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**UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE 1**  
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**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE ET DE FORMATION  
DOCTORALE EN SCIENCES HUMAINES,  
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**UNITE DE RECHERCHE ET DE FORMATION  
DOCTORALE EN SCIENCES HUMAINES**

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**FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET SCIENCES  
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**DEPARTEMENT D'HISTOIRE**

**CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE MOGHAMO**  
**1888 -1961**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of a Master  
of Arts (M.A) Degree in History

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To My Mother

Sarah Atuh Timah

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## ABSTRACT

The study titled Chieftaincy and Local Governance in Moghamo Clan: 1888-1961 examined the state of chieftaincy in Moghamo clan prior to penetration of European colonisers and the role played by traditional institutions and authorities in local governance during the colonial period. However, the institution of chieftaincy in Moghamo clan was not a colonial creation but an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman. Before the arrival of the Whiteman, chieftaincy institutions in Moghamo were already organised socio-politico and economically and commanded much respect from the indigenes. Like in other areas in the Bamenda Grassfields before the colonial rule, chiefs carried out combined legislative, executive, judicial and military functions assisted by their traditional councils. But the arrival of the Whiteman brought a lot of changes and transformation to this institution. For concrete analysis, the study makes good use of qualitative and quantitative research techniques using both exploratory and content analysis of primary and secondary sources. Based on the assessment made on its role and challenges in local governance in the Moghamo clan area, the study underscored that traditional rulers played a crucial role in local governance in Moghamo clan during the colonial rule but the state of these roles were altered and ushered by a transformation of change as the yesterday's monarchs became the errand boys of today during the colonial rule. Traditional governance in Moghamo clan in particular and in the Bamenda Grassfields in general during the German and the British periods, was an example to emulate though it created some frictions that led to future problems. Despite the discord and transformational changes imposed on the traditional authorities by foreign delegates, this work reveals that traditional rulers remain relevant actors in administration and local governance, though law No. 77/245 of 15<sup>th</sup> July 1977 organizing chieftaincy in Cameroon had limit their functions, they still remain an indispensable force to reckon with and in fostering Cameroon's new decentralization agenda.



## RESUME

*L'étude intitulée « Chefferie et gouvernance locale dans le clan Moghamo : 1888-1961 » a examiné l'état de la chefferie dans le clan Moghamo avant la pénétration des colonisateurs européens et le rôle joué par les institutions et les autorités traditionnelles dans la gouvernance locale pendant la période coloniale. Il faut rappeler que l'institution de la chefferie dans le clan Moghamo n'était pas une création coloniale mais une institution qui existait avant l'arrivée des Blancs. Avant l'arrivée des Blancs, les institutions de la chefferie à Moghamo étaient déjà organisées politiquement, socio-culturellement et économiquement et suscitaient beaucoup de respect de la part des indigènes. Comme dans d'autres régions des Grassfields de Bamenda avant la domination coloniale, les chefs exerçaient à la fois des fonctions législatives, exécutives, judiciaires et militaires assistés par leurs conseils traditionnels. Mais l'arrivée du Whiteman a apporté beaucoup de changements et de transformations à cette institution. Pour une analyse concrète, l'étude fait bon usage des techniques de recherche qualitative utilisant à la fois l'analyse exploratoire et l'analyse de contenu des sources primaires et secondaires. Les données ont été recueillies au moyen d'entrevues orales, de discussions de groupe et de rapports d'archives. Les outils les plus pertinents utilisés ont été les entretiens, la recherche documentaire et les questionnaires structurés. Sur la base de l'évaluation faite de son rôle et des défis dans la gouvernance locale dans la zone du clan Moghamo, l'étude a souligné que les chefs traditionnels ont joué un rôle crucial dans la gouvernance locale dans le clan Moghamo pendant la domination coloniale, mais l'état de ces rôles a été modifié et introduit par une transformation du changement alors que les monarques d'hier sont devenus les coursiers d'aujourd'hui pendant la domination coloniale. La gouvernance traditionnelle dans le clan Moghamo en particulier et dans les Bamenda Grassfields en général pendant les périodes allemande et britannique, était un exemple à imiter bien qu'elle ait créé des frictions qui ont conduit à des problèmes futurs. Malgré la discorde et les changements transformationnels imposés aux autorités traditionnelles par les délégués étrangers, ce travail révèle que les chefs traditionnels restent des acteurs pertinents de l'administration et de la gouvernance locale. Ainsi, ils restent une force indispensable avec laquelle compter et dans la promotion du nouveau programme de décentralisation du Cameroun.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>AKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>RESUME .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>GLOSSARY.....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Motivation of the Study .....	3
Conceptual Review .....	17
Theoretical Review.....	18
Empirical Review.....	18
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Objectives of the Study.....	6
Research Questions.....	10
Sources and Methodology .....	19
Scope and Delimitation.....	19
Problems Encountered. ....	20
Significance of the Study.....	21
Organisation of the Work.....	22
<b>CHAPTER ONE: GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT OF MOGHAMO AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>23</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	23
1.2 Geographical Setting.....	23
1.2.1 Moghamo the Land, Language and People.....	23
1.2.2 Relief and Hydrology.....	27
1.2.3 Climate and Soil.....	28
1.2.4 Flora, Vegetation and Fauna .....	29
1.3. Historical Background .....	29
1.3.1 Origin, Migration and Settlement of the Moghamo People.....	29
1.3.2 Origin of Chieftaincy in Moghamo.....	34
1.3.3 Presentation of Chieftaincy Institutions of the Moghamo Clan .....	35

1.4. Chieftaincy and Local Governance in Moghamo Clan before the Coming of the Whiteman .....	40
1.4.1 The Political Governance of Moghamo Before 1888 .....	41
1.4.2 The Economic Governance of Moghamo Before 1888 .....	43
1.4.3 The Socio – Cultural Governance of Moghamo Before 1888 .....	46
1.5 Conclusion .....	48
<b>CHAPTER TWO : CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MOGHAMO UNDER THE GERMAN COLONIAL RULE 1888-1916 .....</b>	<b>49</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	49
2.2. Arrival of the Germans in Moghamo.....	49
2.3 Legislative, Judiciary and Military Roles .....	56
2.3.1 Legislative Roles.....	56
2.3.2 Judicial Roles .....	57
2.3.3 Military Role.....	58
2.4 Labour, Tax, Land and Heritage Roles .....	59
2.4.1 Labour Recruitment or Supply.....	61
2.4.2 Efficient Tax Collectors .....	63
2.4.3 Custodian of Land and Heritage. ....	65
2.5 Socio-Cultural Role .....	66
2.5.1 Traditional Rulers as Custodian of Culture .....	66
2.5.2 Agents of Social Developments.....	67
2.5.3 Religion.....	68
2.6 Conclusion .....	70
<b>CHAPTER THREE : CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE MOGHAMO UNDER THE BRITISH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION 1916-1961..</b>	<b>72</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	72
3.2 The Arrival of the British in Moghamo .....	73
3.3 The British Policy of Indirect Rule and Chieftaincy Reforms: 1916-1940 .....	75
3.3.1 Native Authority System.....	76
3.3.2 The Moghamo Native Court Councils and its Structured.....	78
3.3.3 The Role of Moghamo Native Authority .....	80
3.4 The British Colonial Policy of Indirect Rule and Chieftaincy Reforms; the Period 1940-1961.....	83

3.4.1 The Democratization of Native Authorities in the British Southern Cameroons in the 1940s .....	84
3.4.2 Moghamo Chiefs' Role in Politics and the Struggle to Independence. ....	88
3.4.3 Chiefs and the Struggle to the Creation of the Southern Cameroon House of Chief. ....	90
3.5 Benefits and Privileges Enjoyed by Traditional Authorities in Local Governance under the Colonial Administration .....	93
3.5.1 Political Benefits and Privileges .....	94
3.5.2 Economic Benefits Privileges Enjoyed by Chiefs during the Colonial Periods .....	96
3.5.3 Socio-cultural Privileges and Benefits .....	98
3.6 Conclusion .....	99
<b>CHAPTER FOUR : CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MOGHAMO 1888-1961 .....</b>	<b>101</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	101
4.2 Political Problems or Challenges .....	102
4.2.1 Usurpation of Functions of Traditional Authorities.....	102
4.2.2 Dethronement of Chiefs and Succession Crisis .....	104
4.2.3 Governance Problems as a Result of Democratisation of N.A in the 1940s .....	109
4.3 Economic Challenges or Problems of Governance .....	111
4.3.1 Land Disputes and the Allocation of lands for Colonial Projects.....	111
4.3.2 Mismanagement of Public funds .....	114
4.3.3 Poverty .....	116
4.4 Socio-cultural Challenges and Problems .....	117
4.4.1 Disrespect of custom and tradition .....	118
4.4.2 Inadequate Knowledge on Western Education .....	118
4.4.3 Intimidation of Traditional Authorities and Loss of Values .....	120
4.5. Conclusion .....	122
<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>SOURCES CONSULTED.....</b>	<b>200</b>

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### A. Maps

1: Location of Moghamo Clan in the Republic of Cameroon .....	25
2: Location of Moghamo clan in the North West Region.....	26
3: Location of Moghamo Clan in Momo Division .....	27
5: Bali Nyonga’s Empire including Moghamo Villages Between 1870’s and 1880’s .....	51
6: Zintgraff’s Journey across Moghamo 1888 - 1889.....	55
5: The 1906 Resettlement Scheme: Meta and Moghamo Villages forced into Bali by the Germans for Easy Tax Collection:.....	60

### B. Plates

1: Some of the Moghamo Fons that governed During the Colonial Period.....	36
2: Mafors of the Anong Palace who lived During the British Period.....	38
3: A Photograph of Dr. Eugene Zintgraff, the German Explorer .....	52
4: Some Moghamo Fons that reigned during the British Mandate and Trusteeship periods in Moghamo. ....	78
5: Photographs of Newly Western Educated Elites in the British Southern Cameroons.....	85
6: Photograph of Chiefs in the First Opening of the SCHCs in Buea on September 6 <sup>th</sup> 1960. 93	

### C. TABLES

1: Bali under Fonyonga II Paramountcy over 31 Villages of his Empire including Moghamo Villages. ....	61
2: Bali Nyonga Tadmanji in the Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> Century that controlled Moghamo .....	65
3: Results of the Elections Conducted by the Colonial Administration with regards to the Ashong Chieftaincy Disputes of 1940. ....	107

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

<b>A.D.O:</b>	Assistant District Officer
<b>ANICHRA:</b>	African Network against Illiteracy, Conflicts and Human Rights Abuse
<b>B.R.C:</b>	Batibo Rural Council
<b>B.S.C:</b>	British Southern Cameroon
<b>CEREHT:</b>	<i>Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres</i>
<b>DIPES II :</b>	<i>Diplome de Professeur de l'enseignement secondaire Deuxieme Grade</i>
<b>D.O:</b>	District Officer
<b>H.T.T.C:</b>	Higher Teacher Training College
<b>G.N.K:</b>	<i>Gesellschaft Nordwest-Kamerun</i>
<b>H.O.C:</b>	House of common.
<b>H.O.L:</b>	House of Lords
<b>H.T.T.C:</b>	Higher Teacher Training College
<b>H.R.H:</b>	His Royal Highness
<b>I.R:</b>	Indirect Rule
<b>IRIC:</b>	International Relations Institute of Cameroon.
<b>K.N.C:</b>	Kamerun National Congress.
<b>K.N.D.P:</b>	Kamerun National Democratic People
<b>KPP:</b>	Kamerun People's Party
<b>L.O.N:</b>	League of Nations
<b>M.N.C:</b>	Moghamo Native Court
<b>N.A.A:</b>	Native Authority Area
<b>N.A.C:</b>	Native Authority Council
<b>N.A.S:</b>	Native Authority Schools
<b>N.A.S:</b>	Native Authority System
<b>N.A:</b>	Native Authority
<b>N.C.O:</b>	Native Court Ordinance
<b>N.C:</b>	Native Council
<b>N.T:</b>	Native Treasuries
<b>N.A.B:</b>	National archives Buea
<b>R.A.B:</b>	Regional Archives Bamenda
<b>S.D.O:</b>	Senior Divisional Officer.
<b>S.C.C.C:</b>	Southern Cameroon Chiefs' Conference.

<b>S.C.H.A:</b>	Southern Cameroon House of Assembly.
<b>S.C.H.C:</b>	Southern Cameroon House of chiefs
<b>S.W.F.C:</b>	South Western Federation Conference.
<b>U.N.O:</b>	United Nations Organisation.
<b>W.A.P.V:</b>	<i>Westafrikanische Pflanzungs-Gesellschaft Victoria</i>
<b>W.E.E:</b>	Western Educated Elites
<b>W.C.H.C:</b>	West Cameroon House of Chief.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Words in <i>Moghamo</i></b>	<b>Words in English</b>
<i>Animi:</i>	Water Spirit
<i>Atok-aben or Attaah:</i>	Head of the Vilage
<i>Attaah:</i>	Chief in Moghamo
<i>Bafons:</i>	Men decorated and honour by the chief
<i>Bah:</i>	Notables
<i>Ejeuh:</i>	Jungle god
<i>Fiban-ngaku:</i>	Palace stick
<i>Fichock:</i>	Palm wine
<i>Goog:</i>	Substance used to detect witchcraft
<i>Iban-took:</i>	Palace bag
<i>Ifut:</i>	Traditional yams festival
<i>Ikob:</i>	A Cave
<i>Iwiri-ngok:</i>	Red Feather
<i>Keng:</i>	A stick hat represented a stick
<i>Moghamo:</i>	<i>The Language</i>
<i>Momo:</i>	River
<i>Munang:</i>	A Secret Society
<i>Nchindas:</i>	Energetic young men that work in the Palace
<i>Neng-nang:</i>	Injunctionst ick
<i>Neubefut:</i>	House of ritual
<i>Ngaku:</i>	Fon's Palace
<i>Nkweti:</i>	Chief's adviser.
<i>Nwerong, Ngwes:</i>	Secret Societies
<i>Mafors:</i>	Queen Mothers
<i>Shaky:</i>	Fon's Messengers or Priest
<i>Tadkon:</i>	A bordered-market where Moghamo people settled.
<i>Tadmanjis:</i>	Notables and Princes from Bali; Traditional Diplomatic Messengers.
<i>Titas:</i>	Elder brother to the chief
<i>Were/bah</i>	Notables
<i>Wum-beg:</i>	Camwood Hill



## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Chieftaincy institution has remained a genuine institution of governance in African communities.<sup>1</sup> It has become a revered and a respectable institution and a legacy in power structure of the African state. Before the coming of colonialism to Africa chieftaincy institution were divine in nature and combined legislative, executive, religious, military and judicial functions to economic and social functions<sup>2</sup>. They were the custodians or guardians of fundamental or customary values or laws and regulated civil behaviours in traditional governance.<sup>3</sup> It therefore means that, these institutions were repositories of traditions and history of their societies, custodians of customs, and arbitrators of justice and enforcement of customary laws<sup>4</sup>. Their authority also extended to the allocation of land, protection of African Kingdoms/communities from external threats or danger. They also acted as mediators between the people and spiritual forces and were embodiment of development.<sup>5</sup> Hence it was their duties to ensure excellent links between the people and ancestors; safeguard existing beliefs, as well as ensure respect for the gods, elders and other authorities. They were equally to ensure fertility of the land, the people and protected them from taboos. In short, they were to ensure safety of their community, invigorate material progress and ensure peace and unity.<sup>6</sup>

However, in the grassfields of Cameroon, chieftaincy institution was an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman. Before the coming of colonisers, ethnic communities with chieftaincy institutions were there, some with already established tradition and civilisations and others in the process of developing them.<sup>7</sup> Some ethnicities were already surely settled where they are today while others were still shifting from place to place escaping from raids or wars.<sup>8</sup> Cameroon and the grassfields in particular already had organised social and political institutions, some with strong centralised governments, judicial

<sup>1</sup> M. Crowder., “*West Africa under Colonial Rule*”. Idowu, H.O. Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria vol 5 no. 1 (1969): p.173-77. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856830>

<sup>2</sup> J. Onzaberigu. N., *Chieftaincy Disputes and Its Effects on Women and children: A Case Study at Bawku Municipality Ghana*. (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology: Kumasi Ghana, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> W. Binsbergen, Van., “*Chiefs and State in Independent Zambia in anieuwal E.A.B Van Rouveroy* (ed), (Special Issue of Journal of legal Pluralism, 1978)

<sup>4</sup> M. Crowder., *Colonial West Africa; Selected Essays*. (London, Hutchinson, 1968. Pp Xv.) p.540

<sup>5</sup> G. Peter., *Chiefs and Colonial rule in Cameroon: Inventing Chieftaincy, French and British Style*. Vol 63, No. 2 (Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, 1993)

<sup>6</sup> M. Samuel and Musah Halidu., “*Examining the Position of the Chieftaincy Institution in modern political System Ghana*”. Journal of Sociology and Social Work. Vol. 6 (Accra, 2018) p.25-26, Doi: 10.15640/jssw.v6n1a8

<sup>7</sup> Fanso. V. G., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges, Volume 1: From Prehistoric Times to the Nineteenth Century*. (London: Macmillan Education Limited, 1989), p.3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6

and religious authority and Moghamo being one of the areas in the grassfields was already organised.

However, with the coming of the Whiteman (colonialism), chieftaincy institution was altered as most of their functions were usurped and their powers were limited.<sup>9</sup> Though they became subsidiaries to the colonial administrators, their inclusion in local governance was only to reduce the cost of governance by the colonial authorities, condense discontents and facilitate control of African territories. Moghamo clan unlike other areas that were under colonial rule was subjected to this legacy of colonialism.

Moreover, chieftaincy institution had been an important institution in the grassfields of Cameroon especially under the British administration, from the mandates to the trusteeship periods. The British colonial policy of indirect rule used chieftaincy structure in implementing governance. The institution of chieftaincy has had varying roles in the British Southern Cameroons as an arm of the administration. Though in some areas, chiefs were dethroned and artificial chiefs appointed by the British known as warrant chiefs. Their role in local governance could not be underestimated.

Chieftaincy represented a tangible example of African leadership during the colonial rule in Cameroon, precisely in British Southern Cameroons under which Moghamo clan the area of the study is found. Even before the colonial era, chiefs and traditional authorities had played an outstanding and exemplary leadership and administrative role in this area. However, still with the increasing number of educated elites in the 1920s whose leadership was indispensable, chiefs and traditional authorities continued to play a very important role in local governance and administration.<sup>10</sup> It all began with the Germans instituting the Native Authority system and direct administration in the area and the British through the Indirect Rule system perfected by the Governor General Lord Lugard in Northern Nigeria. He advanced his position as from 1914 to implement the traditional leadership roles of chiefs in the administration of local governance. The low level of literacy in Cameroon during the colonial era, coupled with the complete absence of communication infrastructure such as roads or railways and the rugged shape of the relief of the territory, meant that, the colonial rule had to depend on traditional authorities, initiatives and structure including chiefs to maintain a firm governance until independence in 1961.

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<sup>9</sup> K. Robert., *Les Chefferie Traditionnelles dans la Societe de la Grand Zone Forestiere du Sud Cameroun 1850 – 2010*. p.67

<sup>10</sup> P.N Nkwi., *the German Presence in the Western Grassfields 1891-1913: a German Colonial Account* (Yaounde, African Studies Centre, 1989), p.45

## Motivation of the Study

Our interest in the study stemmed from the fact that chieftaincy was an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman and also due to the fact that much literature by Moghamo writers in Cameroon, focus on the role of “outsiders” such as governors and many have delved into political history since independence and in particular the chiefs’ roles in nationalist politics, but have not specifically addressed their roles before and during the colonial administration and how their traditional functions were usurped by the colonial administrators.

## Conceptual Review

Much review exists on the concept of chieftaincies, chiefs, chiefdoms, governance and local governance in Africa and Cameroon in particular. Many at the international scene and Cameroon have reviewed these concepts of chieftaincy and local governance from different stands. A few of these concepts will be review below.

A chief is a leader or ruler of a people or clan. And chieftaincy according to the Oxford English Dictionary is the state or position of being the leader of people or clan.<sup>11</sup> According to the Merriam Webster, chieftaincy is defined as; the rank, dignity office or rule of a chieftain or a region or people rule by a chief. It was first known and used in 1878.<sup>12</sup>

However, Timothy Earle. On his part regards Chiefs, Chieftaincies and Chiefdoms as a category, continuous with non-stratified social groups and states.<sup>13</sup> The defining process of chiefdoms is an emergent political economy that mobilized resources used to finance institution of rule and social stratification. To him, chiefdoms are highly valuable, but they are all about power. He illustrated how the concepts of chieftaincies operated prior to state formation and as such, the chief is a political actor seeking to control rather opportunistically the elemental powers of the economy, warrior might, and ideology. Following the formation of states after independence, chiefs continue to operate as sub-state actors controlling interstitial spaces (illegal operations, rural areas and like) in competition and collaboration with an overarching state. He made mention of the fact that they should be considered as tied to the particular political processes by which power becomes centralized. This is because

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<sup>11</sup>M. Deuter, Jennifer. B and Joanna.T (eds) *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary Ninth Edition*. (Oxford University Press: 2008), 679

<sup>12</sup>Merriam Webster Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chieftaincy>. 8 July 2017

<sup>13</sup>T. Earle., “*Chiefs, Chieftaincies, Chiefdoms and Chiefly Confederacies: Power in the Evolution of Political Systems*”. Vol. 10 No. 1 Northwestern Universities, Evaston, Social Evolution and History, (Uchitel Publishing House, March 2011).

chiefs represent an emergent ability to concentrate power and extend it over thousands of people. The extent and institutional form of chiefdoms grade rather seamlessly along alternative lines from egalitarian small-scale societies. He referred us to study the full range of variation from the agrarian of Hayden (1995) to the city-states of the Middle East (Yoffee 1993).

Another investigator on chieftaincy in Africa, John Onzaberigu. N. looks at chieftaincy as one of the most enduring institution and has displayed remarkable resilience from pre-colonial through colonial and post colonial times.<sup>14</sup> To him, the term chieftaincy combined executive, legislative, judicial, military, economic and religious roles and it is indeed important to the people of Africa as it occupies an important role in the administration of the traditional societies in Africa. He made mention of the fact that, despite the controversies that arise as to its relevance as a framework of political organisation and of action, it is of interest on all sides. States call on chiefs as intermediaries in their relationship with the people (electoral mobilisation, tax collection, law and order among others). To this, the concept of chieftaincy can not be compromised in African History.

Jaclyn Grace. Used the concept of chieftaincy in Cameroon as a lens through which the complex tension between modernity and tradition in Post Colonial Africa exist. After presenting a Historical study of Grassfields chiefs' role in the modern Cameroon state, she analysed the relationship between tradition and modernity through the case study of a Cameroonian chiefdom, that of Batoufam in West Cameroon.<sup>15</sup> To her, traditional institutions in African nations are continually excluded from the global development industry and argued that not only can traditional institutions produce aspects of western modernisation but these institutions in Cameroon also utilise liberal and neoliberal practices in the interest of community goals, mobilising western strategies for new and different purposes.<sup>16</sup> She concluded that, the concept of chieftaincy institutions in Africa are not merely reproducing a western model of modernity but are in fact reshaping modernity itself through new conceptualisation, forms, and an application. These traditional institutions thus present a critical resource for development, suggesting alternate strategies and future realities.

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<sup>14</sup> N. J. Onzaberigu., *Chieftaincy Disputes and Its Effects on Women and children: A Case Study at Bawku Municipality Ghana*, (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology: Kumasi Ghana, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Chieftaincy Reimagined: Modernity and Tradition in Cheferie of Batoufam, Cameroon, Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, (April 2015)

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p.5

The word governance came from the Latin verb “*gubernare*” or more originally from the Greek word “*Kubernaein*” “*which means to steer*”. Basing on its etymology, governance refers to the manner of steering or governing or of directing and controlling a group of people or state. Governance is all the process of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market or network, whether a family, tribe, formal or informal organization or territory.

Or it can be defined as the exercise of power or authority by a political leader for the well-being of their country’s citizens or subjects. Or it is a complex process whereby, some sector of the society wield power, and enact and promulgate public policies which directly affect human and institutional interactions and economic and social developments.

Writing for the World Bank, Landel-Mills and Sergeldin defined governance as the use of political authority and exercise control over society and management of its resources for social and economic developments.<sup>17</sup> It encompasses the nature of the functioning of a state’s institutional and structural arrangements, decision making process, policy formulation and implementation capacity, effectiveness of leadership and the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the rule.

Local governance is a form of public administration within a given state.<sup>18</sup> It also refers to government of a local area. It is simply the governance of a local area.

According to Eyong Evelyn. M. Local governance takes the form of decentralization and deconcentrated authorities. He advanced the fact that Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of the independence of India, advocated ‘Swaraj’ or self rule, which implies the rule of the people.<sup>19</sup> This concept forms the basis of democratic decentralization and the establishment of the people council institution in India. The emerging trends in recent years are decentralization and the devolution of powers to local government and peoples of various levels.

Local government in the form of decentralization is a step in promoting democracy. It is the transfer of responsibilities in the management of local affairs from the central government to the local government. The purpose is to bring the administration closer to the people and this has proven to be a better way to improve the living standards of the population. Here, he

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<sup>17</sup>World Bank Report, “*Governance and Development*”, 1992 in N.M.Hongwe., *Traditional Governance in Bafanji from 1906– 1974*. Master Dissertation University of Yaounde 1, 2017

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid*.p.98

<sup>19</sup>*Local Government and Rural Development: A Case Study of Buea Cameroon*. Centre Development and Environment, University of Oslo Blinden, Norway.

mentioned four different kinds of decentralization as a form of local government but threw more lights on two terms;

- Deconcentration: This type of local governance designates an administrative process of decentralization of resources whereby, the local service remains under the control of the central government referred to this as an administrative decentralization.<sup>20</sup> The transfer of authority is from the central government to local branches of central government. In this context, the participation of local population is only a tool in the accomplishment of local projects. Hence it is a form of centralization in disguised.<sup>21</sup>
- Devolution: This on the contrary is the delegation or surrender of powers of the central government to local authorities.<sup>22</sup> It could be referred to as political decentralization and this means that the institutions which this power is devolved must be governed by locally elected persons.

Citing the deficiencies in centralized models of local governance, Eriksen et al (1991) position that decentralization was seen as alternative model of governance and is therefore referred as part of the solution and answer to the need of more involvement and participation of local communities in development processes.

Decentralisation as a form of local governance stands out amongst the priorities of the African traditional agenda because it empowers local institutions thereby enhancing and modernizing democratic societies and states in Africa. By also enforcing accountability, it laid the grounds of monitoring and hence potential sanctions, both positive and negative sense of the word. But who these decentralized units have responsibility to is a challenge we need to find out.

### **Theoretical Review**

There are a number of theoretical explanations on chieftaincy and local governance. The most prominent of these theories are on modernity and tradition that is the modernisation theory and a handful of others. On a more theoretical level, the concept of poly-centric decentralized democratic governance is advocated as an appropriate model for integrating the traditional

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<sup>20</sup> Eriksen et al. 1999, in Eyong Evelyn. M, *Local Government and Rural Development: A Case Study of Buea Cameroon. Centre for Development and Environment.* (University of Oslo, Blindern, Norway). p.19

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p.23

<sup>22</sup> Mukete, Harris et al. 2004 in Eyong Evelyn. M, *Local Government and Rural Development: A Case Study of Buea Cameroon.* p.25

into the modern.<sup>23</sup> This is a system with “multiple decision-making centres” which interact to solve common problems and the management of collective resources. One expert sees this system as a particularly fitting model for the relationship between the modern state and traditional African power structures, given many societies’ tradition of collectively sharing responsibilities within a common framework.

Botswana is cited as an example where paramount chieftaincy has successfully been integrated into a modern democracy: here paramount chiefs meet in the second chamber and are regularly consulted on a number of matters.<sup>24</sup> In addition, they also administer local justice through customary law.

In Zambia, although local chiefs are barred from competing in formal elections, they are “of fundamental importance to local governance and are regularly consulted in local and national matters.” In Cameroon, on the other hand, local chiefs are permitted, and often do, take part in formal elections. Many are elected to positions of local governance (votes are often cast along traditional lines of loyalty) and some as national members of parliament. In addition, chiefs in Cameroon play an important role in encouraging people to turn out and vote.

The modernisation theory constitutes the basis of a long-lasting debate among African philosophers, sociologists and historians. Here it is worth noticing that the conflict between tradition and modernity is the basic problem that defines also the various schools of development. The school of modernisation theory claims that traditional thinking and institutions are the main causes of underdevelopment, while the school of dependency rejects this argument, pointing out the main reason for underdevelopment is the dependency of African societies on Western metropolises. Another school, the mode of production approach, suggests that underdevelopment takes place when traditional methods and structures battern on advanced systems to perpetuate themselves.<sup>25</sup> The friction between what is “old” and what is “new” is therefore one of the most important problem in the history of development.

As for African philosophers, the ongoing debate on the relationship between tradition and modernity concerntrates on the question whether traditional ways of thinking and behaving can serve as a resource or create obstacles to the development and modernisation in Africa

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<sup>23</sup>K. Beyene., *Polycentric Decentralized Governance in the Context of Eritrea*. Presentation given at the Eritrean Festival, (Frankfurt, Germany, 6-8 July 2010).

<sup>24</sup>ACE Facilitators, “*Paramount Chieftaincy as a System of Local Government*”. (March 25, 2011)

<sup>25</sup>M. Kebede, “*Development and African Philosophical Debate*” *Africa Journal of Sustainable Development* Vol. 1. No. 2 (1999), p39. In RÓŻALSKA, Monika. *Between Tradition and Modernity-The Role of Chiefs in the National Development and Local Governance in Ghana*. No. 42, (2016), pp. 379-402. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24920263>. Accessed 12 Aug. 2021.

and how the indigenous African traditions can be applicable to the challenges of contemporary life.<sup>26</sup> Discussion of these questions shows that there are two major perspectives among various schools of African philosophy.<sup>27</sup> They can be presented even as two conflicting approaches: ethnophilosophy and professional philosophy. Ethnophilosophers claim that the restoration of African tradition is a condition for successful modernisation, while professional philosophers believe that the success is built through exchanging traditional culture for modern ideas and institutions.<sup>28</sup> To expand the categorisation, there are four main schools in African philosophy: ethnophilosophy (represented by Placide Tempels, Alexis Kagame, and John Mbiti), philosophic sagacity (Henry Odera Oruka and his followers), national and ideological philosophy (e.g. Amílcar Cabral, Julius Nyerere) and professional philosophy (e.g. Paulin Hountondji, Kwasi Wiredu, Peter Bodurin). Ethnophilosophers regard the collective worldviews of traditional Africa as philosophy. Representatives of philosophic sagacity search for individuals' thinkers with traditional background, but at the same time they are critical of traditional beliefs. National and ideological philosophers emphasize the importance of African collective destiny and the necessity of a theory deriving from traditional African socialism and familyhood as the best recipe for effective liberation of Africa. Finally, professional philosophers argue that only rationality and critical argumentation make works philosophical.<sup>29</sup>

According to the first perspective, referred to as “cultural revivalism” by Kwame Gyekye, the effective addressing of contemporary challenges requires reclaiming and revitalising indigenous traditions that were inhibited by colonialism.<sup>30</sup> Revivalists are frequently sceptical of development and modernisation, perceiving them as a hidden continuation of European cultural influence. They do not view their own perspective to be anti-modern, but they underline that real modernisation of Africa can be achieved only if there is the revitalisation of African cultural norms.<sup>31</sup> The second perspective is more critical toward the indigenous heritage. Supporters of this perspective claim that cultural revivalism does not address the

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<sup>26</sup> M. RÓŻALSKA, “*Between Tradition and Modernity -The Role of Chiefs in the National Development and Local Governance in Ghana.*” No. 42, 2016, pp. 379-402, [www.jstor.org/stable/24920263](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24920263). Accessed 12 August (2021), p385.

<sup>27</sup> J.A. Ciaffa, “*Tradition and Modernity in Postcolonial African Philosophy: Humanities*”. Vol. 21, and No. 1-2 (2008), p121.

<sup>28</sup> M. Kebede, “*Development*.” Africa Journal for Sustainable Development 39. Eds. RÓŻALSKA, Monika. “*Between Tradition and Modernity – The Role of Chiefs In the National Development And Local Governance In Ghana.*” No. 42, (2016), pp. 379–402. [www.jstor.org/stable/24920263](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24920263). Accessed 12 Aug. 2021.p386

<sup>29</sup> M. Kebede, “*Development...*”, p44, in

<sup>30</sup> He is a Ghanaian philosopher, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Ghana.

<sup>31</sup> J.A. Ciaffa, “*Tradition and Modernity...*”, pp.121-122. Ed. R. Monika, “*Between Tradition and Modernity...*”, p.386



challenges of contemporary Africa properly. Moreover, they accuse cultural revivalism of distracting attention from crucial political issues, and promoting thoughts that are opposition to scientific and technological advancement. According to them, modernisation requires thinking adequate to the problems of the present, not restoration of ideas from the past.<sup>32</sup>

The most ardent critic of cultural revivalism (ethnophilosophy) is presented in the works of a Beninese philosopher, Paulin Hountondji, who argue that this project is based on mistaken assumptions about African peoples and about the nature of Philosophy. He even claims that such an approach does not facilitate the effort to address the challenges of the present.<sup>33</sup> Hountondji takes the position that local knowledges create a foundation for sustainable development in African societies. However, in order to be politically meaningful, they have to continually undergo criticism and modification. According to Hountondji, African people live in a “dual language” world, that is the one in which the “recent” co-exists with the “ancient” in almost every aspect of life. Therefore, they should transform the old indigenous knowledge to address new challenges.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, Hountondji does not under appreciate Africa’s indigenous knowledge systems; quite on the contrary, he defends the value of local knowledges claiming at the same time that they need criticism. He points out also another problems Africa’s intellectual and scientific independence on the outside world. In this way, he calls for taking responsibility by Africans for their own intellectual, social, political, scientific and economic life.<sup>35</sup>

Both attitudes have become popular among their supporters throughout the whole African continent. Ethnophilosophy is suitable for those who want to underline their African origin and are very proud of their tradition. However, it lacks recognition that tradition are not always the best solutions for everything, especially if these traditions stand in opposition to rational thinking and, what is more, cannot be used for addressing contemporary challenges. Therefore, the perspective presented by Hountondji seems to be more relevant, as it combines both the “old” and the “recent” in looking for best answers to new problems, especially those that come through globalization process, but simultaneously does not undervalue traditions.

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<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.* p.387

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.* p.390

<sup>34</sup>D.A. Masos, “The Making of a Tradition.” RÓŻALSKA, Monika. “Between Tradition and Modernity – The Role of Chiefs in the National Development and Local Governance in Ghana.” No. 42, (2016), pp. 379–402. [www.jstor.org/stable/24920263](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24920263). Accessed 12 Aug. (2021), p386.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.* p.387

## Empirical Review

Much literature exists on chieftaincies in Africa and Cameroon in particular. Many at the International scene and in Cameroon have written about chieftaincy from diverse point of views. This depended on their pre-occupations. More so, some authors have published books in local governance in Cameroon, Africa and other continents. Literature on chieftaincies in Cameroon has been written in Nso, Mamfe, Kumba, Mankon and Bafut. However, nothing much has been written on them in Batibo subdivision the area that covers Moghamo. This study intends to cover that space by reviewing chieftaincy and local governance in Moghamo clan from 1888-1961.

It is of great relevance because this study fills the space of the undocumented history of chieftaincy and local governance in the Moghamo clan. It is one of the first attempts in the study area to assess how the people were governed by their chiefs during the pre-colonial and colonial periods.

Firstly, R.J. O'Neil. On his part examines how the society of Moghamo was before the coming of the Whiteman. He observes that the movement towards greater centralisation and consolidation was interrupted by the arrival of the Germans in 1888.<sup>36</sup> He went further to say that from 1888 until 1925 Moghamo was at junction to its history. The era from 1865 to 1888, where in astute leadership had strengthened a ritual and authority over large settlements was at an end a period began in which authority and its power base was condemned. The internal and relative sacrosanct boundaries of local society and its leadership came under attack. The ability to provide for the secular welfare of the community was challenged by a new authority, which demanded that ultimate autonomy be reserved to it and back up its claim with military power.

N.A Wandeh. Observes that before the era of colonisation, Moghamo clan was a purely traditional society with its political institutions and administrators.<sup>37</sup> It was a well organised society with traditional laws and customs<sup>38</sup>. Traditional laws and customs simply refer to practices that have been handed down through generations and are known to everybody in the society in which it operates.

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<sup>36</sup>R. J.O'Neil. *A History of Moghamo: 1865 to 1940, Authority and changed in Cameroon Grassfield culture*. PHD dissertation. (Columbia University, 1987), p.40

<sup>37</sup> Wandeh. "*Moghamo 1884-1961. Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Organisation and Development*", DIPES II Disertation in History. (ENS Yaounde, 1995), p.13.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid* p.13.

H.T Mbah presents a vivid account on the origin of Moghamo to their present site.<sup>39</sup> He claimed that the Moghamo people through their original founders Tembeka (male) and Takumeka (female), first appeared at a place called Tad where their offsprings Tiwere and Tikum later moved to Widikum and founded the Widikum settlement. Widikum was a mere modification of these two sons.<sup>40</sup> P.N. Nkwi and J.P. Warnier.<sup>41</sup> And E.M. Chilver and P.M. Kabearry<sup>42</sup> equally hold this view. During the period of colonialism, traditional leaders did not really perform traditional functions but government functions. There was a modification of traditional values. The *nkwifon* and *neubefu*<sup>43</sup> were relegated to the background while institutions like *ngwe* and *menang* lost their powers. The society of pre-colonial Moghamo had Fon, traditional councils and regulatory societies which acted as instruments of traditional governance. But during the colonial days, Fon who in the past were in charge of traditional governance only, were now involved in colonial governance. The Native court and native administration created here by the colonial masters were the latest development in the history of the clan.

A.P. Ayah. That Moghamo Fondoms like other fondoms in the western grassfields had its own judicial system that maintains law and order.<sup>44</sup> It also had a judicial system through which laws were made. This was centred on the Fon. There was a village traditional council that met in the Fon's palace called *ngaku* under the auspices of the Fon. He was assisted by his counsellors in this function. The traditional council was the centre of the judicial system adjudicating on matters. It was made up of the Fon, traditional notables and some important figures appointed by acclamation. It was the supreme organ of law making within Moghamo and addressed matters from family courts. This court also intervened in cases of adultery and failure to participate in communal labour, divorce and destruction of crops by animals.

A.A. Samah. On his parts examines the socio-political organisation of Moghamo.<sup>45</sup> He highlighted that, the structure of Moghamo political organisation comprised the households or compound head, family head, quarter head and the village headed that was the

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<sup>39</sup>H. Mbah., *The Origin of Moghamo Clan: A Paper presented to Batibo student Association (BASSA)* (August 1989), P.1.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.* p.2

<sup>41</sup>P.N Nkwi. And Warnier, *Element of History*, p.87.

<sup>42</sup>Neubefu and kwifon both mean the same thing. They were both secret societies found in the Fon's palace

<sup>43</sup>A.P. Ayah., "*Elements of the History of the Moghamo people. Early Settlement 1916*" Dipess II Dissertation in History. (ENS Yaounde: 1994, ), p.72

<sup>44</sup>A.A., Samah. "*The Advent, Growth and the Impact of New Churches in Moghamo 1974-2004*" M.A Dissertation in History. (University of Yaounde I: 2005), p.13

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid* p.15

Fon. They were no paramount ruler that rule over all the Moghamo but a village head (Fon) headed each village. The lowest social unit was the compound. The head of families, compounds, quarters and villages acted as spiritual links between their subjects and ancestors. They settled disputes over land, fighting and adultery. They also carried cleansing ceremonies to spare the family compound, quarters, village from ill-luck, curses and calamities<sup>46</sup>. The head of the quarter was called “bah” or “Were” that of the village was called *Attaahand* of the compound was called “were-chan”.<sup>47</sup> The Fon resided in his palace called ngaku. He and his kings’ men the *mukums* or senior lineage head were the spiritual leaders of the village. The strength and authority of the Fon depended on his ability to provide solution to spiritual and material needs of the subjects. Whenever a village is attacked by a calamity, it was the duty of a Fon to find out the cause and to perform sacrifices and cleansing ceremonies on the behalf of the entire village.

A.A Ndamukong. In his own work observed that the basic unit of administration in Meta society was the family, which was the patrilineal decent group.<sup>48</sup> It was the base of social life and the foundation of administration.

A. Adela. On her part, examined the political and socio-cultural institutions of moghamo during the pre-colonial and the colonial times.<sup>49</sup> She showed how political authority was exercised in the pre-colonial and colonial periods in Moghamo. She however insisted that most of the research works that have been undertaken on the Grassfield history have paid more attention on the bigger fondoms to the neglect of smaller ones. The study has shown that, the political and socio-cultural institutions were not static; rather they evolved with changing times. The coming of colonialism with the western values brought a lot of drastic changes to the traditional and socio-political institutions of Moghamo. The study looks at the changes that were introduced in these institutions of Moghamo especially as the powers of the Fon were to an extent reduced vis-à-vis the colonial masters and increased vis-à-vis the people. The study also examined the historical evolution of the moghamo, the role religion and politics in the moghamo. Finally, the impact of colonialism on Moghamo clan has been dealt with. The study has shown how the society of the Moghamo was organised politically and socio-cultural in the pre-colonial period until when the Germans reached the Grassfields

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<sup>46</sup>R.J.O’Neil., “*History of Moghamo*” p.80

<sup>47</sup> E.A. Eyong., “*The Advent of Christianity in Moghamo Clan and Impact on Traditional Political Institutions 1906-1985*”. DIPESS II Dissertation in History. (ENS Yaounde 2004), p.27

<sup>48</sup> A.A. Ndamukong., “*The Evolution of Traditional Authority in Meta from Pre-colonial Times to 1900*” M.A Dissertation in History. (University of Yaounde I, 2003), p.8-9

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p.12

which made Moghamo to experience a wind of change that greatly affected its socio-political institutions but failed to highlight the specific roles of traditional institutions in local governance before and during the colonial rule.

One of the investigators on chieftaincies in Cameroon is R. Kpwang. Explained the noble role that was played by chiefs in the past was distorted. Yesterday's protectors became mere instruments in the colonising service, consigned to the subordinate roles of tax collectors and providers of labour (free) for portage and force labour<sup>50</sup>. To clearly show that the era of independent chiefs was over, the colonial administrators did not hesitate to dismiss those who did not literally apply the orders received and to invest again chiefly in their pay. Using multiple sources this article analyses the role of the chief in the pre-colonial and colonial in the past and its place in the Cameroonian society today. Their new role became that of collection of taxes. It means that from the protector to collection of taxes. He was often the defender of his people during the pre-colonial rule. In order to profit the German administration, they were asked to collect taxes. The supply of German colonies with agricultural products, furnish porters and labourers for the construction of roads, bridges and plantations.

Another investigator on chieftaincies in Cameroon is Joseph M. Ndifor.<sup>51</sup> The author exclaimed that at the time that sizable numbers of Cameroonians have lost faith in their national institutions, one would have expected that chieftaincy a once venerated institution in some parts of Cameroon would be the last bastion for some defends. Instead, chieftaincy also appears to be teetering on the edge of collapse. The rapid erosion of their influence on their people is a cause for concern for tradition-loving Cameroonians who grew up with some respect for their royalties. The author identified a problem that it has never used to be this way. What happened? The author said those days the chiefs were there to guarantee the safety of his subjects. Even in captivity following tribal wars, war captives were accorded some protections by chiefs.

Protus. This paper presents the factors that necessitated the creation of local government units in Southern Cameroon in 1947.<sup>52</sup> It contends that inefficiency of the native administration system; improper financial management and administrative delay were factors that

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<sup>50</sup> R. Kpwang., *Les Chefferies Traditionnelles dans la Société de la Grande Zone Forestière du Sud Cameroun 1850-2010*. (Yaounde: 2010). p.345

<sup>51</sup> J.M.Nfi., *Chieftaincy: The Bane of Cameroon Politics and what to do about it*. (Bamenda, 2014).

<sup>52</sup> P.M Tem., "Flaws in Native Administration in Southern Cameroons: A Factor of the 1949 creation of Local Government Units". Vol. II, No. 1, *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*. (2016)

contributed to these reforms. This involved the federation of native authorities into financially viable local government entities that were granted some autonomy in the management of local affairs. The author also mentioned the creation of new administrative divisions that became local government units that were merged with native authorities. The author also discussed the implementation of the British policy of indirect rule through traditional institutions. And show how their deficiency was a setback of the administration which necessitated the 1949 changes for the inclusion of educated elites in the Native Authority set up

B. Abdillahi, The advents of colonial rule ushered in a transformation in the role of traditional rulers. This change was necessitated by the desires to achieve the objectives of colonialism which were; to exploit our resources, to meet the needs of the capitalist metropolist.<sup>53</sup> Traditional rulers were therefore used to serve these objectives.

Aidelokhai. 2008, traditional rulers before the advent of colonial rule in Nigeria were the political, economic, cultural and social administrators and lords of their various domains.<sup>54</sup> The status of traditional rulers changed with the advent of colonial rule as the colonialist imposed powers on traditional rulers, usurped their sovereign authorities. This development was meant to enable the colonialist perfect their exploration through the use of traditional rulers.

M.Crowder. 1978, assert that chieftaincy institutions were maintained and used by the colonialists for colonial interest.<sup>55</sup> The international relation in Nigeria attests to this phenomenon. Arguing further, Crowder believed that whether they had fulfilled the entire traditional pre-requisite for assumption of office which would have allowed them rule in pre-colonial days. Their right rule depended on the colonial authorities.

Afigbo. 1972 asserts that the British instituted Native courts and installed chiefs by warrants that control them.<sup>56</sup> This was because the British believed that African people had to be governed by chiefs, therefore maintaining the organic unity of the community. In effects, many warrant chiefs solely constituted colonially blocked usurpers of power and had little legitimacy beyond the fact of being installed by colonial state. Nevertheless, they had powers

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<sup>53</sup> A. Barr., *“Traditional Rulers and Conflict Resolution: An Evaluation of Pre and Post Colonial Nigeria”* Vol 3 No. 21 Research on Human and Social Science, (P.M.B Garki, Abuja-Nigeria: 2013).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid* p.120

<sup>55</sup> M. Crowder., *Colonial West Africa; Selected Essays*. (London, Hutchinson, 1968. Pp Xv. ) p.540

and used it for their own gain. Their main source of power was the control of Native Courts and Labours for example, the colonial roads and water-ways construction.

V. G. Fanso. One of the pioneering investigators of pre-colonial and colonial institutions. The author illustrated the peopling of Cameroon by showing how the institutions of chieftaincies were organised before the coming of the Whiteman.<sup>57</sup> He made mention of the fact that the chiefs were at the head of every society. He added by saying that each group already had organised social and political institution; some with centralised government judicial and religious authority. Example the Nso society of the Western Grassfields, other societies were organised in decentralised system. The aim of the author is to dispel the European argument that Cameroon like any other African country was a dark country, that is, its people were living in a state of anarchy, primitive and barbaric before they were introduced to the light of civilisation which colonialism brought. However, the author in simple terms was trying to say Cameroon institution of chiefs or traditional authorities existed before the coming of the Whiteman.

V.G Fanso. In his second edition 1988, wrote outstandingly on colonial period. He showed how chiefs were used first under the German rule as actors and finally under the British and the French rule in Cameroon.<sup>58</sup> Beginning from the annexation of Cameroon in 1884, the chiefs of the coast of Cameroon were agents first used by the Whiteman. Following the end of the First World War in Cameroon the League of Nations was created and Britain and France were given Cameroon to rule as mandated territories. In order to fulfil the objectives of colonialism, Lord Lugard ordered that until other definite arrangements were made, the British sphere of Cameroons should be administered according to the laws of the territory. This was the introduction of the indirect rule policy which traditional authorities were used.

According to anthropologist Paul Nchoji Nkwi, the erosion of traditional authority which began with European penetration and intensified in the 1940s, saw a positive attempt at a re-evaluation in the 1950s. This positive revitalization of customary authority and institutions in colonial Cameroon came from the incorporation of chieftaincy, particularly in the French and the British Grassfields area, into nationalist movements and independence struggles. In fact, the institution of chieftaincy in the Grassfields was elemental in the fight

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<sup>57</sup> Fanso.V. G., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges, From Prehistoric Times to the Twenty-First Century* (Revised and updated combined edition) Team Work Press, (Bamkika'ay-Kumbo: 2017), p.54

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* p.55

for independence of French Cameroun and British Cameroons, as well as their eventual reunification in 1961. Customary values and institutions

J. Nfi.<sup>59</sup>2014, Examine the changing inter-community relations that resulted from attempts to create a single polity or administrative unit out of the people who had to form separate entities with different languages and customs but who entertained various relations between themselves in pre-colonial times.<sup>60</sup> The paper reveals that the politics of identity in the Nso state fluctuated from cooperation when the Noni and Nso communities tended to stress on similarities and respect for each other's privileges and to conflict when customs and interests clashed and when differences were real. The author also depicts that relations between chiefdoms were also fascinated by diplomats who transmitted information between communities. These diplomats were messengers, interpreters and bodyguards of chiefs who carried this information to the headquarters of these chiefdoms.

Protus (2017).<sup>61</sup>The author asserts that chieftaincy institutions have remained important governing institutions in Africa but have been plagued by conflicts due to bad governance. This has ignited the wrath of the people and governments leading to their displacements. Though necessary for development, the process and the choices of their replacements often contradict or ignore customs and traditions governing chieftaincy succession in resolving the conflict, contends that while local authority upheld the customs and traditions governing succession, in resolving that conflict, they ignored the principles of good governance and supported the reigning tenant against the wishes of a majority of their subjects. The author brought an example with the case of succession in Bamessing southern Cameroons in 1953, as the administration deposed chief Lufong, in favour of his grand uncle, Fontong. However, such a decision was reversed by the Southern Cameroons Chiefs Advisory Council which argued that the verdict of the administration was contrary to the native laws, customs and tradition as two crowned chiefs in the same stool could not be alive. This was also true with the choice of his replacement as succession moves from father to son. It called for regency that had to manage the affairs of the village until Lufong's son became of age to mount the

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<sup>59</sup> Nfi. J, "*Intercommunity Relations and the Politics of Identity in the Nso Chiefdom, Bamenda Grassfields, Cameroon*". J. Res-peace Gen. Dev. 4(4): (2014), p.63-69

<sup>60</sup> J. Nfi. "*Intercommunity Relations and the Politics of Identity in the Nso Chiefdom, Bamenda Grassfields, Cameroon*". J. Res-peace Gen. Dev. 4(4): (2014), p.63-69

<sup>61</sup>M. Protus.,. "*Bad Governance as a Basis for Chieftaincy Conflict and the Transportation of Custom and Traditions Governing Chieftaincy Succession in Bamessing, Southern Cameroons, 1953-1962*". International Journal of Politics and good Governance. Vol. II, No. 83, (Bamenda University of Science and Technology: 2017), p.442



stool. In this way, they averted attempts to transpose the customs and tradition governing chieftaincy succession.

Kwame Asamoah (2012), the author asserts that the institution of chieftaincy is of tremendous importance to the local government in Ghana, particularly in the area of socio-economic development.<sup>62</sup> The institution is the embodiment of our rich culture, agent of development and catalyst of change which must be maintained. He also decried the fact that most people hold the view that the rampant chieftaincy disputes hamper progress and for that reason the institution is of no relevance in local government. It is argued that many post-independence African governments saw chiefs as impediments to modernisation and nation building and tried to curtail their role in local government and national politics (Kyed and Burr 2005; Sharma 1997). It is further argued that some chiefs use their stools to enrich themselves instead of using them to improve the living conditions of their subjects while others these days do not perform their traditional function as chief commanders during wars as they used to do. The author ends by saying chieftaincy has been adulterated and undermined and as such their position in the local government is not felt.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, traditional authorities had often been used as adjunct in the administration in full capacity prior to, and during the European colonisation. After independence, the Cameroon government had relegated some of their functions by rendering them to a mere place of cultural reference. This was done by limiting their power under Law No. 77/245 of 15<sup>th</sup> July 1977 that governed Chieftaincy in Cameroon. In recent times, we have witnessed a power struggle in many cases between traditional authorities and deconcentrated authorities in Moghamo on the question of functionality and role. Following this agony between traditional authorities and deconcentrated authorities, the main problem of this study is to prove the autonomy of this institution before the coming of the Whitemen to Moghamo and its importance by examining the roles and challenges of traditional authority in the colonial administration in Moghamo clan.

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<sup>62</sup> A. Nkwame., “A *Qualitative Study of Chieftaincy and Local Government in Ghana*”. *Journal of African Study and Development* Vol. 4(3), (University of Ghana Business School, Legon-Accra Ghana: 2012), pp.90-95

## **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the two colonial systems under the Moghamo people tranverse from 1888 to 1961 by bringing out the roles of chieftaincy in local governance during this period and the impact on the institution at the dawn of independence.

### **Secondary Objectives**

- 1) Highlights the state and organisation of chieftancy institution in Moghamo prior to the advancement of European colonisers.
- 2) Examine the roles played by traditional rulers under German Administration during German's occupation and administration in Moghamo clan.
- 3) What were the roles and chieftancy reforms in traditional governance in Moghamo during the British's occupation?
- 4) Assess the privileges and benefits chiefs received in return for loyalty and leadership during the Bristish rule in Moghamo clan.
- 5) Identify and examine some of the challenges faced by Moghamo chiefs in local governance during colonial rule.

### **Research Questions**

Was chieftaincy an institution that existed brfore the coming of the Whiteman or better was chiefs' roles profitable to the colonial administration during the colonial period?

### **Secondary Questions**

- 1) What was the state and organisation of chieftancy institution in Moghamo prior to the advancement of European colonisers?
- 2) What were the roles played by traditional rulers under German Administration during German's occupation and administration in Moghamo clan?
- 3) What were the roles and chieftancy reforms in traditional governance in Moghamo during the British's occupation?
- 4) What privileges/benefits did chiefs receive in return for loyalty and leadership during the colonialrule in Moghamo clan?
- 5) What were some of the challenges faced by Moghamo chiefs in local governance during colonial rule?

## **Sources and Methodology**

Carrying on research in any scientific work required a specific methodology in information gathering and data analysis. In this light, this research was carried using qualitative and quantitative methodology based on both primary and secondary sources of information. Data was collected through oral interviews, focus group discussion, and archival reports. The most relevant tools used were interviews, documentary research and structured questionnaires. The primary sources were gotten from public archives like the National Archives Buea, Regional archives Bamenda, the Library of the African Network against Illiteracy, Conflicts and Human Rights Abuse (ANICHRA), the Library of Higher National Teacher Training College Yaounde, University of Yaounde I and the Library of Cameroon Institute of International Relations (IRIC). The Batibo Council and traditional authorities and individuals of Moghamo were not also left out. The Divisional Officer's office in Batibo Sub Division and some Palaces of Moghamo. Oral sources were consulted via interviews and focus groups with traditional rulers of Moghamo, traditional councils, notables, and members of the royal families. The first oldest chiefs of Moghamo to be consulted were; the H.R.H Fon Mbah Richardson Forkum II of Bessi who is the eldest and the old reigning North West Fon, followed by the Fon of Tiben HRH Bernard Mundi and others. Quarter heads, educated elites and some interpreters were also interviewed.

The secondary sources consulted were published and unpublished works. The published works were books, journals, and articles while some unpublished books such as dissertations and thesis were also consulted. The Research Centres and Libraries adequately exploited were those of the ANICHRA, International Relations Institute and the library of Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde.

Internet sources were also useful for the research. The above sources of information were used to analyse the work following the qualitative and quantitative approach methodology. However, some difficulties were encountered in the course of carrying this study (research).

## **Scope and Delimitation**

The time frame of this study stretches from 1888 – 1961; covering a period of 73 years. The year 1888 was chosen because it was a year that marked the effective penetration and occupation of the interior of Africa. By 1888, Zingtraff had arrived Moghamo. It should be recalled that Moghamo was the entrance way into the Grassfields of Cameroon by the Germans. All of Africa except Ethiopia was under colonial rule. On the other hand, the year

1961 is very significant in this study because some African countries were already obtained independent and British Southern Cameroons under which this study is carried had independence in 1961. The year 1961 was the year the United Nations Organisation organized a Plebiscite in the British Southern Cameroons and the people of Southern Cameroons voted in favour of Reunification with the Republic of Cameroon.

### **Problems Encountered.**

In the course of doing this study, a number of problems were encountered. The main difficulties were in the field of research. It was very difficult to obtain information in the D.O's office of Batibo due to the insurgency posed by the Anglophone Crisis. In some areas, I was seen as a spy of the government by the separatist fighters. Again, still on Anglophone crisis, movement from one village to another was very difficult as this research was carried on during the period when the Northwest Regional Governor issued an order banning the circulation of motor bikes in the sub division. In palaces, information could not be given anyhow due to the fact that they considered it as secret of royalties and finally, another problem was that in the whole of Moghamo, it was difficult to see people who lived during this period 1888, especially findings about the background of the study that involved pre-colonial period.

However, some solutions were found to resolve the above problems or challenges. For the D.O's office in Batibo, an agent working in the office was used to collect data and photocopy to be used for analysis for this work. For the traditional rulers who were reluctant to give information of their palaces more Fons were interviewed and members of the royal families called the *Titas'* were also interviewed. To solve the problem of age which limited this research, notables who were descendant of chiefs were a solution to the problem. In transportation, villages could only be accessed on traditional market days because vehicles went there only on weekly traditional market days since motor bike circulation was banned in the area. For the informant who saw me as a spy of Anglophone Crisis, they were bypassed to interview more who were willing.

Despite of the challenging nature of the research, all went well as this scientific piece of work was finally realised due to the determination and seriousness put in place by the researcher. Thanks to the cooperation of some of the informant.

## Significance of the Study

- 1) **Importance to the Government of Cameroon:** One of the utmost responsibilities of the Cameroon government is to maintain unity in diversities (government policy) given the multiplicity of cultures. And this could only be done by curbing the inimical powers often associated with chieftaincy and often frowned upon by those who detest it through laws. The Cameroon government in doing so, chieftaincy functions have been clearly defined by the state as per the decree of 1977,<sup>63</sup> which could be used effectively in the delivery of customary and common laws in the country which would undergone a long way to maintain the decentralisation process and unity in diversities.

Still to the government of Cameroon, this work will help in the decentralisation process and the newly introduction of the house of chiefs in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon.

- 2) **To Researchers:** This work or study is vital to other researcher because it has bridged the gap between the existing literatures in the subject matter and also opened a further debate and research for future researchers' inMoghamo. Adding something in the main stream of scientific work.
- 3) **To the Moghamoans:** This piece of work has helped the Moghamo in the following ways; first to know the colonial history of Moghamo; how the people were governed during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, secondly, to create awareness to the chiefs of Moghamo about their functions as local governors or auxiliaries to the administration. Thirdly, to provide solutions to some chieftaincy problems in the Moghamo clan that was created as a result of colonial rule and fourthly, to make Moghamosubjects know about the history of Moghamo clan. Again, this work is important to the Moghamo man in the sense that, it analysedthe different opinions held by many writers on the History of the origin of Moghamo, and took a stance by clarifying that Moghamo originated among the Widikum tribes and Tadkon which is claimed by many as the origin of Moghamo was just a meeting point. Likewise, a market.

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<sup>63</sup>Decree No. 77/245 of 15<sup>th</sup> July 1977 Organising the Chiefdoms of Cameroon.

**Organisation of the Work.**

This work has been divided into four chapters, excluding the general introduction, general conclusion and recommendations. Each chapter starts with an introduction and ends with a conclusion.

Chapter one presents the Geographical and Historical Background of the study area.

Chapter two treats the roles of Chieftaincy and Local Governance in Moghamo Clan under the German Colonial Administration 1888-1916

Chapter three dealt on the roles and chieftaincy reforms in Local Governance under the British Colonial Administration 1922 - 1961

Chapter Four, Examines the challenges and problems faced by chieftaincy in local governance during the colonial rule.

## CHAPTER ONE

### GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT OF MOGHAMO AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter covered the geographical location of Moghamo clan in Momo Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. It also exploits the history of migration and settlement of some of the Widikum tribe at Tadkon since 1800 and also throws more light on how Moghamo disintegrated from Tadkon to formed several chiefdoms that made up the autonomous chiefdoms of Moghamo.<sup>64</sup> In continuation of the chapter, chieftaincy institutions in the Moghamo clan are presented followed by an examination of the socio-political and economic institutions of Moghamo clan before the arrival of the Whiteman.

The objective of this chapter is therefore to give the reader an idea of the origin and history of Moghamo and show that the institution of chieftaincy existed before the coming of the colonialists and the chiefs were at the head of their kingdoms.

#### 1.2 Geographical Setting

Here we are going to examine the location of Moghamo clan, Relief and Hydrology, climate and soils and vegetation, flora and fauna

##### 1.2.1 Moghamo the Land, Language and People.

Moghamo lies between the latitudes 4° 95 and 5° 45 North and longitudes 10° 10 and 10° 30 East.<sup>65</sup> Moghamo clan is located in the South West area of the Bamenda Grassfields, lies in the vegetation zone; the forest in the south and the savannah in the north.<sup>66</sup> Found principally in the present day Momo Division in the North West Region. Along the Trunk A road leading from Mamfe in Manyu Division to Bamenda in between Widikum and Bali towns. The land surface is about 415.9km squares and has a projected population of about 200.000 inhabitants.<sup>67</sup>

The said area under which this study is carried was first occupied by the Germans under the Bali German Station and thereafter by the British under the Bamenda Divisions during the

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<sup>64</sup> V.G Fanso., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges from Prehistoric times to the twenty-first century*. (Team Work Press, Bamkika'ay-Kumbo: 2017), 55.

<sup>65</sup> Batibo. C., "Development Plan PNDP", (Batibo Council May 2012), p.8

<sup>66</sup> The term Grassfields was first coined by the Germans to describe the Bamenda highlands which was geographically different from the forest coastal region (Fowler and Zeitlyn)

<sup>67</sup> Batibo. C., "Development Plan PNDP", (Batibo Council May 2012), 10

mandate to the trusteeship era in the British Southern Cameroons.<sup>68</sup> Moghamo in its original form means “I have said that, I say or I am saying that”.<sup>69</sup> Moghamo as a language is a narrow Grassfields Bantu Language spoken by about 200.000 people in Batibo Sub division, Momo Division of the North West Region of Cameroon. Moghamo speakers are also found in the villages of Ngyen-Mbo in Mbengwi Subdivision, Momo Division, in some villages of Santa Subdivision (Baforchu, Baba II and Mbe) in Mezam and in Banjah villages also in the Mezam Division of the North West Region.<sup>70</sup> In Batibo Subdivision, two groups – the Mbororos and Njen speak Moghamo not as a mother tongue. It is a dialect of the language Meta and categorised to the Niger-Congo languages. Moghamo as a language has four different speech forms. These are Ahgwi (Batibo), Iyirikum, Ashong and Kugwe. These four speeches forms have a significant variation. For example, Kugwe people have a significant variation in the Moghamo Language, whom is alleged had some migrational influence from Njie.<sup>71</sup>

Moghamo as a people who had their patriarch as Tembeka and his wife Akumaka who first settled at the legendary Tadkon a spot 2km on the south of present day of Batibo sub divisional headquarters.<sup>72</sup> As already mentioned above, the earlier ancestors are linked to some earlier Bantu immigrants.<sup>73</sup> The Moghamoans in Batibo Subdivision are divided into more than 22 autonomous Fondoms but administratively, 22 Fondoms. One of the Fondoms; Ashong Fondom has three legalised and recognised third class chiefdoms.<sup>74</sup> These are the Kon that originated from Tadkon, Mbororos who came from Banyu and Njen that originated from Bamendankwe in Mezam Division. Other Fondoms have recognised but not legalised chiefdoms.<sup>75</sup>

Below are the present maps of Republic of Cameroon, North West Region and Momo Division showing the exact geographical location of Moghamo clan.

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<sup>68</sup>The British Government officially assumed office in Bamenda in January 1916. The area became known as the Bamenda Division and its first Divisional Officer was Podevin (cf. Nyamndi 1988, p.132)

<sup>69</sup>M Njeck., *Moghamo Orthography Guide; the Moghamo Language Committee (MOLCOM)*”. (Batibo 2008),3-4

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* p.5

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* p.6

<sup>72</sup>Batibo. C., *An Eye View.* ( Batibo Council, May: 2008), p.2.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* p.3

<sup>74</sup>Interview with; ForKum III, Mbafor III, Tebeck Thomas all Fons of Moghamo. 2017 to 2021.

<sup>75</sup>V. G., Fanso. *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges, From Prehistoric Times to the Twenty-First Century.* (Revised and updated combined edition) (Team Work Press, Bamkika’ay-Kumbo: 2017), p.54.

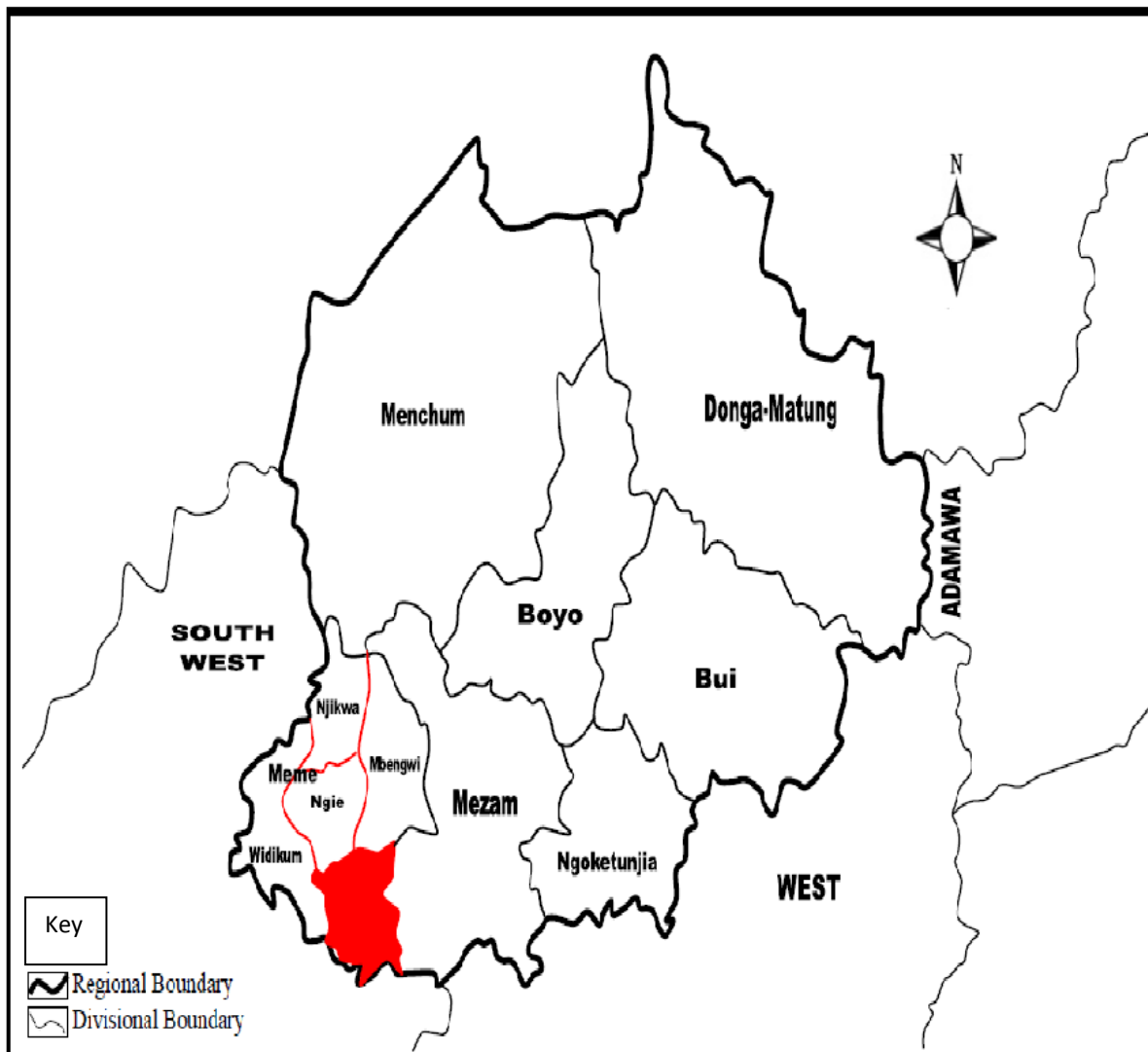


**Map 1: Location of Moghamo Clan in the Republic of Cameroon**



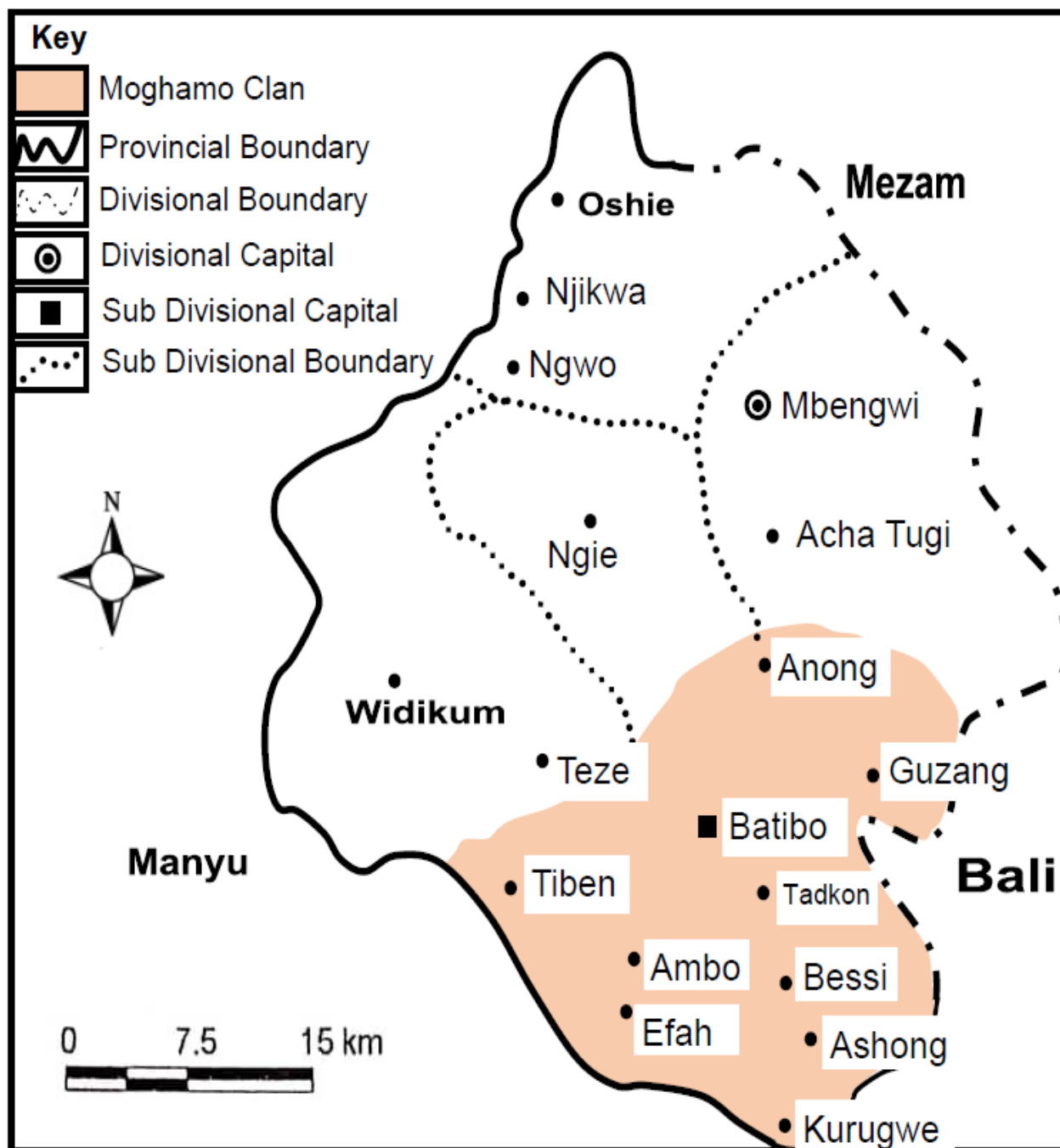
Source: MINPLAT: National Institute of Cartography. Yaounde, August 2021

**Map 2: Location of Moghamo clan in the North West Region**



Source: MINPLAT: National Institute of Cartography. Yaounde, August 2021

Map 3: Location of Moghamo Clan in Momo Division



Source: MINPLAT; National Institute of Cartography. Yaounde, August 2021

### 1.2.2 Relief and Hydrology

The area is characterised by a few gentle slopes or hills while most of the other areas are made up of plains.<sup>76</sup> The hills here are mostly dome-sloped. The slopes aided the transportation of eroded materials to the lowland. The level land in plains is an advantage to

<sup>76</sup>Batibo. C., "Development Plan PNDP". (Batibo Council: May 2012) ,15

cultivation since planting is better done on level lands than on sloppy areas. The area has many highlands but the major outstanding ones are; the Anong-Mbengok chain mountains, the Ashong hills and Numben hills. The Anong Mountain is the 2<sup>nd</sup> mountain in Cameroon after Mount Fako where it is used for Mountain Race annually by the Batibo Council.<sup>77</sup> The relief of Moghamo also harnessed geographical features such as caves and water fall with two outstanding ones such as the Wumungoh waterfall in Guzang and the Tugfoh fall in Anong village. Caves such as Eteh in Guzang and the historic cave of Anong village (Ikob Bad) which have seventy-two chambers and thirteen streams that flow within the cave.<sup>78</sup> Oral sources said it was used as a refuge area to hide war during the wartimes in Cameroon.

The Batibo Municipality (Moghamo) is also a water catchment area and therefore has many streams and rivers which served as a water supply source in the area. The volume of water in this area increases during the rainy season. The mountain and highlands served as watersheds areas where many rivers take their rise and flow to the lowlands. Despite of all these, the water table is very deep and as a result most streams completely dry up during the dry season. The main river in this area is River Momo<sup>79</sup> from which Momo Division got its name. Other smaller rivers exist in the land such as the Tip tip river, Wuyala river etc.

### **1.2.3 Climate and Soil**

The region falls within the equatorial climatic zone. It has two seasons; rainy and dry seasons. The rainy season covers from March to mid-November and the dry season from mid-November to mid-March. The region is characterised by varying attitudes. It has two climate zone corresponding to the relief, the equatorial climate and savannah climate zones. In the low plateau, temperatures are high throughout the year with a monthly average temperature of 20<sup>0</sup>C and an annual range of 4.6<sup>0</sup>C (Batibo station). The average annual rainfall of the zone stands at 2000mm. this offer favourable climatic condition for growth of a wide range of plants like perennial and annual crops.

The different soils found here include the red soil, the black soil (loam) and the laterite soils. The dominant soil here is the red soil. The black soil which is also found in great quantities enhances the growth of crops since it is very fertile.

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<sup>77</sup>Anong Development Association. "The Minutes of Anong Development Association". (Anong Batibo, February 2010)

<sup>78</sup>Ikob Bad 'is a cave found in the North West of Moghamo with about 72 Chambers and 13 streams. It was used as refuge centre by the people of Moghamo during the war times in Caameroon. That is during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World wars.

<sup>79</sup> River Momo flows from North West of Moghamo where its rise to the South of Moghamo and merged with the Manyu River. Momo is actually the river which Momo Division got its name.

### 1.2.4 Flora, Vegetation and Fauna

Vegetation in the Moghamo municipality is mostly savannah. The vegetation includes Eucalyptus trees, Palm trees; Raffia palms (Fichock<sup>80</sup>) and a variety of fruit trees like kola nuts, monkey kola, palm trees etc. The Moghamo clan area is generally described as tropical grass kinds or humid savannah with grass and shrubs.

There is wild Fauna and domestic Fauna. The animals found in the forest here are monkey, Antelopes, Bush dogs, Bush cats, snakes and domestic fauna such as; sheep, goats, dogs, cats, poultry (local and improved breeds), a few guinea pigs, rabbits, ducks and some wild hunted birds like Swallow, hawks and Weaver birds.<sup>81</sup> In Moghamo, some of these are used for sacrificial purposes as gifts and during social gatherings. Sometimes they are sold and the proceeds are used for many different purposes like paying of school fees and buying of household equipment.

### 1.3. Historical Background: Origin of Chieftaincy in Moghamo and the Presentation of its Institutions

#### 1.3.1 Origin, Migration and Settlement of the Moghamo People

There have been a lot of controversies on the history of the origin of Moghamo people. This is so because, many writers hold different opinions. According to Prince Mbah Hansel Tita in his paper addressing the Batibo Student Association in 1978, which was later developed and published by the Batibo council in an article titled “A Bird Eye View”<sup>82</sup> in 2008, the origin of the people of Moghamo centres principally in Tadkon.<sup>83</sup> According to him, it was at Tadkon that the mythical ancestors of the village dynasties Mbeka emerged from the earth. Mbeka then transformed first into a river guardian spirit (*Animi*) and then into a man.<sup>84</sup> His descendants founded the tribes among which Moghamo claimed the Tادkon origin. Mbeka’s

<sup>80</sup>Fichok’ is a palm wine formerly called Batibo Brasseries. It is one of the main economic activities of the people of moghamo.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with; Zacheus Mbah of Batibo, Ndam Ernest of Anong, Tengem Victor, Anong on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

<sup>82</sup>Batibo. C., “*A Bird Eye View*”. (Batibo Council, Batibo: 2008),3

<sup>83</sup>Tadkon was a border slave-market which served the exchange interest of the densely-settled neighbourhood of the Widikum tribes. Oral sources said the market was so significant in history because of a group of certain people with long tails who used to sale in the market. They were however, the first to arrive the market and the last to leave because of this condition. Holes were dug in the market for their tails to be hidden. Oral sources added by saying at a given moment, the local Tadkon market population discovered these people had long tails. And as such, to send them away, palm oil was dropped when into the holes which attracted ants. One day, this people came early enough as it used to be and their tails were harboured in their normal holes. They could not resist the black ants and as such had to escape in broad daylight with their long tails. This is just one of the characteristics of the local Tadkon market

<sup>84</sup> Batibo. C., “*A Bird Eye View*”. (Batibo Council, Batibo: 2008),4

shrine is maintained at Ahgwi (Batibo). Mbah Hansel Tita went further to depict the fact that it is false to say Moghamo originate from Widikum. That Moghamo people never originated from Widikum as it is commonly held by many, especially people from Widikum. He explained the concept that Moghamo owes origin to Widikum is erroneous, dating as far back 1911 around the German colonial period, when one Mr Kisob Johanness of Baforchu was serving in the German colonial administration as an interpreter.<sup>85</sup> Since Baforchu people, Metta and Moghamo clan had primarily a common dialect, it is therefore obvious that they all originated from Widikum. Right from that time, it became properly documented that all these clans originated from Widikum. Although the idea is misleading, many writers had taken the pains to nullify this anomaly. Let it remain indelible in our minds that Moghamo people did not originate from Widikum as propelled by many writers and local population. Rather, Tewire and Tikum grandsons of Tembeka settled in Widikum and later Baforchu and Ngyen-mbo sprang from there at a place called Eguwum above Bamben near Numben village.

Other writers like V.G Fanso<sup>86</sup>, Chilver E.M, and Kabbery P.M<sup>87</sup>, P.N Nkwi and Warnier J.Pheld the opinion that Moghamo clan was among the tribes that originated from Widikum which parted from the waves of the Bantu migration and settled at Tadkon<sup>88</sup>. According to V.G Fanso, thefiction that the two personalities uncovered a stone in Tigheben and exposed themselves to light is a conception that can certainly not be realistic because it is inconsistent with the theory of the evolution of man. By nature, all human beings are born with the first being Adam and Eve made by God.<sup>89</sup>It is rather more portable to consider them as having paired up and departed from the wave of Bantu emigration and settled there. So, it would be wise to have said that Moghamo originated among the Widikum tribes who departed from the waves of Bantu emigration and settled at Tadkon.

From the above points of view, we can take a stand from the Socio-Anthropological and natural points not only historical points of view that is by comparing the tradition of Moghamo to that of neighbouring clans like Meta, Ngembas and Upper Ngembas like

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<sup>85</sup> The Mr. Kisob Johanness was an interpreter during the German Colonial Administration in Cameroon around 1911. He was a man from Baforchu. The Barfochu people owed their origin from Widikum and Widikum owed theirs to Tadkon. And as such, since the Baforchu speaks the same language with the Meta and Moghamo people, he therefore thought that they all originated from Widikum. Since from that time, it had been documented and these tribes were called the Wwidikum whereas they are the Tadkon tribes.

<sup>86</sup> V.G Fanso., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges, From Prehistoric Times to the Twenty-First Century*. (Revised and updated combined edition) (Team Work Press, Bamkika'ay-Kumbo, 2017)

<sup>87</sup> Chilver E.M, and Kabbery P.M., "*Traditional Bamenda and the Precolonial History and Ethnography of the Bamenda Grassfields*". Vol. 1, (Buea Government Press: 1967),13

<sup>88</sup> V.G Fanso; *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges, From Prehistoric Times to the Twenty-First Century*. p.24

<sup>89</sup> Holy Bible. *Authorised King James Version: Genesis 1:26*. (Zondervan Grand Rapids: Michigan, USA), 2

Barforchu, Baba II, Banjah and Mbe.<sup>90</sup>Cultural wise, we shared the same culture with them and again, looking at the languages of these tribes who claimed origin from the Widikum tribes to that of Moghamo, there is only a slight difference. For example, the Baforchu and Santa Mbe people in Santa Subdivision, Banjah people in Mezam Division and Meta people in Momo Division, speak the same language with the Moghamo people. There are dialectical forms which the root sound is “-m-”, and there are many local variations of all the above mentioned Widikum clans. Examples; Mogamo, Moghamo, Mogamago, Moganemo, Menemo, Menyemo, Mongemba, And Mogimba all meant the same thing. Meaning “I say”.<sup>91</sup>

Again, Socio-culturally, comparing the cultural aspects even up to Calabar, we have seen that the Moghamo man share some aspects of culture, that is custom and tradition with them. The Yam Festival in Calabar was also being performed in Moghamo, names such as; Nwachuku, Nwaku, Nwati, Ngwan and Nwachan can also be found in Calabar and the same names are found in Moghamo.

Evidently, we can therefore say that considering the socio- anthropological, cultural, natural and not only historical points of view, we can conclude that, Moghamo originated from the Widikum tribes and parted from the waves of the Bantu emigration and settled at Tadkon. Tadkon was a bordered-slave market which served the exchange interest of the densely migrated population of the Widikum tribes. It was a point of convergence and exchange.<sup>92</sup> Oral sources say the market was so significant in history because of a group of certain people with long tails who used to stay and trade in the market.<sup>93</sup>They were however the first to arrive the market and the last to leave because of their condition. So one can say that Tad was a rallying market point not a place of the origin of Moghamo clan as mentioned above by some people. So, because of the influence and pressure at Tadkon as a result of migration, the population outnumbered the place. So, they had to disperse in search of greener pastures.<sup>94</sup> This was how the Moghamo clan was formed from Tadkon. It further holds that the great grandparents at Tadkon had long tails and always sat on one spot during the market session. One day, when the market was in full session, a fight erupted and the market disintegrated

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with Mr. Tanjoh Federick, 56years, Former Mayor Batibo Councils, Yaounde Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> 2021, Agwejwng Jerome a teacher from Enen on the 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2021.

<sup>91</sup> NAB. File No 1027, Vol I “Intelligence Report on the Moghamo and Ngemba Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe in the Bamenda Division. By Croasdale, A.D.O, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1933.

<sup>92</sup> E.M. Chilver., and P.M Kabbery., *Traditional Bamenda and the Precolonial History and Ethnography of the Bamenda Grassfields*. Vol. 1, (Buea Government Press. 1967),13

<sup>93</sup> Interview with Ayang John, 90 years, Spokeman to the Fon on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2010, Agwejang Jerome, 62years, Former Head Master, Yaounde Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> 2021.

<sup>94</sup> E.M, Chilver and P.M Kabbery., *Traditional Bamenda and the Precolonial History and Ethnography of the Bamenda Grassfields*. (Vol. 1, Buea Government Press. 1967), 14.

into many factions who struggled to find their way out of the place. Thus, was when the people discovered that they were certain group of people with long tails, they began running away from Tad market. This was how Moghamo clan dispersed from Tadkon.<sup>95</sup>

Some of the Widikum Fondoms in the Grassfields who passed through Tadkon are Meta, Ngemba and Upper Ngemba, Ngie, Essimbi and Beba-Befang found today in Momo Division and Mezam Division of the North West region respectively.<sup>96</sup> The people are often frequently referred to as the Widikum people because Widikum on the Momo-Manyu border was the point of their migration into the Grasslands.

More generally, Moghamo traced their cradle to Tadkon near Agwi about three kilometres south of Batibo. The first man who originated from Tadkon as a son of Mbeka was Tembeka. He settled in Tigheben and his spouse had the name Tekomoka. Tigheben is about one and a quarter kilometres from Tad markets based in Batibo and formed part of the Tad quarter in Batibo. The paternity of Tembeka is unquestionable because he had a host of children which formed the Moghamo Fondoms made up of more than 30 autonomous Fondoms but 22 Fondoms administratively for easy administration. Guided by Moghamo tradition of always that one child becomes leader to others on the death of a father, Njei Tegha succeeded Tembeka on his death. It is unknown whether Njei Tegha was the most elderly of the children of Tembeka or not, but tradition reveals that a father had and has the prerogative of nominating any child of his taste to succeed him. Propelled by some circumstances, Njei Tegha resolved to erect his quarter in Gowi, a quarter in Batibo centre (Ahgwi) while evacuating his father's premises in Tigheben.<sup>97</sup>

One of the children of Tembeka headed upwards to Ashong village and settled. He was Njodang. Another called Gwachere went North West wards to Bengang and settled with his brother Tendong who later moved to Anong village and settled. Damuk, another one of the sons from Tadkon went southwest wards and had twins called Tewire and Tikum. The twins settled in Widikum and the name "Widikum" originated from Tewire and Tikum. Tewire had several children and some moved North West wards and composed the Numben and Mbengock villages. Then another called Anofei settled in Guwu and had children who later constituted Ambo, Enyoh, and Efah and Kulabei villages. Guwu is part of Ambo village today.

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>96</sup> NAB. File No 1027, Vol I "Intelligence Report on the Moghamo and Ngemba Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe in the Bamenda Division. By Croasdale, A.D.O, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1933.

<sup>97</sup> Batibo. C., "A Bird Eye View" (Batibo Council, Batibo, 2008), p.4



Njeiagha who was an able successor of Tembeka on his death had to choose a successor from his manifold children to sensitive position of leadership. He was called Njeitifuh who as well decided to quit his Father's compound and found his own settlement in the presents Fondom of the Batibo former palace adjacent the Batibo community hall. And Njeitituh became the first recognised beginner of the Batibo Royal Household.<sup>98</sup>

However, we have reliably gathered that animosity was often nursed against the successor and his life threatened.<sup>99</sup> Especially after the announcement following his father's death. Those deeply involved in this plight were the brothers of the nominated successor. Consequently, the successor had to change site while retaining the will of the late father appointing him leader. This is the available explanation of this movement and others that led to the formation of Moghamoan villages. This simple phenomenon for the hatred of the successor by the brothers is still prevalent today.<sup>100</sup> What is obvious is that while the successor vacated the father's house for safety, one of the sons probably settled and apparently governed the rest and, on these bases, became the leader of the quarter but remains subject to the successor who lived apart.<sup>101</sup> The continuation for the foundation of other Moghamo villages, followed suit; another prominent brother of Njeitifuh was Tetuh Njei who settled in Mbounjei village; Founder of Mbounjei village. The next was Awum Njei who settled and founded Bessi village. Two persons settled in Guzang village. They were Njonghokon, a son to Njei Tagha and Munji Tebid a son to Tembeka. It is worthwhile to note here that Munjei Tebid was the brother of Njei Tagha.

It was from Mbounjei that the villages of Ngyen-Muwah, Nyenjei, Oshum sprang as time over took events. Enwen, Angie and Tiben villages owed their origin to the Fumben people. The first settler in Kuruku village was a junior brother to the one who settled in Angie.<sup>102</sup> They both emerged from Fumben. The Kugwe people came from a spot called "Kud" on the outskirts of Momo Division.<sup>103</sup> The first settler in Kud was one of the sons of Tembeka who went to that end but decided to retreat because conditions were evidently unfavourable.

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* p.3

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* p.4

<sup>100</sup> The hatred for the successor in Moghamo usually arose an atmosphere of insecurity among his brothers. Even after which the successor had quit his father's house in favour of a new site, some of the brothers could still claimed chieftaincy titles in the previous site or quarter where they settled. This fact, still count in Moghamo today.

<sup>101</sup> V.G. Fanso., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges from Prehistoric times to the twenty-first century.* (Team Work Press, Bamkika'ay-Kumbo, 2017).

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Agewjang Humphrey, Nen, on 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021, Councillor Mbah Isaac, Kuruku village, 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

Though it all point to the definite fact that the fore-fathers (founders) of Kuruku, Enwen, Angie and Tiben came from Fumbe is an affirmation but this does not expose the fact that they are totally unconnected to the common origin of Tembeka. The settlement in Kud as referred to above must have produced a group that emigrated towards Fumbe and was after sometime compelled to retreat. They probably returned to settled in Kuruku and Angie. The cultural linguistic diversity between the Kuruku and Angie people on the one hand and the Fumbe people on the other hand, best elucidates this fact.<sup>104</sup>

Bessom another village in Moghamo clan are descendants of Tewire grandson to Tembeka. Although Tikum and Tewire settled in Widikum, some of their children moved upwards. As for Ewai village, the first person who settled there was an offspring of Njei Tagha successor of Tembeka.

From the above analysis, it is evident that there were more than twenty-two principal settlements that sprang from the descendants of Tembeka and Njeiagha and migrated to form the autonomous Fondoms that constitute the Moghamo clan. Traditionally, they are more than 22 Autonomous Fondoms in Moghamo but for ease administration, they are divided into twenty-two. The 22 chiefdoms came as a result of the simple fact that Mba I and later Mba II of Ahgwi village relationship with the Fon of Bali, that is Fonyonga II and later Galiga II had some influence to this note.<sup>105</sup> Fon Mbah, I had rendered some autonomous chiefdoms in Moghamo to be his vassals. For example, Mbengan, one of the autonomous Fandom from Tadkon with its Fon gazetted on the magazine of the British Southern Cameroons in the 1930s, today is under the Fandom of Ahgwi<sup>106</sup>. Other polities in Moghamo like; Nen, Ewoh, kuruwan and Khe'en are under Ahgwi village today. Oral sources say he wanted his position in Moghamo to be like that of Fonyonga II of Bali.<sup>107</sup>

### **1.3.2 Origin of Chieftaincy in Moghamo**

As already mentioned above about how various polities sprang up from Tadkon, migrated and settled where there are today, it is certain that chieftaincy did not began at Tadkon. It was within the migration and settlement of the peopling of Moghamo that they began to elect their leaders. The first settlers themselves were not leaders but they made one of their sons who were to be next of kin or successor to be a leader over the people. This one was called,

<sup>104</sup>Batibo. C., "A Bird Eye View". (Batibo Council, May 2008) p.5

<sup>105</sup>Interview with Mr. Agwejang Humphrey, Teacher, 70 years. Yaounde,

<sup>106</sup>NAB. File No 1027, Vol I "Intelligence Report on the Moghamo and Ngemba Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe in the Bamenda Division". By Croasdale, A.D.O, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1933

<sup>107</sup>Interview with Mr. Agwejang Humphrey, Teacher, 70 years. Yaounde,

*Attaah*. This was the origin of chieftaincy in Moghamo. Example, Njeiagha one of the sons of Tembeka who succeeded his father, most of whom his sons founded most of the polities in Moghamo was not himself a Fon. It was one of his sons who was his successor by name Njeitifuh who as well decided to quit his Father's compound and found his own settlement in the presents Fondom of the Batibo former palace adjacent the Batibo community hall. From where Njeitituh became the first recognised beginner of the Batibo Royal Household<sup>108</sup>. Another example was in another polity North Westward of Moghamo called Anong. The beginner or founder of this polity Tendong the Great was never a Fon.<sup>109</sup> He nominated one of his sons, to be precised, the second son by name Shoh as the leader. Oral source says the first son Akah refused to be the Fon and instead demanded the spear of the Great warrior which was given to him.<sup>110</sup> This spear still in keeping today signified the number of territories the warrior conquered. In so doing, Akaah owned most of the lands in Anong Village. This was the origin of chieftaincy in Moghamo.

### **1.3.3 Presentation of Chieftainy Institutions of the Moghamo**

Apart from traditional rulers, other traditional authorities existed in Moghamo clan. They were often used as assistance to the Chiefs in matters of local administration. Among them were; *Mukums* and *bahs*, *Nkweti*, *Ngwes* and *Nchindas*, *Mafors*, Quarter Heads, Traditional Councils and Secret Societies.

#### **Chiefs or *Attaah***

The village head called '*Attaah*'<sup>111</sup> was both a human being and a phenomenon.<sup>112</sup> Once enthroned, he is also sanctioned by God and acts as a demi-god who cannot be touched by the village. He is the highest authority at the head of the village and the custodian of tradition and land of the village independent of other villages. No one was allowed to shake hands with the chief; he was greeted in a special way by clapping of hands by all human beings. Again, in Moghamo, it is the chief that stops all the evils that may come to his village. He is the father to everyone in the village particularly all those who have lost all their parents. He inherits homes that are destroyed of its inhabitants. He is the epitome of peace in Moghamo. Chiefs do not die in Moghamo; they are said to be missing or travelled to the great *tad* beyond where

<sup>108</sup>H.M. Tita., "*Minutes Addressing the Batibo Students Association*". (Batibo: 1989)

<sup>109</sup>Interview with HRH, the Fon of Anong, Agwejang Moses 75 years, a Fon, Anong Batibo, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

<sup>110</sup> B. N.Awazi., Oral Generational Source transferred by the father John Ayang Nwachan to the children. Anong 2006-2013.

<sup>111</sup>"*Attaah*" means Chief of village head in Moghamo

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Tenoh Lawrence, 70 years Tiben, Mbah Vincent, 70 years Oshum, Timah Silas 58 years Prince; oral sources passed to him by the father, 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

they transpired. Before a Fon goes on a journey (dies), he usually makes a will and if there is no agitation from the brothers; in his absence, the proposed Fon is automatically enthroned by the ‘*Mukums*’.<sup>113</sup> People were not allowed to mourn the Fon or see the corpse except special institutions like the traditional juju known as *nebseg*, *munang* and *kwifon*. These institutions and some family members do the burial. And after the burial, the Fon is declared missing. During this period usually a period of about two weeks, no farming takes place in the village. *Fons* were the first actors that were used in local governance long before the arrival of the Whiteman in Africa. Below are some great chiefs in the History of Moghamo.

**Plate 1: Some of the Moghamo Fons that governed During the Colonial Period**



Source: Photo Archives Buea. R.S: 641721. August, 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021.

From left; Fon Timah Jacob Awu II of Anong and to the right; Fon Richardson Forkum II of Bessi

**Mukum *sambe* or Kingsmen**

Are a very important set of actors in Moghamo clan immediately after the chiefs were the *mukum sambe* (kingsmen). *Mukum* is a title that is given to each member of the seven notables who were believed to be the founder of the village.<sup>114</sup> In all the villages of Moghamo, they are seven mukums although the Fon could decide to make some other people to be mukum,

<sup>113</sup> *Mukums* are the kingmakers in Moghamo

<sup>114</sup> Interview with HRH, the Fon of Tiben, Atud Bernard, chief 78 years. Tiben Batibo. June, 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

their titles did not carry the same weight and respect as *the mukum sambe*. They were also assistance to the chiefs in matters of the local administration. They are found in some particular quarters not all in Moghamo villages. They are different from quarter heads but in most cases, some are quarter heads. They are in charge of enthroning and dethroning the chiefs in case he acts contrary to his position. They equally have some powers reserved to them in the village, as they can give some special announcements and take important decision concerning the village. As their primordial function, they acted as advisers to the chiefs. During the colonial administration, they were diplomats and messengers in local governance. This could be denoted as they transmitted information from chiefdoms to chiefdoms.

### ***Nkweti, Nchindas, Ngwes, and Mafors***

*Nkweti*. In Moghamo, *nkweti* is the senior brother of the Fon. In most cases, he is called *Tita*. He is the main adviser to the Fon and acted in the absence of the Fon as an adviser. One of his functions was that he preserved the palace stick (*fibam ngaku*). He is the main adviser to the Fon of Moghamo and in most cases, come from the royal family.

***Ngwes and Nchindas***. These people stay in the palace. They were the Fon's bodyguards and like *nkwifon*, they implemented punishments, arrested situations that could bring disorder. They were the first to appear in a war front, acted as the police because they were the one who arrested criminals and brought to the palace.

*Mafors*. In Moghamo clan, there was a special respect for the *Mafor*. That is the mothers of the chief and his wives. Queen mothers are important part of African tradition. Even though their influence in local governance today is declining, during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, Africa was organised around the authority of Chiefs, Kings and Queen mothers. They were very important political figures who commanded respect prior to the colonial era. In some instances, they were even considered to be autonomous ruler but this factor had diminished overtime with the arrival of the Whiteman. In Moghamo clan, Queen Mothers are consulted when the chief is considered missing or travelled. They also give advice at the enthronement of a new chief and acted as advisers to the newly nominated chief. Another peculiar function of the Queen Mothers in Moghamo clan was that they were involved in preparing special dishes called "*Ifut*" (Yam festival) during traditional festivals. This dish was commonly known as pounded yams and red oil which was being done in a bowl and in that bowl, every villager was fed. Some *Mafors* who lived during the British period in Anong Village of

Moghamo. I chose the Mafors of Anong Palace because of the closed relations that existed between Fonyonga II and Fon Timah Bamtie of Anong.

**Plates 2: Mafors of the Anong Palace who lived During the British Period.**



Source: Photograph taken by the HRH, Fon Mbah Agwejang Moses in 2017

From the left to the right standing; Ebod Abit Njei, Ebod Lydia Ndum and Ebod Fon Engwari.

From the left to the right sitting; Ebod Esoh and Ebod Paa.

### Secret Societies

*Neubefut*, Found in the palace but it had different meeting days. It operated once a year for seven weeks. Each village had its own day of the week set aside for its operation called *aneifu*. This day was observed throughout the seven weeks of its operation. Nobody went to the farm, talks were not allowed and even the church bells were not rang. On this day, if somebody was seen farming, he was given a fine. Some victims were killed on their farm or made dump, deaf or the member of neubefut throw some dirt diseases on them. The role of these neubefut was to protect the fertility of the soil and protect crops on the farm so that witches and wizards from other palaces should not come and destroyed the land or crops. The neubefut was made up of strong elder men, mostly head of the families and quarter heads and some powerful youth of the village who were capable of fighting, singing and dancing. They were members who know and kept all the secrets of the village.<sup>115</sup> Their meeting period differed from village to village. In Ahgwei village, it started from January to February in order to prepare the land for planting. In Anong village it is in the month of August. This was

<sup>115</sup>Interview with HRH, the Fon of Anong, Agwejang Moses 75 years, a Fon, Anong Batibo, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

because, it was believed that this secret society brought fertility to the land and protected it from wicked foreign spirits.

***Kwifon.*** The *kwifon* was made up of seven notables and quarter heads. The Fon was also a member of *kwifon*. The *kwifon* rooted bad herbs that were planted by wicked villagers to endanger the life of other citizens. The *kwifon* could overthrow the Fon if he refused to solve a problem that was plaguing the village. It maintained peace and order. People were not allowed to see it and if somebody who was not supposed to see it saw it, such a person was cleansed with special herbs from the *kwifon*'s house. Another function that the *kwifon* performed was that it punished evil doers, attended funeral celebration of a Fon and those of its members.

### **Traditional Council and Quarter Council of Elders**

There are basically two traditional councils in the chieftaincies of Moghamo clan. These institutions are; the village councils of elders and the quarter councils.

#### **The Village Council of Elders.**

This was the highest institution that deliberated matters in local governance after the chiefs during the pre-colonial rule as already mentioned above. This association was made up of kinsmen (Mukums) and some aged people in the village. This institution had judicial powers in pre-colonial times.<sup>116</sup> It ruled the people and could even impeach the Fon or make him disappear with the help of the secret societies like the *Kwifon*. Such powers and acts by the village council of elders on a Fon were executed in Moghamo. The duties of this council include that of holding regular meetings to examine events in the village, educates the population, settle minor cases like marriage dispute, community labour, land disputes. The seat is in Ngaku (Palace). Acted as auxiliary to the administration of the chief, protected its citizens from foreign invasion and organises and collect finances (taxes) for all projects. During the pre-colonial, taxes were paid in the form of tributes.

#### **Quarter Council of Elders**

The quarter council of elders was answerable to the village council. They assisted the village council to transmit information from the village council of elders to the people in the quarters during the colonial era. And also carried information from subjects in the quarter to the

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<sup>116</sup>Interview with Muya Joseph, 75 years, Fon, on 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020. Fomna Richrd Ayong, 75 years, a Fon, Tegem Victor, 65 years, Mukum on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2021. The 'mukums' could curtailed the powers of the chief and dethroned him from the stool of chieftaincy if he was ruling contrary to the views of the community.

village council of elders. This therefore implied that members of this council were diplomats or messengers in the local administration during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. They acted as facilitator at the level of the quarter. It performed the following task; settled minor disputes, assisted the village council in tax collection to fund projects, supervised community labour and acted as a watch-dog to every quarter etc.

#### **1.4.Chieftaincy and Local Governance in Moghamo before the Coming of the Whiteman.**

Before the coming of the Whiteman as traders, explorers, missionaries and colonisers from the fifteen to the twentieth centuries, the territory that constituted modern Cameroon existed. What did not exist before colonisation as we now have them were defined and demarcated national boundaries clearly separating Cameroon from her neighbours. There was also no Cameroon government covering the national territory. But the ethnic groups or communities existed some like the Tadjon among which Moghamo clan is found already existed with already established culture, tradition and civilizations while others were still in the process of developing their own tradition.<sup>117</sup> It is but true that some of these ethnic communities were already settled where they are today and others were still shifting from place to place, escaping from raids or wars mounted against them by their aggressive neighbours, or looking for safety, productive and comfortable location.

Moghamo clan which stemmed from the Tadjon around the 15<sup>th</sup> century was already in order and civilisation. One thing is sure, that whether a particular community was only just beginning to form and to expand or was in the move or was already settled each group already had organised socio-political and economic institutions, some with strong centralised government, judicial and religious authority and others were organised in decentralised or centralised system.<sup>118</sup>

Our purpose here is to examine in a general perspective the socio-political and economic institution of the Moghamo clan before the arrival of the Whiteman in their land. That is Moghamo clan in the pre-colonial state. And more so to prove that chieftaincy was an institution that existed in full capacity before the arrival of the Europeans.

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<sup>117</sup> V. G Fanson., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges from Prehistoric times to the twenty-first century*. (Team Work Press, Bamkika'ay-Kumbo, 2017). P.46

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*.p.49



### 1.4.1 The Political Governance of Moghamo Before 1888

In the Pre-colonial era, that is the period prior to the coming of the Whiteman, Cameroon in general and Moghamo in particular had a sound political system. Moghamo clan a principal tribe of the Grassfields practiced purely a centralised political system in which there was a recognised ruler at the centre of every village, holding power and wielding supreme political authority as part of the status. Moghamo, a composite chieftaincy with more than twenty-two autonomous villages of twenty-two rulers of which one is responsible specifically to his own village or sphere of influence. The chiefs, who were at the head, were assisted by the traditional council made up of kingmakers followed by the Queen Mothers (Mafor) and secret societies; *kwifon*, *Nebseg*, *Munang*. The Fon who was at the head of every village in Moghamo was both a human being and a phenomenon and performed the following functions to make sure that order was maintain in the village. He was a sacred ruler, the overlord of the village custodian of the land. He presided over councils of the village and make final decisions in matters of wars and peace.<sup>119</sup> For example, the great beginner of the Anong village (a settlement found in the north west of Moghamo) Tendong the Great<sup>120</sup> is said to have angrily taken a decision after a deliberation that was made by the traditional council and waged a war against the Bali chambas (Nyonga) who were already invading the Moghamo land from the North West. Part of Ngyen-Muwah, a small village closer to Bali was already captured by the Bali. Oral sources say his decision involved mystical powers and witches which led to the defeat of the Bali. In pre-colonial Moghamo, it was the Fon who ratified appointment to all officers in the land and had the right to sanction individual from office. The welfare of chieftaincy depended on chiefs assisted by his co-heads. They were also like fathers to all subjects living in the village and not only to royal family.<sup>121</sup> Even though the chief was at the head of a village, in making final decisions in all matters affecting the chieftaincy, he was also responsible and accountable to his subjects. If he acted so as to threaten the welfare of the chieftaincy, he could be called to account as an individual. Both the secret societies, *Kwifon*, *Munang* and the kinsmen may fine him if he acted in a way contrary to the ideas of chieftaincy or to the interest of the chieftaincy<sup>122</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup>Interview with Pa Ayang John, 90 years, Former spokesman to the Fon, Anong June 11<sup>th</sup> 2010.

<sup>120</sup> Tendong the Great was the first beginner and the founder of the Anong Village. A settlement in the North West of Moghamo. He is said to have used mystical powers to chase the Bali invaders who were already advancing powerfully into his territory. At the end of the war, the Bali was defeated in a battle because of serious raids and their war amenities were seized by mystical wind initiated by Tendong the Great.

<sup>121</sup>Interview with Pa Ayang John, 90 years, Former spokesman to the Fon, Anong June 11<sup>th</sup> 2010.

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*

The Moghamo clan chiefs were assisted in the administration by two councils. The village council of notables known as the *Mukums* and the quarter councils of elders headed by the *Wereorbah*.<sup>123</sup> The primary duties of these institutions and counsellors who were also head of their lineages were to be near the chief, to advise him and to judge cases or pertinent matters. They together with the *shaky, titas*<sup>124</sup> *Mafor* and the regulatory societies like *Kwifon* and *nwerong* assisted the chief in pre-colonial Moghamo in making the laws of the clan. At the same time, all important palace officers were diplomats, administrators, guards in their lineages who helped to carry information from one chieftaincy to another.

The political and judicial control in some cases was in the hands of the traditional council that is the *Mukums*, *Kwifon* and aged grades to which political authority accrued as a consequence of the ages.

During the pre-colonial Moghamo chiefs received tribute paid to them by their vassals.<sup>125</sup> This was in some large chieftaincy like the Ahgwi chieftaincy which often received tributes from some sub chiefs, Bengang and Ken traditional rulers who were quarters under the Ahgwi Fandom. Other chiefs collected tributes from some quarter heads who possessed some royal affiliation while others existed especially in villages where the chief or Fon who settled had met some families who decided to succumb under him. These types of families often retained some traditional heritages and were compensated either as *Mukums* or quarter heads who in return paid tributes to the recognised chieftaincy. Tribute was paid regularly in cash or materials to the chiefs.

It should be noted that; all through Moghamo from the family to the village, the lowest to the highest position in the chieftaincy, law and order prevailed and the chief was the highest authority. It is said, when the Germans under Dr. Eugene Zintgraff travelled in the Grassfields through Barombi-Tinto-Ashong and reached Moghamo in 1888. He found a well organised state with each village under a super ruler. According to oral sources, Zintgraff found it difficult to destabilise the Moghamo chieftaincies. He tried to stay in the land and negotiated treaties but was driven to Bali Nyonga when he could not reach an agreement with one of the most powerful traditional rulers in Moghamo called chief Awu I who is said to have manifested the wind through his mystical powers and break the whisky and glasses of

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<sup>123</sup> Interview with Mr. Ndam Ernest, *mukum*, 48 years, Anong, May 15<sup>th</sup> 2021.

<sup>124</sup> “*Shaky*” means Palace stewards and *Tita* means the senior brother to the chief in Moghamo

<sup>125</sup> Vassals in Moghamo were found in some large chieftaincy and used to pay tribute to the royalty under which it is governed.

Dr Zintgraff.<sup>126</sup> He could have taught that the German explorer wanted to poison his subjects. Because of this cruel action, Zintgraff was forced to move to Bali further into the Grassfields where he met the hospitable traditional ruler of the Balis, Galiga I in 1889<sup>127</sup> The two entered into a Blood Pact Treaty 1891 making Galiga I, the paramount ruler of Bali.<sup>128</sup>

#### 1.4.2 The Economic Governance of Moghamo Before 1888

The pre-colonial communities of Cameroon could be classified into three economic groups. There were communities whose major economic occupation was agriculture, some were cattle rearing and some who were involved in diverse economic activities such as hunting, fishing and gathering of wild fruits, trade and exchange, smelting and manufacturing iron. With these three groups, Moghamo in pre-colonial era practiced agriculture, cattle's rearing and hunting and fishing. It should however be noted that Moghamo felt the impact of slavery and participated in international slave trade that was radiating from the coast of Cameroon to Nigeria through Mamfe. The Moghamo sold criminals and other outcasts to this southern wave of slave traders.<sup>129</sup> It is not clear whether their indigenes were kidnapped and sold, they also bought foreign slaves for their own use. It is worth mentioning that even before the coming of the Whiteman, Moghamo clan was a route of trading centre. People travelled on these routes on foot from many paths of the Grassfields through Moghamo-Mamfe-Kumba right up to Calabar in Nigeria.<sup>130</sup> The most famous centre of these routes was Guzang where the well-known Guzang market was established some 300 years ago.<sup>131</sup> This happened before the coming of the Bali and the Germans. This route was regarded as a high way linking the Grassfields and the forest region.

Traders from different parts of the Grassfields, Mamfe, and Widikum together with Moghamo converged at Guzang market to exchange their goods by trade by barter. Money was later introduced changing from cowries to brass rod (ring money) and later to the German Marks. The principal commodities were palm oil, clay pots, camwood, goats and

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<sup>126</sup> Interview with Ayang John, 90 years, Former Spokeman to the Fon. Anong Village, June 2010; Chief Awu I was one of the traditional rulers of moghamo who was said to have angered Dr. Eugene Zintgraff. Together with other powerful Moghamo chiefs demonstrated their witchcraft to Zintgraff which destroyed his properties. This was when the German explorer first left Barombi passed through Ashong to Batiibo before Bali. This attitude angered Zintgraff and he was forced to move to Bali in 1890 to meet the hospitable traditional rulers of the grassfields Fon Galiga I and his people who received him with a lot of care. He now signed a Blood Pact Treaty in 1891, making him a paramount ruler.

<sup>127</sup> Interview with HRH, the Fon of Anong, Agwejang Moses 75 years, a Fon, Anong Batibo, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

<sup>128</sup> N. Ndifontah,., *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1986),

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Ayang John, 90 years, Former Spokeman to the Fon. Anong Village, June 2010.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

fowls and gunpowder. The price of camwood was very high because of its cultural value and the small hill besides Guzang market on top of which stands the former Cooperative Union was named *Wum-beg* meaning “Camwood hill”.<sup>132</sup>

As far as agriculture was concerned, Moghamo practiced subsistence economy. This was the dominant economic activity and they were hardly any household or community that was not fully or partially engaged in agricultural activity. A variety of crops were cultivated. These included grains such as; corn, beans and groundnuts, root crops such as yams, cocoyams, potatoes and cassava and trees crop such as banana, plantains and pawpaw. A variety of legumes and fruits were also cultivated.

The method of cultivation was the slash and burnt cultivation and shifting agriculture. Farmers will clear, gathered and burnt their farmlands before cultivation was being done. Rotational bush fallowing was also practiced. The people mostly practiced mixed farming where all types of crops were cultivated in their farmland.

Another aspect of agriculture we have mentioned above was animal husbandry. Cattle farmers are known to have kept a variety of livestock such as cattles, sheep and goats. Horses were often used as a means of transportation. This aspect of herdsmen was encouraged by the grassy highlands of Moghamo where cattle’s rearing was favoured. For example Anong, Numben and Ashong hills harnessed cattle rearing and today some graziers trekked long distances with their cattle in search for greener pastures especially during the dry season when the mountain tops are dried.

Hunting, fishing and domestication of animals like pigs, dogs, cats, birds, and fowls were common in Moghamo. Gathering of wild fruits like cola nuts, forest spices, monkey kola etc. was an economic activity. Professional hunters used all forms of spears, traps; bows and arrows. The smelting of iron and manufacturing facilitated this task (hunting). Recent studies undertaken by J.P. Warnier, M Rowland and I Fowler in the Cameroon Grasslands showed that one of the major centres of iron smelting was the Ndop plain. Iron produced in Ndop plain reached distant places in west and central Africa.<sup>133</sup> Long before the importation of European iron, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Babungo, Bamessing and Bamenyam were engaged in Iron melting. Moghamo benefited from their supply.

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<sup>132</sup>S.M Njang., “*Government and Politics in Moghamo 1800 -1961*” (An Essay Presented to the Department of History University of Buea, 2001), 23

<sup>133</sup>V.G Fanson., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges from Prehistoric times to the twenty-first century*. Team Work Press, Bamkika’ay-Kumbo, 2017.

Trade and exchange despite of the subsistence nature of the economy of Moghamo, most of them engaged in long distance trade, the distribution of the product beyond the household and the community was accomplished by means of exchange or trade by barter. Trade made it possible for different communities to exchange their products or those from other communities.<sup>134</sup> The market was a place of exchange, meeting friends, creating new relationships. Each market was held on a fixed day at an interval of eight days. So, the market place in Moghamo was an economic as well as a social centre for all who attended it. Many went to the market place because they were sure they would hear news, despatch a gift, pay debts, settle a dispute, and meet a *Njumba*. The market day was the day when local age mates, members of the same profession or trade, meetings, *njangi* etc meet. The chief preside the market on each market day by addressing the market. He often go to the market with a host of his subordinates; the *Mukums* with the greatest his spokesman. After his chief messenger arrived the market to announce his coming, immediately followed by the spokesman who will address the market and keep it in some tranquillity before Attaah can come out and address his people.<sup>135</sup> Distance trade involved transactions in items as kolanuts, salt, palm-oil, palm kernels, hoes, guns etc.

Chiefs were agent and controller of finances, organised labour force, shared land for cultivation. The chief owned all the land in the village and could decide as he was the custodian of the land. For instance, he could declare someone's land to be use for general interest; he could decide to own land on disputes and land of owners who had failed to respect a law. The chief also ensures the fertility of the soil through “collectivity and mystical theory”.<sup>136</sup> Important and specific animals like Monkeys, snakes (Piton), Antelope, cutting grass that were caught by hunters, were controlled and sent to the palace while women selected the best part of their products and took it to the palace as a sign of respect for their chief.<sup>137</sup> Those who did not own land in Moghamo like slaves and strangers, the chief gave them lands. Slaves were very significant in Moghamo because they were a source of labour and an increase to the indigenous population.<sup>138</sup> Villagers were also subjected to make some payment in kind into the palace treasuries in Moghamo. The palaces in Moghamo never lacked because there were constant supplies from its indigenes.

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<sup>134</sup> Interview with Pa Wandeh Zacheus, Former Councillor, 80 years, Ambo Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> 2021.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> The ‘collectivity and mystical theory’ was a means manifested through witchcraft whereby the fertility of the soil, products from farms like yams, palm nuts, cocoyams etc were carried spiritually by traditional rulers from neighbouring villages or far off places to enrich their land.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.4.3 The Socio -Cultural Governance of Moghamo Before 1888

The Moghamo were a gregarious people who jointly share in the joy and sorrow of their fellows. In fact, more in their sorrow than joy. More so, Moghamo people were generous. Their generosity stems from the tradition of providing to strangers who might be gods in human bodies. No stranger passed through Moghamo (a home) without being given food to eat and something to drink. It was a tradition to keep food and drink at strategic places in the village, like road junctions, so that hungry foreigners could refill themselves. Not all groundnuts were harvested, especially on farms near the road. Some very hungry trader would harvest what was left for food. Some people also kept at regular spots on the way bunch of ripe palm fruits for passer-by to take some home.

Another social aspect of Moghamo people was religion. Before, the traditional Cameroonian society was influenced by Islam from the North and Christianity from coast, religion and morality were part and parcel of every aspects of life in Moghamo land. They already had their own belief and a way of worship. Human life was regarded as sacred and each community in Moghamo used its rituals and sacrifices to protect and safeguard it. Rituals or prayers and sacrifices were often made and offered by each family or lineage to plead the innocence of the members and to ask the gods and the ancestors to lead and protect them from evil. If requests were made during prayers and sacrifices, there were usually in relation to health, welfare and fertility in the production of children and crops in the community.

The Moghamo people worshipped and belief in numerous gods and good spirit. They worship the “*animi*” gods, “*Ejeuh*” god of the stones etc. Sacrifices like killing of animals and shed their blood on the altars were made annually to appease these gods.<sup>139</sup> Sometimes, human beings were sacrificing to appease the gods of the village. This was in most cases where the market was to be planted. Example, the Guzang market was built on the Altar of people buried alive as sacrifice.<sup>140</sup> The same equally with the *Tang* Market of Anong, slaves were buried at the old market *Sam Tang* now called Water Side.<sup>141</sup> During the worship of these gods, “*fitchuk*” and some foods were taken to the site by the family head with some family members. In some specific Altars, only the chief and the mukum sambe could do some encharment and throw liabasion on the Altar.<sup>142</sup> Names of the ancestors of the family were then called while little palm wine was dropped in the Altar as a symbol of worship. In

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<sup>139</sup>Interview with HRH, Fon Muya Joseph, Fon of Nyenjei, 65 years, Nyenjei Oct.15<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>140</sup>Interview with Ayang John, 90 years, Former Spokeman to the Fon. Anong Village, June 2010

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

Moghamo, every home is having the stone god found in the kitchen. It is made up of stones, in most cases three stones. Each of these stone signified great ancestor who once lived. As concerned the living and the death, ancestral worship was a very important part of the tradition and culture in Moghamo. It was strongly believed that ancestors were part of the living society and that they continue to protect their descendants. They were always ready whenever they were called upon during prayers and sacrifice to intercede on the behalf of the living. Sacrifices were used as a way of communication and relation to them between the ancestors and the descendants.

Moghamo also believed in witchcraft and superstitions. They believed and practice it. In short witchcraft and superstitions practices were the order of the day in Moghamo clan. Each village in Moghamo shunned evil. Evil was thought to be expressed in witchcraft. Witches and wizards were persons engaged in the practiced of doing others harm. They were the cause of unnatural deaths in the clan. Such persons, whenever they were detected in the society, were punished by death or banishment. They could never be appeased except by blood of human being which they consumed magically. Their evil works or intentions could only be undone by witch-doctors or diviners which had an important place in Moghamo.<sup>143</sup> This aspect of diviners and witch-doctors is still common in Moghamo today. They were in position to combat the practice and save their victims. In ancient Moghamo, the chief was regarded upon as the highest person to intercede between the ancestors and descendants. He was also regarded as a witch as he performed some magical role in the clan. When a witch or wizard was said to have died in Moghamo, they were said to have been operated to remove the witch before burial.

Socially, the chiefs commanded and ensured that custom and tradition was respected, all over the clan. Ancient Moghamo had a diverse culture, ranging from performing rituals, traditional dances and polygamy. The most important ritual and initiation was called “Ifut” that was performed annually in the palaces of Moghamo. It was formally called the yam festival. Yams were pounded with red oil in a bowl were everyone in the village fed in that bowl. It was a strong initiation which had drastically reduced or is not practice today again. Polygamy was a belief especially as far as chieftaincy was concerned. A chief could get married to more than one hundred wives in Moghamo clan. Other cultural and custom practices in

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid; Diviners were like watch dogs and Consultants in Moghamo. They were considered living beyond with the deads and could listen to the deads speak. Each time a person died mysteriously or suspiciously in Moghamo land, diviners could be consulted to find out the reason for the death.

Moghamo such as initiation into cults like to transform human being into animals to go into the forest in search of greener pastures were also being practice.<sup>144</sup>

Informal education should not be left out. It was an aspect of the social phenomenon. It was being done at the level of each family, village and the clan as a whole. This was through the teachings of parents to children in aspects like fishing, farming and craft workers until the introduction of colonial education.

### **1.5 Conclusion**

This chapter aimed at examine the geographical setting and historical background of the study by locating Moghamo in Momo Division, North West Region and in the Republic of Cameroon. The relief, hydrology and flora and fauna of Moghamo clan were also looked at. The chapter also examined the history of migration and settlement of the Moghamo people. How they stemmed among the Tadkon families, migrated and settled to form the more than twenty-two autonomous chiefdoms. Follow by this, the chapter presents the origin of chieftaincy in Moghamo, chieftaincy institutions or auxiliaries to the chiefs' administration in Moghamo clan like; *mukum*, *kweti*, *kwifon*, *ngwes*, *nebseg* and queen mothers, traditional councils and Secret Societies.

The chapter also proved that chieftaincy was an institution that existed in its full capacity before the coming of the Whiteman in Moghamo clan. By showing this, the socio-political and economic institutions of Moghamo during the pre-colonial times were examined. The colonialists only came and attached some strings to the institution that strained its powers and functions. That notwithstanding, chieftaincy existed in Moghamo clan in its full power and capacity before the coming of the Whiteman. It was not a colonial creation.

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<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.*



## CHAPTER TWO

### CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MOGHAMO UNDER THE GERMAN COLONIAL RULE 1888-1916

#### 2.1 Introduction

Unlike in other areas in Africa, the German colonial administration in Cameroon was short lived. Moghamo could not be left out because it was one of the Germans bastions in the Grassfields of Cameroon. The German colonial administration officially started with the signing of the Germano-Duala Treaty of July, 12th 1884 and came to an end in 1916 with the defeat of the Germans in the First World War by the Allies.<sup>145</sup> Though the German administration officially ended in Cameroon in 1916, traces could still be seen after this period. Chieftaincy was an important element in the German colonial administration as traditional authorities were used or acted as machineries in the colonial administration. The German made sure that chiefs were used in their interest. In areas where the former could not act in their interest, they were dethroned and appointed new ones to take over. It all started with the Germans instituting the native authority system and then a direct administration through Galiga I in 1891 in the whole Bamenda Grassfields.<sup>146</sup> This German policy was suitable and useful in the Grassfields where the chief rule could not be over compromised to its subjects.

In this chapter, we are going to examine the arrival of the Germans in Moghamo, roles of chiefs in the local governance during the German administration and some of the privileges that were enjoyed by the chiefs in local Governance administration. The history of the Germans in Moghamo is not different from the history of the Germans in Bali. As already mentioned above, Moghamo was one of the vassals under the Bali suzerainty and empire, and as such the role of chieftaincy in local governance during the Germans era is incorporated from the Bali polity.

#### 2.2. Arrival of the Germans in Moghamo

The area covered by Moghamo came under the Germans rule around 1888 when Dr. Eugene Zintgraff arrived Moghamo and stayed in Bamessong now Ashong village.<sup>147</sup> During his stay in Moghamo, some chiefs like the chiefs Mbafor of Ashong, Fon Mbah I of Batibo village, chief Forkum I of Bessi and Awu I of Anong campaigned to gain favour and support

<sup>145</sup>V.J. Ngoh,., *Cameroon 1884-1885, A Hundred Years of History*. (Limbe: Naval Group Publication, 1989)

<sup>146</sup>E.M. Chilver,., *Zintgraff Explorations in Bamenda Grassfields*. (Buea: Government Printers 1966), P.3-5

<sup>147</sup>N. Ndifontah,., *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1986), p.95

from him. Fon Mbah I in collaboration with other Fons from Moghamo sent his messengers to Dr. Zintgraff who was then staying in Ashong village to visit to his palace.<sup>148</sup> Oral sources say these chiefs failed to capture the interest of Zintgraff because of their hostile nature. It was their first time seeing a Whiteman and tried him with some mystical witcraft.<sup>149</sup> This scared Zintgraff and also because Fon Galiga I sent his Tadmanjis to visit Zintgraff while still in Ashong after receiving a message from Moghamo. This was around January 1889, when news came from Moghamo that a strange creature, perhaps a spirit has entered their land.<sup>150</sup> Following this, Galiga dispatched a group of his tadmanjis including Doh Ndudin, Fonte and Tutuwan Ngu to see the sight on his behalf. Report from these men and their behaviour when they arrived Ashong was what pushed Zintgraff to continue his journey where he met with Galiga I in 1889.<sup>151</sup> He was not only welcome by Galiga I but they decided to enter a friendly relation that elevated this Grassfields king. Galiga I was made a paramount ruler following a blood pact treaty signed with Zintgraff in 1891.<sup>152</sup> This was followed by a German station built in Bali from where Moghamo was ruled.

It should be noted that, long before the Germans arrived in the Grassfields, some parts of Moghamo and Meta villages were under the Bali suzerainty and empire.<sup>153</sup> Galiga I through his early expansionist policy had already conquered some parts of Moghamo. The Germans only came and ratified his rule over Moghamo. Attached to this passage below is a map showing Bali Nyonga's Empire including part of Moghamo Empire in the 1870s and 1880s and the photographs of Fon Galiga I and Dr. Eugene Zintgraff and the map of his journey when he first arrived the Grassfields through Moghamo in 1888.

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<sup>148</sup> Interview with HRH, Fon Forkum II of Bessi, 91 years, Bessi August 11<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*

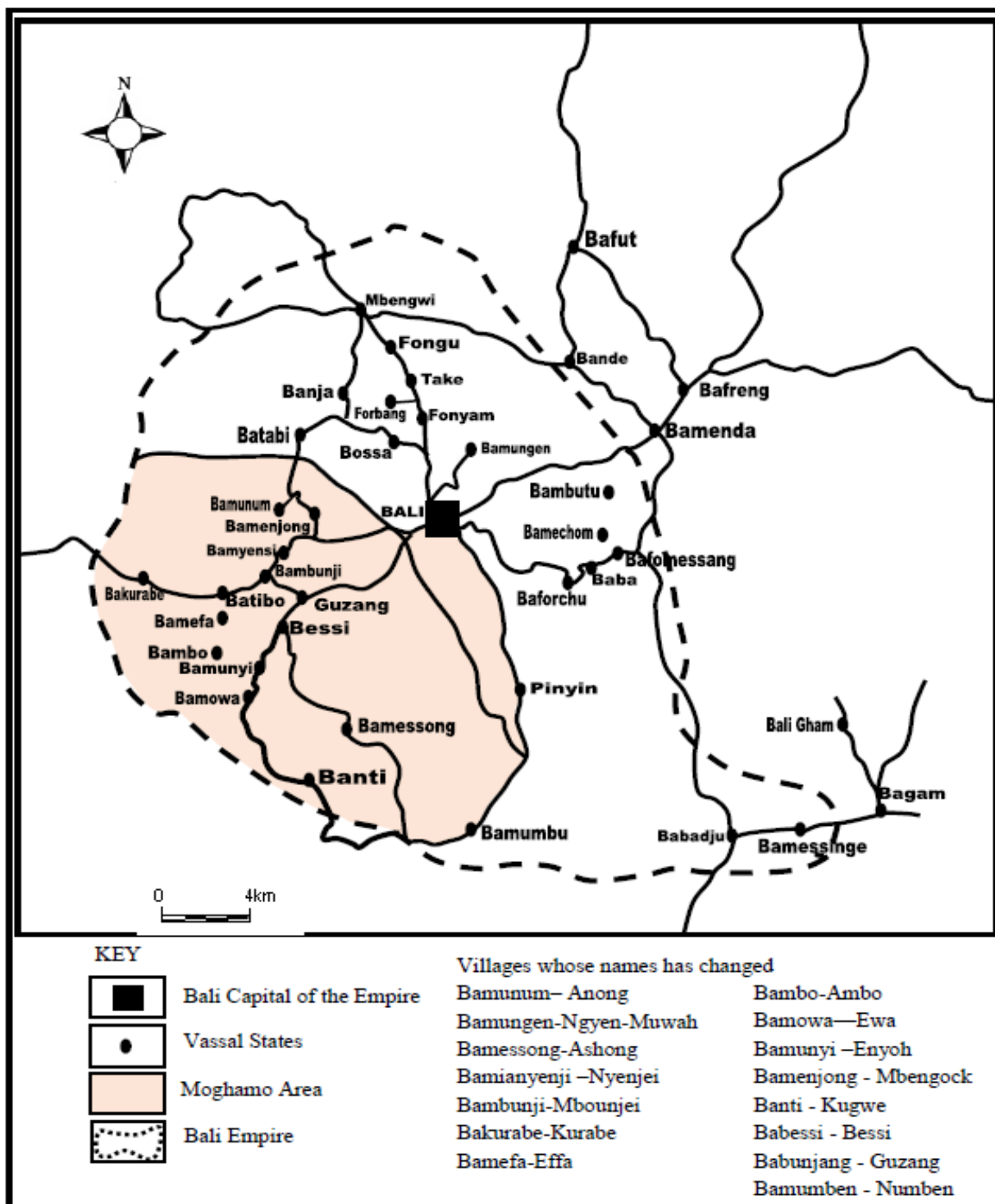
<sup>150</sup> E.M Chilver..., *Zintgraff Explorations in Bamenda*. (1966), p.15

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid* p.16

<sup>152</sup> V.J., Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1885, A Hundred Years of History*. (Limbe: Naval Group Publication, 1989)

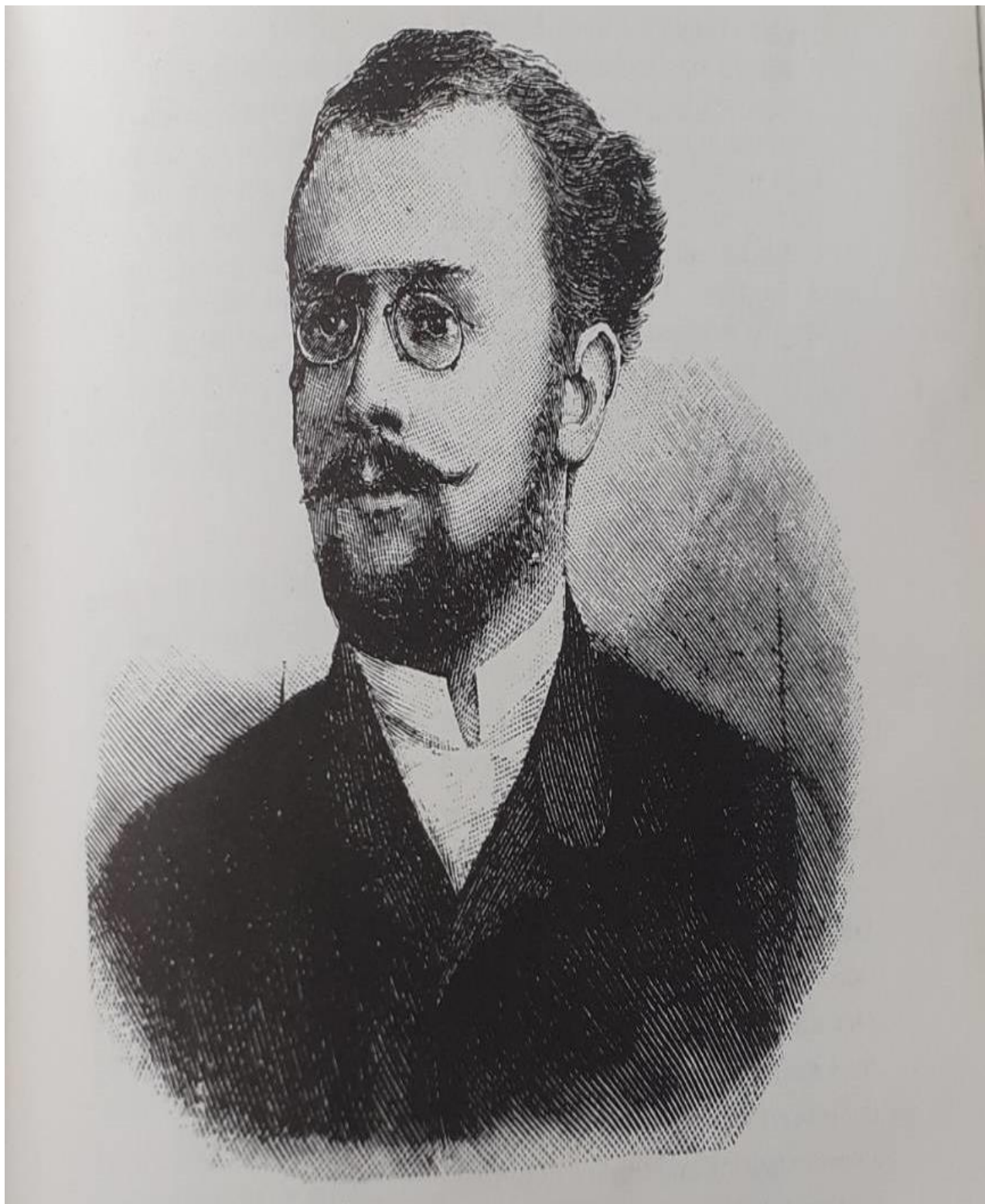
<sup>153</sup> N. Ndifontah,, *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1986) p.77-86

Map 5: Bali Nyonga's Empire including Moghamo Villages Between 1870's and 1880's



Source: Nyamndi. N., the Bali Chamba. (1984), p.78. Modified by the Author. July 2021

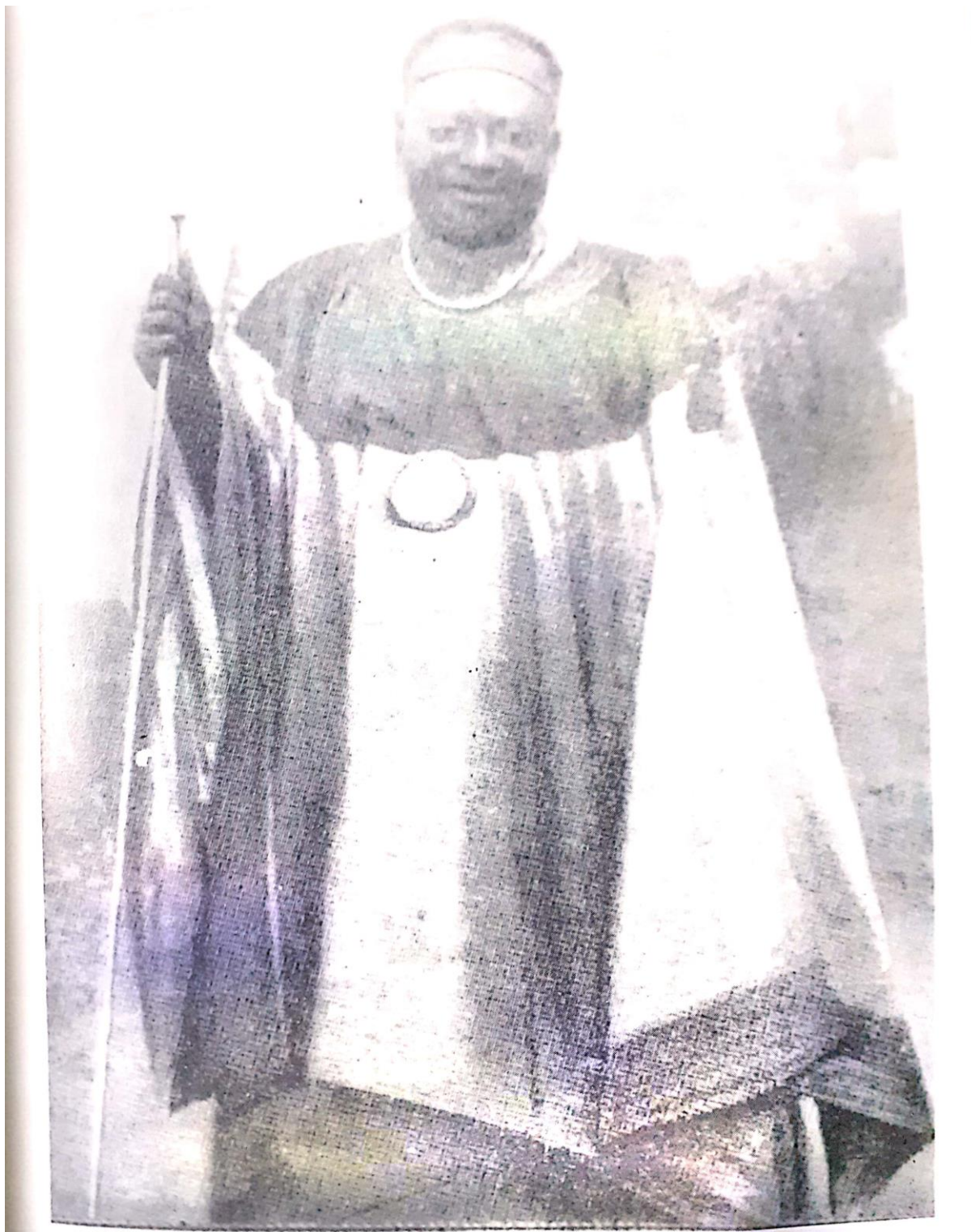
**Plate 3A Photograph of Dr. Eugene Zintgraff, the German Explorer**



Source: Photo in Enongetah. B., *A History of the Cameroon Cameroon*. London, Longman Group Ltd (1974), p.

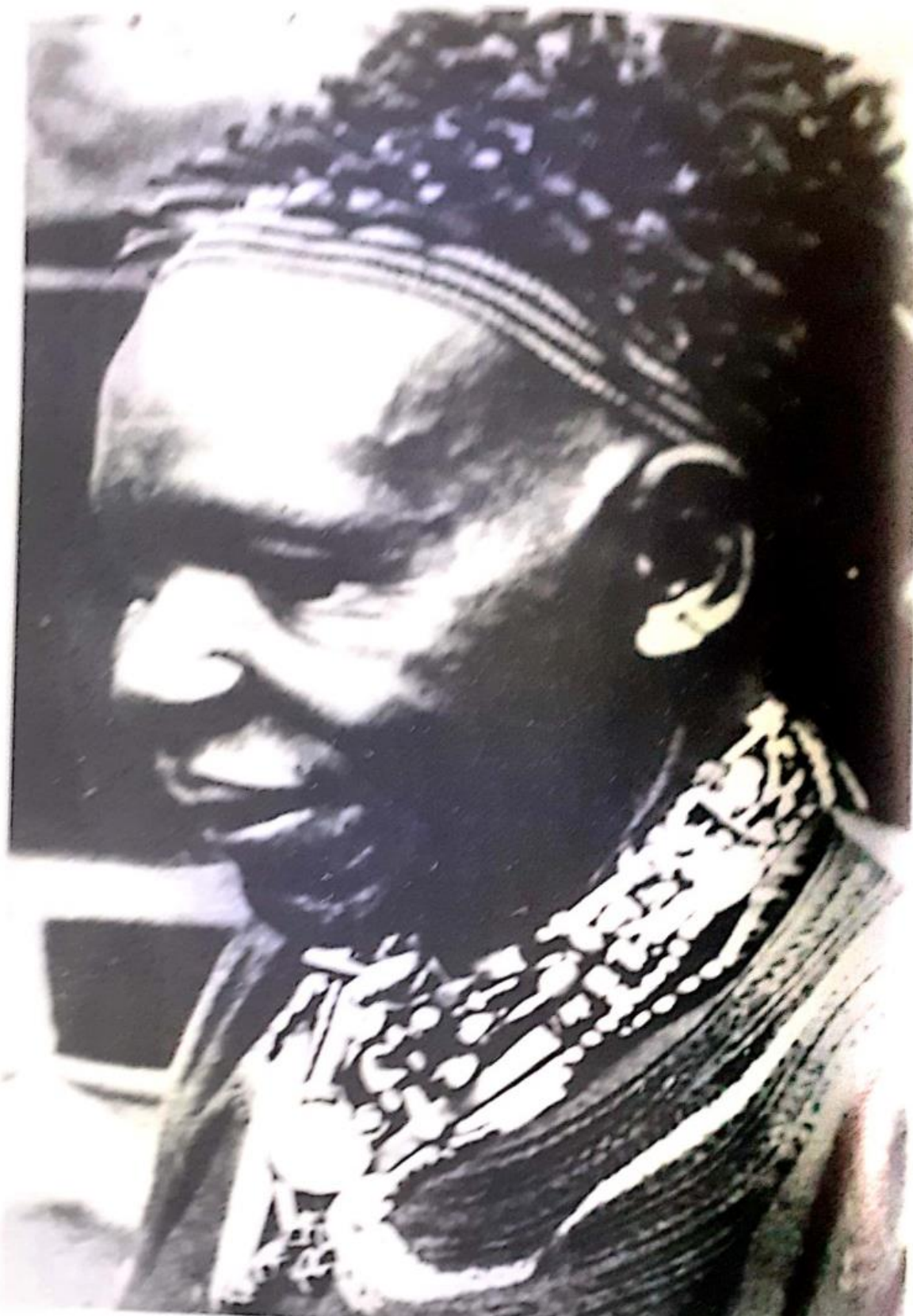


Plate 3B Photograph of Fon Galiga I of Bali



Source: Ndifontah, N., *the Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1984), p.103-105. Modify by the Author. July 2021

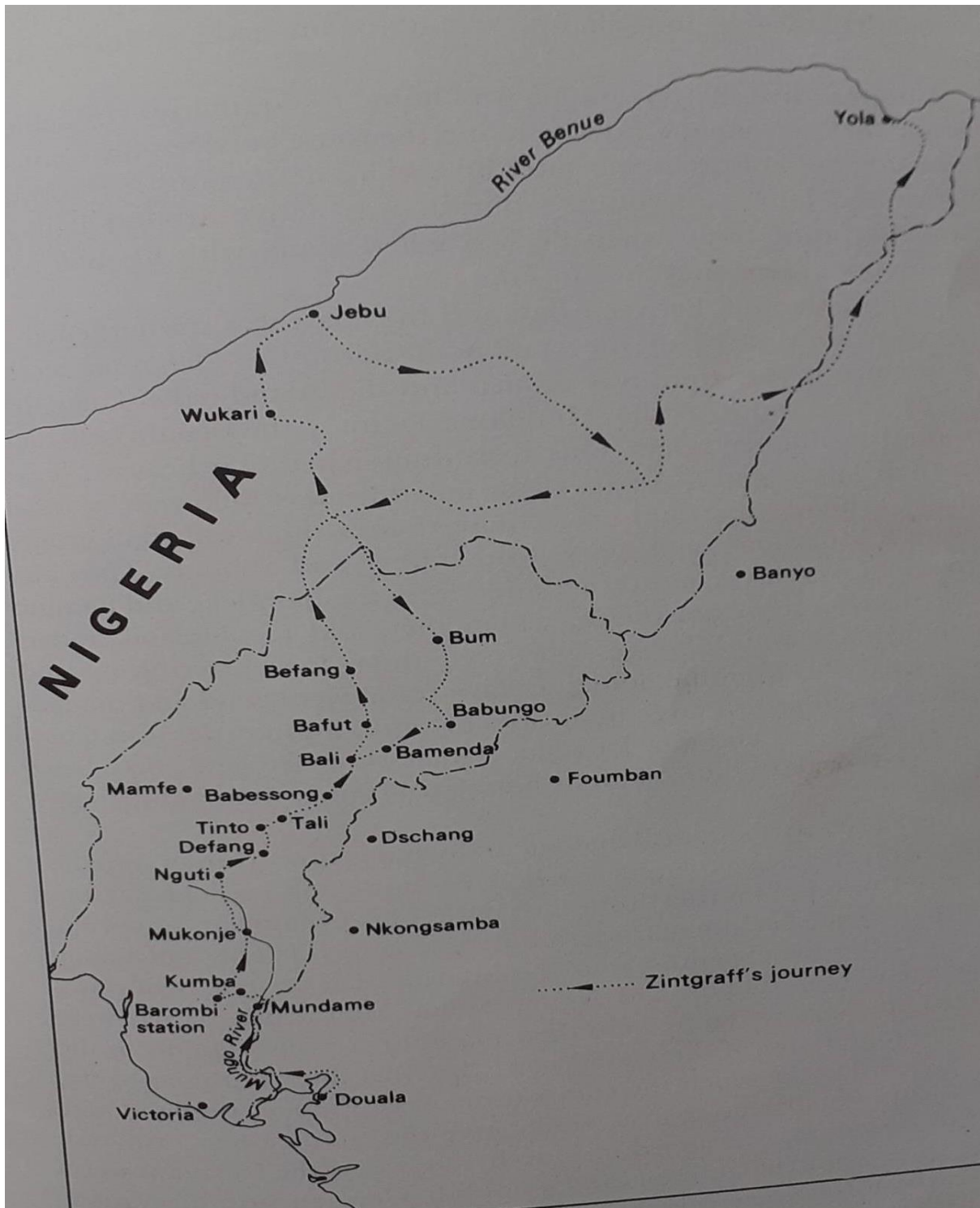
Plate 3C Photograph of Fon Fonyonga II of Bali



Sources: Ndifontah, N., *the Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1984), p.103-105. Modify by the Author. July 2021



Map 6: Zintgraff's Journey across Moghamo 1888 - 1889



Source: Photo in Enongetah. B., A History of the Cameroon Cameroon. London, Longman Group Ltd (1974), p. 69. Modified by the Author, July 2021

## 2.3 Legislative, Judiciary and Military Roles

Generally, in Africa, before the coming of the Whiteman, chieftaincy was divine in nature and combine legislative, executive, judicial and military roles.<sup>154</sup> But with the coming of the Whiteman, the noble role was distorted as could be said; yesterday protectors became more instruments in the colonising services.<sup>155</sup> Unlike in different other areas under the German administration, these roles were not different in Moghamo. Under the political role, a cross examination of the legislative, judicial and military or protection roles will be done.

### 2.3.1 Legislative Roles

The chiefs were directly responsible for the administration of the clan; they promulgate laws for the village with the assistance of the village councils. During the German administration, they acknowledge the village leaders and brought them under the protection of the imperial government.<sup>156</sup> According to Ruel Malcolm (1969: 101), they were given a German flag and a “letter of protection” which was printed on an imposing double leafed paper, edged with black and red bands and headed with an eagle crest. It was this letter that gave them the official recognition as chiefs and they became intermediary between the German administration and the people. Just like after the Blood Pact treaty that was signed between Zintgraff and Galiga I, traditional rulers in Moghamo who were vassals could now transmit the law put in place by the German administration under Galiga I and later Fonyonga II.<sup>157</sup> The chiefs were responsible for the implementation of these laws making put in place by the Germans by bringing the laws closer to the people and making them respecting these laws for the benefits of the treaty signed with Fon Galigaa I. The Germans created Administrative Districts in the interior headed by the German officers who were collaborators to traditional rulers. One of the most powerful districts in the Grassfields of Cameroon was the Bali station which King Galiga I was at the head. Moghamo was under the German station of Bali and later under the Bamenda station when it was transferred from Bali in 1908. In this jurisdiction, Galiga I was the paramount ruler and some of the Moghamo villages such as Mungen-Muwah now Ngyen-muwah, Bamunum now Anong, Bamesong now Ashong, Bamunyenjei now Nyenjei, Bambunji now Mbounjei, Babunjang now Guzang, Bessi, Bamefa now effah, Bambo now Ambo and Batibo and other neighbouring villages were under his

<sup>154</sup>M. Crowder., *Colonial West Africa: Selected Essays*. (1978)

<sup>155</sup>R. Kpwang., *Les Chefferie Traditionnelles dans la Societe de la Grande Zone Forestiere du Sud Cameroun 1850-2010*. (Yaounde 2010)

<sup>156</sup>*Politics and Power Struggle in Bangang Clan of Manyu Division: The case of Besongabang Chieftaincy Succession Crisis, 1908 to Present* (Historical Dissertation)

<sup>157</sup>N. Ndifontah.,, p.100-103



Fondom.<sup>158</sup> Law making during this period came from his palace and was implemented by the Moghamo chiefs. Chief Mbah I of Batibo village was one of the most recognised traditional rulers in Moghamo. Though these laws often passed by Galiga I under the German administration, were sometimes contrary to Moghamo customary laws. But however, Moghamo chiefs were fully engaged under the Germans as they passed laws needed by the German administrators to their subjects. These laws from Balisuch as the collection of taxes, labour recruitment etc were often sent to Moghamo through Fon Mbah I of Ahgwi, Fon Awu I of Anong and some other influential Fons like Ashong and Bessi who now in tend passed them to other areas of Moghamo clan.<sup>159</sup>

### 2.3.2 Judicial Roles

Chiefs played an important role in adjudicating in matters of disputes and conflicts in local governance life in Moghamo. Before the Germans were ousted from Cameroon in 1916, they had created a local Native Court in Bali with FonyongaII at the head. This local court has its jurisdiction over Moghamo clan. Despite the fact that chieftaincy was already organised in Moghamo to an extent; most of the laws came from Bali. In many matters within certain limits, native chieftaincy had the right of adjudicating disputes in native courts according to the customary laws. Governor Seitz was very much interested in giving natives the experience of important responsibilities in the administration. The chieftains ran the two lowest courts for natives in the colony, appeal to the Whiteman over native decisions coming only in the third court.<sup>160</sup> Very frequent the German local administration asked chiefdoms for their advice.

The chiefs adjudicated according to native laws and custom in civil cases where the objects of contention were valued at not more than 100 marks criminal cases where the penalty for the crime was not more than 300 marks or six months' imprisonment. From the court of First Instance, appeals could be made to second tribunal composed of chiefs appointed by Governors. Appeals from the second tribunal as well as cases like murder and man's slaughter which were beyond the powers of the two courts were heard by the Governor or a judge appointed by him. The penalty inflicted on Africans included whipping, (which was the commonest form of punishment), jail sentences and death penalties with the consent of the

<sup>158</sup>E.M, Chilver, "Native Administration in West Cameroons 1902-1954" in Robisson. K and Madden. F (eds.), Essay in Imperial Government presented to Margery Perham, (Oxford 1963).

<sup>159</sup>Interview with Timah Moses Agwejang, 75 years, Fon of Anong, 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, Mbafor III C.M, 73 years, Fon of Ashong, 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2021, Ngwan Mbanyamsig III, 68 years, Fon of Guzang, 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2021. They acknowledged this information was passed unto them by their parents.

<sup>160</sup>Mbah., *Inter- Village Relations*, p.24.

Governor. In Moghamo, Chiefs acted as traditional judges to their subjects in matters of the judiciary.

### 2.3.3 Military Role

One of the roles played by chiefs during the colonial period was that of protection. Galiga I had inherited an army composed essentially of a strong regiment. Even long before the arrival of the Germans, he had built a sophisticated army of more than 2000 men.<sup>161</sup> Though this former function has been altered as compared to the pre-colonial era, chiefs still played the role of protection in the colonial era. The control over the interior was the creation of stations with garrisons of troops at critical points as protection against attacks. One of such garrisons was a German Military Barrack built in Moghamo in a place called Bamunum/Banum today known as Anong.<sup>162</sup> Till today, the place is called Balleck by the lay man meaning Barrack. This Military Barack was under the leadership of Fon Timah Awu I, the most mystical Fon in Moghamo whose relation with Galiga I was cordial. And later, under his son Timah Bamtie Jacob Awu II, who was a man schooled by the Germans in Bali.<sup>163</sup> Another military barrack in Ambo village. These troops were recruited by chiefs. The task of the chief was the maintenance of peace and order through the local police that was put in place. The German exercised their rule indirectly through native chieftaincy that should be made to feel that it was their interest to support German rule. Natives were used in their great numbers as Police, soldiers and carriers. Without such aid, the task of administering in Moghamo would have been a helpless one. So, traditional authorities possessed military power in the German colonial administration.<sup>164</sup>

It is important to mention here that the German knew a good soldier when they saw one. Zintgraff has been more impressed by the size and discipline of the Bali army which part was recruited from Moghamo. It should be mentioned here that during the days of the German colonial rule in the Grassfields, Moghamo was under Galiga I and later his son Fonyonga II of Bali. Until 1908 when Moghamo and some Meta villages were set to report directly to the station that was transferred from Bali to Bamenda.<sup>165</sup> The Moghamo army was used to prevent attacks on the Bali Kingdom from invaders in the south where there was strong

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<sup>161</sup>Nyamndi. N., *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1986) P.185

<sup>162</sup>Interview with Timah Moses Agwejang, 75 years, Fon of Anong, 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. Purely oral source passed to him by the father.

<sup>163</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup>*Ibid.* p.186

<sup>165</sup>N.A.B., *Evidence on the Bali Baforchu Boundary Dispute, giving before Inquiry led by W.E. Hunt*, (DO Bamenda August 1922).

resistance against the Germans. Example from the Bayang country. The training of this army was directed by **Lieutenant Franz Hutter**<sup>166</sup>, a Barvarian artillery officer who joined Zintgraff in 1891.<sup>167</sup> A selected cracked force of 200 Bali soldiers received daily training in discipline, firing of rifle range that has been built closed to the German station. Meanwhile at the town Green, another German soldier thoroughly drilled the 200 strong mucked-armed bodyguards of the Fon. Military discipline soon became a way of life in the chiefdom. It was not only adults, the German also thought children a thing of the military. All this training was just as well because Zintgraff and his Bali allies had some rather difficult wars to fight in the early days of the German penetration of the Bamenda Grassfields. German presence was fiercely resisted by many Grassfields tribes notably the city-states of mankon, Bafut and the Nso. It is obvious that Moghamo fought alongside with the Bali-Mankon-Bafut wars since some Moghamo powerful villages were vassals' states under the Bali Kingdom and had Military garrisons built in their area. Most of the young men from Moghamo were recruited by their chiefs to serve in the Bali Army.<sup>168</sup> An Example of those soldiers from Moghamo was Pa Shogy and Pa Mossi both from Anong village.<sup>169</sup>

#### **2.4 Labour, Tax, Land and Heritage Roles**

One of the purposes of opening up the Cameroon hinterland was to create and maintain a steady supply of labour to the German plantations at the coast of Cameroon and a steady source of income to the colonial government in the form of taxes. The problems of penetration have convinced the Germans that they could not do all themselves without the aid of traditional ruler. So, initially they co-opted some indigenous chiefs into new rulling class to act on their behalf in the recruitment of labour and the collection of taxes.<sup>170</sup> In the grassfields, this was done in the German station of Bali, serving to coordinate these efforts and conveyed the proceeds to the headquarters. In this perspective, we are to going toexamine the role played by chieftaincy institutions in Moghamo clan as supplier of labour, tax collectors and infrastructural developments.

In early1906, with the new policy introduced in the Grassfields, the German administration began the removal and resettlement of some Metta and Moghamo villages within the confines

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<sup>166</sup> F. Hutter, *Wanderungen und Forschungen in Nord Hinterlan von Kamerun*, Braunchweig 1902 pp. 17-27 in Ndifontah

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.* p.102

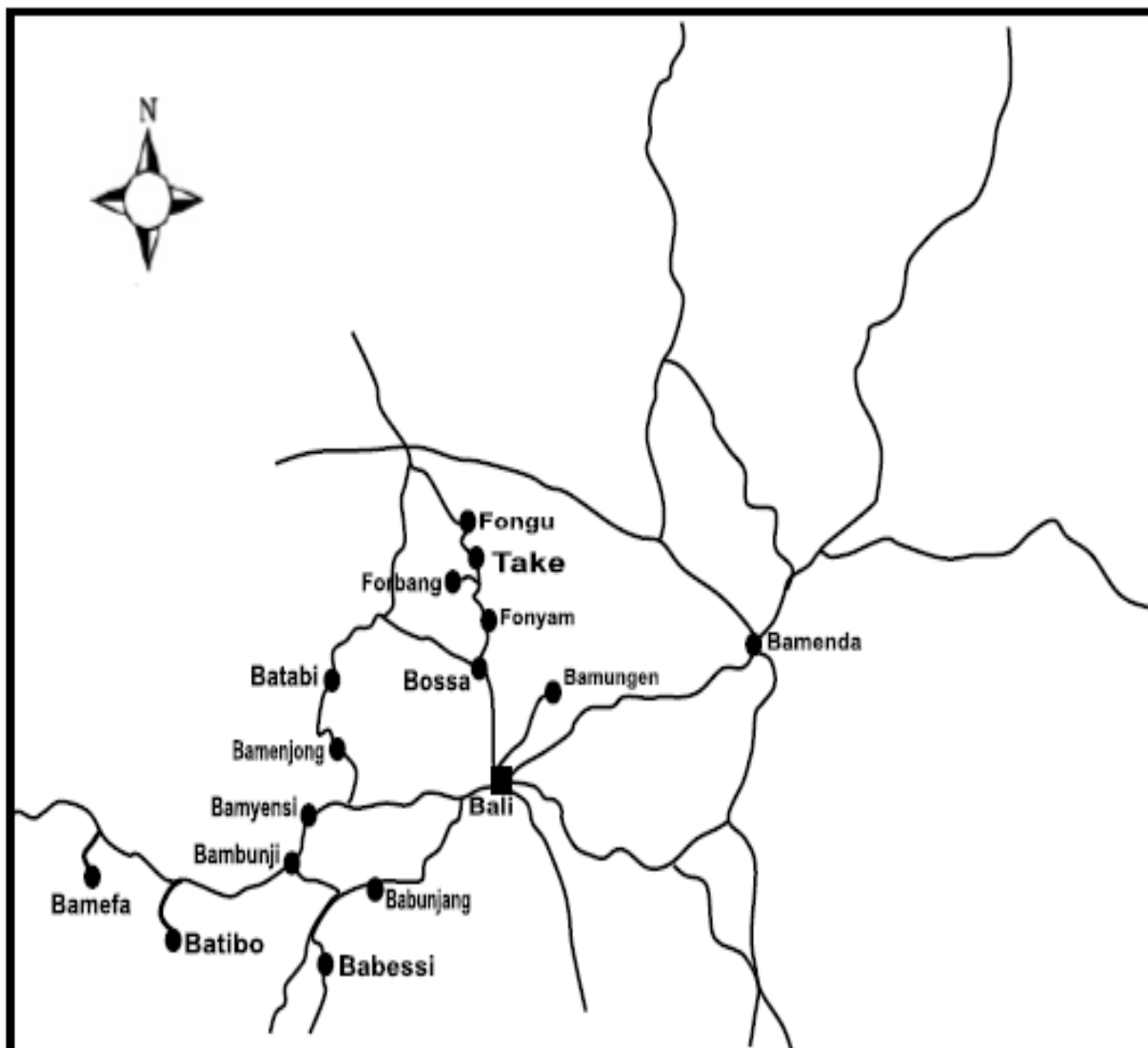
<sup>168</sup> Interview with Mbaku Charles, 60 years teacher, Ashong on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

<sup>169</sup> Interview with Timah Moses Agwejang, 75 years, Fon of Anong, 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. Purely oral source passed to him by the father

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* p.103

of Bali. The force with which this was done bordered on sheer brutality: the villages were simply razed to the ground. In all, eleven Widikum villages were uprooted from their original homes, much against their will, and bundled into Bali.<sup>171</sup> This resettled villages included the ones on the map below and a table of Fonyonga Paramountcy over 31 vilages of his Empire including Moghamo.

**Map 5: The 1906 Resettlement Scheme:**



Source: N. Ndifontah., *“The Bali Chamba of Cameroon”* 1986, modified by the Author July 2021

The map depicts how Moghamo villages were incorporated into Bali forcibly by the Germans for easy tax collection in 1906.

<sup>171</sup>Nyamndi, p.110

**Table 1: Bali under Fonyonga II Paramountcy**

<b>NO:</b>	<b>VILLAGES</b>	<b>NO:</b>	<b>VILLAGES</b>
1.	<i>Babaju</i>	17.	<i>Batabi</i>
2.	<i>Bamessinge</i>	18.	<i>Banjah</i>
3.	<i>Bagang</i>	19.	<i>Bossa</i>
4.	<i>Pinyin</i>	20.	<i>Fonyam</i>
5.	<i>Bamessong (Ashong)</i>	21.	<i>Forbang</i>
6.	<i>Bamowa</i>	22.	<i>Take</i>
7.	<i>Bamunyi</i>	23.	<i>Fongu</i>
8.	<i>Bessi</i>	24.	<i>Baforchu</i>
9.	<i>Babunjang (Guzang)</i>	25.	<i>Baba</i>
10.	<i>Bambo</i>	26.	<i>Bangwa</i>
11.	<i>Bamefa</i>	27.	<i>Bafomessang</i>
12.	<i>Batibo</i>	28.	<i>Mbatu</i>
13.	<i>Bamyensi</i>	29.	<i>Fongwen</i>
14.	<i>Bamunung (Anong)</i>	30.	<i>Banti</i>
15.	<i>Bamenjong</i>	31.	<i>Fongu (Babaju)</i>
16.	<i>Babunji</i>		

**Source:** Ndifontah, B. Nyamndi., *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon*.1984, Modified by the author.

Over 31 Villages of his Empire including Moghamo Villages. Above were some of the Moghamo villages placed under Fomyonga II paramountcy

#### **2.4.1 Labour Recruitment or Supply**

By far the most significant role of Bali Nyonga within the German colonial Framework was a source of cheap plantation labour<sup>172</sup>. Labour supply was the most important service that was

<sup>172</sup>*Ibid.* p.111

rendered by chiefs to the German colonial government. Colonial frame work was a source of cheap labour for the plantations. The centrepiece of the colonial enterprise in Cameroon was plantation development in the coastal areas operated by a few companies notably; the *Westafrikanische Pflanzungs-Gesellschaft Victoria (WAPV)* and *Gesellschaft North West Kamerun (G N K)*.<sup>173</sup> For both these companies, the constant supply of labour was a vital source of life. As already mentioned above, Moghamo villages such as Bessi, Guzang, Ngyenmuwah and other Widikum villages were under the Bali paramountcy.<sup>174</sup> The Fon of Bali was a prominent member of the pro-German group of the grassfields rulers. Ruled from Bali, Moghamo clan chiefs received orders and instructions from King Galiga I and later Fonyonga II in 1905 on labour recruitment. These labourers, some of which were sent to work in the German plantations and firms at the coast of Cameroon while some were retained for community labour. Community labour was the construction of roads and bridges in the Moghamo villages. Example of roads and bridges in Moghamo built during the German era was the road leaving Bali to Batibo, the old Teetip Bridge linking Oshum and Nyenjei villages were some of the German structures in Moghamo.<sup>175</sup> It should be noted that, most of the labourers recruited by Moghamo chiefs, some were retained to work in the branch of the Jantzen and Thormahlen firm that was opened in Bali. So, the most significant role of the Moghamo chiefs in the German colonial administration was the supply of cheap labour for plantation developments in the coastal areas.<sup>176</sup> It should be noted that the Germans had relied on foreign labour from Ghana and Liberia, but labour from such distant sources was difficult to recruit and expensive to maintain.<sup>177</sup> So, when Zintgraff toured around Moghamo and other Grassfields areas in 1880s, and saw young powerful class, he advised the German government to replace the distant labour with local labour from the hinterland. Moghamo clan became one of the areas where chiefs under Galiga I would be most useful to the Germans. On Zintgraff third visit to Bali in June 1896, he lost no time in negotiating terms with Galiga I for the large scale supply of labour to the coast.<sup>178</sup> It was a difficult thing for a chief to do because it was like sending off their best hands to the coast. But Zintgraff cajoled with wild promises and his personal wealth and tribal prestige and assurance that he could recruit the supplies from vassals and not from Bali proper after all. The agreement provided

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<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* p.112

<sup>174</sup> N. Nyamdi.. p.108-109

<sup>175</sup> Interview with Muyah Joseph, 75 years, Fon of Nyenjei village, (Nyenjei 24<sup>th</sup> October 2020).

<sup>176</sup> Interview with Mr. Mbaku, teacher, 60 years, (Ashong., June 16<sup>th</sup> 2021)

<sup>177</sup> Ndifontah

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 111

that Galiga I would send several hundred men to the coast each year, for whom the government would pay him a tax for every man on departure and on return.

The first beneficiary of this agreement was WAPV in June 1897, which received the initial batch of Bali recruits which Moghamo labourers were part of this recruitment. This company even acquired a plot of land in Bali on which it helped to build a factory as a base for its operators. This made Moghamo chiefs who were under the Bali station to become leading Grassfields agents of the supply of plantation labour to the Germans. To satisfy the Germans, Galiga I and later his predecessor Fonyonga II resorted to mass recruitments with Bali soldiers launching indiscriminate and reckless labour raids throughout the empire which Moghamo was part of it. The figures are even more hallowing than words: In 1904, alone Fonyonga I supplied as many as 1700 abled-bodied men to the plantations and according to the census in 1912, the entire Bali empire had no more than 400 men left.<sup>179</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Efficient Tax Collectors

During the German colonial administration, the new role of chiefs became that of tax collection. The German introduced the tax of six marks in 1907. As already mentioned above, the Moghamo Empire was under the Bali and as tax collection was concerned, the Fon of Bali had no rival in the Grassfields. The German government introduced a hut tax of six marks in the Grassfields in 1907 to compliment and gradually to replace the supply of labour.<sup>180</sup> It was an extension of the Poll Tax that had been in operation in the district of Douala since 1903. Fonyonga usually received tax tickets for Moghamo and other Empires which he then distributed to them through his *tadmanjis* and a 10% of stipend upon collection and payment of the taxes to the station. Chiefs became very enthusiastic about tax responsibilities because of the privileges they enjoyed. The Fon of Bali often subject Moghamo chiefs to bring in the tax returns of their villages and when these were not forthcoming, he could usually pay the tax from his pockets pending later reimbursement so as to protect his subjects and please the Germans.<sup>181</sup> Unfortunately, the reimbursement was often a source of bitter argument with the subject chiefs who were sometimes unwilling or unable to pay, when they could disagree with the exact amount owed. These difficulties were later taken as justification for a new stand of German policy that had serious consequences on Moghamo. The desired of the Germans to secure a flow of taxes by enhancing Fonyonga II

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<sup>179</sup> Nyamndi, *the Bali Chamba of Cameroon*. (1986), p.108.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid* p.109

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*

powers and prestige had almost become an obsession.<sup>182</sup> Any attempt to slur his authority was very harshly dealt with, the most severe case being that of one Moghamoan chiefs; Fon Mbah I of Agwei village who was exiled to Banyo in September 1910 for insubordination to Fonyonga II.<sup>183</sup>

This new policy came back in 1906 when the German administration began the removal and resettlement of moghamo villages within the Bali confinement. This was done by force and brutality.<sup>184</sup> Many Moghamo villages such as Ngyen-muwah, Nyenjei, Bessi, Ashong and Guzang were razed to ground and their inhabitants herded into Bali for resettlement. In all, eleven Widikum villages were uprooted from their original home; much adjusted their will and bundled into Bali for tax collection.

It should be noted that the role of Moghamo chiefs under the Bali as tax collectors changed by 1912. In 1912, the new Governor Karl Elbermaire whose hatred for Bali seemed inborn, decided to free many vassals<sup>185</sup> and appointed their representative at the stations to report directly to the Germans not through Bali. This is when Bali lost control over Moghamo villages and was directly to report to the Bamenda station. Bessi, Ashong, Guzang, Ngyen-muwah and Pinyen were some of the villages in Moghamo that were freed. The villages could now receive their tax tickets directly from the Germans and send their returns directly to the station, receiving a 7% stipend in return. Bali suzerainty was now restricted to Bali chiefdom proper and the eleven Meta villages which had been forcefully resettled there in 1906. With all these, chiefs were said to have played a major role in the collection of taxes in Moghamo during the German administration. Below is a plate introducing some of the Bali Nyonga's Tadmanji that controlled Moghamo Empire.

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<sup>182</sup> *Ibid* p.110

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.* p.111

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* p.112

<sup>185</sup> R.B. Eyongetah. *A History of the Cameroon*. (Londo: Longman Group Limited, 1974)



**Table 2: Bali Nyonga Tadmanji in the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century that controlled Moghamo**

<i>TADMANJI</i>	<b>VILLAGES CONTROLLED</b>
Tita Fofam	Mungyen-muwah, Bambunji, Bamunyenjei,
Tita Mufut	Bessi, Guzang, Bamunyi (Nyenjei), Bamefa, Baba
Tita Lavod	Batibo and Neighbouring Meta Chiefdons
Tita Forkum (Previously under Tita Gwengjang who became Fonyonga II)	Bamunung(Anong) <sup>186</sup> , Bamenjong, Bamessong (Ashong) and Bamessinge

**Source:** Nyamndi. *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon.* (1986), p.112 Modified by the author July 2021.

#### **2.4.3 Custodian of Land and Heritage.**

Traditional rulers in Moghamo during the Germans colonial administration were custodian of culture, customary and traditional matters overland. They also provided spiritual leadership to their respective villages. They had full control over lands since the Germans were not really interested over land in the Grassfields.<sup>187</sup> In Moghamo, the rule over land still continued as it was in the days before the arrival of the Whiteman (pre-colonial) whereby the chiefs were responsible for promoting and upholding the cultural values, tradition and hereitage of their villages. Though they were under the Bali, nonetheless, the Bali never interfere in the Moghamo custom and tradition. The only thing they did was to encruhed most of the Moghamo lands especially those of the villages of Ngyen-muwah, Nyengei, Guzang and Ashong who shared borders or boundaries with them.<sup>188</sup>

As heads of the clan, in each village, chiefs performed a number of functions linked to custom and tradition. For example, in Moghamo, chiefs led the delegation in traditional ceremonies such as *mundere*, *neré* dance and other ritual rights. They officiated at other ceremonies, funerals and public events where adherence to traditional practices is a requirement. They also ensure that traditional values of the land were observed with respects

<sup>186</sup>Interview with Timah Moses Agwejang, 75 years, Fon of Anong.

<sup>187</sup>E.M, Chilver, *Zintgraff Explorations in Bamenda.* (1966), p.17

<sup>188</sup>Interview with John Akum, 69 years Former teacher, Ngyen-muwah, on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and Elizabeth Mbah, 73 years, Oshum on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021

to burial arrangements, marriages and sacred shrines. Thus, the role of chiefs as custodian of value of the society was widely recognised in Moghamo during the German era.

When the Germans reached the Grassfields in 1889, they needed to expand their influence inland and they used the Bali for this purpose. And it is said when the Bali arrived the Grassfields and had no land to settled, Moghamo gave lands to them but when the German became allied to Bali because they needed more land for their increasing population, they began to claim over moghamo lands. The Bali seized a good portion of the land of Ngyenmuwah and Guzang villages of Moghamo which led to a war in 1952<sup>189</sup> between Bali and the Moghamo villages.

As far as land was concerned, chiefs in Moghamo played a role in the allocation and management of communal lands for opening of schools, hospitals, farms and grazing lands. These made them to be custodian of land. For example, they gave land for the missionaries to build churches and schools.<sup>190</sup> To them, land was a heritage from their forefathers.

## **2.5 Socio-Cultural Role**

Here we are going to examine the role of chiefs in the socio-cultural aspects in the Moghamo clan during the era of the German administration in Kamerun. Their role in social developments and religion. Though under the Bali for some time and later directly under the Germans, their culture was not altered as they made sure their tradition and custom werepreserved even with the coming of Christianity in Moghamo, culture was still practiced and preserved.

### **2.5.1 Traditional Rulers as Custodian of Culture**

Though little changes were seen in the Moghamo culture as compared to the era of pre-colonial, chieftaincy institutions in Moghamo could still function well and preserved the culture and the original ways of the Moghamo people. The colonialists had little or nothing to do with the Moghamo tradition. The little was at the level of the introduction of Christianity though no chief was able to be converted in Moghamo. They accepted the planting of churches and their subjects to attend these churches but it never stopped them from performing their role as custodian of custom and tradition as already mentioned above. In most villages in Moghamo was planted the Bassel Mission Churches and later some Bassel Mission Schools.

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<sup>189</sup>W.E. Hunt, *Assessment Report on the Bali Clan*, 1950 para. 30

<sup>190</sup>R.J. O'Neil., "A History of Moghamo 1865-1940: Authority and Change in Cameroon Grassfields Culture". Ph.D in History (University of Columbia, 1978).

### 2.5.2 Agents of Social Developments

Chiefs were not only responsible for custom and tradition; they were also agents of social developments in the clan of Moghamo. This was done through the provision of lands for the construction of hospitals, schools and churches. Many churches, schools and dispensary opened in Moghamo were on lands given by the chiefs. As earlier mentioned above, the first Native Authority School built in Moghamo today, G.S Nyenjei, was on a land given by Fon Muiyah. They did not only provide lands; they recruited the labour that was used and supervised the work in most cases. Labour recruited to construct bridges such as Old teetip linking Oshum and Nyenjei villages, the bridge on river Momo linking Gwofon, Anong and Mbengock and Numben villages and other bridges in Moghamo. In roads construction, they also played a major role. Examples of some roads built by community labour supervised by traditional authorities in Moghamo are; the road linking Gwofon and Mbengwi, Gwofon and Mbengock, Numben, and Bamenda-Batibo-Mamfe roads.<sup>191</sup> Below is one of the structures built by the Germans in Moghamo during the colonial period.

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<sup>191</sup>Interview with Agwejang Shadrack, 78 years, Former Councillor, Anong, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and Mbah Vintcent, 78 years, Former Deputy Mayor, Oshum, 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.

### Plate 4: The Old Teetip Bridge



Source: Photo Taken by the Author; October, 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 at Mile 71 Oshum Village

#### 2.5.3 Religion

In local Governance during the German administration, chiefs played a major role in religion. The belief in other gods was a preoccupation. Many gods in Moghamo such as the three stones god in the kitchen goddess of the water “*animi*” and god under the tree *jeuh*<sup>192</sup> were still worshipped. Though they believe in their various gods of the lands, they could still give a chance to the western religion of Christianity.<sup>193</sup> This was done by given them land for

<sup>192</sup>Interview with Ayang, Anong. 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2010

<sup>193</sup>R.J O’Neil., “*A History of Moghamo 1865-1940: Authority and Change in Cameroon Grassfields Culture*”. Ph.D in History (University of Columbia, 1978).

missionary activities. It should be recalled that before the introduction of Christianity in Moghamo, missionaries were already present at the coast of Cameroon since the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Reverend Alfred Saker established the Baptist Mission in Douala and Victoria. By 1903, the Basel mission was already firmly established in the interior of Cameroon. For 17 years from its introduction in Cameroon, in 1886, the Basel limited its activities to the coastal region.<sup>194</sup> It was forced to move into the interior when its existence was threatened in the coastal regions by the Catholic mission and Islam. As a result, the Basel mission was forced to come to the Grassfields in order to counteract its counterpart. Thus, Zintgraff's expedition to the Grassfields resulted to the opening of the Basel mission station in Bali in 1894.<sup>195</sup> From Bali, the activities of the station were extended to Moghamo. Among the missionaries to Moghamo were Rev. Zarcher Funk and Rev. Weber Ernest.<sup>196</sup> They came to Moghamo on Horseback and their branches were opened in Moghamo, on lands that were given by chiefs. In the early days, no schools were open in Moghamo and as such, chiefs advised the natives who trekked on foot and attended elementary school in Bali. Moghamo also had contact with the German Pallotin fathers. This was under the auspices of priests like father Schuster and Bishop Shanaghan.<sup>197</sup> So, chiefs played a major role though chiefs were not evangelists, they indirectly did evangelism without knowing. This was done through a series of ways; by providing land for the construction of churches, declared Sundays as resting days for all its subjects, sent their children to mission schools, inspected mission vernacular schools set by the Germans, rounded up boys for school and pursued runaway.

However, even though the European claimed that Africans did not believe in the supreme God, their ways of belief and worship was different from the European. They also claimed of a lot of doctrines that Africans did not know but it was false. All they want was to use the western religion to exploit the African resources to their governments. For instance, if they claimed that Africans did not believe in God or likewise know some of these doctrinal principles like love your neighbour as yourself, don't kill, don't take what does not belong to you, don't commit adultery or rape etc, who told them these things even before the colonialists came? Obviously, the precolonial Africa had her own ways of communicating with the Almighty God different from the western style. In a nutshell, their styles of worship had some differences but they were worshipping the same God who is the creator of human.

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<sup>194</sup> V.G. Fanso., *Cameroon History for Secondary schools and colleges. From Prehistoric times to the twenty-first century*. Revised and updated Combined Edition, (Team Work Press Bamkika'ay – Kumbo, 2017).

<sup>195</sup> P.M kaberry, *Field Notes on Bali Nyonga*, (1960)

<sup>196</sup> N. Ndifontah, *the Bali Chamba of Cameroon (1986): A Political History*. Pp. 114-116

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* p.115

This they failed to understand. That notwithstanding, the African system of worship was altered with the implementation of the western norms and principles especially that of the Jewish tradition of Christianity.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter is geared at examining the roles of chieftaincy institutions in local governance in Moghamo clan during the German colonial administration, precisely from the commencing of the German colonial administration till the time they were ousted from the Kamerun colony. As mentioned in this chapter, one of the Germans bastions in the Bamenda Grassfields was Bali closer to Moghamo. It is wise to mention the fact that Dr. Eugene Zintgraff exploration works that began from the coast of Cameroon to Barombi, cut acrossed Tinto to Ashong in Moghamo before his arrival in Bali in 1889.<sup>198</sup> Likewise, Zintgraff first stayed in Moghamo around the 1888 before moving to Bali in 1889.<sup>199</sup> Arriving Bali in 1889, the German administration was established. From Bali, Moghamo felt the German influence in local governance.

Though the German colonial administration was very harsh; with all sorts of intimidation of the chiefs, the Germans believed in the institution of chieftaincy, that which they met in the Grassfields. The way Zintgraff was welcomed in the Grassfields was different from the way he was received in any other area in the Kamerun colony. This explained the reason why the German instituted the Native Authority System.<sup>200</sup> This policy was suitable and useful in the Bamenda Grassfields in general and in Moghamo in particular because the chiefs' roles could not be over compromised to its subjects. However, it should be noted that not all of Moghamo area was rule by the Germans from Bali. Only villages such as Bessi, Guzang, Ashong, Ambo, Efah Ewah, Nyenjei, Mbounji, Anong, Ngyen-muwah and Ahgwi called Batibo itself were directly under the influenced and stronghold of Fon Galiga I and later Fonyonga II.<sup>201</sup> Other parts of Moghamo were either on their own or under Fon Mbah I of Ahgwi village who claimed paramount over them.<sup>202</sup> During the periods of the German administration, the chiefs and their subordinates were responsible for the affairs of local governance in the Moghamo clan. But it should be made known that long before the arrival

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<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* p.115

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* p.116

<sup>200</sup> British colonial office Records, letter No: 35941 of 24/02/1916 in Ndifontah, N. The Chamba of Cameroon

<sup>201</sup> N. Nyamndi., (1986), p.117.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

of Zintgraff in the Moghamo and established links with the Bali through treaties, Galiga I had built a strong empire which extended across the Moghamo clan.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> See the map in page 51, Bali Nyonga's Empire including Moghamo between 1870s and 1880s.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MOGHAMO UNDER THE BRITISH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION 1916-1961

#### 3.1 Introduction

Following the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 and the subsequent defeat of the Germans in Kamerun by 1916 marked an end to the German administration in Cameroon. Britain and France took Cameroon and tried to govern it jointly which failed and were left with no option than to partition Cameroon. As a result of this, Cameroon was partitioned between Britain and France in 1916 by the French officer Georges Picot who produced a map showing that the whole of Kamerun was desired by France, with the exception of a tiny strip of territory along the South-eastern border of Nigeria which did not even go as far north as Yola.<sup>204</sup> And the Milner-Simon Agreement later confirmed by the League of Nations in 1919. Moghamo clan our area of studies, fell under the British spheres of influence. The British administered their own portion of the Cameroons as an integral part of Nigeria. In 1923, due to economic and political considerations, London further divided its portion into British Northern Cameroons with control from Yola in Northern Nigeria and British Southern Cameroons as one of the provinces of Eastern Nigeria with control from Enugu. The British Southern Cameroons where our area of study is found was divided into four administrative units; Victoria, Mamfe, Kumba and Bamenda Division. Moghamo was placed under the Bamenda Division during the mandate and later in 1949, when the Bamenda province was formed, under the trusteeship; it was still placed under the newly created Bamenda Division.<sup>205</sup>

However, Moghamo like in any other area in the British Southern Cameroons, the British administered via the policy of Indirect Rule that has been successful in Nigeria and other British colonial possessions in Africa. This was because they believed that chiefs' rule could be better in administering the people of Southern Cameroons especially those of the Grassfields where Moghamo was located. This was due to the simple fact that Grassfields chiefs commanded must respect from their subjects and also as a result of the simple fact that, the leading Grassfields King, Fonyonga II had turned his empire in support of the

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<sup>204</sup>British Colonial Office Records, Letter No. 35941 of 24/2/1916

<sup>205</sup>File No. 1947/53/2 N.W/NAB "*Annual Reports to the UNO*" 1947



British.<sup>206</sup> As a result of this, the British substituted the direct rule for indirect rule policy. This policy of the British was effective in the Grassfields area.

In this chapter, we are going to examine; the arrival of the British in Moghamo, the British policy of indirect rule and chieftaincy reforms, firstly the period 1916 to 1945 and secondly, the period 1945 to 1961. We are also going to examine the privileges and benefits enjoyed by traditional authorities in Moghamo during the colonial administration.

### 3.2 The Arrival of the British in Moghamo

From 1916 to 1922, Moghamoland came under provisional British administration. The British pacified the Moghamo, thanks to District Officer Podevin and his all-male successors, appeased Moghamo authorities and opened society by allowing direct access to the station and thus initiated the participation of Fons, male figures of authority in Moghamo clan in the new colonial order.<sup>207</sup>

During the League of Nations Mandate and the United Nations Trusteeship, the British designed, tested and implemented the policy of indirect rule in Moghamoland as they did in the rest of the Bamenda Grassfields of Cameroon.<sup>208</sup> A policy meant to secure British interest, the indirect rule prospered at the expense of the indigenous population and the women in particular.

More than six years passed between the occupations of the Bamenda station by Major Crookenden's four companies and the approval by the League of Nations of the terms of the mandate approved at Geneva<sup>209</sup>, the Moghamo authority deterioration of its communal power following the introduction of a policy of indirect rule and the promulgation of the Nigerian Criminal Code.<sup>210</sup>

Some political changes took place immediately as the whole of the Grassfields was left hanging following German defeat by the Allied Forces, and by December 15, arrangements were underway to provide an interim administration for the region. During this time, the population of the Bamenda Division was about 414,000 in January 1916, when the first

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<sup>206</sup> N. Nyamndi,, P.128

<sup>207</sup> Leveson, Forest p.254 eds. *Landscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa*. Ed. Toyin. F et al. Emily Brownell.

<sup>208</sup> Reade, *Savage Africa*, p.76-77

<sup>209</sup> Robert N., *My Ogowe* (New York: Neale, 1914), p132-133 in *Landscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa*. Eds. Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 244-669

British officer, G.S Podevin, arrived from the Calabar (Nigeria).<sup>211</sup> He took up administrative responsibilities for the said population with really a small staff composed of 2 interpreters, two policemen, one Lieutenant, two assistants at Kentu and Ossindinge, 12 Messengers and some domestics.<sup>212</sup> Podevin was faced with break away villages in Moghamo and other parts of the Grassfields.<sup>213</sup> Capt. Armstrong. Col. Sgt and fifty male soldiers were sent against the Moghamo villages of Ambo and its neighbours for continued refusal to accept Bali as tax and labour agent of the administration. Guns and other weapons and compasses were used. The DO's toured the area setting up disputes in open air courts with village Fons and male elders present. That was the beginning of the setting of the Moghamo Native Court system.

From 1923 to 1926, Moghamo faced some of the crucial and most significant challenges of history. Drastic measures were taken to implement British policies. For example, the Fon of Pinyen a traditional ruler was killed for using ritual sanction, sassawood poisoning Ordeal, 'goog' on his people. The Fon of Enyoh was imprisoned for refusing to obey the British D.O, thereby generating so much fear in the people.<sup>214</sup>

Following the above event, the Moghamo Native Authority and Native Court Area<sup>215</sup> was established in 1927 when the British Administration began to create Native Authorities in the Bamenda Grassfields. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May that same year, the Native Court opened and offered participation and possible enhancement of status and positions in the society. Education and Christianity gained strength and a new kind of mobility, symbolised by the opening of Bamenda-Mamfe-Ekok-Eloum Road, which became the main road linking Bamenda Province to Eastern Nigeria.<sup>216</sup> The Ngemba, Bali and the Ndop Native Authorities were also created in the same year.<sup>217</sup> The Moghamo clan Area was a popular area known during the era of the Germans and the British Colonial administration. The popularity stemmed from the fact that Moghamo had fought many wars of conquests with the Bali since their arrival in the Grassfields. And some greater parts of Moghamo like Batibo central, Anong, Oshum, Mbounjei, Nyenjei Guzang, Ashong, Bessi and Ngyen-Muwah villages were of Galiga's I and later Fonyongaa's II bastions in the Grassfields. When Native court was

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<sup>211</sup>H. William., *The Great Apes, Recreation* 8 (1898), 259

<sup>212</sup> P.V., *Notre Passe: Etude Historique* (Paris: Societe D'impressions Techniques, 1970), p.32-33

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34

<sup>214</sup> *Landscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa*. Edited by Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell.

<sup>215</sup> C. Anyangwe,, *The Secrets of an Aborted Decolonisation: The Disclassified British Secret Files on Southern Cameroons*. African Books Collective, 2010

<sup>216</sup> *Landscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa* eds. Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell.

<sup>217</sup> Nyamndi, N., P.137

created in Bali Nyonga in 1925 to settle disputes between Bali and her neighbours, a local Native court was already functioning in the Moghamo clan area.<sup>218</sup>

In 1923, due to trouble over land and tax collection between Bali and her neighbour sub-chiefs included those of Moghamo, the British decided to redefine and free some of these villages under Bali. Between 1916 to 1920, many broke away from the Bali. 11 sub clans under Bali including Moghamo villages fight for total freedom from Fonyonga's rule. They wanted to achieve what their other counterparts had achieved in 1914 when 18 sub clans were freed by the Germans for paying taxes through Fonyonga II.

By 1920, Moghamo villages had departed from the Bali Empire and paid taxes directly to Bamenda station and received a dash of 2 pounds. This struggle was a reason why the British Senior District Officer who arrived Bali, G.S Podevin ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Chief Fongang of Guzang in the German Ford in Bamenda for instigating the revolt.<sup>219</sup> However, like the Ngemba villages that departed and created their Native Authority in 1927,<sup>220</sup> Moghamo Native Authority area was also created around the same period 1927. The Fon of Ahgwi village, Chief Mbah I became the president of the court. The Moghamo Native Court and Native Authority were gazetted after the reorganisation of 1938.<sup>221</sup> The court was made up of court President, Vice President, a Clerk, a scribe and Messengers and the council of Native Authority was made up of various chiefs who represented the more than 22 Moghamo chiefdoms. At first, there was no Native Authority school in Moghamo by 1930 as they could still benefit from the one operated in Bali. But the Bassel mission opened a government assisted school at Batibo and Catholic at Widikum in 1937.<sup>222</sup>

### **3.3 The British Policy of Indirect Rule and Chieftaincy Reforms: The Period 1916-1940**

The British carried out many chieftaincy reforms in the British Southern Cameroons under the policy of indirect rule from 1916 to 1961. However, in the beginning, the British were not very sure of the way they would administer the Southern Cameroons. Initially they retained the four German administrative units of Victoria, Mamfe, Kumba and Bamenda Divisions and administered them directly.<sup>223</sup> That is without making any use of traditional authorities.

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<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.* p.138

<sup>219</sup> B.F., Gardinier, *the British in the Cameroons: 1919 – 1939 in the British and Germany on Africa imperial Rivalry and colonial* eds. Grafford and Louis, London Grafford and Louis, London Yale University Press

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* p.34

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.* p.35

<sup>222</sup> R. J O'Neil., *“A History of Moghamo 1865-1940: Authority and Change in Cameroon Grassfields Culture”*. Ph. D in History university of Columbia, 1978.

<sup>223</sup> Nkwi p.67

The first D.O in the Bamenda Grassfields was Podevin and was later replaced by N.C Duncan.<sup>224</sup> The District or Division was in the charged of a District Officer (D.O) assisted by an A.D.O all responsible to the Resident in Buea. At the beginning, the D.O was empowered to apply the German laws that existed in his district, or in the absence of such laws, native laws and customs be apply provided such laws and custom did not contradict European standards. Again, the D.O was at liberty to apply Nigerian laws or to administer the division in the ways he had previously administered in any part of a British colony.<sup>225</sup> By 1916, the British would abandon the policy of direct administration in principle lack of European staffs and indirect rule was therefore initiated.<sup>226</sup> In the early 1917, the Governor-General of Nigeria Lord Lugard the architect of indirect rule advised that Southern Cameroons would have to be rule indirectly through the chiefs.<sup>227</sup> The new system of administration, the indirect rule system which was already elaborated in his book titled “*The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*” was introduced in the British Southern Cameroons. Several years after the decision was taken, it was named Native Administration.<sup>228</sup>

Under this part we are going to look at the Native Authorities system, the Moghamo Native Authority, Moghamo Native Courts and Councils and the roles played by the Native Court during this period.

### 3.3.1 Native Authority System

Native Authorities were traditional authorities or chiefs and their councils that were formerly recognised by the British as agents of the administration during the British colonial administration.<sup>229</sup> The British began the reconstruction of Native Authorities which in their view had been seriously impaired under the brutal Germans administrative policy. According to the British report on the Cameroons to the League of Nations in 1922, page 52 which quoted the greater architect of Indirect Rule Sir Lord Lugard himself, one of the first goals had to be; to rule through chiefs, seek their cooperation and maintain their prestige.

“The chief was a crucial link in the development of a native administration. Only by reinforcing the chief’s position could a viable native authority emerged to which the British hope to transfer as many tasks as possible ”.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>224</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>225</sup> E. Chilver, “*Native Administration in West Central Cameroons 1902 -1954*”, ed. Nkwi. P.N; Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics. (Frobenius Institute. Bd. 25 1979), pp 99-115

<sup>226</sup> Resident, Buea to D.O Ossidinge, 29 May 1917, file Ja/d (1916) 1 N.A.B in Paul Nchoji Nkwi

<sup>227</sup> D. E. Gardinier, “*The British in the Cameroons 1919 – 1938*” in Paul Nchoji Nkwi, (Yaounde, 1989).

<sup>228</sup> File No. Bk 129, General Chiefs Conference. Minutes of Ndop Fons Conference, 1978

<sup>229</sup> British Reports on the Cameroons to the League of Nations. 1922. Page 52

<sup>230</sup>*Ibid* p.53

Following this, after a serious investigation by the British from 1916 to 1920, four qualified Native Authorities were nominated and recognized by the British authority. These were the Fons of Bali Nyonga, Nso, Kom and Bafut in the Grassfields area. In places where the people were not well organized, efforts were made to group indigenous people into Native Authority Areas and responsible natives called warrant chiefs were appointed.

In Native Authority areas were found Native Courts, Native Treasuries and Councils. Native Authority exercised judicial and fiscal functions in courts and treasuries within its jurisdiction. As functions, they were also given the responsibilities of providing health and educational services in their various localities as well as encourage economic and socio-political developments. In 1917, G.S Podevin, the first British officer in the Bamenda Division, opened an instructional Native Court at Bamenda and in 1918, a court was open in Bali.<sup>231</sup> Podevin died at the end of the year and was replaced by SDO Major Crawford, who had the difficult task of supervising the court and Native Treasury at Bamenda and two courts at Bali and Bagham without an assistant. By 1919, Bagham and Bali courts were closed.<sup>232</sup>

Under the judicial system, Native Authorities were made governance and chiefs were made members of the councils which were developmental agencies. Cases which involved serious crimes were sent to Bamenda. The Bamenda prison was permitted to detained criminals convicted by Native Authority courts for up to two years. Under the Native Court Ordinance for categories of courts A and B, C and D. Court "A" had full judicial powers over civil and criminal cases except death sentences. Grade "B" court had jurisdiction in civil action which the demand does not exceed 50 pounds and in criminal cases where the punishment did not exceed two years imprisonment, 24 lashes or a fine of 50 pounds. Courts "C" civil jurisdiction where the claim did not exceed 10 pounds and criminal jurisdiction where the punishment or a fine of 10 pounds. Grade "D" 5 to 10 pounds, imprisonment of the three months.<sup>233</sup> Native Treasuries were also empowered to collect taxes and the council was for native legislation where laws were being made.<sup>234</sup> Native Authority was empowered to maintain law and order, collection of taxes, labour recruitment, promotion of public health and sanitation in community development. Economically, development like farm to market

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<sup>231</sup>Carl, Heinersdoff, *et al*, "Reisen in West Afrika nach seinen hinterlassen Tagebuchern und Briefen". In Lanscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa. Ed. Toyin F et al. Emily Brownell. ),179-180

<sup>232</sup>Louis D, et al. *Macquis de Compeigne, L'Afrique Equatoriale: Gabonaise, Pabouins, Galloiss*. Paris: E. plon, 1875) p. 147-190. EdsLanscape, *Environment and Technology in Colonial and Post colonial Africa*. Toyin F, et al. Emily Brownell.

<sup>233</sup>NAB, File No: Ma/9/1920/20 'Native Court Jurisdiction Bamenda

<sup>234</sup>G.E Batey..., *Effective modern History for Colleges*. (Dove Educational Press Ltd, Sixth Ed. Buea 2018), 69

roads were constructed under these N.A. Schools were not also left out. In 1923, the British opened the First Native Authority in the Bamenda Grassfields precisely in Bali Nyonga and follow by a Native Courts<sup>235</sup>

Below are photographs of some chiefs from Moghamo that governed during the British mandate precisely after 1945.

**Plate 4: Some *Moghamo Fons***



Source: Photo Archives Buea. R.S: 641721, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

From the Left, Fon Timah Jacob Awu II of Anong and to the Right, Fon Richardson Forkum II of Bessi

### 3.3.2 The *Moghamo* Native Court Councils and its Structured

In 1933, the British District Officer, for the Bamenda Division Mr. C.H Croasdale after a careful toured in the Moghamo area, proposed the establishment of a central chiefs' council under the presidency of the Fon of Mbah I of /Agwi-Batibo which was to constitute a Native authority and the establishment in each village a chief council called a local council which was to be subordinate to the N.C.<sup>236</sup> The central N.C proposed by the D.O was a full "D" Grade powers having jurisdiction over all the villages in Moghamo. The panel membership

<sup>235</sup> P.N Nkwi., "Colloquim of the Grassfields political Institutions". (cuissels France 1977)

<sup>236</sup>See appendix 2. Intelligence Report on the Moghamo Speaking Families of the Widikum tribe.

was to incorporate all the chiefs and village councillors under the presidency of the chief of Ahgwi with several village heads (chiefs) as Vice-presidents.<sup>237</sup> After the Central court, he proposed the establishment of five combined village courts, called *Ngaku* courts which were; Babunji-Baminyenjei, Babessi-Babunjang, Babessom-Bamua, Bamesong-Bamungwen and Mbengok-Banumben.<sup>238</sup> It should be noted that the D.O's proposal was based on the desires of Moghamo Fons who did not want any joint federation either administratively, judicially or financially with any neighbouring units, but have expressed a wish for an independent administration.<sup>239</sup>

Unfortunately, for Moghamo, the proposal was rejected by the residents in Buea who in his comments, was against the principle of establishing a chief-in-council in each village and a central court at Batibo.<sup>240</sup> He mentioned the fact that the only justifiable central body is a meeting of chiefs and councillors at Batibo to discuss common interest with the district officer, notably on estimates/budget and tax. So, there should be no central Native authority at this stage, no subordinate Native Authority at this stage. All these comments in the reply to the D. O's report by the Resident, was because of difficulties of administrative supervision.

However, even though a Native Court existed in the Moghamo Native Authority Area, its organisation was extremely loose as confirmed by the D.O in 1935 reports after his visit to the area; the Native Court, never very favourably reported and has shown no improvement, and abuses on the parts of members, coupled with a total disregard of custom, particularly the matrimonial matters were too evident. By 1935, it was no exaggeration to state that the Mbem Native Court, in the primitive "Kaka Ntem" Area was a better institution than the Moghamo Court. It should be noted that this was happening at time when the Batibo village group was without an active village Head, the young village head being a minor, Tike later G.T Mba II, the son of Fon Mba I. Papa Tazo, Regent of Batibo who was representing the Fon, was however looked up to by other village heads and were prepared to accept him as president of the Court. In the Moghamo area, twenty-one villages of Widikum origin were divided into five groups, showed little cohesion and unity. Each village was administered by a village head and council of elders, with village heads striving to obtain the power of a Bali or a Tikar chief. The eldest chiefs resisted and the result was the absence of authority.

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<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, p.112

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.* p.3

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2 see appendix two

### 3.3.3 The Role of Moghamo Native Authority

Moghamo traditional rulers were made N.A, thus exercising judicial and fiscal functions in the court and treasury within their spheres of influence. N.A was given the responsibilities of providing health and educational services in their various localities as well as encouraged economic and socio-political developments.

The Moghamo N.A as mentioned above was made up of Native Court, Native Treasuries and Council of Chiefs which later became the Moghamo Customary Court. In the Native court, the various chiefs from Moghamo met in their council to settle disputes of Witchcraft, issues of marriages, and land disputes between villages. Matters that were more than their deliberation like murder were sent to the court of the specific jurisdiction in Bamenda.

Examples of issues settled by the court. The president of the court was rotational from one village to another but however; chief Mbah I and later chief Mbah II and Awu II both from Ahgwi and Anong village respectively were very popular when it came to their turn leading the court. Chiefs in the Moghamo N.A area played a major role in Socio-Economic development. During the British colonial administration, the construction of the Mamfe-Bamenda road, Batibo-Mbengwi roads, the prosecution of band of clandestine slaves and participation of local and external trade, work ventures (plantation trading) were under the supervision and strict controlled of the Moghamo chiefs.

In Moghamo, young men that were instrumental were commissioned by chiefs to go around collecting taxes that were sent to Chiefs' Palaces (Ngaku) for further classification into the government treasuries and N.A treasury. Community developmental works such as constructions of roads, bridges, markets and building public offices were under the supervision of the Moghamo N.A. The bridges linking Mbounjei and Ahgwi villages, Ahgwi and Ambo villages and Oshum and Anong villages were constructed under the supervision of Moghamo Fons. Young men and women who refused to take part in the community reliance efforts of the village were punished by chiefs.

By 1940, Moghamo chiefs who welcomed the Chief Commissioner Shutte in September 1940 showed flexibility and political pragmatism which allowed them to retain whatever old



communal power they could while benefiting and even prospering under colonialism. The most notable examples were Regent Tazo of Ahgwi and Fon G.T Mbah II of Ahgwi.<sup>241</sup>

The Moghamo N.A Court had its main function that of settling disputes in accordance with the traditional laws between members of N.A area. Such disputes already mentioned above. After the Native courts, was Native Treasury which was a set up where taxes collected had to be paid from Native Authority. This tax money was used to pay president, vice president, councilors, courts' clerks and some helped in the provision of basic amenities in the Moghamo N.A area to build infrastructures like schools, dispensaries and roads.<sup>242</sup> Examples of such structures in Moghamo were the building of G.S Nyenjei, which was the first N.A school in Moghamo, the dispensary which was in the old Post Office Batibo and many other roads and bridges mentioned above. The N.A played a big role during the British Colonial administration as compared to the role of chiefs during the German era. It therefore means that, the Moghamo Native Authority had powers during the British period than the Germans period. Below is the photograph of the First Native Authority School in Moghamo.

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<sup>241</sup>R. J O'Neil. "A History of Moghamo 1865 to 1940: Authority and Change in Cameroon Grassfields Culture". Mill Hill Missionary in Cameroon, 6b years with Moghamo (1972 – 1978), 1988 to 1989 Bamenda, Cam, (Gonzaga University North Western USA. 1987)

<sup>242</sup>File No. Kib/b 1940/5, Bamenda Native Treasury, Cameroons Province 1940

**Plate 5: The First Native Authority School in Moghamo**



**Source:** Author; at Mile 71 Oshum Village October, 28<sup>th</sup> 2021

The three photographs above are the old structures of the First Native Authority School in Moghamo by name G.S Nyenjei today. The building is still used till date. Though the images resembled that of an abandoned building, it is because of the Anglophone Crisis that started since 2016 and has interrupted schools programmes. If not these structures are still solid.

### 3.4 The British Colonial Policy of Indirect Rule and Chieftaincy Reforms; the Period 1940-1961.

Unlike the first phase of the policy of Indirect Rule 1916-1940, the British carried out many reforms as far as the institution of chieftaincy were concerned between the periods 1940 and 1961. Firstly, in 1940, the Native Authorities were already democratized by introducing new class of elites into the system. Secondly, the government of the British Southern Cameroons changed and this time around it was not under the Eastern Region of Nigeria but a new state with a Quasi-Regional Status introduced in January 1954 and Buea was made the headquarters for the British Southern Cameroons. This brought changes to Moghamo and the whole Grassfields because the administration was brought closer to the people and the British were instrumental in the creation of the House of Chiefs.<sup>243</sup> Southern Cameroons was thus separated from the Eastern Region and was accorded its own House of Assembly and its own Executive Council. The House of Assembly was empowered to raise taxes, and other political issues. And the SCHA met in Buea for its first time on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1954 with 13 elected members, 6 nominated Native Authority members, 2 appointed special members and 3 Ex-Officio members.<sup>244</sup> During this period, the institution of chieftaincy was more involved in local governance and increased in socio-economic and political developments. New political changes with chiefs involved in active politics were introduced as chiefs became a primary tool in partisan politics.<sup>245</sup>

However, it should be recalled that this was a decisive period in the institution of Chieftaincy in the British Southern Cameroons as chiefs were geared to achieved total rule over the people and take them to independence and also because of the Quasi Regional Status obtained through the Lyttleton Constitution which could make a cutoff or stayed out from Nigeria politics.

As a matter of fact, under this part, we are going to examine the democratization of N.A in the British Southern Cameroons in the 1940, Moghamo chiefs' roles in politics and chiefs and the struggle to the creation of the Southern Cameroon House of Chiefs (SCHC) which later became the West Cameroon House of Chiefs (WCHC).

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<sup>243</sup>T.H Afuhngang., *Socio-economic Changes in Akum North West Province of Cameroon. Pre-colonial Times to 1961*. By (LCP London, BA Yaounde July 1998)

<sup>244</sup> V.G. Fanson., *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges: From pre-historic times to the twenty-century*, Revised and Updated Combined Edition". (Team Work Press, Bamikika'ay-Kumbo, 2017), 293

<sup>245</sup>*Ibid.* p308

### 3.4.1 The Democratization of Native Authorities in the British Southern Cameroons in the 1940s

In the 1940, the powers of N.A were checked by a colonial administrative law which democratized Native Authorities. It officially allowed literate Cameroonians for the complete membership with the chiefs of N.A. This worked against the chiefs since most of them were illiterates. The chiefs were then subjected to scrutiny of new elites who considered the chiefs as agents or as hindrance to economic and socio-political developments of their own areas.<sup>246</sup> The positive erosion of traditional authorities which was intensified in the 1940s by the introduction of educated elites into governance saw a positive attempt at the re-evaluation in the 1950s. The newly educated elites that emerged in the 1940s accused traditional authorities of not being educated enough to administered the people in administrative matters.<sup>247</sup>

Following the democratization, in 1949, four federations were created in the Grassfields in which all chiefdoms except Bali were grouped.<sup>248</sup> Recognized hereditary chiefs were appointed N.A to whom were assigned revenues for expenditure within their areas. It should be noted that in the Grassfields, chiefs were not appointed by the British as they did in east Africa to carry out administrative functions. The new elite accused Britain for using unprogressive and illiterate chiefs to retard the progress of the country.<sup>249</sup> In a petition addressed to the United Nations visiting mission, the Kom Improvement Association, an association of new elite had this to say to the British administration;

The worst neglect of all is the absence of training for self-government whereby, the people might hope to do these things for themselves. Instead by damnable Native Administration System, there is the role of things remaining where they were. This is done by excluding the literate and enlightened from the administrative councils. Most council's members are there by might of neither birth, nor matter whether they can serve the people or not. When will these illiterate old men being trained for self-government rule? In their graves? Off course it does not matter with the government.<sup>250</sup>

Britain had to take into account the views of these new elites. This led to the creation of representative assemblies that is the SCHA, and democratisation of Native Authorities in preparation for full autonomy which became the primary objective of the British. Some of these educated elites that emerged in the Grassfields in the 1940s were; John Ngoh Foncha,

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<sup>246</sup>P.N Nkwi., “*Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*”; Paiduma: Mitteilungen Kulturkunde Bd. 25 1979) m pp 99-115 (17 pages). Published by Frobenius Institute. <https://www.jstor.org/s/table/23076440>.

<sup>247</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>248</sup>P.N Nkwi. “*Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*”. <https://www.jstor.org/s> (Paiduma 25: 1979)111

<sup>249</sup>*Ibid* p.112

<sup>250</sup>T. pet 4/35 1950



S.T Muna, Augustine Ngom Njua, V.T Lainjo, J.T Ndze, A.T Ngala, S.C Ndi and Rev. Kangsen. Below are photographs of some of the newly western educated elites who emerged in the 1940s.

**Plates 5: New Western Educated Elite in the British Southern Cameroons**



Source: Photo Arhives Buea, File No.229402 R.S: 629402,629399. 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2021

From the Left, Dr. J.N Fonch and to the Right, A.N Njua

Under the new N.A ordinance, the Bamenda province was made up of 22 clans. 21 of which had been grouped into four federations, each forming a federated Councils and the Moghamo N.A was among the South Western Federated council.

## Judicial Organization

Under the new colonial administrative law which democratized Native Authorities, it also affected the functionality of the judicial organization. After 1940 under the trusteeship system, two sets of courts functioning side by side those administering the English laws and those which primarily administering native laws and customs both in civil and criminal cases. In the first category, magistrate courts found in Buea and Native courts among which one was found in Moghamo. The Chief Magistrate of the Magistrate court had its headquarters in Buea who toured the whole of Cameroon and the Bamenda provinces where he held court sessions.

Four grades of Native Court with jurisdiction specifically defined on civil or criminal cases existed. Native court of the first grade exercised the widest jurisdiction, but not sentence of death may be carried out until it has been approved by the Governor.<sup>251</sup> The other grades of the Native Courts had limited jurisdiction. Residents and District Officers of the administration controlled the operation of all Native Courts and may review any of the proceedings or modify the sentence. Example, the UN visiting mission in 1952 stated that, in sixteen Native Courts trialed between September 1950 to October 1951, 3659 cases out of which only 1.07% were modified or annulled on review by administrative officials.<sup>252</sup>

## Public Finance

Moghamo did not have a separate Native Treasury in the area different from that of the Bali. This was because the people were yet considered sufficiently educated in the principle of Native Administration to be fitted to bear responsibility of the custody of their funds.<sup>253</sup> Annual estimates of revenue and expenditure within the area were prepared and discussed with the several village councils as opportunity occurs. The chief of Batibo as the President of N.A and President of Central Native Court received an annual combined salary of 12 pounds. The administration was to remunerate only 25% of the total revenue under other village heads.

There was also democratization in public finance, taxes and budgets. Under the direct taxation ordinance, the native population pays direct taxes in Moghamo and other areas in the Grassfields. This tax was assessed on the basis of the ascertained annual income of native

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<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.* pp.99-110

<sup>252</sup> Report of the UN Visiting Mission 1952.

<sup>253</sup> NAB, File No: 1027, Vol. I Intelligence Report on the Moghamo, Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe by C.H Croasdale, A.D.O, 1933

community or an individual native. No other land or house taxes were imposed with exception of jangali tax. Those who reared catles in Moghamo paid this tax which was on the cattle of nomadic herdsmen. The chief in Moghamo apportioned the total tax of elders in accordance with the abilities of individual tax payers. Native employees of local governance, government, native authorities and commercial firms were taxed individually on their incomes. The NA retained a greater portion of the direct tax for their budgets.

However, for the budget, NA also had their budget which after approval, all NA personnels and work was paid.

### **Health Education**

By 1945, there was a dispensary in Moghamo precisely in Ahgwi village. The dispensary was located in the present day Batibo Motor Park in the Old Post Office Building.<sup>254</sup> It should be noted that though the NA system played it role to maintain hygienic and a good sanitation atmosphere in Moghamo, health and education was mostly in the hands of the missionaries. Even though it was not easy for the natives to accept missionaries because of their doctrine of Christianity that was contrary to the native tradition and custom, they were forced to accept the missionary role through the education that was given to them<sup>255</sup> So with the help of the Moghamo NA, Missionaries opened and built many schools and dispensaries in Moghamo. The Bassel mission opened an English Primary school in Batibo in 1937 because the Moghamo man could no more accept the teachings of the missionaries using the Mungaka venecular.<sup>256</sup> In 1947, another school was open in Guzang and in 1948; a Teacher Training College was opened in Ahgwi. Between 1948 and 1960s, 531 teachers graduated from this school.<sup>257</sup> Statistics showed that by 1951, there were 302 Vernacular Schools and Primary Schools in the trust territory as compared to the schools in the mandate period.<sup>258</sup> Of these, fifty-seven were government and Native Authorities while the remainders were mission schools and other voluntary agencies schools. The highest schools were in the Bamenda Division; seven Native Authority Schools and 135 mission schools of which few came from Moghamo. All of these were being constructed with the help of NA.

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<sup>254</sup>Interview with ...

<sup>255</sup> Interview with HRH, Fon Agwejang Moses Mbah, 78 years, Anong, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>257</sup> Interview with Edum in Christian Missionaries.

<sup>258</sup>UN Visiitng Mission to the Trust Territories in West Africa, 1952 Report Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration. Together with related documents 28 January- March 1954.

### 3.4.2 Moghamo Chiefs' Role in Politics and the Struggle to Independence.

During the period of the British Trusteeship, the chiefs' role in politics was felt in Moghamo. For instance, the Moghamo chiefs who welcome Chief Commissioner Shutter in September 1940 showed a flexibility and political pragmatism. The most notable examples were; Reagent Tazo who was the representative of Fon G.T Mbah of Batibo.<sup>259</sup> During the period of the British Trusteeship, the administration was mostly in the hands of the NAs. The British and the politicians believed chiefs in the Grassfields commanded greater respect and authority over their subjects and as such, chiefs' role in politics was also felt.<sup>260</sup> However, the new elites of chiefs that emerged in 1950s were also keen in preserving traditional institutions that gave them a sense of identity. This search for a part gave the politicians the feelings that independence could not be achieved without the active participation of chiefs. The chiefs were the people who controlled the populations. The politicians knew that any political arrangements without the chiefs would be disastrous. 57% of the Grassfields population of Southern Cameroons was controlled by chiefs.<sup>261</sup> Most of the chiefs were regarded as sacred beings whose ritual functions promoted the welfare of the tribe. So, to arouse the people against their chief through political demagoguery and intrigue could be considered as sacrilege. These were the facts which no politician could ignore without ending in political bankruptcy. The 1960s saw the emergence of new African states, thanks to the efforts of different nationalist movements. Chiefs were very instrumental with the formation of the KNC in 1953 and Endeley's stance in favour of separation from Nigeria. For instance, the petition from the KNC to the Commissioner for the Cameroons Province dated July 1953 was signed by eight chiefs from the Grassfields including Fon Mbah II of Moghamo who signed on July 22 1953. Traditional rulers once more gave their support to the nationalist movement election of 1953.<sup>262</sup> Southern Cameroons was in a unique situation as it seat was caught up between two factions by 1957.<sup>263</sup> The Kamerun National Congress/Kamerun People's Party (KNC/KPP) fighting for independence within the federation of Nigeria and Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), preaching the doctrine of secession from Nigeria and reunification with

<sup>259</sup> R.J. O'Neil, PhD in History. Columbia University., N-Y 1987; Dissertation, "A History of Moghamo 1865 to 1940: Authority and Change in Vameroon Grassfields culture" Mill Hill Missionary in Cameroon. 6 Years in Moghamo 1972 -1978, 1984) 1988 -1989 Bamenda....

<sup>260</sup>Tassi, « An introduction to Pinyen Political History in Socio-economic Changes in North West Province of Cameroon. Pre-colonial times to 1961. By Afuhngang Thomas (LCP London) B.A Yaounde July 1998

<sup>261</sup>P.N. Nkwi., *Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*, Paiduma: Mitteilungen Kulturkunde Bd. 25 1979) m pp 99-115 (17 pages). Published by Frobenius Institute. <https://www.jstor.org/s table/23076440>.

<sup>262</sup>B. Chem-Langhee: "Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and the Nationalist Movement 1953- 1961. Afrika Zamani: Revue d'histoire Africaine, 1984 p.147-163

<sup>263</sup>R.A Frii-Manyi., *Post Plebiscite Petitions and Requests for the Partition of Southern Cameroons*. European Journal of Social Sciences, (Vol. 2, 2017). ISSN: 2501-8590



French Cameroon. During the 1959 elections in the British Southern Cameroons, Moghamo and other tribes of the Grassfields gave their votes to J.N Foncha; the KNDP candidate.<sup>264</sup> J.N Foncha and Jua personal campaign in Moghamo won the admiration of traditional authorities and their votes contributed to his victory which help him acquired the post of Prime Minister. The KNDP victory was thanks to the efforts put in place by traditional authorities in the Grassfields. This is to say that in the attainment of independence and reunification, chiefs without leaving those of Moghamo played an active role through the KNDP. The nationalists' parties KNC/KPP and the KNDP courted the support of chiefs.

A statement made by the president of Wum Chiefs' Conference, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 1958, in support of reunification;

We the natural chiefs have the interest of the people and the country more at our heart than the politicians. We have a natural and more lasting right to speak for the people and the country than the politicians. We are confident that the salvation of Southern Cameroons is to secede from an independent Nigeria and have autonomous Southern Cameroons region.<sup>265</sup>

They were growing Moghamo chiefs also in militancy and developing a new political conscience under the wise leadership of educated chiefs especially the Fon of Bali who acted on several occasions as their spokesman.

In a meeting in Bamenda in January 28<sup>th</sup> 1958, attended by chief Mbah II and Chief Bamtie Timah Jacob Awu II, Gwan Mbanyamsig I of Guzang together with other Grassfields chiefs, dissasociated themselves from the views of Dr. Endeley's Party. The role of Grassfields chiefs at this meeting led to Dr. Endeley's removal of chiefs' representative from the Ad hoc meeting of the Federal laws and Marketing Board.<sup>266</sup> This action infuriated the chiefs. In a letter sent to the Governor General in Lagos through the High Commissioner in Buea, the Fons and chiefs stated that they had lost confidence in Endeley's government. Again, the chiefs opted for session. That notwithstanding, chiefs rallied and influenced the people of Moghamo clan to support the KNDP in the 1959 elections. Among these chiefs were Fon Mba II of Ahgwi village, Chief Timah Jacob Awu II of Anong village, Chief Forkum III Richardson of Bessi, Gwan Mbanyamsig I of Guzang and a host of others. This effort by the Moghamo chiefs contributed to the independence and reunification of the British Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>265</sup>Daily Times, 9th January 1958 p.11

<sup>266</sup>NAB File No. ab/C/ 125 *Intelligence and Assessment Report on Moghamo Area Bamenda Division, 1939.*

### 3.4.3 Chiefs and the Struggle to the Creation of the Southern Cameroon House of Chief.

Another reform carried out by the British in the Native Administration was the creation of the Southern Cameroon House of Chiefs (SCHC) in 1957 so as to provide a formal role in the policy making on the part of the chiefs.

However, the British were instrumental in the creation of the SCHC in the Southern Cameroons. In promoting their parliamentary system of government of a Bi-Cameralism, the British regarded the House of Chiefs to perform the same functions as the House of Lords (HOL) which included; advising the government, deliberating bills and proposing or modifying legislations. In short, the functions were judicial, legislative and deliberative.<sup>267</sup>

Several factors led to the creation of the SCHC ranging from the British stance as mentioned above, the experience which the chiefs in Southern Cameroons had following the association with the chiefs and Emirs of Nigeria and the 1952 Eastern Chiefs' Conference which was inaugurated at Onitsha. When the Eastern Chiefs Conference was created, a few of Southern Cameroons Chiefs picked up their seats in it. Among them was the Fon of Bali Galiga I who later became instrumental in the SCHCs. It was long after the establishment of the Eastern House of Chiefs' Conference, that a Southern Cameroons Chiefs' Conference was proposed. The Southern Cameroon Chiefs Conference (SCCC) was formed in 1956 with the purpose of providing a vehicle for the chiefs of the grassfields to put forward their views on matters particularly concerning their traditional status. These efforts of the Grassfields chiefs were later enlarged to include heads of descent groups from Mamfe, Kumba and Victoria Divisions.<sup>268</sup> Following this, the Grassfields chiefs organized themselves in divisional conferences. The Fon of Bali, Galiga II toured the Grassfields' Chiefdoms addressing the chiefs on their obligations as natural rulers. Since he had attended Constitutional Talks in Lagos and London, on the future of Southern Cameroons, he was in position to enlighten the grassfields chiefs.

Moghamo was incorporated into the South Western Federation in the Bamenda Division. In a meeting of the chiefs of South Western Federation that was held in Mbengwi in early October 1957, attended by 30 chiefs from the Grassfields and politicians of the KNC and KNDP, some chiefs came from Moghamo among who were; Chief Mbah II of Ahgwi village, Chief Timah Jacob Awu II, Chief Forkum III Richardson of Bessi, Gwan Mbanyamsig I of Guzang,

<sup>267</sup>B. Chem-Langhee: *Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and the Nationalist Movement 1953-1961*. Afrika Zamani: Revue d'histoire Africaine, 1984 p.147-163.

<sup>268</sup> Cf Letter to the Governor General in Lagos sent by J.O Fields (Buea Archives)

Chief of Ashong and a host of others from Moghamo.<sup>269</sup> The conference was presided over by Fon Ndefru of Mankon. He called the chiefs to stay out of politics and geared towards the creation of the SCHC that was to be a better platform for them to harness the institution of chieftaincy. It was also at this meeting that Galiga II of Bali joined the chorus of other chiefs telling them how he and Foncha has fought for the establishment of the HOC during the London Constitutional Talks.<sup>270</sup> He asserted that Foncha and his party had respect for traditional leadership. Achirimbi of Bafut endorsed the views of Galiga II, adding that the chiefs should form a platform to overthrow Endeley.<sup>271</sup> And the chiefs finally passed a vote of non-confidence in Endeley's government

However, in order to brief the chiefs on the importance of HOCs, the British High Commissioner J.O Fields toured the Grassfields as was empowered by the constitutional Conference to determine the method of selection of members of the HOCs. On May 1<sup>st</sup> 1958, he addressed the chiefs of South Western and South Eastern Federated Native Authorities at Ndop in which Moghamo chiefs from the South Eastern Federation were present. He explained the decisions of the London Constitutional Talks regarding the future of Southern Cameroons and the establishment of the HOCs. He discussed the mode of selection of members, the nature and structure of the new institution. After the Commissioner's tour, D.Os was then instructed to constitute different electoral colleges that would choose the chiefs' representatives. When the regulations were drawn and finally signed by the commissioner on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1960, all the D.Os and chief electoral officers were notified that election into the HOCs would take place on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1960. Over 311 chiefs registered in 1968. 48 from Wum, 14 Nso, 94 in Nkambe, 123 in Gwofon (Moghamo). Of the 22 seats opened to chiefs, four were reserved to the four Grassfields kings (Kom, Nso, Bafut and Bali) and of the 18 remaining seats, over 300 Grassfields chiefs had to contest for only 9 seats.<sup>272</sup> Bamenda Division was constituted into three electoral colleges for the selection of chiefs' representatives. The election finally took place in July 1960 and the following chiefs were to represent Grassfields chiefdoms; Chief Meh Boh of Isu (Wum), Chief Walleng of Aghem (Wum), the Fon of Kom, Fon of Bali, Fon of Bafut, Fon of Nso, chief Ghogomo of

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<sup>269</sup>NAB File No: 35 "Southern Cameroons Information Reports on Southern Cameroon Federation included Ngemba, Moghamo, Menemo, Ngie and Ngwo. 28<sup>th</sup> December 1957.

<sup>270</sup>Daily Times. *Endeley disrespect of chiefs; greet them by shaking of hands, sitting by their side on stools reserved for their fellow Fons or by addressing them by wrong titles or at wrong times.* 15th October 1957 p.6

<sup>271</sup>*Ibid.* p.7

<sup>272</sup> B. Chem-Langhee: *Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and the Nationalist Movement 1953-1961* (Afrika Zamani: Revue d'histoire Africaine, 1984, p.149.

Bambalang, chief of Ngwo, chief of Mfe (Nkambe), chief of Ndu, chief of Nkembongsi (Nkambe) and chief Mbah II (Moghamo).<sup>273</sup>

On September 6<sup>th</sup> 1960, the HOCs sat for the first time at Buea. Even though only one among the Moghamo chiefs occupied a seat in the SCHCs, they were very instrumental for the creation of this institution in the British Southern Cameroons. This was through their subsequent presents in the South Western Federation Chiefs' Conference.

However, when the SCHC emerged in 1960, it was not the source of authority in the British Southern Cameroons as propagated, when it was finally established, its first president was the British High Commissioner for the Cameroons Province J.O Fields. Thereafter, its president was always a member of the Southern Cameroons Executive Council, usually the Speaker of the SCHA who though himself not a traditional ruler, had the discretion to decide what should be discussed. This was also because of the illiterate nature of the chiefs. Whatever reason, the worst was still to come. Without question, the Federal Constitution of 1961 retained this prestigious institution of the British legacy in West Cameroon. It remained the West Cameroon House of Chiefs (WCHC) after the 1961 Federal Constitution was adopted. Membership into the WCHC was maintained as no election was conducted after the federal constitution was adopted. By 1968, some members of the HOCs had begun to bleak as they perceived no future for this house.<sup>274</sup> They were not totally mistaken, before the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1972, the President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon Ahmadou Ahidjo instructed the clerk of the House of Chiefs A.W Daiga who was about to organize a General Meeting of Parliamentary Wing of Committees of the WCHCs; that in future Chiefs' Conference would have to be held at Divisional level.<sup>275</sup> And in May 1972, a presidential decree gave the House of chiefs a maximum of six months to dissolve itself. And following this, the WCHC was dissolved.

That notwithstanding, it was the efforts of Grassfields chiefs including those of Moghamoin local governance that created this short-lived prestigious institution. Below are some photographs of chiefs in the first opening of the SCHCs in Buea on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1960.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.* p.160

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.* p.155

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.* p.157

<sup>276</sup> G.S 0061 Photo Archives Buea "First Opening of the SCHCs at Buea, September 6 1960. Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

### Plates 6: Chiefs in the First Opening of the SCHCs in Buea



Source: Photo Archives Buea, File No.229402 R.S: 629402, 67543. 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

### 3.5 Benefits and Privileges Enjoyed by Traditional Authorities in Local Governance under the Colonial Administration

Chieftaincy Institution was an important arm of local governance during the colonial administration. It all began with the Germans using chiefs as collaborators to rule the indigenous people of Cameroon and ended with the British applying the policy of Indirect

Rule which used the Chieftaincy structure as a system of governance. So, chieftaincy structure was the main body of governance in the grassfields of Cameroon during the colonial times. As already mentioned in the previous sections above, in the Grassfields chiefs carried out combined legislative, executive and even military responsibilities assisted by their council of elders.

Although these types of institutions were not synonymous to western institutions in terms of structure, administrative procedures, they enjoyed a lot of privileges at that time. Unlike the privileges enjoyed by chiefs during the German administration, chiefs in the British Southern Cameroons were more privileged than those under the Germans because the institution of chieftaincy had undergone many reforms under the policy of Indirect Rule.

This part seeks to examine the benefits and privileges or some perogatives enjoyed by Moghamo chiefs in local governance in the British Southern Cameroons during the colonial administration. These benefits and privileges are classified under political, economic and socio-cultural aspects of governance.

### **3.5.1 Political Benefits and Privileges**

Politically, many chiefs or traditional authorities in the Grassfields in general and Moghamo in particular gained recognition. Under the policy of Indirect Rule, many local chiefs gained recognition and undisputed accompanying influence and such gain have survived the Post-Colonial Times. The most glaring examples in Moghamo who gained recognition and popularity over the whole Grassfields was Chief Mbah I and later Chief G.T Mbah II both of Ahgwi Village (Batibo), Chief Timah Bamtie Awu II of Anong and Gwan Mbanyamsig I of Guzang . Others Moghamo chiefs were also recognized by given them Gazetted Certificates during the British administration. It should be recalled that Moghamo chiefs that constituted Moghamo clan exploited their position within the colonial dispensation to protect and advance their interest.<sup>277</sup> Again, chiefs were privileged to be executors of administrative orders or decrees and the discipline of their subjects. The Indirect Rule system put the administration in the hands of the chiefs who rule their subjects using the system designed by the British. In so doing, traditional authorities served as mediators between their subjects and Europeans. This mediation was done in the Native Courts system that existed in the Native Authority Areas in the British Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>277</sup>W.S., Mbapndah. *German Colonialism and Cameroonian Chieftaincy Institution, 1884-1916). The Policy of Convenience, Tyranny and Hegemony*, Vol 9, 2009

Another privilege enjoyed by the chiefs politically was that they were seen by their subjects as supernatural beings or demi-gods that could not be questioned. Nobody could question a chief in Moghamo during the precolonial and colonial periods. The leadership, unity, peace and security of communities were largely dependent on traditional authorities and institutions such as the *Kwifon*, *Mukums* and council of elders. To this effect, chiefs in Moghamo were at the helm of the society, he was the head of the executive, legislative and judiciary. He presided over the village council and had as privileges to take important decisions; excommunicate a citizen from his community and to withdraw traditional honours from some notables. Many examples existed in Moghamo where notables were withdrawn traditional honours or titles. It often happened for disobeying some traditional rituals or committing adultery with one of the chiefs' wives. A good example to be mentioned here was in Anong, one of the villages in Moghamo where one of the *Mukum Sambe* who happened to be my grandfather; Mbanwei Ayang was withdrawn traditional honour and title for allegedly committing adultery with one of the wives of Chief Awu I.<sup>278</sup> Following this, the traditional title was to be reinstated after a period of time and which was not done.

In Moghamo, traditional rulers had the privilege to appoint notables and carry out diplomatic negotiations with other villages within and out of the clan. For example, the chief was the only person who could appoint or give subject indigenes titles such *Bafons*, *Sakis*, *Were* and *iwiri ngok* (Red Feather) awards. Diplomatic negotiation like the transfer of traditional dance from one village to another was signed and ratified by the chief in Moghamo. The *Andere* dance of Anong Palace was diplomatically negotiated by Chief Awu I of Anong and Chief Forkum I of Bessi for it to be performing until today as the main chief dance of Bessi Palace<sup>279</sup>. Again, chiefs had the prerogative to create diplomatic relations with other Fondoms within the Grassfields of Bamenda fascinated by palace diplomats. A glaring example in Moghamo was relations between the Fondom of Anong with the Fondoms of Bafut, Bali and Nso under the reign of Timah Bamtie Awu II.<sup>280</sup> Chief G.T Mba II also emerged in the 1950s with such relations in the Grassfields as he was looked upon as the paramount and his position as the President of the Moghamo N.A Courts.

The search for prestige was another privilege enjoyed by Moghamoans chiefs and those of the Grassfields during the colonial periods. Many of them got involved in politics and became popular and shared the dash of politics as benefits. Some chiefs like G.T Mba II,

<sup>278</sup> J.A., Nwachan Oral History from my father, of late at 93 years in 2013.

<sup>279</sup> Interview with HRH, Fon Agwejang Moses, the Fon of Anong, 5 years, Anong, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*



Timah Jacob Awu II and Richardson Forkum II participated in the KNDP rallies in the 1950s. One of the first measures of the KNDP party was to set up SCHCs in order to satisfy traditional rulers who were backbone of the KNDP supporters. This captivated the chiefs who attended the several Chiefs' Conferences that were held in the Grassfields. The greatest of these conferences, was that which was held in Mbengwi in October 1957 attended by 30 chiefs from the grasfields and politicians amongst which were Moghamo chiefs led by Chief G.T Mbah II.<sup>281</sup>

### 3.5.2 Economic Benefits Privileges Enjoyed by Chiefs during the Colonial Periods

Rebates from taxes collected by chiefs were one of the most powerful benefits that empowered a chief in Moghamo. These rebates were direct and indirect. Direct rebates were the 7-10% stipend that was given to them by the colonial administration while indirect rebates were those part of taxes enjoyed by chiefs as a result of embezzlement which usually was a caused of scandal.<sup>282</sup> Chiefs became wealthy from taxes collected from their subjects, proceeds collected from the royal farms, tributes paid by slaves and also from people who needed favour in courts. Armed with this wealth, chiefs were able to strengthen their positions through patronage and a well-armed force.<sup>283</sup> As tax collectors, they were empowered by the administration to collect tax revenue within their jurisdictions. 1/3 of the proceeds of Poll Tax were saved in Native Treasuries for community developments and a percentage was given to them.<sup>284</sup> During the German even the British administration, chiefs' paid lump sum of tax into the Native Authority Treasuries and a 10% was given to them as compensation.

Moreover, the allocation of land to colonial projects and control of labour force were one of the economic prerogatives enjoyed by chieftaincy institution in Moghamo. They had as privileges and benefits in the allocation of lands for colonial projects such as the construction of schools, dispensaries and roads. And in return, the compensation for the loss of native lands was given to chiefs. Example was the Gwofon Plateau that was made headquarters of Momo Division after independence and reunification. It was Chief Timah Jacob Awu II that allocated the plateau and claimed compensation. Again, when the first Native Authority School was constructed in Moghamo on the present site occupied by Government School Nyenjei, it was Chief Muyah of Nyenjei who allocated the land for the project. Many other

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<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>282</sup> Interviewed with Mr. Tanjoh Fred, Former Mayor, age 58 years Yaounde, February 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

<sup>283</sup> Chiefs and Protectorate administration in Colonial Gambia 1894-1965

<sup>284</sup> B.J Natang..., *Indirect Rule in Colonial and Post-Colonial Colonial Cameroon*.....



projects in Moghamo such as the dispensary that was constructed now Batibo Pack, today occupied by the Old Post Office Building, was thank to Chief Mbah I who allocated the land. And most often they received a token as compensation for the loss of the lands.

The control of labour force was a very big benefit for traditional rulers. During this period, the Chief Palace produced a labour force that could be compared to that produced by more than 10 families coming together. This is because of the accumulation of women as a result of polygamy practiced by traditional authorities.<sup>285</sup> This led to the production of many children who later produce a big labour force. For example, Chief Timah Bamtie Awu II had 26 wives and inherited 10 wives from the father making a total of 36 wives with 175 children as Princes and Princesses. These were those that could be counted when he died and not counting inherited children and slaves that were more than 50 people and their children that he adopted as his children and gave them his name Timah.<sup>286</sup> The Fon of Bessi Forkum II of Bessi had 14 wives and two inherited from the father, making a total of 16 wives.<sup>287</sup> To this effect, Moghamo chiefs had the benefit of many things. He had the prerogative of not lacking anything as everything was under his command and control. He had the right over all the raffia palms and kola nuts cultivated in the village or community. That is the reason why palaces in Moghamo had regular supply of palm wine and kola nuts for entertainment of the chiefs' visitors. This is an aspect that still continues still today. The first harvest of all types of food; crops and some cash crops in the village was destined to the palace. Hunting grounds was reserved for the chiefs and important animals like Leopard, Buffalo and Antelopes were known as royal animals. Wherever and when they were caught, they were taken directly to the Chief Palace. In short good things in Moghamo were reserved for the royalty. The chief had the right over the village market and could choose anything at his will.

In the local governance, most traditional authority even royal children gained employment. This was a benefit enjoyed by the chieftaincy institution. First; they were the first people to gain employment as they were employed as courts' clerks, councilors and presidents. They were also paid for their services by the Native treasuries which retained a greater portion of

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<sup>285</sup> P. Geschiere..., "*Chiefs and Colonial Rule in Cameroon; Inventing Chieftaincy French and British style*" African Journal of the International African Institute Vol. 63, No 2 (1993), pp 151-175.

<sup>286</sup> Interview with Njei Raymond Abam, 36 years, Bonaberi-Douala Driver, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021. And a son of a Prince. He confirmed to have gotten this information from the father who was one of the first Princes of the Anong Palace.

<sup>287</sup> Interview with Forkum Menuch Atuh, 36 years, Princess of the Bessi Royal family, Obili-Yaounde, 26th August 2021.

the direct tax. All native authority personnels and works were paid because a budget was allocated for it.

### 3.5.3 Socio-cultural Privileges and Benefits

The most important social privileges or benefits enjoyed by traditional rulers in the Grassfields during the British mandate and later trusteeship period was the training obtained by traditional authorities as administrators in the colonial government. The British colonial policy of indirect rule was a powerful training to grassfield chiefs on how to govern their subjects. Many of them benefited from this policy because the colonial government had made it a policy to educate chiefs or chiefs' son or any person who was likely to become a chief.<sup>288</sup> In a memorandum dated 26<sup>th</sup>, May 1932, G.S Browne Resident for the British Southern Cameroons province, outlined the British stand for the education of chiefs. He said all the chiefs are to be educated at government or N.A schools. So, chiefs' sons were induced to attend schools.<sup>289</sup> It is interesting to know that by 1932 only one grassfield's chief had received full primary education. He was chief Nfominyen of Meta, the chief of Babungo who learned how to read and write had been employed before he became chief as a Basel Mission Catechist.<sup>290</sup> They were 63 potential rulers attending government and Native Authority schools in 1932.<sup>291</sup> In the 1940s, the three chiefs from the Grassfields who received the based minimum education were Mankon - Batibo and We. Chief Mbah went to school in Nigeria and became a teacher after graduating from the Teacher Training College, Chief Timah Bamtie Awu II attended school in Bali in the days of the Germans and was awarded a Standard V certificate and the chief of Bessi Forkum Richardson II attended school in the present up station Bamenda and obtained a Standard III Certificate.<sup>292</sup>

Education was one and the greatest benefit enjoyed by traditional rulers during the colonial periods especially with the British system of administration via the policy of Indirect Rule. Instructions to rule Southern Cameroons on the principle of indirect administration were issued only subsequent to the Milner-Simon Agreement that the chief had to be educated at Government or Native Authority Schools. As a result of this instruction from the British colonial administration, many chiefs were educated in the NA schools that were established

<sup>288</sup> P.N. Nkwi. "*Cameroon Grassfields*. p.102

<sup>289</sup> NAB, File No: 134/2 Intelligence Reports on the Moghamo and Menomo area, 1945

<sup>290</sup> File No. 134/2 in Nkwi Paul "*Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*" p.103

<sup>291</sup> They were 19 chiefs' sons in the Ndop N.A School, 5 at Bali NA School, 5 in Kom Fujua NA School. In the Bamenda Government School, they were 29 chiefs' sons among whom few came from Moghamo.

<sup>292</sup> Interviewed with Mr. Tanjoh Fred, Former Mayor, age 58 years Yaounde, February 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

all over the Grassfields. The Bali NA School established before 1927 incorporated chiefs' sons and a few chiefs from Moghamo. Moghamo chiefs such as Chief Mbah I, Mbah II both of Awei village, Chief Timah Bamtie and Chief Forkum II of Bessi were all products of the schools that were established during the colonial administration. It should be recalled that these schools were not only attended by chiefs' sons but members of the royal families and some notables equally attended some of these schools.

Moreover, respect was another prerogative enjoyed by the Moghamo chiefs during the colonial rule. Most of them commanded respect from their subjects and politicians from the KNC and KNDP parties. They were respected and given honour by politicians in the British Southern Cameroons. This was the more reason why politicians like J.N Foncha influenced and supported the creation of the SCHCs in the First Session of the SCHA in 1954.<sup>293</sup> This was because of the respect for chieftaincy institutions. Again, the fall of Dr. Endeley of the KNC party was as a result of disrespect of traditional rulers of the Grassfields.<sup>294</sup> Chiefs commanded respect both from their subjects and politicians.

### 3.6 Conclusion

The period of the British colonial administration in the British Southern Cameroons experienced many reforms as far as the institution of chieftaincy was concerned.<sup>295</sup> This was because the British thought wise like the Germans. They believed that chiefs' rule could be better in administering the people of southern Cameroons especially those of the grassfields where Moghamo was found. This was so because; Grassfields chiefs commanded much respect from their subjects.<sup>296</sup> As a result of this, the British substituted direct administration to indirect rule. The policy of indirect rule which gave traditional rulers an upper hand in local governance administration was effective in the Grassfields area.<sup>297</sup>

This chapter seeks to examine the revolution and the evolution that took place within the period of the British administration in the socio-cultural, political and economic roles of chieftaincy institution in Moghamo. From the policy of indirect rule instituted in the area immediately after the League of Nations confirmed the Milner-Simon Agreement in 1919,<sup>298</sup> traditional ruler took the lead until independence that came with the democratization of the

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<sup>293</sup>E.M., Chilver. "Native Administration in West Central Cameroons 1902 -1954", eds. Paul Nchoji Nkwi; *Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*. (Frobenius Institute. Bd. 25 (1979), pp 99-115

<sup>294</sup>*Ibid.* p.99

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.* p.103

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.* p.112

<sup>297</sup> B. Eyongetah,, A History of Cameroon. London, Long man Group Limited 1974

<sup>298</sup> N. Ndifontah,, *the Bali Chamba* p.200

native authority system in 1949 which some of them were resisted by the new educated elites.<sup>299</sup>

It is for these reasons that this chapter clearly examined the British policy of indirect rule and chieftaincy reforms; the period from 1916-1945 and the period from 1945-1961 and finally this chapter also tried to look at some of the benefits or privileges enjoyed by chieftaincy institution during the Germans and the British colonial administration in Moghamo clan and the decline of some of the precolonial privileges in Moghamo.

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<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.* p.202

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY CHIEFTAINCY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MOGHAMO 1888-1961

#### 4.1 Introduction

Chieftaincy institution was a genuine institution of governance during the pre-colonial and to an extent colonial period in African communities. During the colonial period, chiefs were a crucial link between the Europeans and their subjects. It became a respectable institution especially with the used of the British policy of Indirect Rule that put chieftaincy institutions at the forefront of governance. Though it was an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman, the colonial period brought many changes to the institution of chieftaincy in the Grassfields of Cameroon and Moghamo where this study is carried. Firstly, there was a change in their functions and nature. These changes brought a lot of challenges and problems to the institution. The institution was really altered as the masters of yesterday were seen as the errand boys during the European era.<sup>300</sup> However, the link of this institution between the European and their subjects could not be over compromise by the colonialist during the colonial administration in Cameroon especially in the Bamenda Grassfields where the British used the indirect rule to administer the people.

However, there was real contradiction between the intention displayed by colonial administration to rely on the traditional nobility to govern, to make traditional authorities as their right hand men and the humiliating treatment which was often inflicted on them.<sup>301</sup> It appeared that, this unhealthy treatment tending to ridicule the traditional chief far from discrediting them, rather aroused in their subjects, a spirit of solidarity and attachment to their chiefs.<sup>302</sup> The relative loss of authority of chiefs came more from the many ways chiefs collaborated with the colonial administrators.

Likewise, the institution of chieftaincy in Moghamo like in any other area in the Grassfields, undergone through a lot of problems and challenges during the colonial rule. That is the period between 1888 to 1916 and 1916 to 1961, the Germans and the British periods respectively. Under this chapter, we are examined the socio-political and economic problems

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<sup>300</sup> E.M Chilver., “*Native Administration in West Central Cameroons 1902 -1954*”, in Paul Nchoji Nkwi; *Cameroon Grassfields Chiefs and Modern Politics*”. (Frobenius Institute. Bd. 25 1979), pp 99-115

<sup>301</sup>M. Kuete, et al A. Dikoume., *Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres*. (Group de recherche Pluridisciplinaire sur la direction de Press Universitaires de Yaounde, Janvier 2000).

<sup>302</sup>*Ibid* p.124

and challenges faced by chieftaincy institution in Moghamo during the Germans and the British colonial administrations in the Bamenda Grassfields precisely in the Moghamo clan.

## 4.2 Political Problems or Challenges

Under this part, we are going to see how their functions were altered, the dethronement of chiefs and the appointment of warrants by the colonial administration and the challenge of bad governance.

### 4.2.1 Usurpation of Functions of Traditional Authorities

From masters to errand boys, from protectors to tax collectors.<sup>303</sup> During the colonial administration, their functions were altered as to what aided the colonialists for further exploitation. During the colonial administration, these functions could no longer be compared to those pre-existed during the pre-colonial era. It should be noted that, the latter were masters and defenders of their communities, custodian of lands and properties, had the prerogative to declare war and make peace but these functions were usurped and they merely became errand boys and tax collectors. The pernicious and degrading aspects of their mission have been strengthened.<sup>304</sup> Therefore, a very delicate situation, even harsh as that of Moghamo chiefs under Galiga I and latter Fonyonga II henceforth caught between the hammer of the chief envies of his subjects. Its delimitation lies in the choice to “*serve his master and lose its people or to serve his people and suffer the wrath of the master*”.<sup>305</sup> Here was the grammar of the chief in the grassfields, which is still played out today since with independence, the stick of command was passed to the authority of the Divisional Officer.<sup>306</sup> For example, we have witnessed twice the present Fon of Anong village (Moghamo), HRH Fon Agwejang Moses Mbah clashed with the D.O for Batibo Sub Division.<sup>307</sup> For the first time, it happened in 2006 when the then D.O for Batibo Subdivision Mr. Nkwele Divine had to step into the village without obtaining audience from the HRH the Fon of Anong.<sup>308</sup> Upon arrival in the village, the chief was at local road construction site with his villagers. Report came to the chief that the D.O was in the village to see him and the chief quickly back off by refusing to grant him audience. Following this, he sent his chief Messenger with a message “Go and tell him to go back. I didn’t invite him and I am not ready

<sup>303</sup> Interviewed with HRh, Fon Agwejang Moses Timah of Anong

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>305</sup> Kuete. Martin et al. Albert Dikoume., *Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres.* (Group de recherche Pluridisciplinaire : Press Universitaires de Yaounde, Janvier 2000).

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.* p.145

<sup>307</sup> Author “*Eye witness at the Anong- Egham Mbounjei Road construction*”, (Anong June 2006)

<sup>308</sup> Interview Timah Moses Agwejang, 75 years, Fon of Anong.

to receive him". The D.O was angry and intimidated. However, it did not end at the village. That same day after community work was closed at the working site, HRH Fon Agwejang Moses Mbah of Anong left the village to the D. O's Office in Batibo at the sub divisional headquarters to correct the D.O. in his statement, and he told the D.O that "You don't come to my village when I have not invited you". It led to some clashed and exchanged of words between the two which almost let to riot at the D.O's office but was quelled down by the intervention of HRH Fon Mbah II of Batibo.<sup>309</sup>

The second incident 11 years later on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2017 whereby this same chief, HRH Fon Agwejang Moses Mbah had a clashed with the then D.O of Batibo subdivision, Marcel Namata Diteng. This was on the occasion of the official celebration of his enthronement that was done some 30 years ago but was not celebrated due to his studies in the United States of America. The occasion was to be officiated by the D.O who came late when all guests and in the presence of His Royal Highnesses; Moghamo Fons had waited for more than three hours to no avail. The D.O upon arrival, refused to step down from his car that the host Fon should come and receive him at the door post of his car. To the Fon who was furiously waiting while sited on the royal stool for the occasion to begin, rejected the request of the D.O. and said "If he doesn't want to step down from the car, he can go back".The D.O stayed about 15 minutes in his car and the Fon said I can't leave this Royal Stool seated here with my humble colleagues to shake hands with a mere administrator.<sup>310</sup>Other Moghamo chiefs that were sitted with him had to intervene by begging him not to disrupt the occasion but to go welcome the D.O. when the chief finally accepted to receive him; he was accompanied by the *mukum sambe*. Upon arrival, the Administrator stretched forth his hand to greet the Fon he rejected his hand and instead pointed at his kingsmen who shooked hands with the D.O. To prove that the Fon meant business on this day, in his welcome speech, he made a statement "***Nation States are built on tradition, not tradition built on nation states***".<sup>311</sup>That notwithstanding, it was the second time in this same village with the same Fon that two different civil administrators, were humiliated.

All these were as a result of the simple fact that their attributes were usurped during the colonial era and the worst came after independence. Functions like management of lands, justice, and protection of boundaries of their territories were switched to that of errand boys

<sup>309</sup>Interview with Mr. Timah Ngariba Adamou, Driver of the Fon age 45 years, Anong 2006.

<sup>310</sup> Author, Eye witnessed 30<sup>th</sup> December 2017, Anong Village, on the occasion of the celebration of the final enthronement of the Fon.

<sup>311</sup>The Welcome Speech of the Fon on the Occasion of the Celebration of his final Enthronement. 30<sup>th</sup> December 2017 in Anong.

collecting taxes in the colonial administration. It was a painful thing which made them real groom because power escaped their hands. In Moghamo, chiefs' roles in collecting taxes, supervised public works, execute other tasks to construct roads and bridges, supply labour for colonial plantation at the coast. It is these roles especially that of collection of taxes, that traditional authorities lost more of their respect and values in the eyes of their subjects. The most notorious examples that were so glaring in Moghamo, where the chief suffered in the collection of taxes were the cases of Ahgwi and Ashong villages. Fon Mbah I that was exiled to Banyo in 1910 by the Germans as a result of insubordination to Fonyonga II in the collection of tax and Chief Mbafor I of Ashong who was imprisoned in Bamenda by the British who accused him of embezzling tax money. All this was due to the usurpation of functions of chieftaincy institution.

#### **4.2.2 Dethronement of Chiefs and Succession Crisis**

Chieftaincy dispute was a common problem in Moghamo clan and the remote causes for the dethronement of chiefs and succession disputes in the clan could be traced by the coming of the European and the subsequent colonization of Moghamo by the Germans and later the British. The seed of chieftaincy disputes in Moghamo was planted by the Germans and carefully guarded by the British such that after independence, it began to germinate.<sup>312</sup> Looking at chieftaincy dispute as a challenge to local governance during the colonial rule, it is easy to deduce that it was a common problem created by the European.<sup>313</sup> In order for colonialists to have facilitated Local governance in Moghamo, traditional authorities were dethroned and enthroned in some areas and warrant chiefs were appointed by a warrant from the colonial administration.

The dethronement and appointment of chiefs by warrant in Moghamo, stemmed from the major problem of collection of taxes, when the Germans knew that you were stubborn as a chief, working against their wishes or standards, you were immediately deposed as a chief. Examples in Moghamo during the reign of the Germans were; in Ambo village Chief Tita Sama was appointed by the German administration, in Angie Village Chief Isaac Tembei Agwo was replaced by his brother TitaNda Check with a warrant from the Geemans.<sup>314</sup> In

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<sup>312</sup>P.N. Nkwi; *Traditional Diplomacy* pp.58

<sup>313</sup>*Politics and Power Struggle in the Banyang Country*

<sup>314</sup> R.J O'Neil., "A History of Moghamo, 1865-1940, Authority and Change in the Cameroon Grassfields Culture", Ph. D Thesis, (Columbia University, 1978)



Ahgwi village Fon Mbah I was exiled to Banyo in 1910 by the German administration for embezzling tax funds and insubordination to Fonyonga I.<sup>315</sup>

However, the most glaring and pronounced examples of chieftaincy problems in Moghamo under the British period of administration that was birthed as a result of the indirect rule policy was the Ashong chieftaincy dispute that is still existing up till date. The Ashong chieftaincy dispute that began as early before the arrival of the Whitman in the land. It was during the reign of Enoh Tembeik (1879-1900) that conflict originated between his two sons Akamanda Cheoh and Tebi. As Akamanda Cheoh would invade Ashong to take over the throne from Tebi leading to the beginning of open confrontation in the Royal Family.<sup>316</sup> When this happened, Cheoh was reported to the German administration as the master planner of the war in Ashong. He was tried and found guilty and it led to his execution in Ashong by the German administration around 1906.<sup>317</sup> Once again, this chieftaincy dispute in Ashong was orchestrated by the British in the 1939 as a result of the fact that the British administration mingled with traditional politics by subduing the powers of Chief Mbafor I in favour of his brother Tita Enongang I and Tita Teku.<sup>318</sup> Following the system of indirect rule introduced by the British, the local rulers were in charge of tax collection among other things. Mbafor I the then undisputed chief of Ashong was responsible for the collection of taxes. However, he was sentenced by the British colonial administration for hiding of some taxable males and embezzling tax money. He collected tax from his people and paid in approximately half of what he collected. This was according to a report given to the then Senior Divisional Officer for Bamenda, Dr. Jeffreys by his contender Enongang on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1937.<sup>319</sup> It came out that he was appropriating 50 pounds a year and had done so for years.<sup>320</sup> He, with one Teku, also obstructed Mr. Harcourt in the compilation of nominal rolls.<sup>321</sup> The colonial administration therefore lost faith in Mbafor I and decided to make arrangement for a new chief to be elected. In the election that followed, Tita Enongang (Inawngang) contested with Tita Teku for the post. Teku mentioned above, was a brother of Mbafor (Bafo) and Inawngang also of the Royal Family.<sup>322</sup> In an election that was conducted in the presence of

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<sup>315</sup>Nyamndi., *The Bali Chamba*, 1978

<sup>316</sup>R.A. Frii-Manyi., "Power Politics in Moghamo Clan of Cameroon: An Analysis of the Succession Squabbles in the Royal Family in Ashong; 1900-2013". Vol. 4, No. 1, May 06, 2018. ISSN: 2455-751X

<sup>317</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>318</sup>Interviewed with Forkum II Richardson, 95 years, Bessi, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

<sup>319</sup>R.A. Frii-Manyi. A., "Power Politics p.184

<sup>320</sup>NAB, File No: N.A. 734/38, Ashong (Bamessong) Chieftainship: Moghamo Native Authority Area. Bamenda Division, June 7<sup>th</sup> 1940

<sup>321</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>322</sup>*Ibid.*

eight Quarter Heads of the village, the President of the Moghamo Native Authority Court; Papa Tazo who was also Regent of the Ahgwi and other Chiefs of the Moghamo Clan. The quarter heads were asked to separate into two groups: those supporting Inawngang and those supporting Teku, the division was five quarter heads in favour of Inawngang and three in favour of Teku but what was more disastrous for Teku was that eight of his compound heads immediately seceded from him and supported Inawngang while one compound head from a quarter that supported Teku also seceded. On the basis of the number of taxable males, the support for these two candidates worked out as follows; in Akuregwe and Akurunda quarters 51 and 9 males respectively voted in favour of Inawngang while part of Ngaku and Akurewa quarters 212 and 28 males respectively supported Teku. However, apart from Akuregwe and Akurunda quarters where Inawngang had majority votes, none of both candidates had majority votes as to the number of taxable males. Inawngang had a total of 250 and Teku had 251 taxable males.<sup>323</sup>

So, on the score of numbers above, there is nothing in the choice: but if the compound heads are counted, then there are 26 in favour of Inawngang and 17 in favour of Teku. What however was shocking is that 25% of Teku's own quarter opposed him and again, the opinion of moghamo Chiefs was then taken, and it was found that Papa Tazo and seven chiefs making a total of eight chiefs in all supported Inawngang and five supported Teku.<sup>324</sup> Following this democratic election, the order of the Royal throne was transferred from the Mbafor's line to Enongang's line of succession. This was a seed of succession crisis that was sowed by the British in the 1940s without knowing. Although chieftaincy succession in Moghamo traditional society is hereditary, and warrants that before the disappearance, the chief nominates his successor. This procedure was not applied here. The colonial administrators brought some sort of democracy as a guiding principle for the changing of the chief.<sup>325</sup> The table below shows the figures mentioned above in a tabular form the outcome of the election that was conducted in 1940 between Inawngang and Tita Teku for the choice of the next Fon of Ashong.

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<sup>323</sup> See Appendix 3

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>325</sup> Croasdale Intelligence Report on the Moghamo Speaking Families 702 Vol. 1, Ab (1953) NAB

**Table 3: Results of the Elections Conducted by the Colonial Administration with regards to the Ashong Chieftaincy Disputes of 1940<sup>326</sup>.**

Class of Voters	Candidate 1	Candidate 2
	Tita Inawngang (Enongang I)	Tita Teku
Quarter Heads	05	03
Independent Chiefs	08	05
Taxable Males	250	251
Compound Heads	26	17
Total Numbers of Voters	289	274

Source: NAB, File No: 702 vol. II Intelligence Report of the Moghamo Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe in the Bamenda Division by Croasdale, ADO, 1933

Following the above results, chieftaincy was therefore transferred from Mbafor I to Enongang I. Enongang I became henceforth the traditional ruler of Ashong and was recognized by the British as well as some faction of Ashong and Moghamo people.<sup>327</sup>

However, the chieftaincy dispute as to who should be the rightful chief of Ashong has dragged on for a long time till date. Enongang I position as chief of Ashong was contested in 1943 when the ex-village head Mbafor was released from the prison. His term of imprisonment has finished and he returned to Ashong.<sup>328</sup> It appeared that when he was convicted, the insignia of his office was not collected and held pending the appointment of a new village head. So, when he returned home in 1943, he regained his royal stool and was sitting on it and using the insignia of the village head of which he was no longer entitled. However, the matter was reported to the D.O in Bamenda who asked him to bring the insignia to Bamenda within one week. Mbafor objected saying that the D.O would then give it to his hated opponent. Following this, the village of Ashong was once again plunged into another division of two camps. The British government disqualified Mbafor as he was termed a thief of money. This made Mbafor to put forward his son Tengwe as the new village head according to custom. Following this episode, the D.O went to Ashong and held another

<sup>326</sup>NAB, File No: N.A. 734/38, Ashong (Bamessong) Chieftainship: Moghamo Native Authority Area. Bamenda Division, June 7<sup>th</sup> 1940

<sup>327</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>328</sup>*Ibid.*

meeting in front of the whole village. The positions of the villagers remain the same with a slight increase in favour of Inawngang: in the proportion 3:2.

This issue resurfaced again in 1972 when Inawngang finally died and his nephew Mbafor II son of Mbafor I who had died tried to regain the position of his father. As mentioned earlier, Enongang I had ruled Ashong from 1940-1972 and was number 82 on the Gazetted Magazine of the Southern Cameroons Chiefs.<sup>329</sup> On June 29, 1972, Mbafor II was approved as head of Ashong Village. This is how the Ashong chieftaincy has evolved to become contested by the royal princes. Meanwhile Moghamo villages have been making efforts to see into it that peace and tranquility reign in Ashong because the fiction that two chiefs exist in one village cannot be held.

In April 24, 1992, Moghamo villages led by HRH Chief Forkum II of Bessi organized a meeting geared towards the discussion of this dispute. This meeting was attended by the SDO's representative. In this crucial meeting, the chiefs of Moghamo resolved that this dispute which was already tabled in the court of First Instance of Batibo Margisterial district court be withdrawn. This was an illustration that they still cultivate the Customary Court attitude.<sup>330</sup> The decisions reached at this meeting were forwarded to the SDO of Momo Division at the time Mongolian Diabelle. At this meeting, some chiefs supported both sides and others remain neutral. For examples, Pinyen and Bali chiefs were for Enongang as the rightful chief of Ashong. The chief of Njen and Fon of Bamumbu have remained neutral in the whole affair.

Recent and new development in the history of this dispute was due to the death of David Chessami Enongang who died on March 28<sup>th</sup> 1994.<sup>331</sup> At his death, many thought that it was to be an end of this chieftaincy dispute. However, all arrangements were made following his disappearance and his son named Robben. T Enongang was enthroned as his successor. Although not recognized by the administration, R.T Enongang has attracted many followers in and out of Ashong village.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> In Magazine No 26 Volume 3 titled "*Southern Cameroons Chiefs*" June 8, 1963 published by the Federal Republic of Cameroon, in Buea. Enongang I appeared No. 82 being Ashong Village head.

<sup>330</sup> Interviewed with Chief Forkum II, Bessi one of the principal moderators in the Ashong Chieftaincy Dispute. Bessi Village September 10, 1997 in Shaibu. E.M "*Chieftaincy succession in Ashong 1870-1999; a History of Turbulance*" Dipess II in History ENS Yaounde, 2000.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.* p.87

<sup>332</sup> Interviewed with Chief Forkum II, Bessi one of the principal moderators in the Ashong Chieftaincy Dispute. Bessi Village September 10, 1997 in Shaibu. E.M "*Chieftaincy succession in Ashong 1870-1999; a History of Turbulance*" Dipess II in History ENS Yaounde, 2000.

In 1994, the Governor of North West Province decided that R.T Enongang be made third class chief and be a sub chief under Mbafor II who is second class chief. Many Ashong elites especially those from Lower Ashong did not share this opinion and some felt that the case should be taken to the Supreme Court in Yaounde. Despite of all these challenges concerning the Ashong chieftaincy here and there, the British administration in Moghamo, was responsible to have sowed the seed of this dispute.

Apart from chief Mbafor of Ashong that was accused by the British administration over squabble of tax money, in Moghamo during the colonial periods, Chief Sama of Ambo and Mba-ambuck of Guzang were also accused of embezzling tax money.<sup>333</sup>

#### **4.2.3 Governance Problems as a Result of Democratisation of N.A in the 1940s**

The burden of the administration fell heavily on the Native Authorities who themselves lack proper administrative guidance and had not even the benefit of well-trained administrators of local governance.<sup>334</sup> The NAs were too large for them to manage and that is why it was suggested in 1946 under the administration of C.J Mayne, SDO for Bamenda Division, that Bamenda Division was too large and communication in it difficult.<sup>335</sup> The Division should be carved up into four administrative units. That is why his successor F.R Kay strongly supported that Bamenda Division be made a province with three Divisions.<sup>336</sup> This was what led to the event of 1949 that invited the Western Educated Elites (WEE) to Native administration in the Southern Cameroons.<sup>337</sup>

Due to several challenges faced by traditional authorities in local governance, in 1940, the NAs were democratized in order to permit some WEE to participate in local governance. The challenge was that the chief was then subject to scrutiny of the new elite who considered them as agent or hindrance to governance.<sup>338</sup> The new elites that had emerged from the colonial formal education became very critical of the colonial administration. It attacked the whole basis of the NAs including Moghamo clan. Due to mismanagement and bad governance, a call was made for the WEE. In response to this, invitation, the British authorities in Southern Cameroons organized a meeting in Victoria in early 1949 under the chairmanship of Manga Willaim, a semi western educated chief. Twenty seven chiefs, six

<sup>333</sup>R.A Frii-Manyi., "Power Politics (2018), p.184

<sup>334</sup> M.H; Nilime, Camp. Annual Report for Bamenda Division for the year 1948, File no. cb/1948/1, BA, 1-2

<sup>335</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> N.A.B., Kay to Resident, No. 2575/19, 12 March 1948, File No. 1441 BDA in Croasdale Intelligence Report on the Moghamo Speaking Families 702 Vol. 1, Ab (1953)

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*

administrative officials and thirty seven observers attended this meeting.<sup>339</sup> They informed the new leaders that they could hope to play second fiddle in the government of their territory. As could be expected, some of the modern leaders immediately charged that the British were using “unprogressive and illiterate chiefs to retard the progress of the country.”<sup>340</sup> Their general feeling towards native administration was expressed in some times ungrammatical language. A petition written by the Kom Improvement Association to the petition addressed to the UNO.

The worst neglect of all (southern Cameroons) is the absence of training for self-government whereby the people might hope to do these things themselves. Instead of the damnable NAs system, there is the role of things remaining where there were.<sup>341</sup>

Essentially, the WEE either wanted the illiterate traditional authorities hand off native administration or they demanded the total abolition of that system of administration. But the British made their demand half-way when they introduced their administrative reforms in 1949. Bamenda Division was made a Province comprising; Bamenda, Wum, Nkambe Divisions and Victoria, kumba and Mamfe Divisions became the Cameroons Province.<sup>342</sup> A name formerly applied to the whole British Southern Cameroons. This new reform applied to the whole grassfields chiefdoms including Moghamo clan. Bad governance was evident through the embezzlement of public funds, mismanagement of tax money on developmental projects, bribery and corruption practiced in courts sessions

An example of such cases in Moghamo was HRH Chief Mbah II who accused the chief of Enyoh village for not paying tax money to the NA treasury whereas the chief of Enyoh claimed that he paid all.<sup>343</sup> But since he couldn't justify because he was an illiterate, chief Mbah educated than him could manipulate everyone against him. As a result, the Moghamo NA handled this using the customary laws of Moghamo. This happened when reagent Tita Ndi of Tiben was president of the Court. A traditional leaf called “*shan*” was brought for both chiefs to make a vow or swear on it according to the custom and tradition of Moghamo. Chief Mbah refused to vow and the customary Court ruled that Chief Mbah II collected the money and should pay into the Native treasury. Following this, Chief Mbah II appealed to the D.O in Bamenda, when the D.O came to Batibo to look into the matter, it is said Chief Mbah gave

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<sup>339</sup> B. Eyongetah, *Histry of the Cameroons*, pp. 128

<sup>340</sup> P. N. Nkwi, “*Grassfields Kings and Chiefs and Modern Politics*”, in I.S.H., No. and ONAREST (Yaoundé 1978), 10

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.* p.104

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.* p.105

<sup>343</sup> Interviewed with Mr. Agwejang, Former Head Teacher ,60years on Jan. 2021

one of his beautiful daughters to the D.O who spent the night with.<sup>344</sup> The next day while in court session, the D.O ruled the matter in favoured of Chief Mbah II and asked the Chief of Enyoh to be imprisoned. The president of the court Tita Regent Ndi became furious and angry at the D.O and used his cane brutally on the D.O who shouted that the Customary Court decision should be endorse.<sup>345</sup> And that Chief Mbah should pay the money. The Court's Clerk was asked by the session to register it and the D.O had to thumb print it because the court refused his signature that he could sign and refuse thereafter.

It should be recalled that most independent chiefs lost their place as traditional chiefs in NAAs. The independence of various villages that were under the main NAs like that of Bali was compromised as it put the president of the court above others who were merely members. Because of this problem connected to them, some modifications were made by the British between 1923 and 1927. For instance, the British named one of the Fon or Chiefs in each of the Native Court Areas of Nsungli, Meta, Moghamo, Fungom, Bafut and Mbembe all in Bamenda Division as NA. And from 1927 to 1936, the focus was more on various clans and ethnic groups and less on villages and Fondoms.

### **4.3 Economic Challenges or Problems of Governance**

Chieftaincy and local governance in the Grassfields area of Cameroon faced a lot of challenges and problems during the colonial administration. This was through the numerous economic projects carried out under the supervision of native administration during the period of the Germans and the British stayed in the Grassfields in general and Moghamo in particular. From tax collection to plantation agriculture, labour supply, allocation of lands for developmental projects and the construction of roads and bridges. Chieftaincy institutions faced a lot of challenges and problems in executing these functions. Under this part, we are going to look at land disputes as a challenge to local governance, mismanagement of public funds or tax money and poverty as an economic challenge or problems of chieftaincy and local governance in the grassfields and Moghamo clan to be precised.

#### **4.3.1 Land Disputes and the Allocation of lands for Colonial Projects**

During the stayed of the Germans and the British in the Grassfields, Moghamo witnessed a lot of issues as far as land was concerned. In short after the collection of taxes as a major

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<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*

challenge, land dispute became the second challenges and problem in chieftaincy and local governance.

In 1906, there was an anguish growth that boiled when the Germans began the forceful resettlement of some of the Moghamo villages within the Bali proper.<sup>346</sup> The subject village seemed convinced that the resettlement plan was a Bali-inspired scheme a new form of imperialism designed to bring them right under Fonyonga's backyard.<sup>347</sup> The Moghamo people became angered with the policy because most of their land was to be given to Bali. The net results were that several Moghamo villages which had been happy enough under Bali suzerainty in the past were now bitterly resented the idea of losing their land and independence and living in Fonyonga's backyard. The policy drastically happened the distinction between Bali and Moghamo villages thereby increasing the diplomatic and political isolation of Bali. What was more of a problem as far as land was concerned is that it sowed a seed of accrimonous land dispute that have since plagued the history of Moghamo-Bali land problems which led to several clashes of wars between the two parties in 1952.<sup>348</sup> Moghamo villages of Ngyen-muwah, Nyenjei, Guzang and Bessi were victims.<sup>349</sup>

In 1912, the last German Governor Karl Elbermaire decided to test the waters nearer home and in February 1912; Moghamo was freed, it's chief that acted as an intermediary; chief Mbah I returned home from exiled and was reinstated.<sup>350</sup> When there was no protest by Fonyonga over this, the Governor felt encouraged to proceed with the program. Bali lost total control over Moghamo and was to report directly to the Bamenda station. This loss of power over Moghamo land was effectively done on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1912 when the German governor summoned a meeting of all the chiefs under Bali Empire at the Bamenda station.<sup>351</sup> In this meeting, subjects' chiefs were encouraged to speak their minds. The Governor threw the bomb shell that marked the end of the Bali Empire. He announced the new policy of the station in a statement tantamount to the declaration of independence on behalf of the vassal chiefs. He declared that, even vassal envoys had the right to communicate directly with the station.<sup>352</sup> The vassals will keep the messengers at the station. Bessi, Guzang, Ambo, Ewa, Kugwe, Pinyen, Ashong, Ngyen-muwah and Nyenjei were some of the Moghamo villages

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<sup>346</sup>N. Ndifontah,, *TheBali Chamba of Cameroon*. p.95

<sup>347</sup>*Ibid.* p.96

<sup>348</sup>*Ibid.* p.97

<sup>349</sup>*Ibid.* p.97

<sup>350</sup> Interview with Mr. Mathias, Carpenter, 69 years, Yaounde, Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 2021.

<sup>351</sup> Interview with Mr. Mbah Vintcent, Former Deputy Mayor, 68 years, Oshum June 16<sup>th</sup> 2021

<sup>352</sup> Interview with Mr. John Akum, Teacher, 69 years, Ngyen-muwah, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2021.



that were freed. These villages could now receive tax tickets directly from the Bamenda station and send returns directly to the station, receiving 7% stipend in returns.<sup>353</sup>

### **The Bali -Widikum Disorder March 195**

The Bali-Widikum disorder that escalated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1952 was a clash between the Bali and Widikum tribes including Moghamo due to land dispute. The Bali-Moghamo land dispute was known to the Trusteeship Council from petitions submitted since 1949.<sup>354</sup> The disorder was at the time of British stayed in Moghamo. The Wdidkum riot seemed destined to occur at one point in the history of their relationship with Bali since the time of the arrival of the Bali in the grassfields.<sup>355</sup>

In March 1952, the long shouldering antipathy between the Bali and the Widikum tribes had its origin in land disputes. The seed of discord that was sowed during the time of the arrival of the Bali and the time the Germans stayed in Moghamo and in Bali germinated this disorder in 1952. The Widikum which outnumbered the Bali by 5 to 1, claimed titled to almost all the lands occupied by the Bali except Bali town itself.<sup>356</sup> The challenge began when a non-suit decision with cost against the Widikum Plaintiffs given by the judge of the Supreme Court at the end of February 1952 brought the hostile emotions to a head this led to a well-organised attack that was made by the Widikum tribes on the Bali from all sides on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1952.<sup>357</sup> Despite splendid works by the small number of government officials and Police, there was severe and prolonged affray in which about 1900 Bali houses and many properties were destroyed and some seven persons, mostly Bali lost their lives.<sup>358</sup> The war was not only fought by Moghamo clan, but clans such as; Menemo, Mankon and Ngemba native area were included.<sup>359</sup>

Following this, the Governor General in Nigeria appointed two investigating bodies. The first was commission of Inquiry instituted under the Collective Punishment Ordinance to ascertain the responsibility of the disturbances and the second was a commission consisting of a single

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<sup>353</sup>Interview with Mr. Tanjoh Fred, Former Mayor

<sup>354</sup>N. Ndifontah,, *TheBali Chamba of Cameroon* (1984), p.59

<sup>355</sup>*Ibid* p.61

<sup>356</sup>Reprot of the Commission of Inquiry into the 1952 Riots (Nigeria Gazette, No. 45, Vol. 39, Lagos, 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1952. See Appendices 4 and 5 p.168-176

<sup>357</sup> N. Nyamndi., *the Bali Chamba of Cameron*. Bali as the strongest state in the South western Sector of the Grassfields established its hegemony over a numbers of villages, both Bafore and during the period of the German Administration.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid*. p.99

<sup>359</sup>See Appendix 5and 6 p.176-193

judge to investigate the rival land claim.<sup>360</sup> The commission of inquiry under the Collective Punishment Ordinance placed the blame for the disturbances on Widikum people of the Moghamo clan, Menemo clan and Ngemba native area with the exception of certain villages. Some ninety eight persons were convicted by the Margistrate on charges of promoting native wars and two persons stood trials in the Supreme Court.<sup>361</sup> On the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1952, the Governor-General confirmed the findings of the Commission of Inquiry and in accordance with the ordinance quoted above, ordered the people of the three village groups; Moghamo, Meta and Ngemba native area to pay a collective sum of 10.000 pounds to be applied to the Resident in compensation to Bali for the damages and injuries.<sup>362</sup> The fine was paid by 15<sup>th</sup> October 1952 and placed on deposit in the Government treasury in Bamenda.

The second commission consisting of a single judge appointed to make recommendations regarding right of occupancy to be granted by the Governor in regard to the land in the disputed area submitted his report to the Governor and the case as under consideration by the Eastern Regional Executive Council of Ministers when the mission was in the country. In a memorandum submitted to the UN Visiting Mission, the Bali Improvement Union submitted that the total cost of the Bali damages was about 180.000 pounds and that the fine of 10.000 pounds was consequently inadequate. On the other hand, the Widikum memorandum asked for a sympathetic consideration of their claim over land rights and expected that the results of the commission of Enquiry into the right of occupancy would solve the chronic land dispute to the satisfaction of all concerned.

However, Moghamo had a lot of issues during the German and the British stay in their land and with their neighbouring clans but the most glaring was that with the Bali which still even a problem up till date.<sup>363</sup> Oral sources say where the Bali Palace is presently found, is Guzang land.<sup>364</sup>

### **4.3.2 Mismanagement of Public funds**

#### **The German Period**

During the German administration, the new role of traditional authorities became that of collection of taxes. It started with the Germans introducing the hut tax of six marks in the

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.* p.102 and the appendices 4,5 and 6, p.168-193

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>363</sup> Interviewed with Mr. Patrick, Carpenter, Yaounde Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

<sup>364</sup> Interviewed with Timah Emmanuel, Ritired Gendarme Officer, 75years, Anong Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> 2017

grassfields in 1907 to compliment or gradually replacing force labour.<sup>365</sup> This was an extension of the poll tax that had been operational in the Douala District in 1903.<sup>366</sup> The British also came with their policy of indirect rule with its main characteristics of using traditional rulers to collect taxes.

The matter of collection of tax by traditional authorities has often been the main debate and bond of contention in Moghamo during the days of the colonial administration. In the days of the Germans, most often traditional rulers were unable to manage these resources because they were never train on how to do so and also because they had been used to their tributes which they owe no account to give to anybody. But this time around, they had to give account of the money collected as tax to the German administration. As a result of this, mismanagement was the order of the day. In the days of the Germans in the Grassfields, Fonyonga usually received tax tickets for Moghamo and other vassals which he then distributed to them via his tadmanjis and a 10% stipend upon collection and payment of the taxes to the station.<sup>367</sup> Traditional authorities were usually very enthusiastic about tax responsibilities because of the privileges attached to it. This situation of Fonyonga's influenced in the grassfields often subjected many independent states including Moghamo chiefs to bring the tax returns of their villages and when this was not forth coming due to embezzlement, he usually pay the tax from his pocket pending reimbursement so as to protect the subjects chiefs and please the Germans.<sup>368</sup> Unfortunately, the reimbursement was often a source of conflict with the subject chiefs who were sometimes unwilling or unable to pay and they would disagreed with the exact amount owed. These difficulties in managing the tax collected were later taken to justification for a new stand of German policy that had very serious consequences on Moghamo. The most severe case being that of Moghamo chief; Chief Mbah I of Ahgwi Village who was exiled to Banyo in 1910 was as a result of tax embezzlement and insurbodination to Fonyonga I.<sup>369</sup> Firstly, this might have occurred because the amount required of Fonyonga I to pay by chief Mbah of Moghamo was small and secondly, because Moghamo was an independent state and the quest for Chief Mbah I to protect the sovereignty resulted to the above challenge. Other cases existed in Moghamo on tax collection as already mentioned in the previous chapters. But that of Chief Mbah was the most glaring case in the Grassfields.

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<sup>365</sup> Nyamndi. P.45

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.* p.46

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.* p.46

<sup>368</sup> N.Ndifontah. B i 108-109

<sup>369</sup> NAB File No. Cb?

## **The British Period**

The economic challenges and problems of chieftaincy and local governance in Moghamo during the British period were more severe as could be compared to the Germans period. The policy of indirect rule gave traditional authorities the full right to collect tax, supervise public works through the construction of their communities, maintenance of roads, supply labourers for the colonial administration to work in the plantation at the coast, a lot of mismanagements occurred in executing these roles on the side of traditional authorities. This was especially in collection of tax, where the chief lost total respect and values in the eyes of their subjects. This was when most of the tax collected was mismanaged either through embezzlement or when wrong calculation of figures was put in place. Sometimes traditional rulers over exaggerated in the collection of tax in order to fill their accounts and this often brought humiliation to the chief and some of the notables who placed the tax tickets with their subjects. When often this mismanagement was done, the British sanctioned the chief either through replacement or imprisonment. A good example in Moghamo was case of Ashong where Chief Mbafor I was accused by the British administration in 1940 for mismanagement of tax money through embezzlement.<sup>370</sup> He was imprisoned in the Bamenda prison and the same year, through a democratic election, Tita Enongang his brother was elected as the new chief of Ashong village.<sup>371</sup>

Apart of mismanaging tax money, traditional authorities did not know how to manage the money put in the NAs treasuries for developmental projects. Most of this money is often spent with no accountability.

### **4.3.3 Poverty**

During the colonial periods, traditional rulers were not as rich as it was during the pre-colonial periods. This was simply because their old role as masters to their new role of errand boys had strongly rendered them poor. Several powerful chiefs in the Grassfields saw the tax system replacing the tribute that was usually paid to them by their subjects and vassals. This went a long way to increase poverty within the ranks of traditional authorities. This is also one amongst the reasons that pushed them to squandered tax money collected for the colonial administration. The two instances mentioned above in Moghamo; Chief Mbah I who went on exile and chief Mbafor I who was imprisoned was as a result of embezzlement which they got

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<sup>370</sup>NAB, File No: N.A. 734/38, Ashong (Bamessong) Chieftainship: Moghamo Native Authority Area. Bamenda Division, June 7<sup>th</sup> 1940

<sup>371</sup>see Appendix 3

into as a result of poverty. The tribute system that seized to exist pushed some traditional rulers to be reluctant to pay tax to the colonial administrators because the chief was at a loss as to how to obtain his traditional perquisites.<sup>372</sup> Again, traditional authority's salary as tax collector or agent of the colonial administration could not be compared with the amount that was paid to them as tribute before the coming of the Whiteman. This explains why in 1945, Chief G.T Mba II of Batibo addressed a letter through the D.O in Bamenda to the Senior Resident of the Cameroon Province, Buea demanding for an increase of his salary as President of the Moghamo Native Authority Court.<sup>373</sup> One of the reasons why Chief G.T Mba II also demanded for an increase in salary was because assumed himself as the Paramount ruler of Moghamo N.A Area. This demand was rejected by the Senior Resident in Buea by advancing reason that; his position is like any other chief in Moghamo area. And moreso, the resident asked him in letter to delete from his mind that he is a paramount ruler.<sup>374</sup> Most importantly, perhaps, their role as tax collectors for which they had to render account to the administration was at odd with the aura as divine monarch. Because of poverty, their communities fatally; began to sleep.

#### **4.4 Socio-cultural Challenges and Problems**

One of the major impacts of colonization in Africa is that it brought western education and hence western civilization to the shores of Africa which by implication is a positive contribution towards African developments.<sup>375</sup> When colonialism emerged and wiped every aspect of the African tradition and custom. As a result of western education, majority of African traditional rulers lost control over culture and tradition. Christianity that was introduced took the role of an arbiter of what was culturally correct or wrong. African ancestral beliefs were equated to evil.<sup>376</sup> To them African religious beliefs were merely witchcraft, fetishism, superstition and magic. However Christian church also attacked prevailing African customs such as polygamy, female circumcision, and twin murder. They introduced monogamy which was highly hated by the chieftaincy institution in the Grassfields. Many indigenes were converted and made them to abandon their political relevant beliefs.

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<sup>373</sup>NAB, File No: N.A 1734/76 Mba, Village Head of Batibo, Moghamo Area. Request for Increase in Salary, 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 1944.

<sup>374</sup>See his letters and the reply of the D.O in Appendix three.

<sup>375</sup> Stephen Ochen, Basil C, et al. Nwako; *Analysis of Colonialism and its impact in Africa*. 2012

<sup>376</sup>H. Awah 78 years, Notable of Agwei vilage Batibo 20th June 2007

Under this part, we are going to examine the challenge of disrespect of moghamo custom and tradition, inadequate knowledge on western education and intimidation of traditional rulers.

#### 4.4.1 Disrespect of custom and tradition

During the colonial period, chiefs were no longer working in accordance with the traditional institutions, no longer cooperated with the *kwifon and ngwes*, but they were being controlled and influenced in their decisions and actions by the colonialists.<sup>377</sup> As already mentioned above, from masters to errand boys under the colonial administration, the first function of traditional authority which was that of practicing and maintaining the custom and tradition was defiled to an extent as the function of traditional ruler could not be compared to those defined during the precolonial period. Their mission and function have been strained.<sup>378</sup> We saw traditional ruler here instead of serving their people, they were now servicing the masters. Many traditional practices in Moghamo such as the worship and belief in numerous gods, the most popular ones being; the worshipped of *Animi and ejeuh gods*. That is mami water or water spirit or God of the forest respectively was tempered with by Christianity. Sacrifices that were made annually to appease gods' sieze from being existing. The value and the role of traditional institutions and secret societies such as *kwifon, neubefut, mafors, ngwes, nkweti, mukum sambe, traditional councils and nchindas* were usurped as the colonial administration took the lead by using traditional rulers as auxiliaries in the administration. Their voices were not heard as their leadership was under tutorship and control. In so doing, most of these aspects of tradition and custom to an extent began losing their values and some were finally abandoned.

#### 4.4.2 Inadequate Knowledge on Western Education

Traditional authorities faced a lot of challenges as they governed through the policy of indirect rule. It should be acknowledged that many of the Grassfields Fons were inadequately prepared for the function of governance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most of them knew nothing about the whitemen administration as they were not adequately trained for it. This was one of the reasons why the colonial government had made it a policy to educate chiefs' sons or any persons who was likely to become chief.<sup>379</sup> In a memorandum dated 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1932, G.S

<sup>377</sup>S. Ochen, Basil C, et al. Nwako; *Analysis of Colonialism and its impact in Africa*. 2012

<sup>378</sup> Kuate Martin et Dikoume Albert. *Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres.*) Group de recherche Pluridisciplinaire sur la direction de Press Universitaires de Yaounde, Janvier 2000)

<sup>379</sup>Paul N.Nkwi., "Grassfields Kings and Chiefs and Modern Politics", in I.S.H., No. and ONAREST (Yaoundé 1978), 11

Browne Resident of the Cameroons province outlined the British stance in education of chiefs:

If this province is to make any progress in the future, there are two ends at which we must aim; a) as many people as possible must be taught to speak and write good English, b) all the chiefs should have been educated at government or native authority schools. As to a) is being done and as to b), will you please inform me to what extends boys who are likely to succeed chiefdoms are being educated in schools and what prospect there is, that the end will be attained in the years to come? Is any special attempt being made to induce chiefs' sons to attend school.<sup>380</sup>

It is interesting to know that in 1932 only one Grassfields Fon had received full primary education. He was chief Nfominyen of Meta. The chief of Babungu who learned to read and write had been employed before he became chief as a Bassel mission Catechist.<sup>381</sup> They were 63 potential rulers attending government and native authority schools in 1932.<sup>382</sup> Despite all the efforts put in place by the British government to see that chiefs' sons were educated, most of the chiefs faced major challenges in speaking, reading and writing of English language. Many of them failed to meet up with the administration and thus contributed to socio-political and economic advancements. This explains the reason why in the 1940s native authorities were democratized in order to permit some of the educated elites to participate in local governments. The chiefs were then subject to scrutiny of the new elites who considered the chiefs as agents or hindrance to economic and socio-political developments of their own areas.<sup>383</sup> The new elites that had emerged from the colonial formal educational process became very critical of the colonial administration. It attacked the whole basis of native authorities. The new elites also accused Britain of using unprogressive and illiterate chiefs to retard the progress of the country.<sup>384</sup> In a petition addressed to the United Nations visiting mission, the Kom Improvement Association, an Association of the new elites had this to say to the British administration;

The worst neglect of all is the absence of training for self-government whereby people might hope to do these things for themselves. Instead by the damnable native administration system, there is the role of things remaining where [sic] there were. This done by excluding the literate and enlightened from the administrative council. Most council members are there by rights of neither birth, nor mater whether they can serve the people or not. When will these illiterate old men being trained for self-government rule.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>380</sup>NAB., File No 841/1921, Cameroons Province Annual Reports for the year 1925

<sup>381</sup>E.M. Chilver,, *The Bali Chamba of West Cameroon*, Report to the Bali History committee, Ms, 1960

<sup>382</sup>They were 19 chiefs' sons in Ndop NA School, 5 at Bali NA, 5 at Kom (Fujua NA), 2 from Kom and 03 from Bum. In the Bamenda government school, they were 29 chiefs' sons among whom were 4 from kom. It should be noted that some of this chiefs' sons had no title to the throne.

<sup>383</sup>P. N.NKwi., "*Grassfields Kings and Chiefs and Modern Politics*", in I.S.H., No. & ONAREST (Yaounde 1978), 10

<sup>384</sup>Nkwi 1976; pp. 172

<sup>385</sup>T. Pet 4/35 1950

So, Britain had to take into account the views of these new elites. This led to the creation of representative assembly in 1954 and democratization of native authorities and preparation for full autonomy became the primary objective of the British.

Unlike in the whole of Grassfields as mentioned above, Moghamo was not excluded. Most of the Fons did not receive adequate training on European system of administration. Only few of them like Fon Mbah II of Agwei village, Fon Timah Jacob Awu II of Anong Village, and Fon Richardson Forkum II of Bessi village were a bit educated on Western terms. Fon Mbah II went to school in Nigeria and attended Standard VI; Fon Timah Jacob Awu II went to school in Bali in the days of the Germans. He spoke some German and could write and speak some good English. He went to school up to Standard VI.<sup>386</sup> The Fon of Bessi, attended school in the present day Bamenda Up-station up to standard III.<sup>387</sup> Apart from these ones, few were a bit educated and their sons but majorities did not know anything on western European administration.

#### **4.4.3 Intimidation of Traditional Authorities and Loss of Values**

However, as already mentioned in the previous chapter, there is a real contradiction between the intention displayed by the colonial administration to rely on the traditional nobility to govern, to make traditional rulers as their right handmen and on the other hand, the humiliating treatment which was often inflicted on them. It appears that the unhealthy treatments tending to ridicule the chiefs far from discrediting them, rather aroused in the peasant masses, a spirit of solidarity and attachment in their chiefs. The chiefs lost their respect as their functions were usurped from that of the masters to errand boys. Here is the drama which is still played out today since independence, the power to command (stick of command) has been passed to the authority of the D.O.<sup>388</sup> in their roles especially that of the collection of taxes, the chief lost total respect and value in the eyes of his subjects. This was because firstly, it was not the place to do the collection of taxes and secondly, sometimes traditional rulers could over exaggerate in the collection of tax to fill their accounts which often was a source of their intimidation during the colonial periods.

The inadmissible treatments inflicted on traditional authorities who yesterday were respected, feared and considered by tradition to be infallible, came in variety of forms during the period under study. Firstly, intimidation and coercion were performed through summons to Fon with

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<sup>386</sup> Interview with HRH, the Fon of Anong Mbah Moses Agwejang

<sup>387</sup> Interview with Former Mayor of Batibo Council

<sup>388</sup> P.N. Nkwi., "Grassfields Kings and Chiefs and Modern Politics", in I.S.H., No. & ONAREST (Yaoundé 1978), 10



threats of sanctions. When several of these surmons were not replied, they were intimidated by taken sanctions against them. Some of their palm trees, palm kennels and their domestic animals like goats and sheep were siezed.<sup>389</sup> Secondly, intimidation came through the use of frequent injunctions in the colonial administration. This took the form of Simple sanctions and fines; sanctions on land disputes, lateness to pay tax, sanction for not maintaining roads and sanction through imprisonment terms. Thirdly, the last form of intimidation was dismissal and appointment of new chiefs. The replacement of a chief by another was considered by the colonial administrators as the supreme sanction.<sup>390</sup>

Besides, the involvement of traditional rulers of the Bamenda Grassfields in the German administration and in the British administration through the policy of indirect rule created unnecessary frictions. This led to the total disrespect and intimidation of traditional rulers. Intimidation, loss of respect and loss of values were also experience in many forms in our area of studies, Moghamo. It all started in the days of the Germans, the system whereby Galiga I and later Fonyonga II assured his sovereignty over some part of Moghamo as vassal's chiefs while allowing them their traditional dignity and independence was no longer deemed to be good enough. Fonyonga found himinterfering more and more in the internal affairs of Moghamo to explain the policy of colonial government and transits its instructions<sup>391</sup>. The bond of mutual respect that sustained their allegiance to the empire of Bali began to be eroded as the Fon of Bali was perceived to be working against them. For example, Fon Mbah I of Ahgwi village relation with Fon Galiga was no longer welcome as Galiga I and Fonnyonga II tried to humiliate and intimidate Moghamo Fons on several occasions during the German colonial administration.<sup>392</sup>

Again, nothing eroded this allegiance faster between traditional rulers in Moghamo and the Bali. Fonyonga's role as the chief tax collectors in the Grassfields and Fon Mbah I of Moghamo. Squabble over the amount of tax owing to these Fons by his subject chiefs caused the Fon to lose much respect before vassals' chiefs and subjects.<sup>393</sup> The natives began not only to question chief Mbah's authority but also to resist his role and suzerainty over them. Their

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<sup>389</sup> M. Kuete et Dikoume Albert *Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres*, (Group de recherche Pluridisciplinaire : Press Universitaires de Yaounde, Janvier 2000).

<sup>390</sup> M. H. Sandjong., *L'avenement d'Administration Coloniale Francaise et Reaction des Populations Locales au Cameroun 1916-1946 les cas des Bamilike de L'ouest Cameroun*. Mémoire de Maitrise Université de Yaounde. 1985

<sup>391</sup> E .M Chilver et P.M Kaberry., *Traditional Bamenda : The Precolonial History and Ethnography of Bamenda grassfields Buea 1967*

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.* p.111

<sup>393</sup> Nkwi; *Traditional Diplomacy*

images were further damaged when it came to rounding up unwilling labour for plantations in the Coast.<sup>394</sup> This was probably the most unpopular chore that the Fon of Moghamo under Bali supremacy ever had to perform an exercise which constantly drained the villages by exporting the able youths out of their communities or by depriving the empire of its best hands.<sup>395</sup> The most gruesome part of loss of traditional values in Moghamo in the times of the Germans was when royalties were exchanged for western goods. This happened in Moghamo when Fon Mbah I visited Dr. Eugene Zintgraff in Bali and gave him *aban-tok* (*Palace bag*) as a sign and symbol of creating friendship.<sup>396</sup>

During the British periods, some cases of intimidation of traditional authorities took place in Moghamo. The most challenging was that of Ashong chieftaincy matter in 1940 when Chief Mbafor I was accused of embezzling tax money several times which amounted to about 50 pounds. Following this squabble and embezzlements over tax money under the British administration, he was dethroned as chief and imprisonment terms were pronounced over him.<sup>397</sup> Following the above results, chieftaincy was therefore transferred from Mbafor I to Enongang I. Enongang I became henceforth the traditional of Ashong and was recognized by the British as well as some faction of Ashong and Moghamo people.<sup>398</sup> The removal or dismissal of a traditional ruler was seen as the highest sanction and disgrace in the days of the colonial rule.<sup>399</sup> Other forms of intimidation of traditional authorities occurred in Moghamo during the British rule such as; injunction, shaking of the hands with traditional rulers.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

Conclusively, the challenges and loss of values to which traditional rulers were subjected to during the colonial administration arose from the ingratitude of their new functions and from the illusion that they retained of the exercise of their traditional functions.<sup>400</sup> There were practices consisting in subjecting the chief to treatments unworthy to their social class and the idea that their population had of them. They were not an invention of the colonial rule that is the Germans or the British administration. Most of the socio-cultural, political and economic

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<sup>394</sup>Ibid p.55

<sup>395</sup>Nyamdi. 108 -109

<sup>396</sup>S.M Njang., *Government and Politics in Moghamo*

<sup>397</sup>Croasdale Intelligence Report on the Moghamo Speaking Families 702 Vol. 1, Ab (1953) NAB

<sup>398</sup> R.A Frii-Manyi., "Power Politic in the Moghamo Clan of Cameroon: An Analysis of Succession Squabbles in the Royal Family in Ashong; 1900-2013". *Global Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 4.1 (2018) 181-192. ISSN:2455-751X- [assessed 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

<sup>399</sup>In Magazine No 26 Volume 3 titled "Southern Cameroons Chiefs" June 8, 1963 published by the Federal Republic of Cameroon, in Buea. Enongang I appeared No. 82 being Ashong Village head.

<sup>400</sup>M. Kuete et Dikoume Albert., "Centre de Recherche sur les Hautes Terres » Group de recherche Pluridisciplinaire. (Press Universitaires de Yaounde, Janvier 2000)

challenges widely occurred during the Germans period. For instance, the humiliation of traditional authorities especially took place under the Germans at the start of their administration in 1888 in the Grassfields in general and Moghamo in particular. On the other hand, the British through the policy of indirect rule to a degree, respected traditional institutions but could intimidate chiefs through the sanction of imprisonment. In Moghamo clan, intimidation, challenges and other aspects of local governance also affected the chieftaincy institution. Must chiefs lose their respect especially in the function of collection of tax money.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Moghamo clan is located in the South West area of the Bamenda Grassfields. It lies in the vegetation zone on the fringes of the forest in the South and the savanna in the North. This dissertation has successfully examined chieftaincy institution in Moghamo clan from 1988-1961. That is the period of the German colonisation and the British administration.

In chapter one, the study concluded that Moghamo people originated among the Widikum tribes that was part of the waves of the Bantu emigration as hold by V.G Fanso and other writers on the history of the origin of Moghamo. This dispelled many of the controversies that have been put in place by many writers from and out of Moghamo on the history of its origins. It has clarified the opinions held by many that Moghamo originated from Tadkon. By looking at the socio-Anthropological and natural points of view, we concluded that Moghamo did not originate from Tadkon but from Widikum and was part of the waves of the Bantu emigration that settled at Widikum and later at Tad. Tadkon was just a meeting point, a place of exchange and trade. This conclusion is further backed up when we compared some of the traditional institutions and cultural aspects of tribes like Ngembas, Meta, Mankon, Baforchu, Banjah and Baba II to that of Moghamo; you will discover that they shared common cultural aspects with only slight differences. For examples, the languages spoken in these areas are almost the same, names of people and cultural dances are almost the same. Which therefore implies that since these clans claimed their origin from Widikum, Moghamo is therefore not excluded? The fiction that two personalities uncovered a stone at Tigheben and exposed themselves to light is certainly not realistic because it is inconsistent with the theory and the evolution of man.

To add, this study has made us to conclude that chieftaincy institution in Moghamo was made up of the *Fon*, *Mukum sambe*, *nkweti*, *nchindas*, *ngwes*, *mafor* and secret societies such as; *neubefut*, *kwifon*, village council of elders and quarter council of elders. These were the institutions that worked in close collaboration with the *Fon*. Among all these institutions and personalities, the village head called *Attaah* was the most powerful in Moghamo because he was regarded to be both a human being and a god.

Again, in this chapter, we uncovered concrete evidences which buttress conclusion made by authors like; R.J.O Neil, N.A Wandeh, A.P Ayah, Hansel Tita Mbah, V.G Fanso and Robert Kpwang that chieftaincy was an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman and it was not a colonial creation. The colonialists only tried to modify this institution to suit their imperialist objectives. The Whiteman ushered a transformation and altered a lots of

changes within the institution of chieftaincy in Moghamo clan. We saw the yesterday's masters with the power to control became the errand boys of today during the colonial rule with little or no influence. This is because their functions were usurped during the colonial periods to satisfy that of the imperialists. Their executive, judicial, military and legislative roles were changed. They were no longer practicing and exercising powers as compared to those defined in their culture and traditional setting.

Furthermore, in chapter one, the findings revealed that traditional governance in Moghamo clan was an example to emulate as it was in other areas in the Bamenda Grassfields before the days of the Germans and the British administration. Moghamo was also peculiar among other areas in the Grassfields because she was a composite set up. There was no paramountcy in Moghamo as it was the case of Bali, Mankon, Bafut, Kom and Nso. So chieftaincy and local governance became complicated because it aroused power struggle within the clan. The question of who was great than the other became the order of the day and as such it was difficult to rule them as an entity. Fon Mbah I was often called the Fon of Moghamo or Batibo because in many cases he represented Moghamo clan as their main Fon. Batibo was the name given to the whole of Moghamo and today many have changed the name instead of calling it Ahgwi village, many called it Batibo. This started since the days of colonial rule. So as a composite state, there was a fight to gain popularity and paramountcy among the Fons of Moghamo which Fon Mbah I had often assumed under his leadership with Galiga I and later Fonyonga II of Bali.

To summarise chapter one of this study, it locates the geographical setting of Moghamo clan, presents the origin and chieftaincy institutions in the Moghamo clan and creates awareness that chieftaincy institution in Moghamo clan existed before the coming of the Whiteman. So it was not a colonial creation. This chapter also exploits the history of migration and settlement of the Moghamo at Widikum and later Tadkon since 1800 and also throws more light on how from Tadkon, some of the Fondoms in Moghamo were formed by descendants from Tadkon. Moghamo have more than 25 autonomous fondoms traditionally but administratively, they are divided into 22 fondoms. So the objective of this chapter is therefore to give the reader an idea of the origin and history of Moghamo and prove that the institution of chieftaincy in Moghamo existed before the coming of the Whiteman.

In the second chapter our findings revealed that the German explorer Dr. Eugene Zintgraff first arrived Moghamo land in 1888 before moving to other lands in the Grassfields. His experience in Moghamo land was not cordial as compare to that of the Bali. The hostile nature of the Moghamo chiefs who received him was not welcoming. It could have

been because of the colour of his skin which the Moghamo man came acrossed for the first time. This pushed the Moghamo chiefs to send a message to Galiga I whose Moghamo was part of his empire. Following a message that arrived Galiga's Palace in 1888, that they was a strange being in Moghamo, he dispatched some of his Tadmanjongs to go to Moghamo and bring him. That is how Zintgraff found himself in Bali.

By 1891, Zintgraff had arrived Bali. Bali was one of the greatest German Base in the Grassfields of Cameroon. He was not only welcome by Galiga I but they decided to enter a friendly pact that craved a way for the Germans to take control over the large empire already built by Galiga I, the then Fon of Bali. One of the clauses of the treaty was that Galiga I was made paramount ruler and a German Station was opened in Bali from where the Germans rule other areas of the Grassfields. Our study show that Zintgraff had moved into other area of the Grassfields up to Adamawa but he often regarded Bali as his second home after Germany.

This study has made us to conclude that before the Germans administration, some part of Moghamo like; Bessi, Guzang, Ashong, Anong, Ambo, Efah Ahgwi, Nyenjei, Mbounjei, Oshum and Ngyen-muwah were under the Bali Empire. The German administration only came to ratified Galiga's rule over Moghamo. The other remaining villages were either on their own or supervised by Fon Mbah I and give reports to Galiga I under the Bali stations. Most of the Moghamo children during this period were educated in Bali. Children left Moghamo to go to school in Bali and came back the same day. Our finding in this study has made us to conclude that most of the lands occupied by the Bali today are Moghamo lands. When the Bali Chamba first arrived the Grassfields about the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they did not have any land. Part of the land they occupied today was given to them for farming by the Moghamo and other Widikum tribes. But later, the Bali started claiming the Moghamo land, a factor that necessitated the Widikum disorder in 1952; an attempt that was made by the Moghamo and some of the Widikum tribes to recover their lands.

In this chapter, weexamined the role of chieftaincy and local governance in Moghamo clan from 1888-1916 during the Germans era. These roles are examined under the socio-political, economic and cultural spheres.

Politically, it concluded that, before the arrival of the Whiteman, chieftaincy was divine in nature and combined legislative, executive, judicial and military roles. The Germans only came to continue their administration under the same footing but with a bit of modification of these roles to suit their imperialist objectives. Legislatively, the chief was therefore used to enforce the laws put in place by the Germans. Eventhough, they did not have the right to

make laws as it was during the pre-colonial times, they could have fostered the decisions of the colonialists. In some areas, German flags were given to them as a symbol of power and command. Fon Mbah I directly under Galiga I and later Fonyonga II could make sure that the German laws remain enforced in Moghamo.

Chiefs also played an important role in Moghamo in the judicial aspect. Matters of disputes and conflicts within their communities were handled by them. Fon Mbah I of Ahgwi village was the first president of the Moghamo Native Court that was established around 1927. The Fon in Moghamo also played a military role as they were the one to protect and govern the people. The people mostly depended on traditional authority for defense through the colonial and the local force that was put in place.

The most important economic role was that of collection of taxes. The Moghamo Fon played an important role in the collection of taxes. Other roles such as; supply of labour for community works and custodian over land, culture heritages were some of their roles that were not over compromised. And lastly, this chapter also examines the socio-cultural role of Moghamo leaders in local governance during the German era. They were the custodian of culture, agents of infrastructural developments and gave lands for the building of churches, mission schools and hospitals. That notwithstanding, the objective of this chapter was to examine the role play by Moghamo chieftaincy institutions during the German administration.

Chapter three laid emphasis only on local governance in Moghamo during the British administration. This period is very important in the history of Moghamo; firstly, it was because Moghamo was independent under the British not as it was in the days of the Germans under Bali, even though the Germans later removed the resettlement of the Widikum tribes under Bali by 1908. And secondly because it was a period that traditional rulers became more involved and engaged in governance through the British policy of indirect rule. During the British period, Moghamo was placed under the Bamenda Division in the British Southern Cameroons and they could directly send their reports to the D.O who was at the head of the administration in Bamenda. It was wise enough for us to see that traditional rulers became wiser as could be compared to the previous era. Some of them who emerged like Fon Mbah II of Ahgwi, Fon Timah Jacob Awu II had been educated by the Germans and later the British.

Under this chapter, traditional authorities became very involved and more engaged in local governance through the policy of indirect rule which came with a lot of reforms. Firstly, in 1927 a N.A court was created in Moghamo and Fon Mbah I was the first president. Native

authorities with native courts, native treasuries and chief councils were created in Moghamo. Traditional rulers in Moghamo became very influential in local administration as the second half of the British administration witnessed many reforms and changes that yielded more fruits in the political evolution of British Southern Cameroons. In 1940s, the institution of chieftaincy in the Bamenda Grassfields was faced with many challenges. It saw the democratization of N.A system as educated elites accused traditional rulers as being illiterate and hindrance of socio-economic and political developments in the British Southern Cameroons. An increasing pressure from the latter saw traditional rulers in conflicts with the new educated elites who emerged. That notwithstanding, they could have pushed forward and fought for the creation of the SCHC that was mentioned for the first time in the SCHA in 1954 and later it was realized in 1960.

In this chapter, we also saw traditional rulers who became influential in politics. The chief role was felt as many of them supported the Kamerun National Democratic People (KNDP) of John Ngoh Foncha against the Kamerun National Congress (KNC) of Dr. Endeley. This support by the Grassfields Fons some of whom came from Moghamo, determined the victory of the KNDP in the Plebiscite Question of February 11, 1961 and later the Reunification of the British Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroon in 1961.

Meanwhile chapter four is based on the challenges and problems faced by chieftaincy in local governance in Moghamo clan during the colonial periods. As already mentioned, traditional rulers were a crucial link between the European and their subjects. In linking the two, they went through a lot of challenges that brought them humiliation and intimidations. However, the humiliations and intimidations to which were subjected to the chiefs during the colonial period arose from the degrading nature their new functions and from the illusion that, they retained the exercise of their traditional functions. The two that is the imperialist objectives and traditional prerequisites could not be handled at the same time because one needed to be satisfied than the other. There were practices consisting in subjecting the chief to treatments unworthy of their social class. Chieftaincy was not an invention of the Germans or the British administration but the Germans practiced it widely. Challenges, some of which led to humiliations and intimidations of traditional authorities especially those that took place under the German administration. To an extent, the British respected traditional rulers and their institutions. This does not cancel the fact that chiefs did not suffer heavy casualties during the British era but the policy of indirect rule accorded some degree of respect for traditional institutions.



From the analysis and investigation of the study, we conclude that the problem faced by chieftaincy institution in the whole of the Bamenda grassfields, was caused during the colonial periods. In simple words, it was a colonial creation. The seed which manifested it was sowed during the colonial rule. Colonialism magnified it. A good example in Moghamo is that of Ashong that still existing till date. It started around 1900 and was not well handled by the Germans. And again, it escalated in 1939, by 1942 Mbafor I was dismissed and Tita Enongang I his brother was elected to replace him. There has been the struggle for royalty in Ashong till date. The dethronement of chiefs in the Grassfields was one of the powerful sanctions that were given to traditional rulers. It was a degrading and disrespectful aspect to this institution.

Moreover, chieftaincy institution in Moghamo faced a lot of challenges that ranges from all walks of life. That is from Political to economic and from social to cultural walks of life. Politically, the democratization of this institution after 1945, affected the institution of chieftaincy in the Bamenda Grassfields. Most of them were accused as illiterates and uneducated in terms of the European standards. The usurpation of most of their traditional functions to those of the colonialist was a daunting task. Some of them became errand boys going around collecting tax, an aspect that ridiculed the chief to the floor level. As most of them could not read and write, those in control could easily manipulate them.

The Moghamo-Bali land disputes termed in history as the Widikum disorder was one of the major challenges faced by traditional authorities in Moghamo clan during the colonial rule. Traditional authorities also faced the challenges of accusation of mismanagement of public funds. Majority of them were tagged as embezzlers or thieves of tax money. The mismanagement of these funds was because most of them allowed some notables not to pay tax and again, the fact that they were never accountable to any authority before this period, might have pushed them to use this money otherwise, most of them did not actually steal tax money. When the British did not approve a ruler, they tagged you with mismanagement to dismiss you. This was a challenge that led to problem in most cases in the Bamenda Grassfields. The mismanagement of public funds or tax money was as a result of the aboved mentioned factors and also because the chiefs had lost controlled over the tributes that were collected during the precolonial rule to the collection of taxes for the colonialists. This explains the reason why some of them were exiled and imprisoned.

The objective of this chapter was to analyze the challenges and problems faced by chieftaincy institution in Moghamo clan during the Germans and British colonial periods.

Faced with this, we have examined the socio-political, economic and cultural challenges that were faced by traditional rulers in local governance.

However, a critical examination of this study has proved that, before and during the colonial rule, Chieftaincy and Local Governance overshadowed democracy in Africa. It was only interrupted by a new form of citizens called the Newly Educated Western Elites who had acquired education during the colonial rule. The latter group led to the democratisation of the institution of chieftaincy in the 1940s.

The word tradition was very significant in governance as it commanded must respect for the institution of chieftaincy which reduced or eliminated a sort of contentious power within the frame work of local governance in the colonial rule. Traditional authority had often played a key role in local governance especially in the Bamenda grassfields where this study is carried.

However, the post-independence period saw this institution suffering a setback as it imaged itself as a symbol of tradition while at the same time striving to serve as an agency for modern projects (Geschiere 1993: 152). The post-colonial difficulties of traditional chiefdoms have indeed constituted a subject of vast scholarly interest which has called many scholars and academicians to write on this institution.

Traditional authorities have in the process served diverse purposes. During the colonial rule, the British used the legitimacy of traditional authorities for the implementation of colonial policies. Chiefs were appointed as native authority in the Bamenda grassfields of Cameroon and at the same time were empowered to collect tax revenue within their jurisdiction for expenditure on colonial matters. This institution also played an advisory role under section 40 of the Federal Constitution of Cameroon constituted under the disbanded House of Chiefs. With the advent of democracy, traditional authority has loosed focus and served politicians as vote banks especially in the one party state, the Cameroon National Union that was created in 1966 by president Adhidjo.

However, looking at the institution of chieftaincy before, during and after the colonial rule, it is injustice to sideline them because of its inevitable role and significant in nation building. This has called for many academicians and scholars to recommend on this institution. Based on the submission that traditional authority are stakeholders in governance process, this study recommends that because of the role this institution plays today in local developments, the state or the republic should instead intergrate them into the affairs of the republic rather than leaving them on the periphery.

Again, to recommend more on this study, it would be significant for the author to look at the laws governing chieftaincy institution in Cameroon. Law No: 77/245 of 15<sup>th</sup> July 1977 that replaced the 1960 and 1933 decrees operating in the British Southern and French Cameroon, organising the Chiefdoms. The legal frame work was set by this decree in 1977, which recognised and assigned roles to traditional authorities. Yet academicians and legislators are at odds with each other as to the role of traditional authority today. Academicians see the roles as a negligible one. According to Mback Check Nack, traditional authority has lost their role as a check on the powers of modern institutions and has been relegated to the rank of merely consultative organs. Another academician Kamto to him, traditional authority is a place of cultural reference. Looking at their stance, traditional authority has a role that surpasses that of a mere place of 'cultural reference'.

There is no way that traditional authorities should be left out in the mechanism of governance in the state of Cameroon. The machinery put in place by the administration can not fully work if traditional rulers are eliminated. This is because they are unavoidable in matters of effective local developments. They are a centre of local developments, educators of local population in matters of development, advice local councils on the priority of development problems of their areas and finally, they are a liaison to the administering authority.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

TO TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES, KING MAKERS, NOTABLES, QUARTER HEADS, PRINCES, AND MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILIES, TEACHERS AND INTERPRETERS.

This questionnaire is to permit us acquire information on the Origin of Moghamo Clan, How Chiefs governed the people of Moghamo before the coming of the Whiteman, how Moghamo was govern during the German and the British Colonial Administrations that is from 1900 – 1961 and to help us to find out the challenges and privileges enjoyed by Traditional Authorities during the Colonial Rule.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tick if necessary**

1. Your age    a) 30 – 40        b) 41 – 50        c) 51 – 60+   

2. Where are you from in Moghamo? (village) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Sex: Male        Female   

4. Level of education: a) Uneducated        b) Primary        c)      
Secondary

d) Higher Education    e)        Others   

5. Profession: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Position in the Society: \_\_\_\_\_

## **A- RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Was chieftaincy in Moghamo clan a colonial creation or an institution that existed before the coming of the Whiteman?
2. What specific roles did chief play in local governance in Moghamo clan during the colonial rule?
3. What were the privileges and benefits chiefs received in return for loyalty and leadership to the colonialists in Moghamo clan?
4. As traditional leaders, what were some of the challenges or problems they faced in local governance during colonial rule?

## **B- SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

**(To Traditional Authorities, kingmakers, Prince and princesses, Members of the Secret Societies, Descendants from Royal families)**

1. Traditionally, how many villages do we have in Moghamo?
2. How can we trace the origin of Moghamo clan?
3. What are the various chiftaincy institutions in Moghamo?
4. What privileges do traditional authorities enjoy during the stayed of the Whiteman in Moghamo?
5. Of what relation did Moghamo chiefs had with the Bali?
6. During the German colonial periods, it is said some part of Moghamo was under Bali. Can you mention some of these villages?
7. Moghamo during the colonial period was made up of more than 22 fondoms. Was there any power or authority of Paramountcy?
8. Who often represent the chiefs in Mghamo when it comes to the rule of Galiga I and later Fonyonga II?
9. What were some of the challenges or problems faced by you and your colleagues?
10. It is said during the colonial era in the grassfields, the German and the British imposed traditional rulers in some areas by warrant. Does such case exist in Moghamo? Where precisely?
11. What were the effects of such appointment by an administrative warrant?
12. It is said there was a cruel humiliation and intimidation of chiefs during the colonial rule, were some chiefs in Moghamo humiliated?

13. What were the challenges faced by chiefs in the collection of taxes?
14. Who was the most educated chief in Moghamo during the colonial era?
15. In which year was the Moghamo Native Authority Court created and who was the first president?

### **C- GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. Where are the people of Moghamo coming from?
2. Did chiefs have the powers to make laws during the colonial rule?
3. Were there chiefs in Moghamo that collaborated with the Germans?
4. Who were those put in place for the maintenance of law and order?
5. Give an example of any infrastructure that was built in Moghamo by the Germans or the British
6. Moghamo was not different from other areas in the grassfields as far as tax collection was concerned during the colonial period. How was it done?
7. How was tax money kept or used?
8. Was part given to the chief/
9. Were traditional authorities' custodian of lands, custom and tradition?
10. What religious role did traditional rulers play?
11. Were there some chiefs in Moghamo that was converted by the new Christian church?
12. What role did they play in social developments? That is in health and education?
13. What kind of privileges did they enjoy as a result of local governance administration?

### **Chieftaincy Reforms**

14. What was the policy of indirect rule?
15. How effective was this policy in Moghamo?
16. What benefits did traditional authorities and their institutions enjoy as a result of indirect rule?
17. Apart from the roles played by chiefs, what role did the colonialists play?
18. Who were those involved in the local administration as colonialists?
19. Were traditional authorities involved in any Associations, pressure group or trade unions?

20. What economic role did they play in local governance? Example; the construction of roads, bridges, etc
21. Did traditional rulers' role changed during the colonial rule, as compare to the pre-colonial periods?
22. If their functions were changed, how was it done?
23. Identify any chieftaicy problem in Moghamo that was a cause of colonial rule
24. What consequences is such problem on Moghamo today?
25. Was there a problem of bad governance?
26. Was there corruption. Embezzlements and favouritism in local governance administration in Moghamo?
27. Were traditional rulers poor or rich in Moghamo during the era of colonial rule?
28. How the challenge of poverty did affect local governance?
29. Was there any aspect of seizure of lands and properties? How was it managed?
30. Was there any mismanagement of public funds in Moghamo? What was the cause and consequences of such act?
31. Were there some instances whereby custom and tradition was disrespected by the colonialists?
32. To what extent were traditional rulers educated?
33. Wht were the challenges possessed by illiteracy?
34. Who were some of the educated elites that emerged dafter 1945 in Moghamo?
35. How were traditional ruler's intidated?
36. The lost of values were common during the colonial rule. What were some of the values lost by Moghamo Chiefs?
37. When was the first Native Court set up in Moghamo?
38. When was the first elementary school created in Moghamo?
39. What happened to Fon Fongang of Guzang during the reign of Fonyonga II?
40. Were traditional authorities collecting tax or they delegated their powers to their subordinates?
41. Who was the main chief in Moghamo that was popular in tax collection?

APPENDIX TWO

Intelligence Reports on the Moghamo Speaking Families of the Widikum Tribe, 1933

A6  
Department

Archives Office, Bura  
West Cameroon

PROV. (1933)

FILE NO. 702 VOL. I

DATE REGISTERED. 20 June 1933.

SUBJECT. [Correspondence in re]  
**INTELLIGENCE REPORT ON  
 THE MOGHAMO SPEAKING FAMILIES  
 OF THE WIDIKUM TRIBE IN  
 BAMBENDA DIVISION BY  
 C. H. CROSSDALE, A.D.O.**

SUBSEQUENT FILES.  
 1215  
 Moghamo speaking  
 families of the Widikum  
 Tribe, Bamenda Division  
 Native Courts

702 VOL. II

LIST OF ENCLOSURES IN THIS FILE.  
 (Entries to be continued on third page of cover if necessary.)

Report in Residual Office

Archives Office, Bura  
West Cameroon

PREVIOUS FILES.  
 702 (Bura)

MINUTES OR INSTRUCTIONS.

Archives Office, Bura  
West Cameroon



No. 415/1  
 Divisional Office,  
 Bamenda Division,  
 15th May, 1933.



The Resident,  
 Cameroons Province,  
 BUEA.

MOGAMO INTELLIGENCE REPORT.

I submit herewith, in triplicate, an Intelligence Report on the MOGAMO speaking Families of the WIDEKUM Tribe, written by Mr. C.H. Croasdale, Assistant District Officer, together with my comments thereon and Mr. Croasdale's replies.

2. The Area with which the Report deals is located in the extreme South West corner of the Bamenda Division, at present designated the Mogamaw Native Authority Area.

3. As will be seen from the Report, the Mogamo do not at present desire to federate either Administratively, Judicially, or Financially with any neighbouring units, but have expressed a wish for an independent Administration.

4. The proposals in the Report, with which I am in complete agreement, foreshadow the following:-

I. ADMINISTRATIVE.

(a). Central. The establishment of the Chiefs in Council of each of the twenty-one villages within the Area as a combined Central Council, under the presidency of the Chief of BATIBO, such combined Council to be constituted the Native Authority for the Area. The Council to meet at Batibo.

(b). Local. The establishment of each Chief-in-Council of the twenty-one constituent villages as a subordinate Native Authority.

These proposals have been carefully explained

*Handwritten notes in the left margin:*  
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 the...  
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 the...  
 the...  
 (b)  
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to the people and they have signified their approval. The proposed Native Authority (Central) is such that it will be capable of enforcing orders and exacting the willing obedience of the people concerned.

6. II. JUDICIAL.

(a). Central. The establishment, at BATIBO, of a Central Native Court of full "D" Grade powers, having jurisdiction over all villages within the Area. The panel of membership to incorporate all Chiefs and village councillors of the constituent villages, under the presidency of the Chief of Batibo, with the several village heads (chiefs) as Vice-Presidents. The Court to be a Court of Record, also a Court of first instance, and to act as an Appeal Court from decisions of the several village councils.

(b). Local. The establishment of five combined village (NGAKU) Courts, <sup>names</sup> noted marginally,<sup>x</sup> sessions of which to be held in either village as occasion demands, and eleven individual village courts, each court (combined or individual) to exercise a civil jurisdiction only, equivalent to that of a reduced "D" Grade, that is to say in matters where the amount claimed does not exceed £5, or in matrimonial causes, £10. All criminal causes and matters to be heard in the central court, although there is no objection to preliminary investigation or arbitration in the village courts, as is customary.

Membership to comprise the chief and the customary members of the village council. These courts themselves to be courts of non-record, but rendering monthly returns viva

*Handwritten notes:*  
1. Court of Record in Batibo  
2. ...  
(1) ...  
(2) ...  
(3) ...

- x BAMBUNJI-BAMINYENJI.
- BABESI-BABUJANG.
- BABESOM-BAMUA.
- BABESONG-BAMUNGWEN.
- MBENGOK-BANUMBEN.

*Handwritten notes:*  
1. ...  
2. ...  
3. ...



voice of suits disposed of to the Central Court where brief records will be kept.

7. The foregoing proposals are fully in accordance with the wishes of the people concerned, and the site of the central court at Batibo has been approved by them.

8.

### III. FINANCIAL.

It is not at present proposed to establish a Native Treasury in the Area as the people are not as yet considered sufficiently educated in the principles of Native Administration to be fitted to bear the responsibility for the custody of their funds. There is, moreover, at the moment, no expressed desire either for an independent Treasury or a financial federation with neighbouring units.

Annual estimates of revenue and expenditure within the Area will be prepared and discussed with the several village councils as opportunity occurs.

9. It is proposed that the Chief of Batibo, as President of the Native Authority Council, and President of the Central Native Court, shall receive a combined salary of £12 per annum. It is also proposed to remunerate the several village councils on a basis of 25% of the total revenue under Head I, Item 1, from the village area, for administrative services, and 20% of Head I, Item 1, plus 40% of Court fees, for judicial services. Payments to be in a lump sum and made quarterly and monthly respectively.



10. In the event of your approval of these proposals I will have native court warrants prepared and forwarded.

11. Certain Vocabularies (Adrian and others, Appendices V, 2 and 3) prepared under Mr. Crossdale's supervision will be forwarded shortly under separate cover.

12. This, Mr. Crossdale's first Intelligence Report, was written in the twentieth month of his present tour, and I submit he deserves credit for it.

*[Signature]*  
Divisional Officer,  
Barracks Division.

R.J.H.



No. B.415/24.  
on tour at Baribo, 22nd October, 1933.

The Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
on tour at Mamfe.

241

MOGAMO INTELLIGENCE REPORT : RESIDENT'S  
COMMENTS ON.

With reference to your Memorandum No. 702/107 dated 17th July, 1933, I beg to submit herewith my replies to the Comments.

2. The delay in replying, explained in my Memorandum No. B.415/21 of 9th instant, is regretted.

3. The draft Court Warrants are being typed at Bamenda and should reach me at any moment. They will be forwarded immediately by special messenger.

x  
See file 35/1918 Vol 11/41  
of 28/10/33  
all

*[Signature]*  
District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division.



## APPENDIX 3

Resident's Comments on the District Officer, Bamenda's Letter and Issues Pertaining  
Chieftaincy in Moghamo and Ashong.

Archives No. <u>Ab 193</u>	
<b>South West Provincial Archives — Buea</b>	
FILE No. <u>702 Vol. II</u>	Department of Origin <u>Provincial Administration</u> (Prov. Office, Buea).
DATE REGISTERED	
SUBJECT	SUBSEQUENT FILES
Moghamo Speaking Families of the Widekum Tribes in Bamenda Division — Intelligence Report on By Mr. C.H. Crasdale, A.D.O. One Map.	
LIST OF ENCLOSURES IN THIS FILE <i>(Entries to be continued on third page of cover if necessary)</i>	
PREVIOUS FILES	MINUTES OR INSTRUCTIONS

THIS FILE IS NOT TO BE RELEASED WITHOUT AUTHORITY

N O. PARAGRAPH.

COMMENTS.SECTION VI FINANCIAL.REVENUE.

25. 110-113. The estimate under Head III Item 7 Dispensary should be ignored as problematical.

Total Estimated Revenue will then be ...	£407
and the surplus ...	504
Total Estimated Assets ...	2947.

EXPENDITURE.

(a) Chiefs' Honohmen are dependent on the Chief.

(b) The Chiefs have to keep open house. Unless therefore liberal lump sum salaries are allowed the system of uncertain exactions for (a) and (b) will continue.

The following maximum percentages are based on the Circular on Native Treasuries and Political Memorandum 5 and have worked elsewhere.

Executive salaries under Heads II and III not to exceed 42% of Revenue Head I.

Judicial " " " IV not to exceed 20% of Revenue Head I plus 40% of Revenue Head II Item 2 (paid monthly from the receipts for each month).

These percentages are applied by the following formula :

(1) Expenditure under Head IV = X (by above percentages).

(2) " " " V = Y (share of Native Treasury also a fixed percentage of revenue).

(3) " " " II and III = 50% of Revenue - X plus Y, or 42% of Revenue Head I, whichever is the less.

26. 113. The expenditure on the dispensary should be regarded as Special Expenditure if, as I suspect, it greatly exceeds the estimated percentage of revenue allowed to Head XIII Capital Works. The question then becomes a formula thus

Liquid Surplus on 1st April 1933 ...	£ 540
Revenue on half a year's Revenue ...	303
Balance available for Special Expenditure.	347
Cost of Dispensary ...	115.



11/25.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON THE DISTRICT OFFICER, BALEMBA'S LETTER  
NO. B.415/1 OF 15TH MAY, 1933.

N O. - PARAGRAPH.

C O M M E N T S.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE.

1. 4(a) This on the evidence of the Report is against the principle of establishing as Native Authority the Highest Functioning Unit in this case -- the Chief of a Village Group in Council. The only justifiable Central body is a meeting of Chiefs and Councillars at Batibo to discuss common interests with the District Officer -- notably estimates and tax. And there should be no Central Native Authority at this stage. A superior Native Authority may arise later.
2. 4(b) As a Native Authority -- not subordinate Native Authority at this stage. It is vital to state the members of each council and to justify the inclusion of each member.
3. 5. Not on the evidence of the report.

II. J U D I C I A L.

4. 6(a) Yes.  
N.B. Court of Record is a technical term. Native Courts are not Courts of record. The only records necessary to a "D" grade court are (in the President's keeping) ;  
(1) Form 4 which sufficiently record cases.  
(2) Combined Summons and Receipt Book.  
(3) Cash book in which are included the receipts from Village Group Native Courts.  
All other books are a danger until court members are able to read and write and to supervise their clerk.
5. 6(b) Is there any reason why full jurisdiction should not be given in all dowry cases ?  
The necessary records (in the Chief's keeping) are :-  
(1) Combined Summons and Receipt Book.  
This is the only return -- but it is essential.
6. 7. Formula.  
Through whom proposed ?

9. If



118

Comment No.

Reply to Comment.

20. (continued).

Draft Warrants, each in duplicate, for 1 Mogamo Group Court and 16 village courts are being prepared and will be forwarded immediately.

x See the sixth para. of S.S.P.'s Memo. No. 9552/62 of 22nd May, 1933.

I gather Mr. Crossdale held a meeting at Battbo, attended by all chiefs, Quarter Heads, and a fair proportion of natives of the Area. In view of His Honour's views as regards a possible Zali-Mogamo financial federation, I carefully explained the advantages of such an arrangement, stressing the point that it would only be a federation for financial purposes. I regret to state, however, that the chiefs are strongly opposed to such a step.

25. REVENUE.

As the Dispensary is now open, the amount has been included, as an offset to the loss of Cattle Tolls (Head III, 2) and for the purpose of the figures appearing below. Taking the Estimated Revenue figure, 1934-35, the known share of fixed deposits, and ignoring the share of the cash surplus the position is as follows:-

Total Estimated Revenue ...	£435.
Share of Fixed Deposits ...	£227.
	<u>£ 662.</u>

EXPENDITURE.

*The L.S. Co. said: fragments should cover the items 2-5 of Mr. C's list.*

Points (a) and (b) noted. Resident's Comment implies that, if possible, the full 42% of Revenue, Head I, should be set aside as Executive Salaries, Heads II and III. An important point now arises, which will affect the form of preparation of Estimates accompanying future Intelligence Reports. The point is as to whether (a) the percentages stated in the draft Financial Memorandum, or (b) the formulae which have been adopted elsewhere, are to be followed as a basis of apportionment. As regards (b), from past experience this was only applied to the estimates of village groups, and not to the central (i.e., Clan - Native Authority is the local equivalent -) Estimates of Expenditure.

Taking firstly points (1), (2) and (3) of Resident's Comment (25), and working on the assumption that £435 is the total annual revenue.

50% of total Revenue ...	£ 218.	42% of Revenue,*	
Minus X ...	£ 82.	Head I, taking	
Plus Y.x ...	£ 136.	Head I as	
x 1934-35 figure.	£ 6.	£319.x ...	£ 134
	<u>£ 142.</u>		<u>£ 134</u>

i.e., the 42% basis provides a lesser amount.

Two sets of expenditure estimates are shown below for purposes of comparison:-

(1). Total Estimated Revenue ... £ 435.

Expenditure.

Heads II and III. ...	£ 134.	{ 42% of Rev. Head I, (assuming Head I to represent £319.
Head IV. ...	£ 82.	
x 1934-35 figure.	£ 6.x	{ 20% of Rev. Head I, plus 40% of Rev. Hd. II, Item 2. (£45x).
Head V. ...	£ 222.	
Available for other services.	<u>£ 213.</u>	
	<u>£ 435.</u>	

- 4 -

119

Comment No.	Reply to Comment.
25. (continued).	Mr. Croasdale's total estimate under Head IV is £133. Of this amount, £53 is purely central (Native Authority) expenditure (Items 2 - 5). If the formula is to provide for total expenditure under this Head, and items 2 - 5 are to be retained, then only £29 will presumably be paid as judicial salaries. (£32 less £53).

(2). Total Estimated Revenue ... £ 435.

Expenditure.

(30.8% of total Rev.)	Heads II and III ...	£134.	(42% of Revenue, Head I, (£319).
(31% of total Rev.)	Head IV. ...	£135.	(20% of Rev. Head I, plus 40% of Rev. Hd. II, Item 2, PLUS central items 2-5 (£53), shown in Mr. Croasdale's estimate
(1.3% of total Rev.)	Head V. ...	£ 6.	
	Available for other services.	£275. £160. <u>£435.</u>	(50% of £435 is £218; this figure less by £6

*No. There will be a 'meeting' not a Council. The N. A. will agree on a Council etc.*

It will be observed that it is not possible to secure a balance of 50% of total revenue in either (1) or (2) if a full 42% is allowed. (Query - in view of Comment 12, will Head II of Revenue, Item 1, salary to President of Council, remain?)

26.

The Dispensary has now been erected at a cost of £10. It may be noted that Expenditure for 1934-35 under Head XIII is estimated at £56, representing 12.8% of total Revenue. (£435)

Batibo,  
22nd October, 1933.

*[Signature]*  
District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division.



No. B. 415/46. 140

THE DISTRICT OFFICE,  
BAMENDA DIVISION,  
B A M E N D A,  
8TH NOVEMBER, 1935.



THE HONOURABLE  
THE SENIOR RESIDENT,  
CAMEROONS PROVINCE,  
B U E A.

MOGAMO INTELLIGENCE REPORT, BAMENDA  
DIVISION.

p.138

With reference to your letter No. 702/138 of the 29th May, 1935, I am afraid this matter was not discussed with Mr. Findlay at Bamenda. I mentioned the matter to His Honour, however, in view of the ninth paragraph of Mr. Rutherford's Notes of a Meeting at Batibo on 18th December, 1933. (Bamenda letter No. 66/1927.N.A/148 of 17th January, 1934. Please see also the schedule forwarded with my letter No. B.418/52 of 27th February). His Honour stated that in view of the beneficial results of reorganisation in parts of Nigeria he saw no reason to delay the putting forward of proposals.

p.72 in 1010

p.28 in 752

2. We discussed this matter during your recent visit to the Division, and on 31st October you saw seven of the Village Heads at Batibo. It is regretted that there was such a poor attendance. Those present put forward a request for (a) three Native Courts and (b) a School. It is assumed that the request for three Native Courts was in view of the three "families" shown in the Intelligence Report. I would mention as regards (b) that a joint Mogamo-Meta Native Administration School will be opened in January, 1936, in pursuance of the five year Educational programme.

3. I have given some thought to the question of reorganisation in the Mogamo Area, and shortly before your arrival at Bamenda held several meetings at Batibo. It was

C.N.M.

carefully

Acc 145A

- 2 -

141

carefully explained to the several Village Councils sometime ago that the Village Courts first proposed (my letter No. B.451/1 of 15th May, 1933) could no longer be recommended in view of the difficulties of administrative supervision, and I again emphasised this.

4. My experience of this Area in the past left no doubt <sup>in my mind</sup> that the state of native organisation was extremely loose, and my recent visit has only served to confirm this. The Native Court, never very favourably reported on, has shown no improvement, and abuses on the part of members, coupled with a total <sup>dis</sup> regard of custom, particularly in matrimonial matters, are too evident. It is no exaggeration to state that the Mbem Native Court, in the primitive "Kaka-Ntem" Area, is today a better ordered institution than the Mogamo Court.

5. The immediate need, in my opinion, is to reorganise the Native Court. I consider that this can best be done by the inclusion of all village councillors in the Area on the panel of members. It is unfortunate that the BATIBO Village Group is at present without an active Village Head, the young Village Head being a minor. BAPA TAZO, Regent of Batibo, is, however, looked up to by the other village heads, and they are prepared to accept him as President of the Court. It is to be hoped that he will be able to exercise some control over the other Members, many of whom need a strong hand.

6. It is now proposed that sitting fees are disbursed monthly to Members in a lump sum in place of the present arrangement of fixed fees per member per sitting. It will be seen from the Combined Estimates 1936-37, forwarded under cover of my letter No. 21.N.A/44 of 30th September 1935, that £17 appears under Head IV Item 1. I recommend that this amount is increased to £24. It is understood that Village Heads in receipt of salaries at present will not participate.

7. On the question of the Native Authority, the Native Court

p. 34 in 1670



- 3 -

142

Court is at present the gazetted Native Authority, although I fear this means little or nothing in actual practice among the Mogamo. It would be preferable, in my view, to confer the powers of a Native Authority on the District Officer. To my mind Mr. Rutherford sums up the position at page 5 of his Comments forwarded with Resident's letter No. 702/107 of 17th July, 1933, where he states :

"The only justifiable Central body is a meeting of Chiefs and Councillors at Batibo to discuss common interests with the District Officer - notably estimates and tax."

8. It is not proposed to establish a Native Treasury in the Area, for the reasons given in the eighth paragraph of my letter No. B.415/1 of 15th May, 1933.

9. The proposals now made were discussed at Batibo on 24th October in the presence of seventeen ex twentyone Village Heads, who expressed their agreement therewith.

10. Draft Warrants for Village Courts were prepared here as a result of the recommendations in my letter above-mentioned. Unfortunately complete Schedules of Village Councillors were not obtained, and I would ask whether these are now required in view of the recommendation in my fifth paragraph above.

District Officer i/c Bamenda Division.

HSR  
 140-142 sub in the name  
 12/13/12







- 2 -

154

agreed to go the Bamenda Government School and the trouble was at an end though considerable ill-feeling remained. At the time of this episode the European Missionaries at Bali were not aware of the actions of their converts.

206. The Native Court is also the Native Authority which meets only when called upon by an Administrative Officer to do so.

207. The village heads of Babessi and Bakugwe were suspended during the course of the year. Babessi was suspended for his share in an episode which resulted in the loss of two cows driven by a dealer to Calabar, one of which was killed and shared out among the villagers. The obstructive attitude of the village head delayed for a long period the settlement of the ensuing law-suit and then influence caused the Court to fix responsibility on one small boy. The village head was suspended for 6 months. The village head of Bakugwe was suspended for 12 months for his interference in a law-suit over a woman and for delaying the enforcement of judgment for two years.

208. In April the chief <sup>of</sup> Bambunji was suspended for three months for his share in infringing a boundary demarcated between Bambunji and Babujang under the Inter-Tribal Boundaries Ordinance.

209. The Mogamo area is deriving much profits from the demand for produce and labour created by the work on the Mamfo-Bamenda road.

210. The Meta-Mogamo school was opened at Ngwokong (Meta) in January.

x

x

x

(Sgd.) M.D.W. Jeffreys  
Senior District Officer,  
Bamenda.

Bamenda,

13th Jan. 1937.

CML.





No. N.A. 734/38. <sup>159</sup>

The District Office,  
Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda, 7th June, 1940.

The Honourable,  
The Senior Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B u e a.

Ashong ("Bamessong") Chieftainship:  
Maghamo N.A. Area.

On the 28th of May, 1940, I visited Batlbo for the purpose, among others, of settling the successor to one Bafo as chief of the village of Ashong (Bamessong), Maghamo tribe.

2. Bafo was sentenced for stealing tax money. He collected tax from all his people and paid in approximately half of what he collected. It came out that he was appropriating £50 a year and had done so for years. He, with one Teku, also obstructed Mr. Harcourt in the compilation of the nominal rolls.

3. There are two candidates for the post: One is Teku, mentioned above, a brother of Bafo, and the other is Inawngang also of the chief's family.

4. The eight quarter heads of the village were assembled in the presence of Papa Tazo and other chiefs of the Maghamo tribe. The quarter heads were asked to separate into two groups: those supporting Inawngang and those supporting Teku.

5. The division was five quarter heads in favour of Inawngang and three in favour of Teku but what was more disastrous for Teku is that eight of his compound heads immediately seceded from him and supported Inawngang while one compound head from a quarter that supported Teku also seceded.

6. On the basis of the number of taxable males the support for these two candidates works out as follows :-

<u>For Inawngang</u>		<u>For Teku</u>	
Akuregwe Quarter ...	51 males	Ngaku (part) ...	212 males
Akurunda " ...	9 "	Akurewa (part) ..	28 "
C'd F'd ...	60		240

B.S.A.



100

- 2 -

Ab(1933)35

	<u>For Inawngang</u>	<u>For Teku</u>
Brought F'd. ...	60 males	... .. 240 males
Gwofon Quarter ...	12 "	<u>Awen</u> ... 11 "
Kasong " ...	47 "	
Akuranjaw " ...	39 "	
Akurewa (part) ...	28 "	
<u>Ngaku " ...</u>	<u>64 "</u>	
Total ...	250 males =====	... .. 251 males =====

On the score of numbers there is nothing in the choice; but if the compound heads are counted then there are twenty six in favour of Inawngang and seventeen in favour of Teku.

7. What however is important is that half of Akurewa quarter and about twenty five percent of Teku's own quarter are opposed to him.

8. The opinion of the other Maghamo chiefs was then taken and it was found that Papa Tazo and seven i.e. eight chiefs in all, supported Inawngang and five supported Teku.

So that the position is :-

<u>For Inawngang</u>	<u>For Teku</u>
250 taxable males	251 taxable males
26 compound heads	17 compound heads
8 independent chiefs	5 independent chiefs.

9. So far as Government concerned Teku is not a "persona grata." He certainly knew what his brother was doing and actually assisted his brother in appropriating tax money and thus depriving Government of Revenue. When knowledge of what was happening reached me, I sent Mr. Hercourt to compile the nominal rolls and Teku, so far from assisting, definitely opposed him and created difficulties and confusion.

10. Mr. Croasdale's Intelligence Report on the Maghamo tribe, paragraph 45, states that the chieftainship is hereditary and that the old chief on dying nominates his successor but the procedure does not meet the present case. Here it seems that "Vox populi: Vox Dei" guides and in this connection attention is drawn to His Excellency's printed confidential on The Future Political Development of Nigeria where in his

No.N.A.734/48.



The District Office,  
Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda, 9th November, 1940

The Honourable,  
The Senior Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B u e a.

Ashong ("Bamessong") Chieftainship;  
Maghamo N.A.Area.

p. 163  
p. 159

With reference to your letter No. 702/163 of 3rd July, 1940 and in continuation of my letter No. N.A.734/38 of 7th June, 1940 have the honour to inform you that Teku has just been sentenced by the Magistrate Mr. Hay to 18 months I.H.L. for stealing cattle.

2. It is thus clear that Teku cannot be recognised by Government, and <sup>I beg to ask</sup> whether your views expressed in paragraph 2 of your Memorandum No. 702/163 of 3rd July, 1940 forwarded under your endorsement No. 702/165A of 3rd July, 1940 remain unchanged.

p. 165A

*SP. aaron 23/11.*  
*W. 11-2-169 no views expressed in 2 of my 163 remain unchanged.*  
*aaron 23/11.*

*M. Jeffrey*

Senior District Officer  
i/c Bamenda Division.

MM.

Recd. 170



Original in file 3055.

No. N.A.2021/7.

The District Office,  
Bamenda, 25th June, 1941.

The Honourable  
The Senior Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B u e a.

Village Head for Bamessong (Ashong) Village:  
Maghamo N.A. Area, Bamenda Division.

491  
P. 110  
3055  
P. 170  
P. 163  
With reference to the minutes attached to your letter No. Tr.23/41 of 7th April, 1941, paragraph 5 and also your M.P. 702/170 of 23rd November, 1940, and previous correspondence, I beg to report I have now visited Ashong and held a full meeting. It was I regret to say abortive and the position remains as in paragraph 6 of your M.P.702/163 of 3rd July, 1940, except Teku is now in prison and his followers are supporting one Tangwe a son of chief Mbafo (also in prison).

2. Together with the village heads of Guzang, Anong, Bengang and Efa I tried to persuade the quarter heads to come to something approaching agreement. It was however useless and neither party would give an inch. There is no doubt that Dr. Jeffreys' recommendation in favour of Inawngang is the most suitable one and has the support of the majority of quarter heads and also the better type of elder, the very fact that a number of compound heads (8) from Teku's quarter (Ngaku) support Inawngang is to my mind most significant.

3. If we are to go by the figures above which are given by Dr. Jeffreys in paragraphs 6 and 8 of M.P.702/163 of 3rd July, 1940, and which still hold then nothing can be done and the village will remain in a state of chaos for sometime to come. If however the opinions of the majority of quarter heads, the better type of elder, the majority of outside chiefs (to say nothing of a Senior District Officer and District Officer) are considered then Inawngang will be appointed in succession to Mbafo. There will no doubt be an outcry from the disappointed section but if firmly dealt with at once I do not believe it will amount to much.

(Sgd.) P.M. Riley,  
District Officer i/c Bamenda Division.

P.T.O.



LES MEILLEURES PÉRIODES  
 CE QUE SE PASSE

The Resident,  
 Cameroons Province,  
 B u e a.



No. N.A. 1680/41. 178  
 The District Office,  
 Bamenda, 27th April, 1943.

Petition from Mbanyamingo, Village Head  
 and Quarter Heads of Guzang (Babujang)  
 Moghamo N.A. Area.

I enclose a petition addressed to you by the Village Head and Council of Guzang, Moghamo Native Authority Area.

2. The Village Head Mbanyamingo was appointed court member in April, 1941, your TR.19/41 of 8th April, 1941, and previous correspondence refer.

3. Since his installation, as the successor to Mba-Kundung ex-Village Head, he has suffered much provocation at the hands of Mba Kundung's personal followers. Since Mba-Kundung's release from prison the provocation has become worse.

4. The petitioners complaint that the President Moghamo Native Court is biased against him, is true: the President has already been warned verbally by me for tampering in Guzang affairs and has also tampered in the affairs of Ashong village area neighbour.

5. The radical solution is, of course, to remove the ring leaders and forbid their return to the village unless they acknowledge the present village head. The expedient solution is to advise the Village Head Mbanyamingo to continue to sue them in the Native Court when they give course for such action: but the Moghamo Native Court being what it is this solution is likely to prove ineffective - even for an expedient. Therefore I recommend the radical solution, namely, that the Village Head be advised that as Native Authority having control of land (under the Governor) he should see the District Officer if further cases arise where people refuse to recognize his approved suzerainty, and that the District Officer will take the necessary steps to abate the nuisance.

B.S.A.

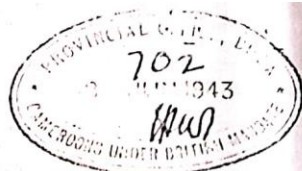
B. J. H. / 5

181A

*Attendant*  
 District Officer,  
 i/c Bamenda Division.



The Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B u e a.



No. N.A. 734/99.  
The District Office,  
Bamenda, 27 May, 1943.

Tita Tiko of Ashong Village, Moghamo  
N.A. Area: Pettition from.

I enclose a petition from Tita Tiko dated the 9th April, 1943, comments are attached.

177 2. The matter is an old one: Your endorsement No. 702/177 of 30th September, 1941, and previous correspondence refer.

3. The village was visited by Mr. Woodhouse, District Officer, on 21st to 22nd of January, 1943. As a result of his visit Mr. Woodhouse wrote :-

"The position is now as follows :-  
"2. The ex-village head Bafo, alias Mbafo, alias Mba, alias Afo, has finished his term of imprisonment and returned to Ashong.

"3. In July, 1940, after Bafo had been convicted for stealing tax money, Dr. Jeffreys recommended that one Enoygang (Inawangang) should be appointed Village Head in his place. This recommendation was turned down.

"4. The other candidate Teku, a brother of the convicted Village Head, Bafo, was sentenced, later in 1940, for stealing cattle and Dr. Jeffreys repeated his previous recommendation.

177 "5. In June, 1941, Capt. Riley returned to the attack, and the official front yielded to the extent, set out in the Resident's endorsement No. 702/177 of 30/9/41, and previous correspondence.

"6. On 3/11/42, I was confronted with the ex-Village Head out of prison.

"7. It appears that when the ex-village Head was convicted the insignia of his office was not collected and held pending the appointment of a new Village Head. This is unfortunate because Bafo is now sitting on the stool, and using the insignia of the village head to which he is no longer entitled.

"8. I informed Bafo that he must bring the insignia to Bamenda within one week. He objected saying that the District Officer would then give it to his hated opponent. I replied that the immediate question was that he was illegally using the insignia as he was no longer Village Head I was giving him an opportunity to save his face.

"9. Bafo is now putting forward his son Tengwe, as the new Village Head saying that this is in accordance with custom.

"10. I held the usual abortive meeting at Ashong in front of the whole village. The position remains substantially the same with a possible slight increase in favour of Enoygang: the proportion is roughly 3: 2. This is in his favour as a person who can collect tax and retain support must ipso facto be fairly well seated.

"11. I then examined the point raised by Dr. Jeffreys in a minute dated 30/3/40, in detail. This minute reads:- "In 1916 the Chief of Ashong died, the father of Inongang. Thereupon Bafo of the same family as Inongang - i.e. of the chiefs family seized the chieftainship, with the result that Inongang left and went to Bali and the present village of Banti followed him. He returned to Ashong land in 1925". It appears that Eno Teku the Village Head who died about 1916, had numerous sons :-

2.

P.S.A.

See / 1943, 1943



- 3 -

184

"other Kwifon said "No", he had been refused and Fongo appointed temporarily, as Enoje had misbehaved himself by supporting the criminal ex-V.H.

"17. Here then was additional confirmation of Enogang's claim to the Village Headship. The society responsible for seeing that the investiture is properly carried out, supports him solidly.

"18. It seems further that in the light of the District Officer's letter dated 19/7/39 and addressed to the Mogamo Native Authority Tengwe is a most unsuitable person to be V.H., and it appears that Teku was substituted because the ex-village head's party recognised that the District Officer would not countenance Tengwe's nomination. Teku is now also out of the running as a result of his subsequent conviction.

"19. We can do one of two things, allow Enoygang to continue as tax collector but refuse to recognise him as V.H. until he has a 100% support, (this is a vain hope), or recognise Enoygang as V.H. and then see that the ex-Village Head's party is dealt with firmly".

4. The letter referred to in paragraph 18 of Mr. Woodhouse's minute above reads :-

"Mogamo Native Authority,

In reply to your letter folio 6 of 15th July, in which you say that Mbafo's son has been appointed in Mbafo's place, I am to say that Mbafo's son knew what was happening, namely that his father was hiding names and taking tax and stealing money. I should prefer that some one else, and not the son of a thief should be head of Village. There is also the possibility that Mbafo's son may make things unpleasant for the witnesses called by the Police against his father.

"2. The choice must wait till Administrative Officer visits the Magamo Court.

"3. I am to ask why Mbafo's son was elected in the absence of Chief Nyeke please".

5. I recommend that the petitioner be informed that the matter is one which concerns not himself directly but the ex-village head and that if the ex-village head has any grievance he can address his own petition direct either to or through the District Officer.

6. With regard to the ex-village head unless he can settle down peacefully, vide paragraph 2 of my comments on the petition, it is proposed to recommend his removal from the village of Ashong under the provisions of paragraph 2(1)(a) and (b) of Chapter 78 as amended by No. 9 of 1925.

*A. Woodhouse*  
District Officer.

*W. Woodhouse*

*see h. 193*



From Tita Tiko,  
Ashong Village, Mogahmo Area. 180  
Bamenda Division.  
9th. April 1943.

The Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B U E A.

Through the District Officer,  
Bamenda.

Ex-chief Mbafo of Ashong Village, Mogahmo Area

Sir,

I have the honour most humbly and respectfully to bring the following petition before the Resident for immediate action to relieve the miserable position which my father Mbafo the ex-chief of Ashong Village, Mogahmo Area is placed.

2 I have the honour most humbly and respectfully to inform the Resident that my father was imprisoned in the year 1938 by the Government for using tax-money and when he came out from prison it became a heated argument which divided the Villagers into two sections in their opinions that my father should <sup>be</sup> replaced in the position of a chief which he was serving. The greater part of the population was in opinion that he should be replaced to his position, but as the person who was holding the position temporary, acquitted such threatening actions in collecting tax from the inhabitants and later on the District Officer also confirmed that my father should no longer do the work, the number of villagers who voted for my father became less about one hundred and fifty while others have to attach themselves to the Mamfe Division.

3 The topic of writing this petition is not the need that my father be replaced as a chief as the question is one that rests in the hands of the decision of the whole village and the District Officer which has now been concluded, and which I think my father has no further argument to raise.

4 The questionable angle in the matter is the demand made by the D.O. that my father should surrender all his movable properties including women and compound which are the result of his own labour and a general estate of the village to be inherited by the new chief appointed by the community and the District Officer to replace him, while the worst of all the new chief is pressing that my father should be removed from the village with many others in his family merely because he has not surrendered his properties. I therefore beg the Resident to see whether it is right in the British Empire



187

(2)

where there is freedom of speech if my father's vote to be replaced as a chief is not recognised he should be deported to another land from his own given-land, without committing any serious offence but merely the effect of a chief; and at the time of writing he is with the Police.

I have therefore petition that if the measures now in motion against my father cannot be revoked by the Resident a legal remedy may be opened for him and his family-members intended to be removed from the village to plead the cause in the Magistrate's court at Bamenda or in the Supreme Court supported by a legal representative.

Looking forward for your early reply Sir,

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most humble petitioner,

Tita Tiko      his thumb mark.

This is to certify that the above petition has been written at the request of petitioner and after it has been read over to him both in English and explained in vernacular in our presence petitioner confirms that this contains nothing more than the authorised terms and expressions dictated to the writer for the Resident Cameroons Province, Buea, thro' the District Officer, Bamenda Division, Bamenda.

Witnessed this 9th. day of April 1943 by (1)

*R. M. S. Anyang*

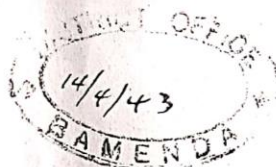
(2)

*Arthur Lee*

Written by H. J. S. Ngongi,  
Letter Writer (Cameroons) Buea.  
Touring Bamenda.

*H. J. S. Ngongi*

Fee charged for three copies  
(Twenty shillings only) 20/-  
Petitioner has given a prom-  
issionary note to pay in-  
due course.



178

No. 702/188.

Provincial Office,  
Cameroons Province,  
Buea, 10 June, 1943

Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th April, 1943. Your complaint is one which does not concern yourself directly but the ex Village Head Mbafo. If Mbafo has any grievance he can address his own petition to the District Officer.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) J.W. Hartley,  
Ag. Resident, Cameroons Province.

Tita Tiko  
Ashong Village,  
Moghemo N.A. Area,  
u.f.c. thro' the District Officer,  
B a m e n d a.

No. 702/188A.  
Buea, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 1943.

188A

L.H.M.W. The District Officer,  
B a m e n d a.

For information, with reference to your letter No.N.A. 734/99 of the 27th of May, 1943. Please deliver the attached letter to petitioner.

*N.W.V*  
Ag. Resident, Cameroons Province.

*P.A.  
Done  
11/6*



From Quartersheads and  
Village head of Gugang  
Abghamo area  
Bamenda Division  
24/2/43.

The Honourable, the Senior Resident.

Cameroons province,  
Through Divisional Officer,  
1/c. Bamenda Division.

Your honour,

We have the  
honour most respectfully to petition your honour.  
we the quartersheads of Gugang and the Villagehead, beg the  
honour to listen to our trouble which usual happened  
with Tita Luma, Salah quartershead, Timpah, Quartershead, Abbalbung  
et al, are going round the village and convince people  
not to obey the present chief and foolish them that the ex  
chief who just discharge from prison will be the village  
head, and they are abuse our present village head in  
public, which all we believe him to be the head of the village  
we have suffer of put them in Native court Abghamo, and  
court did not agreed with our desire and allow them to  
do more, and doing any things in our village, by  
confuse more and more, they also abuse our chief in court  
and President take no interest about abuse our head.  
But village head summons Abbalbung et al, in Native  
court in retained chief property, court play trick and  
dismiss the case, we all vex, and have stronger suspicion  
that Abghamo President usual takes bribing for case  
and then prevent judgment, that is why we are  
going to wrong in Abghamo area, Native court.  
When the Divisional Officer, instructed us to do things in  
right way, that he gone, they will change it and begin  
made tricks they can not carry the D.O. instruction and  
court laws, only make wrong judgment. We  
want the Government to put this four men in  
tribunal court and exile them from our village  
if not so, they will cause much trouble by convince  
people and allow them not to obey the present chief.

F. F. O.

Your honour, We humbly beg to state that we want to separate our selves from this Native court. We submission beg the honour that we wanted to have our own simple Village court, this will stop the trick which usual did in this mixed court. We trick that we have said, we believe, the Divisional Officer who usual visit Magama Native court and heard the various cases have discover some trick for cause. We the Mentersheads of Gugang and if we said any things in our Village then it is so, We did not want such people who are show bad sample in the Village and cause much trouble and hurroy to our sleep. We have no times more.

We have the honour to be Sir

Your honour most obedint Servant

See thumbs marks for list

- |   |               |               |                |
|---|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 | Village head  | Mbah Yamsick  |                |
| 2 | quartersheads | Fon-mijoh     | of Mung Gugang |
| 3 | "             | Tata Sabindun | " Ngaku "      |
| 4 | "             | Tebangjong    | " Sigiswick "  |
| 5 | "             | Made          | " Kevoukhor "  |
| 6 | "             | Sijuk         | " Kiti "       |
| 7 | "             | Sarji         | " Mumashe "    |
| 8 | "             | Ndanyi        | of Bekke "     |
| 9 | "             | Totato        | " Kevan "      |
|   | "             | Tiboh         | " Suorow "     |

Written by [Name] I have read to him and they Confirmed  
True.



207

No. N.A.1734/76

Divisional Office,  
Bamenda, 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1945.

The Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
B u e a.

MBA, Village Head of Batibo, Moghamo area.

Request for increase in salary.

The above named, the permanent President of the Moghamo Native Court asks that his Executive salary of £15 per annum be increased.

3484

2. In this connection, I refer you to Item 3 page 5 of the Schedule forwarded under cover of my letter N.A.166/87 of the 26th of October, 1944, which was approved by you in your telegram 3484 of 20th of November, 1944.



3. Petitioner has an exaggerated idea of his own importance. His administrative functions are no greater than any other Village Head in the Moghamo area, and I can see no reason why he should be singled out for preferential treatment. He receives a salary equivalent to that which he has always received, and it would be dangerous to make any change in existing salaries without very good reason. He speaks of his position as President of the Moghamo Native Court, but this has nothing to do with the executive salary paid to him. He receives a share of Sitting fees for his work in Court.

702/198

4. I refer to your endorsement 702/198 of the 17th of December, 1943.

5. I recommend that petitioner be informed that you are not prepared to grant his request.

*R. Smith H.*

*S. J. Turner*

District Officer.

ed. NSM  
19/12/45

20/12

18  
12  
45

*20/12/45*

No. 702/208.

Provincial Office,  
Cameroons Province,  
Buea, 19th October, 1944.

Sir,

YOUR PETITION OF 20/5/1944.

I have nothing to add to my letter No.702/197 of the  
17th of December, 1943, addressed to you in answer to your  
petition of the 6th of November, 1943.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

Resident, Cameroons Province .

Chief G.T.T.Mba,  
Moghamo Native Authority Area,  
u.f.s. thro' the District Officer,  
B a m e n d a.

P.194  
P.194



200

when I pay tax for I am a salaried member of the Native Court. This reason impels me to say something further: With regard to the tax of 1943-44 my village alone yielded £148:10:=-. If therefore I were to be granted any per centage I would have got just about the same £15/- which I earn per annum. Logically, it demonstrates that the mentioned amount is solely my due tax per centage being paid me by monthly instalments. Notwithstanding the per centage so paid to every tax collector is mere compensation for his collecting tax, no matter whether he is a Native Court Member or not. This is obvious by a private business.

(3) To end with, I humbly beg to know what is being paid me as the

P. T. C.

4 JUN 1944  
 my Area could  
 Accp. 197

LETTERED PRESIDENT OF THE MOGHAMO  
NATIVE COURT.

Awaiting your most profound  
favourable reply,

I have the honour to be,  
Honourable Sir,

Your submissive servant,

Ilmba Chief, Aghwi.

N.B. A duplicate of this has been  
forwarded to the District Officer,  
Bamenda.

Ilmba

H.S.R.

P. 199 is a further Petition to  
P. 194 - see P. 197 in ref to P. 194.

2. P. 199 to await D.O.'s Comments

Yes

B.H.

2/15/6

16 JUN 1944

JUN 1944

See p 208



195

199

Original to :-

Batibe alias Aghui,  
Moghamo N.A. Area

20th May, 1944.

The Senior Resident,  
the Cameroons Province,  
Buea.

Honourable Sir,

p.194

Further to my petition of the  
6th November, 1943, I have the  
honour most submissively to add  
the following facts :-

(1) With reference to paragraph "(a)"  
of my previous petition, the number  
of taxable males of the whole  
Moghamo Area for 1943-44 was  
4309. This means that the Area  
yielded for that year, a good  
revenue of £969:10:6 if everyone  
paid only 4/6.

(2) Furthermore I understood that  
I am not allowed any per centage

4 JUN 1944  
whenever my Area could  
20/203  
Accp.197



196

The DL  
D  
o. N. 1  
2

I have the honour to be,  
Honourable Sir,

Your submissive servant,

Mba (G.T.T. Mba)

~~Paramount Chief~~  
Villagehead, Aighui  
Moghamo N.A. Area.

196A



The Senior Resident  
Moghamo Area.

No. N.A. 1734/45.

District Office,  
Bamenda, 29th November, 1943.

Petition from Mba, Village Head of Aighui (Moghamo Area) for a higher salary. I suggest petitioner be informed that you are not prepared to consider his application at present as the whole question of salaries, both judicial and executive, requires review.

2. You will observe that petitioner first signed the letter as "Paramount Chief". He has no claim to such a position, and I instructed him to delete it.

*H.S. R.*  
District Officer.

K.

H.S. R.

To reply as suggested  
D.O. in para. 1 above?

B. Ocho 10.12.43

*J.B.*

- 16/12

*P.H.*

16/12

Recd. 1943, 206

28th J

195

yield a great amount of revenue.

(b) I am the President of both the Native Court and Native Authority; and also my village is the Mother village because about  $\frac{4}{5}$  of the people of this N. A. Area originated from here. — This might be investigated —.

(c) I am the only chief (in the Bamenda Division) who has yet achieved Middle II and obtained a Certificate thereof.

(d) We are forbidden to trying Criminal Cases out of Court by which means I could get money to buy some Native Gowns for wearing.

(e) I am not allowed any percentage when I pay tax to the treasury.

(f) No. War Bonus is allowed us.

Awaiting the most favourable reply,

P. T. O.

194

Batibo alias Aghwi, Moghamsu Ar  
Bamenda Division.  
6th November, 1943.

rough: The District Officer,  
ifc Bamenda Division

to: The Senior Resident,  
at Bamenda Division.

Honourable Sir, My Salary—Increment of

I have the honour

most submissively to refer the Honourable to my salary which is only £15 (fifteen pounds) per year. This is obviously too less and I therefore presume it will be redressed under the following circumstances:—

(a) Some Presidents in other Native Courts earn very much more than £15 p.a. (e.g. Bani, Bafut & Banso). I see no reason why I should be cheated whereas my Area could

Accp. 197



702/212.

28th December, 1945.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 25th November, and to inform you that after a full consideration of all the circumstances I can see no reason why you should be singled out for preferential treatment and accorded an increase in salary. I would point out to you that your administrative functions are no greater than those of any other Village Head in the Mghamo area, also that your executive salary is a question quite apart from the matter of your duties as President of the Mghamo Native Court.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

**R. J. HOOK.**Resident,  
Cameroons Province.

Chief G.T.T. Mba II,  
President,  
Mghamo Area Native Court.  
u.f.s. 'Tiro' The District Officer,  
Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda.

MM.

Copy to:-  
The District Officer,  
Bamenda.

No. 702/212A.

Buea, 28th Dec., 1945.

For information with reference to your letter  
No. N.A. 1734/76 of 7th December.  
2. Please deliver the original of the attached  
letter to petitioner.

**R. J. HOOK**  
Resident,  
Cameroons Province.

MM.

Thro'  
 District Officer,  
 i/c Bamenda Division,  
 To the Senior Resident,  
 Cameroons Province,  
 Buea.  
 Honourable Sir,

from Chief G.T.F. Mba II.  
 Aghui (Batibo),  
 Mogamo N.A. Area,  
 Bamenda Division,  
 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1945.

Increase of Salary.

With reference to your letters of 17th Decem-  
 ber, 1943, and 19th October, 1944, in answer to my  
 letters of 6th November, 1943 and 20th May, 1944, I have  
 the honour most submissively to engender the following  
 humble modifications :-

- (1) Frustration and inconvenience have always  
 been the consequences of my incessant  
 endeavour to live on the atomic monthly  
 salary of £1/5/- which has habitually  
 placed me in state of bankruptcy coupled  
 with resentment.
- (2) As a man of letters who holds the post  
 of President, Native Court, my necessa-  
 ries must needs cost more than £15/-/-per  
 annum.
- (3) As my tax percentage award several years  
 past, I should have been receiving the  
 same £15/-/- each year I collected tax in  
 my village, but I could never<sup>be</sup> offered this  
 amount owing to the fact that I am a  
 salaried member of the Native Court. There-  
 fore the Government fixed my salary to be  
 £1/5/- per month which is tantamount to  
 the same £15/-/- per year. Can anybody  
 discriminate between a fent of £3 per year  
 and that of 5/- per month? No. Hence this  
 savours of deliberate fraud.
- (4) My Native Court jurisdiction yields  
 enormous revenue which could furnish me  
 with a pay of more than £120 per annum.



2.

No. N. 4. 1. 1. For information.



## APPENDIX 4

**APPENDIX THREE**  
**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION**  
**OF INQUIRY INTO THE 1952 RIOTS**  
**(Nigeria Gazette, n° 45, vol. 39, Lagos,**  
**26 August, 1952)**

Your Excellency,

On the 12th of April, 1952, you directed that we should hold an inquiry under the provisions of section 3 (b) and (e) of the Collective Punishment Ordinance.

The purpose of the inquiry was to investigate the circumstances in which serious disturbances among the Widekum and Bali people lately occurred in the neighbourhood of Bali in the Bamenda Province of the Cameroons; and to ascertain whether all or any inhabitants of any village or district or members of any tribe or community in the neighbourhood of Bali have suppressed or combined to suppress evidence in any criminal case, investigation, inquiry or inquest and whether they have been guilty of such conduct as to require the bringing of soldiers or police to the village or district or the employment of soldiers or police against them for the purposes of preventing or suppressing disturbances or of enforcing lawful orders.

2. We opened our inquiry at the New Hospital, Bamenda, on the 21st April and heard evidence there on the 21st, 22nd, 25th and 26th April. On the 24th April we visited part of the area affected by the disturbances and inspected damage to houses and crops.
3. On the 27th April we proceeded to Bali and sat in the Bali Native Court on the 28th and 29th. On the 1st and 2nd May we heard evidence in the Moghamo Native Court at Batibo. On the 3rd May, we returned to Bamenda.
4. On the 5th May we sat in the Ngemba Native Court, on the 6th in the Resident's Office at Bamenda, and on the 7th in the South West Federation Native Authority Council Hall at Mbengwi in the Menemo clan area.
5. We conducted our proceedings at Bamenda, Batibo, Mbengwi



the opinion that it would amount to a substantial sum. These witnesses were of course unable in every case to make a detailed assessment.

18. Evidence relating to the identity of the armed men who burned and looted Bali houses between the 3rd and 14th March was given by witness N<sup>o</sup> S 14-20 and 22-24, all Balis who claimed to have been present during the disturbances. Although we were on our guard against a natural desire on the part of the Balis to overstate their case, we were impressed by the straightforward and restrained attitude of these witnesses. They identified, generally to our satisfaction, attackers from villages all over the Moghamo and Menemo areas and from the villages in the Ngemba area which lie close to the Bali boundary. Their evidence is to a large extent corroborated by the evidence of the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 10th witnesses.

19. We also draw attention to the evidence of the 36th witness, Mr McCaffrey, Assistant Superintendent of Police, who stated that out of a total of fifty-six persons convicted up to the 6th May of offences directly connected with the disturbances, fifty-two came from the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clan areas; the remaining four came from the mixed settlements of Mengen Muwa and Mengen Mbo and were persons of Widekum sympathies.

20. The witnesses from the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans appeared for the most part to be chiefly interested in establishing their personal innocence, although at the commencement of our sessions, at Batibo and Ngemba Native Courts and at Mbengwi, we were at pains to explain the purpose of our inquiry. The 33rd witness, I No Lie Ndanin, however, at Batibo stated that the Balis attacked the Widekums in the mixed Bali-Widekum settlement of Mengen Muwa which is on Bali land. He said that Widekums from outside Mengen Muwa came to their fellow-clansmen's assistance and that they came unarmed. In spite of the witness's name he did not impress us as a truthful witness; his answers to questions were evasive and his manner extremely uneasy. We consider it impossible to place any reliance on his evidence. We note that the 12th witness, Mr Wood, District Officer stated that out of a total of 292 houses burned in Mengen Muwa 219 had apparently been the property of Balis. We note also that widespread attacks on Bali houses all over the Bali area took place on the same day as houses were burned in Mengen Muwa.



21. When we sat in the Ngemba Native Court on the 5th May the Ngemba clansmen present were emphatic that only Ndefru, the President of their Council, could speak for them. It was necessary to send for Ndefru and, while he waited, we ourselves called the 34th witness, a village head of the Ngemba area. When Ndefru, (35th witness), arrived his evidence was almost entirely directed towards establishing the fact that he was in hospital during the disturbances; he did however state under cross-examination that his people fought the Balis because they heard a drum in Mungen Muwa but was unwilling to develop the theme. We note from Exhibit n° 3 that Bande. Ndefru's village, is about twelve miles from Mungen Muwa in a direct line. The 34th witness also said that the Ngembas fought the Balis but made no excuse for them and did not refer to Mungen Muwa. Before leaving Ngemba Native Court on the 5th we announced our intention of sitting at Bamenda on the following day. No Ngembas appeared on the 6th.

22. At Mbengwi on the 7th May the 37th witness, the village head of a Widekum section of the mixed Bali-Widekum village of Mungen Mbo, claimed that the Balis attacked his people in Mungen Mbo, burned their houses and turned them out. He said that he did not know who burned 236 houses in Mungen Mbo which the 13th witness, Mr Elkerton, had stated to be the property of the Balis; and that he had no knowledge of any Bali houses being burned anywhere. We received the impression that this witness's evidence in chief had been rehearsed; it broke down under cross-examination. We would apply the same remarks to the 39th witness. We cannot accept their evidence.

23. The two Presidents of the Moghamo and Ngemba Clan Councils, the 28th and 35th witnesses respectively, each sought to establish that he was away during the disturbances and was in no way responsible for what occurred. The 28th witness admitted receiving Exhibit n° 1 before leaving his village for Mamfe. Apart from the 28th and 35th witnesses no less than four Widekum village heads of the six who gave evidence endeavoured to establish alibis and their example was also followed by a Widekum Native Court member (32nd witness). We find it difficult to believe that the similarity of so many claims is a mere coincidence.

24. We found on the other hand the evidence of the President of the Menemo Clan Council (41st witness) most illuminating. This witness was nervous as might well be expected in the presence of



some 150 or so of his clansmen whose attitude was truculent and hostile. But we gained the impression that he spoke the truth and wished to be of assistance.

25. We note that a small proportion of Widekum houses in Mengen Muwa and Mengen Mbo was burned. We carefully tested the allegations that it was the Balis who burned these houses in an unprovoked attack on the Widekums. Not only were we not impressed by the demeanour of the witness who made these allegations but we consider their contention intrinsically unlikely in the light of the evidence (which we accept) of widespread attacks on Bali settlements at a great many other points on the perimeter of their land on the morning of the 3rd March. From considerations of time and distance we think it most unlikely that appeals for help from Mengen Muwa and Mengen Mbo could have been answered so quickly by attacks on so many other Bali settlements. While we cannot exclude the possibility of retaliation by the Balis, we think it likely that the Widekum houses which were destroyed in the mixed settlements were burned in the general conflagration.

26. The widespread area over which the disturbances took place and the extent of the damage lead us to believe that a very large number of persons took part and that a considerable proportion of the inhabitants of the areas adjacent to Bali lands must be fully aware of what occurred. But neither in this inquiry nor in the inquiries carried out by the Administration and the Nigeria Police have the people of the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans shown any willingness to co-operate or assist. The attitude of the Presidents of the Moghamo and Ngemba Clan Councils has already been described. The evidence of the 3rd and 7th witness, Mr McCaffery, states that the Widekum clansmen have given the police virtually no assistance, although the Balis have been helpful throughout.

27. We accept the evidence of the 6th witness, the Resident of Bamenda Province, that certain villages in the Ngemba clan area were not concerned in the disturbance; i.e., Bapinyi, Bambullue, Bagangu (otherwise known as Akum), Banjong, Bafawkum, Bafawmissang, Santa, Abakpa (a stranger settlement), and Bamenda Government Station. We note that these villages are situated at a distance from the Bali boundary and such evidence concerning them as we have heard is slight.

28. On the 9th May when this report had for the most part been completed and typed, we received from a Mr E.F. Fawty a written



address which we attach hereto. We have considered its contents and observe that in so far as it repeats the allegations that the Balis made an unprovoked attack on the Widekums, we have already dealt with this contention in paragraphs 20 and 22; the remainder is outside our terms of reference. We would add that Mr Fawty was given the opportunity of giving evidence on oath but declined to do so.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

29. To summarise our conclusions with respect to the points into which Your Excellency directed us to inquire:

(1) In our opinion the responsibility for the disturbances lies with the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans of the Widikum tribe, subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph 27.

2) The attacks on Bali property were planned and concerted; they were carried out by a large number of persons over a period of more than one week. A considerable proportion of the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans must be fully aware of what occurred. These people however, including their village heads and two clan council presidents, have given little or no information or assistance in the inquiries which have been made. We consider that their conduct amounts to a combined effort to suppress evidence.

3) The conduct of the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans has been such as to require the bringing of police and soldiers to the districts in which they live and the employment of police against them for the purpose of suppressing disturbances and preventing a recurrence of such disturbances.

## **Recommendations**

30. We recommend that Your Excellency should impose a fine under the provisions of section 3 of the Collective Punishment Ordinance upon all the indigenous inhabitants of the Moghamo group area, the Menemo clan area and the Ngemba Province as indicated in Public Notice N° 116 of 1949; except that we recommend that the inhabitants of the following villages in the Ngemba clan area should



be exempted from such fine: Bapinyi, Bambullue, Bagangu, Banjong, Bafawkum, Bafawmissang, Santa, Abakpa and Bamenda Government Station.

31. We recommend that the amount of the fine should be ten thousand pounds. In arriving at this figure we have borne in mind that any fine imposed should be large enough to constitute an appropriate punishment to those concerned in the disturbances, to serve as a deterrent and a warning against recurrences, and to afford to the Balis a measure of compensation commensurate, in so far as possible, with their losses. We have on the other hand given careful consideration to the question of what amount those concerned may reasonably be called upon to pay. To this end we have examined figures showing the tax rates, the taxable population and the estimated average income of adult males in the areas concerned.

32. We have not taken into consideration any sum which those concerned may be ordered to pay under the provisions of section 11 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. We respectfully recommend that any fine which Your Excellency may see fit to order to be paid as a result of this report should be taken into account if any sum becomes payable under the provisions of that Ordinance.

33. We recommend that of the total fine nine thousand pounds shall be applied in compensation to the Balis and other indigenous inhabitants of the Bali Native Authority area for the injuries caused to them as a result of the disturbances; and that this sum should be administered at the discretion of the Resident, Bamenda Province.

34. We recommend further that any date which may be ordered by Your Excellency for the payment of a fine imposed as a result of this report shall be not less than three months after the date of such order.

35. Although not within our terms of reference, we feel it our duty respectfully to suggest that, in view of the tension which still exists between the Balis and the Widekums, a substantial police force be

retained in the Bamenda Province at least until any fine imposed under this Ordinance has been collected.

(Signed) E. C. ALDERTON

(Signed) D. L. BATE

(Signed) ABDUL AZIZ ATTA

Dated at Bamenda this 12 th day of May, 1952.

Note: The documents referred to in paragraphs 7 and 28 above have not been printed.

**Nigeria**



## APPENDIX 5

**Nigeria order made under the collective  
punishment ordinance N° 33 of 1952  
(Cap. 34)**

Whereas on the twelfth day of April, 1952, it was directed that an inquiry be held for the purposes of the Collective Punishment Ordinance to inquire into the circumstances in which disturbances of the Queen's peace involving the Widekum and Bali peoples had occurred in the neighbourhood of Bali in the Bamenda Province of the Cameroons, in order to ascertain whether all or any inhabitants of any village or district or members of any tribe or community in the neighbourhood aforesaid had,

- (a) Suppressed, or combined to suppress, evidence in any criminal case, investigation or inquiry, or in any inquest, or
- (b) been guilty of such conduct as to require the bringing of soldiers or police to the village or district or the employment of soldiers or police against them for the purposes of preventing or suppressing disturbances of the character aforesaid or enforcing lawful orders:

And whereas the inquiry has been duly held :

And whereas the Governor, upon consideration of the evidence taken at the said inquiry and the report upon that evidence made by the officers who conducted the said inquiry, finds that the members of the Moghamo, Menemo and Ngemba clans of the Widikum tribe, with the exception of the inhabitants of Bapinyi,



Bambullue, Bagangu (otherwise known as Akum), Banjong, Bafawkum, Bafawmissang, Santa and Abakpa villages, and Bamenda Government Station, combined to suppress evidence in investigations and inquiries relating to the said disturbances, and further that the conduct of the members of the communities aforesaid has been such as to require the bringing of soldiers and police to the districts in which they live and the employment of police against members of the said communities for the purpose of preventing and suppressing disturbances:

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred upon the Governor by section 3 of the Collective Punishment Ordinance, the following Order is hereby made:

1. This Order may be cited as the Collective Punishment (Widekum) Order, 1952.

2. It is hereby ordered that:

(a) a fine of ten thousand pounds be imposed on all the indigenous inhabitants of the Moghamo group area, the Menemo clan area and the Ngemba court area (as indicated in Public Notice n° 116 of 1949) with the exception of the inhabitants of the following villages, that is to say, Bapinyi, Bambullue, Bagangu (otherwise known as Akum), Banjong, Bafawkum, Bafawmissang, Santa and Abapka villages, and Bamenda Government Station; and

(b) of the said fine the sum of nine thousand pounds be applied in such manner as the Resident, Bamenda Province, shall think fit in compensation to the Balis and other indigenous inhabitants of the Bali Native Authority area for the injuries caused to them by the disturbances to which the aforesaid investigations and inquiries related; and

(c) that the said fine shall be paid on or before the twenty-fifth day of September, 1952.

Made at Lagos this 26th day of August, 1952.

By His Excellency's Command,

L. H. GOBLE,

Acting Chief Secretary to the Government



## THE MANSON REPORT

*(Nigeria gazette, n° 37, vol. 40, Lagos, 8th June, 1953)*

Your Excellency,

I was appointed by Your Excellency under the Commissions of Inquiry Ordinance (Chapter 37) to be sole Commissioner of Inquiry into certain land disputes between the Widikum and the Bali peoples in the Bamenda Division of the Cameroon under United Kingdom Trusteeship. The precise terms of reference of the Commission will be found at pages 1, 2. I held twenty-three Meetings. The proceedings were unduly protracted owing to double interpretations as each party desired to have its own special interpreter. In some cases the interpretation was treble when an interpreter in a special dialect had to be employed.

2. I feel that I should explain very shortly the circumstances which occasioned this Inquiry. From time to time over a period of years — between twenty-five and thirty years — there have been disputes over land between the Bali people — or more precisely the Bali Nyonga Branch of the Bali people — and some of their Widikum neighbours. These disputes resulted in many petitions and from time to time in boundary demarcations by Administrative Officers, by agreement between the parties or under the Inter-Tribal Boundaries Settlement Ordinance (Chapter 95). Eventually in 1948-49 Mr F. A. Goodliffe, Senior District officer was appointed to hold an Inquiry under the Ordinance with a view to determining a boundary which was in dispute between the Bali people and a Widikum community — the Bamengen (Mengen Mbo). The land which was the subject matter of M. Goodliffe's Inquiry is part of the land in dispute in those suits referred to in the terms of reference of this present Inquiry. Mr Goodliffe's Inquiry resulted in a finding of fact that the Mengen Mbo people had lost all their rights over the land in dispute to the Bali people who had acquired the land from them by conquest sometime before 1890 and therefore, it was not possible to fix a boundary between them. The material parts of M. Goodliffe's report will be found in Appendix B. I have extracted them because the nature of the claim in this case in respect of the area verged yellow in Plan A in folder and much repetition will be avoided. The representatives



of the Mengen Mbo community applied to the Chief Commissioner under section 7 of the Ordinance for a review of M. Goodliffe's decision. The Chief Commissioner confirmed M. Goodliffe's finding and stated that there were no merits in the appeal. At the same time the representative of the Mengen Mbo Community was informed by letter that the Chief Commissioner "was advised that Mr Goodliffe's judgment as confirmed, will not preclude the Mengen people from commencing proceedings in Court for a declaration of title. Should they elect to commence proceedings in Court, the case will be transferred to the Supreme Court where no accusations of prejudice can be levelled at the Judge".

As a result, the Mengen Mbo people instituted an action against the Fon of Bali in the Bali Native Court which was transferred to the Supreme Court by an Order of Transfer under section 28 of the Native Courts Ordinance (chapter 142). Suit N° C/33/1950. The claim, as started in the Summons, was "ownership of Mengen Mbo land in Bali area taken by the Defendant through the Government or British Administrative Officers since 1922". At the same time eight other Widikum communities surrounding Bali jointly instituted an action against the Fon of Bali claiming a declaration of title of portions of Bali land, damages and injunction against the Defendant, restraining him and his people from entering on the land and interfering with the Plaintiff's use and enjoyment of it-Suits N° C/55/50, N° C/64/50 and N° C/65/50. These suits were also transferred to the Supreme Court and were consolidated with Suit N° C/33/50. A certified copy of the Summonses and Orders of Transfer will be found in Appendix E.

The course which the proceedings took in the Supreme Court can be seen by referring to a certified copy of the proceedings in Appendix E. It is sufficient to say that the Plaintiffs in the consolidated suits were nonsuited on the ground that they had not pleaded title under the Land and Native Rights Ordinance (Chapter 105, section 4), and that no title could be granted to them except by the Governor and that, without such title, their claim to damages and an injunction could not be entertained. This abrupt rejection of their claims without any evidence being called except that of the surveyor was the immediate occasion of an outbreak of violence by the Widikum people some few days later. One may perhaps, make this passing observation. The Mengen Mbo community were informed directly — and the other Widikum communities indirectly — by the Chief Commissioner whom they regarded as the Governor, that they could,



if they so wished, pursue their claim to a declaration of title in the Supreme Court. They acted on this suggestion and were then informed by the Judge that he could not grant the declaration they sought and that they should apply to Governor. Without justifying their conduct, one must, in fairness, say that the Widikum people were very understandably mystified, if not bewildered, at the dilemma in which they found themselves. The Governor told them to go to the Court and the Court told them to go to the Governor. The sudden termination, with heavy costs, of their suits which had involved them in very considerable expenditure on account of lawyer's and surveyor's fees, for reasons which they probably did not understand and without any witness, except the surveyor being called, imposed too heavy a strain on their patience and they took the law into their own hands. There can be little doubt that they were encouraged, if not instigated and indeed organised by their leaders.

3. The nature of the claim by the Widikum people is simple. The Court in the consolidated suits ordered pleadings to be filed by both parties and a Plan to be filed by the Plaintiffs. In consequence, the nature of the claim and of the defence and the exact area in dispute are precisely defined. The Plan filed by the Plaintiffs will be found in the folder at the end of this Report (Plan A). It was an agreed Plan (see Appendix E). Another Plan on a smaller scale is also to be found in the folder (Plan B). It is a copy of the Plan which was filed at the Inquiry held by Mr Goodliffe. A copy of the Pleadings will be found in Appendix E. The actual area in dispute is the area verged purple, excluding the central area verged red to which the Widikums lay no claim. The total extent of these two areas is about 130 square miles. In 1948-49 the Bali population was estimated at 12,397. A reference to the Plan A will show an area verged yellow which is approximately the area claimed by the Mengen Mbos, a Widikum community, at M. Goodliffe's Inquiry in 1948-49. The Widikum case can be put very shortly. They assert that the area verged red was given to the Bali people when the latter first arrived in the area about 125 years ago. They say that Bali Nyongas, who are the Defendants, were in flight from another Bali branch called Bali Kumbat and came to them as strangers seeking their protection and they were granted the area verged red called "Wumkai" for settlement and also were assisted by the Widikums to drive back the Bali Kumbats. The alleged gift of land is said to have been accompanied by some ceremony at which a fig tree was planted. They allege that they lived in peace with the Bali Nyongas for many years until the time of the first German arrival which was about 1886. The Widikums say that



the Balis sought favour with the Germans and, with German assistance, and later with British co-operation, encroached beyond the confines of the area verged red and occupied the land and acquired suzerainty over the Widikum communities who were settled on the area outside it (see paragraphs 8, 9, 10 of the Statement of Claim: Appendix E). The Widikums lay no claim to the area verged red, which one may call the "gifted" area. The land in dispute is thus all that area of land lying outside and around the "gifted" land called "Wumkai" up to the purple line.

The Bali Nyongas in their defence assert that the Widikum's claim to have given them the present site of Bali Nyonga alias "Wumkai" has no historical foundation. They state that the present site of Bali Nyonga and all the land on all sides up to the purple line were first acquired by conquest from the Widikum indigenous inhabitants by another branch of the Bali people called Bali Kontan and that the Bali Kontans were, in their turn, conquered by the Bali Nyongas about 1830 who then occupied the land and allowed the subject Widikum people to remain and farm on portions of the land, if they so wished, on payment of tribute, paragraph 5 of the Statement of Defence: Appendix E. The Widikum people deny that there ever were any such people as the Bali Kontans, saying that "Kontan" is merely a corruption of the Widikum word "Kwatad" which means "seven" and that the original gift of land had been made to seven Bali Nyonga men who arrived and sought protection of the Widikums when fleeing from Bali Kumbat (see Appendix B). It may be pointed out that Bali Kontans are expressly referred to in Mr Newton's Intelligence Report on Ngemba, Appendix C; see also Bali's seventh witness, page 174.

The Bali Nyongas state that their conquest of the Bali Kontans and their acquisition of the land in dispute by conquest took place fifty or sixty years before the German's first arrival in about 1886 and that the Germans found them to be in full and effective and undisturbed occupation of the area in dispute and that they received no assistance from the Germans or later from the British in acquiring the present site of Bali Nyonga alias "Wumkai" or the surrounding land verged purple (see the evidence of the Bali spokesman).

The above is a summary of the respective claims of the parties.

4. It will be seen from the preceding paragraphs that the issue in the case resolves itself into the questions "Did the Bali Nyongas



come to their present site of Bali Nyonga alias "Wumkai", i.e. area verged red as refugees or as conquerors?" and "How did they come to occupy the area outside "Wumkai", i.e. the land bounded by the purple line?

In addition to the evidence recorded by me there has been made available both to the parties themselves and myself many Intelligence Reports compiled by various Administrative Officers covering a period of thirty-six years commencing with the Report 1916-17 on the Bamenda Division by M. G. S. Podevin, the first British Civil Administrative Officer to be posted to this area after the outbreak of the First World War. These Reports concerning the Balis and the Widikum people (Ngemba, Moghamo, etc.) contain a great deal of historical data. In addition, the parties have had full and free access to many relevant minute papers containing official correspondence and reports of proceedings of Inter-Tribal Boundary Inquiries held by Administrative Officers into disputed land boundaries between the Bali people and their Widikum neighbours, Bambutu, Bametchom, Babad (Baba II), Bafawchu, Pinyin, Asong, Gujang (Moghamo), Esum (Bamenjong), Kai, Nyas, Tunyang, Cobyang, Bande (see Plan A all round the purple line). These administrative inquiries cover a period of thirty years. In fact, there is so much material available in regard to the Bali people and their relationship with their Widikum neighbours and indeed, with their non-Widikum neighbours, e.g. Bafut, Bansa, that there is a danger of not seeing the wood for the trees. I have extracted some material parts of the Report on the Bali Clan prepared by the late Sir William Hunt in 1925 as it is referred to so frequently in the evidence and also in Mr Goodliffe's Inquiry (see Appendix A).

5. I do not propose to analyse or even to summarise the oral and documentary evidence which is material to the issue before this Inquiry. I am not writing a history of the Bali people. It is quite clear to me — the evidence is overwhelming — that the Balis arrived as warriors — well armed for those days, well organised and partially mounted on horses — and subjugated many of the indigenous people whom they found in this area, including many of the Widikum communities. It is agreed that their first arrival was about 1820 or 1825. Dr Zintgraff, the first German explorer who arrived in 1889, was of the opinion that they had arrived about seventy-five years prior to his arrival. This approximate date is, in fact, accepted by the Widikum spokesman. There can be little doubt that the long period of seventy-five years which elapsed between the Bali arrival



and the German arrival was occupied in perpetual raiding and counter-raiding. It is not, I think, possible at the present day to obtain any additional information as to the ebb and flow of tribal warfare during this period. There is little possibility now of obtaining fresh data in regard to these local strifes of a hundred years ago or more. Only vague and confused incidents are handed down imperfectly by tradition which tends to become more shadowy as the years go by. One cannot, now, gather from them any connected or coherent story.

It is essential to deal with facts as they are today and as they are known to have been for three-quarters of a century and more. Dr Zintgraff asserts that, on his arrival in 1889, he found the Bali people "the most feared of the inland tribes and their friendship a necessary preliminary to the exploration of the North Cameroons" (paragraph 19 of the Hunt Report). There are no grounds for supposing that this state and reputation of the Bali people of which Dr Zintgraff speaks were of recent origin at that date. Moreover the Bali people have, since that date, been in actual, effective and, except for an attempt at re-settlement by the Mengen Mbo people in 1921 and 1934, undisturbed occupation of the area in dispute.

In the absence of any reliable, fresh evidence, it is not now possible to reject the version of Bali history contained in the Hunt Report. Its general accuracy in its broad lines must be accepted. Indeed, this Report is the locus classicus and the foundation of the official summary of Bali history to be found in the Report on the Cameroons under the United Kingdom Trusteeship for 1950 and the Report prepared for the Visiting Mission of the Trusteeship Council to the Cameroons under the United Kingdom Trusteeship in 1950 ; see Appendix C.

The Honourable S.T. Muna is a teacher with educational qualifications and yet he has produced no new historical data to support the Widikum claim or to disprove the general truth of the history as recorded in the Hunt and other Reports and as accepted in the official summary to be found in the Reports to the United Nations. He confined himself to an ineffectual critical analysis, which was not easy to record, of the evidence at Mr Goodliffe's Bali-Bamengen Inter-Tribal Boundary settlement and to an attempt to prove that the Hunt version is based on wrong deductions. The Widikum spokesmen and witnesses persistently deny — with wearisome repetition — any conquest and acquisition of their land by the Bali



people at any time and refute their alleged vassalage to the Bali people and any suggestion that they were ever at any time under the protection or yoke of the Bali people. They state quite frankly that the Hunt version of history is unreliable as he was misled by corrupt Bali Interpreters (see paragraph 122 of Hunt Report; Appendix A). It is difficult to see how Dr Zintgraff's statement above can be regarded as suspect; he stated what he found. It is not necessary to inquire now how far the Balis carried their conquests or to ascertain the degree of their suzerainty over the Widikum communities whom they attacked. There can be little doubt that the Balis and the Germans were of mutual assistance to one another and that with the German aid the Balis were able to conquer the Banded, a Widikum community, whom they had been unable to conquer unaided.

It may be that the extent of Bali conquests or suzerainty in 1884 just before the first German arrival as shown in the Map attached to the Hunt Report — a copy of the Plan is in the folder; Plan C cannot be regarded as entirely exact and that the Bali claim to the large area of suzerainty granted to them by the Germans in 1905 cannot, historically speaking, be accepted (see final paragraph: Cameroons Report for Visiting Commission of the United Nations in Appendix C). But the point is not of any practical importance at the present day though it may be of some historical interest. No question arises now of vassalage, suzerainty or yokedom — whichever word one may use — of Widikum people by the Balis. The Fon of Bali sets up no such claim now.

The surrounding Widikum communities, whatever may have been the case in the past, are now free and independent peoples; it is not necessary to trace the steps by which their freedom was gained.

There can be no doubt that the Balis acquired the area in dispute and other areas by right of conquest during a period when there was much movement and tribes were migrating and seeking new settlements. The Balis drove the occupants away and formed their own settlement on the land so — acquired. The extent to which the Widikum communities were dispossessed of their land no doubt differed; some, e.g. Tunyang, Cobyang, Nya, Kai, were given their land back again as the Balis did not want it. Others, such as Bafawchu, Bametchom were permitted to settle on and farm, in common with the Balis, certain areas of the land which the Balis had acquired from them by conquest and were also given other



Further, I could not discover any adequate reason why the Widikums should have granted this land to the Balis. One witness stated that the "gifted land" was the common Widikum hunting grounds (13th Widikum witness). I cannot believe that such hospitality and such generosity would have been shown in those days to persons who were strangers — and a very considerable number — one witness said 200. Neither do I understand why the Widikums should, as they said they did, have rendered assistance to Bali Nyonga against the other Bali clan viz. Bali Kumbat. The Widikums would appear to have got nothing in return for their assistance. If the Widikums, other than Bande, never, as they say, fought the Bali Nyongas, it can be reasonably inferred as probable that this was because they preferred to submit to a more powerful opponent; alternatively, because they had already been subjugated by the Bali Kontans, the predecessors of the Bali Nyongas (see Bali 7th witness).

The Widikum claim is not only that there was no conquest by Bali, but that the Balis only acquired possession of the area outside the area edged red with German and British aid. As far as German assistance goes, it is quite plain that this area had been acquired, between forty and fifty years before the German arrival, by conquest from the original occupiers by the Bali Kontans who were in turn defeated by the Bali Nyongas. The summons in C/33/1950 (Appendix E) shows the Widikum (Mengen Mbo) claim against the British Government. The position can be seen in Mr Hunt's Memorandum in Appendix A and the Goodliffe Report paragraphs 5, 6 et seq. Appendix B. It was not a question of what the Widikum spokesman so often calls "the iron hand of Government" depriving them of their land; they were ejected from it because they were attempting to re-occupy land which had been acquired from them by the Balis by conquest many years before. This attempt to return to their original sites was opposed by the Fon of Bali who sought the assistance of British Administration. The account of the action taken and the reasons for it given by Mr Hunt is so full and so plain that I see no purpose in summarising it. It makes it apparent that there is no foundation for the Widikum allegation that it was the British Government who forcibly deprived them of their land and gave it to the Balis.

7. At the present time, there are some Widikum people living and farming on the land in dispute including the "Wumkai" land. These are the Mbos, Mengen Muwa, Babossa, Mbufung, Babakus, Kunyang, Bamudum. The total number of these probably does not



sites in substitution. Others such as Mbufung, Bobossa, Babakus and many Mengens settled with the permission of the Fon of Bali on the conquered land and inter-married with Balis and have become "naturalized" with them, and live peaceably amongst them. Eventually, boundaries were demarcated, over a period of many years, between some of the Widikum communities and the Balis, as I have already stated (see also paragraph 8).

No Widikum community has acquired by Bali acquiescence or in any other manner adverse to the Bali people any exclusive rights of occupation over the disputed land or any part of it since the Balis acquired it from them. The Balis have never at any time acknowledged that any Widikum peoples have acquired any rights over the land in dispute or any part of it except those rights of farming and settlement conferred on them by the Fon of Bali as the overlord of the land in dispute.

6. I find myself unable to accept the Widikum version of how the Balis acquired the land now in dispute. The evidence about the "gifted land" i.e. "Wumkai", the area verged red is unconvincing. No definite boundaries were fixed at the time when "Wumkai" was alleged to have been granted to the Bali people; it is said by the 1st Widikum witness to have been demarcated in about 1825, but there is no evidence to show in what manner it was demarcated or by whom or what the boundary marks were. It is also not clear as to which Widikum community granted the land to the Balis. Two witnesses say it was the Mungen Mbos (see 9th Widikum witness and evidence of Fawty at Mr Goodliffe's Inquiry: Appendix B); another witness (2nd Widikum witness) said that it was the Chief of Bande (Mankon) who is said to have been the Paramount Chief of all the Widikum communities at that date. He was not, in fact, the Paramount Chief at that date. It is doubtful whether he is so now. Another witness (4th Widikum witness) said it was his people the Bambutu and also the Ngemba, Menemo, and Moghamo people.

Then again, there is a conflict of evidence as to what the nature of the gift was. Two Widikum witnesses said that it was free and unconditional (5th and 9th Widikum witness); another witness said that after the gift the Balis remained free and independent (5th Widikum witness). The 2nd Widikum witness said that the Balis in return for this gift were "expected" to catch animals for them and also to assist them to fight Bafut. These acts of servile vassalage are irreconcilable with independence.



now amount to more than about 250 taxable males. I would refer to paragraph 27 of Mr Goodliffe's Report (Appendix B). His figures — and only approximate figures — were those in 1949. Since then there have been a number of Mengen Mbos and Mengen Muwas who, either during or after the recent disturbances, left the land in dispute for reasons which are not quite apparent and went to neighbouring Widikum communities.

The Mengen Mbos are not in any defined area; they dwell and farm in Bali Nyonga township and in a few scattered farms on the area in dispute (N. and N.E. of the area verged red). The Mengen Muwas occupy with Bali people a small village at Mile 74 on the Mamfe-Bamenda road (West of the land in dispute). Babossa is N.W. of Plan, Mbufung is S.E. of Mengen Muwa and Bamudum and Babaku are Widikum quarters inside Bali Nyonga township; Kunyang are scattered. It is necessary to refer to these communities because the Widikum people, apart from their claim, as the indigenous occupiers, to the ownership of the land in dispute which, they say, they have never lost by conquest to the Bali people, are putting up, if this claim is rejected, an alternative claim, based on compassionate grounds, to an adjustment of the Bali boundary verged purple. They are making a plea "ad misericordiam". They state that the Mengens and others are not willing to remain and farm on Bali land any longer owing to what the Honourable S.T. Muna has called "the intolerable conditions" under which they live on Bali land, and, therefore, they wish to migrate elsewhere where it would be possible for them to live according to their own laws and customs without interference by the Balis. The Balis do not want any independent unit of the Widikum people to be resident on Bali land and they made an offer to the Widikum spokesmen to withdraw the Bali boundary, i.e. purple line on the Mengen Mbo and Mengen Muwa side in the direction of Bali Nyonga and these two communities would then move from their present site to the other side of the retracted boundary and thus be outside Bali land. The Widikums rejected this offer. Their counter offer was that the existing settlements should remain where they are and that the boundary line should be so retracted that they would be outside Bali Land. (I would refer to my Note at the end of the 6th Meeting). It is sufficient to say that nothing came of these alternative proposals. A Conciliation Committee consisting of a Neutral Group, a Bali Group and a Widikum Group was set up while the Inquiry was continuing, but, after a considerable number of meetings, it achieved nothing. The Bali offer has now been withdrawn as no agreement was reached. I have not thought it necessary to



refer to these abortive deliberations in detail or to include them in this Report. I wish to say, however, that if the alleged "Widikum sufferings" have any real foundation, there is nothing to prevent those who do not wish to remain on Bali land leaving it and joining any other Widikum community outside. I see no reason why the Balis should be expected to give those Widikums who prefer to leave Bali territory any portion of Bali land to settle on; as the Fon of Ngaw put it "would anyone give a shovel to a wife who has decided to leave him and find a new husband?"

I am satisfied that the picture drawn by the Widikum spokesmen and witnesses of the hardships and deprivations and illegal exactions and the other particulars of the "intolerable conditions" is heavily over-drawn and highly coloured and not a truthful representation of the situation. I have no belief in these persons' sincerity. I find that their grievances have no foundation whatever. Their alleged "sufferings" are a figment of their imagination if, indeed, they have not been disingenuously concocted to support their claim. I endeavoured to ascertain the truth about these grievances but was not able to obtain any evidence which I regard as convincing. The Honourable S.T. Muna was vague and uncategorical. He himself admits that he has no personal grievances. The Commission was informed that it was intended to call his elder brother, M. Joseph Muna who is the son-in-law of the Fon of Bali, as a witness to substantiate these charges. I was expecting to hear his testimony. He did not appear for reasons which I was unable to ascertain. The Honourable S.T. Muna lived and taught for years in schools in Bali Nyonga. Both these two gentlemen are, therefore, in a position to speak about the sufferings, if any, of their people in Bali Nyonga. One failed to come forward; the other made vague allegations which are not substantiated by other reliable testimony.

There can be little doubt that there are many Widikum people who are living contentedly and peacefully and without any justifiable grounds for complaint in Bali Nyonga township and the outlying farmlands. Babossa are quite contented to remain where they are; and they have been so for the last thirty years (see Note on Babossa in the Hunt Report, Appendix A). They are not a party to these proceedings — in name at any rate — and I am quite satisfied that they seek no redress and make no claim against the Balis. Neither do the Babakus, a handful of Widikums in Bali Nyonga : see 2nd Bali witness — Songwet, page 154; nor do the Mbufung (see page 139); nor have many of the Mungen Mbos in Bali Nyonga (see Bali 4th witness pages 161, 162).



The only representative of Mengen Muwa who spoke about the grievances of Widikums in Mengen Muwa was Jacob Bojia (page 96), whose personal bitterness against the Fon of Bali over the headship of Mengen Muwa village which contains both Widikums and Bali people makes his evidence untrustworthy. He is also shown to have falsely stated that he is the officially recognised Village Head of Mengen Muwa (pages 99, 100). I have said that I reject entirely the allegations of ill-treatment of or discrimination against the Widikum people by the Bali people. There is evidence to show that Widikum people on Bali land are accepted by the Balis as citizens having equal rights. They have inter-married, they attend the same schools at Bali Nyonga, they are permitted to choose their own Quarter or Village Head, and there is no reliable evidence to show that they are not permitted freely to perform their own customs and religious ceremonies without interference by the Balis.

8. I must say something about those Widikum communities who have a common boundary with the Bali people outside the periphery of the land in dispute. Their claims — C/55/1950, C/64/1950 — pursued in conjunction with the small number of persons belonging to the Widikum Mengen Mbo community inside the periphery, amount to a claim (apart from damages and an injunction) to the whole area of the land in dispute between the red and purple lines. They admit that, if successful in their claim, they will squeeze those Balis living and farming on the area between the red and purple lines back into the area verged red, but will, at the same time, as an acknowledgment of their title, generously consider allowing the Bali people, as compensation, an extension of the area verged red "sufficient to meet their needs". Subject to this, they propose to share amongst themselves the Bali land allotted to them.

Only two Widikum communities have stated the extent of their claim — the Bafawchus (7th Widikum witness) who claim as far as Benekor (S.W. of area verged red) and the Bametchoms W. of Plan (3rd Widikum witness) who claim up to Mile 85 on the Mamfe-Bamenda road. It would be extremely optimistic for anyone to suppose that this distributive share-out of Bali lang amongst the various Widikum communities would be effected without considerable disagreements and disputes amongst themselves resulting in litigations and, perhaps, less peaceful forms of settlement. I have said that these communities have, over a period of thirty years, had their Bali boundary fixed by Administrative Officers, and I am not convinced that there are any grounds — legal



or equitable which would justify and readjustment of those boundaries. The Bafawchus and the Bametchoms and Bambutu and indeed the Bades (Ngemba) plead insufficiency of land: "We are starving; we are suffering". I am not in a position to state whether that assertion is well founded or not. It was requested to visit portions of the land and I would have been willing to do so if the difficulty of obtaining transport had been less or if I had thought that a view of some of the areas alleged to be insufficient would have served any useful purpose. I did in fact get a general view of the area as the main road from Widikum-Bali-Bamenda passes through the land in dispute. A cursory view, however, would not put me in a position to give an opinion on the point. An opinion, to be of any value, could only be given after data and information had been obtained on such matters as the extent of the actual area occupied, the density of the population, the fertility of the soil, and whether the land available to these communities is being cultivated in the most husband-like manner. The point does not, in fact, arise at this Inquiry which is concerned with the rights of occupancy of the land in dispute. An alleged shortage of land by a Widikum community, if true, is not, in my opinion, a ground by itself for depriving the Bali people of their customary rights of occupancy or any rights of occupancy under the Land and Native Rights Ordinance.

I might point out that in the Bali clan area the population density is 107 persons per square mile whereas in Ngemba clan area which includes Bafawchu, Bametchom and Bambutu, the density is forty-two persons per square mile (see page 237 of Cameroons Report for 1950).

So far as the boundaries between the Balis and their Widikum neighbours outside the periphery are concerned, I submit for Your Excellency's information a list of the Inquiries held and their dates:

Bambutu	Mr Hawkesworth (1921)
Bametchom	Dr Jeffreys (1942)
Babad (Baba II)	Mr Brayne-Baker (1932)
Bafawchu	Dr Jeffreys (1942)
	Mr Hawkesworth (1923)
	Mr J. S. Smith (1928)
Pinyin	Mr Schofield (1938)
Asong	Mr J. S. Smith (1928)
Gujang (Moghamo)	M. J. S. Smith (1928)
	M. J. S. Smith (1928)



Esum (Bamenjong)  
Kai, Nya, Tunyang, Cobyang  
Meta

M. L. Cattle (1928)  
M. L. Cattle (1928)  
Mr L. Cattle (1927)  
Mr Sharwood-Smith (1925)  
M. H. H. Marshall (1932)

Bande (Mankon)

I think it will be generally agreed that there must be some finality in the matter. It is essential that there shall be security of tenure; it is a condition precedent to orderly and progressive development. There can be no feeling of stability or security if boundaries are continually to be varied or sought to be varied. The complaints by the Widikum communities about these Inquiries are stereotyped; they allege that they were not present or were not given an opportunity of being heard or received no notice that an Inquiry was being held and that the findings were thus unfair and that Administrative Officers were prejudiced in favour of the Bali people. There is no substance in any of these complaints as is apparent when one refers to the appropriate files as I have done.

Further, it can be said, that, since the boundaries were fixed, there has been no trouble — except perhaps in the case of Bametchom — until just about the time when the present litigations were started when all the Widikum communities, realising, as the Bali spokesman had said, the value of unity, joined together to present a united front (see pages 66, 130). The Pinyins (South of Plan) although not a nominal party to these actions are said to have made a monetary contribution. The Bali spokesman assured the Commission that the Pinyins and the Balis have no disputes at all. The Pinyins did not, in fact, take part in the recent disturbances. It is significant that the South-west Federation formed in 1949 just before the writs were issued includes the various Widikum communities, the Bali Native Authority being an enclave in their midst, the Balis remaining outside the Federation.

9. I wish to make some general observations. In my view, the Widikum communities both inside and outside the area bounded by the purple line, have been ill-advised, misguided and misled by unscrupulous agitators who have, for personal motives, persuaded the great majority of the simple Widikum people, by encouraging false hopes of re-acquiring all or a part of their land from the Balis, to contribute out of their slender means their small subscriptions of a shilling or two — I have seen the contributions book — towards the financing of litigation which, I am satisfied, is merely a speculative



gamble and known to be such by those who have taken a principal part in instituting it. The Widikums have nothing to lose and everything to gain by instituting these proceedings. The Balis do not seek to upset the status quo or to extend their boundaries or encroach on Widikum land outside the purple line.

I regard it as essential that Your Excellency should inform the Widikum people that their claims to occupational rights over the area in dispute cannot be entertained as there are no grounds either legal or equitable or compassionate which justify any such rights being granted to them.

In my opinion, the acceptance by Government of the claims of the Widikum people either in whole or in part, will be regarded by them and others not only as an example of what may be gained by persistent petitioning and propaganda but also, to some extent, as a condonation of, if not a justification for, the recent disturbances which were created by the Widikum people. Other communities — neither Bali nor Widikum — are watching and waiting for the determination of the issues before this Inquiry in the expectation of a decision which will encourage them to commence similar actions against other defendants in the hope of ultimate benefit at the expense of their neighbours.

10. I have reached the following conclusions:

(1) That the Bali Nyonga people acquired by conquest the whole of the area verged purple about 1830 and have been in effective occupation of it since that date.

(2) That the Bali Nyongas have been, except for two claims by Mengen Mbos in 1921 and 1934, and some boundary adjustment, in unchallenged and undisturbed beneficial occupation of the said area for, at least, the last seventy-five years.

(3) That there are no grounds to support the allegations of the Widikum people that the boundaries between the Bali Nyongas and their Widikum neighbours round the periphery of the area verged purple were unfairly or improperly determined.

(4) That the Widikum peoples, resident and farming inside the said area, are not entitled to any rights of occupancy therein except those which the Fon of Bali permits them to enjoy, whether with or without



payment of tribute or other conditions.

(5) That the Widikum communities outside the said area are not entitled to any rights of occupancy inside the said area and can only enjoy any such rights with the express permission of the Fon of Bali and subject to any conditions which he may think fit to impose.

(6) That there are no compassionate grounds — such as discriminatory treatment against, or unjust oppression of, Widikums by Bali Nyongas which, in justice, require that any Widikum people inside the area verged purple should have allotted to them inside the said area any special portion for their own exclusive beneficial enjoyment or which justify any readjustment of the Bali boundary verged purple.

11. I make the following recommendations:

(a) That the Widikum people who were the plaintiffs in those suits referred to in the terms of reference, shall be informed that their claims to a title, whether statutory or customary, to occupational rights in or over any portion of the area verged purple cannot be entertained. It will not be in my view, sufficient for Your Excellency merely to inform the Widikum communities as in (a) above. As security of tenure is indispensable to the future well-being, tranquility and quiet, progressive development of the Bali people and with a view to the avoidance of continual friction with their Widikum neighbours in the years that lie ahead, it is essential that Your Excellency should make a formal positive declaration or acknowledgment to the effect that you deem it expedient that exclusive rights of occupancy over the land in dispute i.e. the area verged purple shall be vested in the Bali Nyonga people subject, at all times, to their native laws and customs and to the provisions of the Land and Native Rights Ordinance. I, therefore, recommend:

(b) That a declaration or acknowledgment to the above effect be made under section 4 of the Land and Native Rights Ordinance (Chapter 105). Subject to the opinion of your legal advisers, it seems to me that the sections 6, 7, 17, 20 of the Ordinance are not appropriate to the case of a native community and it is doubtful whether they were intended so to apply. (See Lord Lugard's "Dual Mandate" 1st Edition page 292). "Native" in section 2 means an individual and not a community. In practice Certificates of Occupancy are not granted even to individual native occupiers —

a fortiori to native communities. It is quite inappropriate to refer to rent — whether by way of payment (section 7 Proviso) or exemption (section 20) — in such a case as the present occupation by the Bali Nyonga community of the area verged purple.

(c) That the boundaries demarcated by Administrative Officers either by consent or under the Inter-Tribal Boundaries Settlement Ordinance referred to in paragraph 8 shall not be disturbed on any ground which will appear to justify the criticism that they were illegally or unfairly or in any manner improperly determined.

(b) That if, at any future date, it becomes desirable, after full investigation, that there should be a boundary adjustment between the people of Bali and any of the Widikum communities now settled outside the area verged purple owing to the insufficiency of the land occupied by any such community, then there should be paid by Government to the Bali people compensation in respect of any portion of land inside the area verged purple of which the Bali people may in consequence be dispossessed.

12. This concludes my Report and Recommendation.

I have the honour to be,  
Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

(Signed) A. G. B. MANSON,  
Commissioner

NOTE: The Appendices and Plans mentioned in this Report have not been printed.



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- RAB, File No. GA 3032, Village Group Native Court Bamenda establishment.
- RAB, File No. LB 2797, Minutes of the South Eastern Federation Council meeting, 1955-1957.
- RAB, File no. LA 2797, minutes of the Native Authorities Council meetings, 1957-1965.

## B- Oral Sources

No	NAME	AGE	SOCIAL STATUS	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW
1.	Agwejang Humphrey	65	Retired Teacher	Nen	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
2.	Agwejang Shadrack	70	Former councilor	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
3.	Akoh Jacob	48	Teacher	Tiben	17 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020
4.	Akum John	69	Teacher	Ngyen-muwah	13 <sup>th</sup> of April 2021

5.	Atud Emmanuel	75	Prince	Mbegang	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
6.	Ayang John Nwachan	90	Spokeman to the chief	Anong	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2010
7.	Fomba Richard Ayong	70	Fon	Enyoh	
8.	Foncham Divine	50	Camara man	Guzang	10 <sup>th</sup> of June 2019
9.	Forkum III Richardson	95	Fon of Bessi	Bessi	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2016
10	Forkum Menuch Atuh	36	Princess	Bessi	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
11	kah Solomon	80	Farmer	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
12	Mbabit Mathias	79	Carpenter	Guzang	15 <sup>th</sup> February
13	Mbafor III C.M	70	Fon	Ashong	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020
14	Mbah Elizabeth	73	Princess	Oshum	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2021
15	Mbah Isaac	70	Councillor	Kuruku	8 <sup>th</sup> of April 2020
16	Mbah John Akuru	68	Teacher	Ashong	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020
17	Mbah Marie	65	Farmer	Batibo	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
18	Mbah Ote	55	Teacher	Tiben	17 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020
19	Mbah Stephen	78	Prince	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021

20	Mbah Vincent	78	Deputy Mayor	Oshum	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2021
21	Mbah Zacheus	80	Teacher	Batibo	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
22	Mbaku Charles	75	Prince	Ashong	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2021
23	Mudoh Walter	60	Politician	Guzang	8 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
24	Mundi Bernard	74	Fon of Tiben	Tiben	17 <sup>th</sup> of June 2021
25	Muyah Joseph	75	Fon	Nyenjei	24 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
26	N Killian	71	Medical doctor	Effah	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020
27	Nanji Marcel	35	Fon of Numben	Numben	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
28	Ndam Ernest	50	Mukum	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
29	Ndam Richard	75	Business man	Yaounde	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
30	Ngugen Patrick	65	Technician	Guzang	12 <sup>th</sup> of October 2020
31	Ngwan Charles Mbanysig II	65	Fon of Guzang	Guzanh	18 <sup>th</sup> of March 2021
32	NjeRaymond i Abam	36	Prince	Anong	23 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
33	Tanjoh Federick Tetuh	60	Teacher(Former Mayor)	Yaounde	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
34	Tebeck Thomas	79	Fon of Angie	Angie	17 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020



35	Tengem George	68	Secretary	Kurugwe	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
36	Tengem Victor	65	Mukum	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
37	Tenoh Lawrence	70	Former Mayor	Tiben	17 <sup>th</sup> of June 2021
38	Tibah Jacob	60	Former councilor	Batibo	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
39	Tikum Andrew	75	Farmer	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
40	Timah Emmanuel Nyambot	75	Prince	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2021
41	Timah Levi	58	Prince	Yaounde	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
42	Timah Moses	55	Farmer	Yaounde	15 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
43	Timah Moses Agwejang	75	Fon of Anong	Anong	15 <sup>th</sup> of May 2020
44	Tita Jacob	60	Farmer	Enyoh	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2020
45	Tita John	64	Prince	Oshum	16 <sup>th</sup> of June 2020
46	Wandeh Zacheus	80	Former Councillor	Ambo	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2021

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