

**The International Possibilities of Insurgency and Statehood in
Africa: The U.P.C. and Cameroon, 1948-1971.**

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Humanities

2013

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Table of Contents

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	3
ABSTRACT	5
DECLARATION	6
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
INTRODUCTION	9
<i>The U.P.C.: Historical Context and Historiography</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>A Fundamental Function of African Statehood</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Methodology and Sources: A Transnational Approach.....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Structure of the Thesis</i>	<i>37</i>
CHAPTER ONE: METROPOLITAN CONSTRAINTS AND EXTRA-METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITIES, 1922-1953.....	42
<i>Cameroon's Experience of French Rule, 1922-1945.....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Possibilities and Constraints of the Post-war Period.....</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>The Emergence of the U.P.C.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>The Extra-Metropolitan Opportunities of Trusteeship</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>74</i>
CHAPTER TWO: AN INTERNATIONAL INSURGENCY, 1954-1959	76
<i>The Proscription of the U.P.C.</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>The Loi-Cadre and Domestic Attempts at Legalisation.....</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>A U.N.-Inspired Insurgency</i>	<i>96</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>117</i>
CHAPTER THREE: DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS AND INTERNATIONAL POSSIBILITIES: THE EMERGENCE OF AFRICAN STATEHOOD, 1960-1962.....	118
<i>The Ahidjo Government in 1960: A Quasi-State?</i>	<i>121</i>
<i>The U.P.C. in 1960: A Parallel State?.....</i>	<i>132</i>
<i>Inequalities of Statehood, 1960-1962</i>	<i>142</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>153</i>
CHAPTER FOUR: THE FINAL BATTLE: NATION-BUILDING AND INSURGENT DIPLOMACY, 1962-1971.....	156
<i>State Consolidation Under Ahidjo, 1962-1963.....</i>	<i>158</i>
<i>An Alternative Gatekeeper: The U.P.C., 1962-1964</i>	<i>167</i>
<i>Coups, Borders, and Non-Intervention: The Contingency and Collapse of Insurgent Diplomacy, 1964-1971.....</i>	<i>179</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>187</i>
CONCLUSION	191
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	200
Word Count: 79, 862.	

List of Abbreviations

- A.A.P.C. – All African People’s Conference
- A.A.S.O – Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation
- A.E.C. - *Association des Étudiants Camerounais*
- A.E.F. - *Afrique Équatoriale Française*
- A.L.N.K. - *Armée de Libération Nationale du Kamerun*
- ARCAM - *Assemblée Représentative du Cameroun*
- ATCAM - *Assemblée Territoriale du Cameroun*
- B.M.M. - *Brigade Mixte Mobile*
- B.C.D. - *Bureau du Comité Directeur*
- B.D.C. - *Bloc Démocratique Camerounais*
- B.E.D.O.C. - *Bureau d’Études et de Documentation*
- C.F.L.N. - *Comité Français de Libération Nationale*
- C.G.T. - *Confédération Générale du Travail*
- C.M.U.N. - *Courant Mouvement d’Union Nationale*
- C.N.O. - *Comité National d’Organisation*
- C.U.T. - *Comité de l’Unité Togolaise*
- F.E.A.N.F. - *Fédération des Étudiants de l’Afrique Noire en France*
- F.I.D.E.S. - *Fonds d’Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social*
- F.L.N. - *Front de Libération Nationale (Algeria)*
- G.P.R.A - *Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne*
- I.L.R.M. - *International League of the Rights of Man*
- J.D.C. - *Jeunesse Démocratique du Cameroun*
- K.N.D.P. – *Kamerun National Democratic Party*
- K.U.N.C. - *Kamerun United National Congress*
- M.P.L.A. - *People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola*
- M.R.P. - *Mouvement Républicain Populaire*

O.A.U. - Organisation of African Unity

O.C.A.M. - *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malagache*

O.K. – One Kamerun

P.C.F. - *Parti Communiste Français*

P.M.C. – Permanent Mandates Commission

R.C. – Revolutionary Committee

R.D.A. - *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain*

R.P.F. - *Rassemblement du Peuple Français*

S.A. - *Secrétariat Administratif*

S.D.E.C.E. - *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage*

S.D.N. - *Sinistre de la Défense Nationale*

S.D.N.K. - *Sinistre de la Défense Nationale Kamerunaise*

S.E.D.O.C. - *Service d'Études et de Documentation*

S.F.I.O. - *Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière*

U.A.R – United Arab Republic

U.C. - *Union Camerounaise*

U.D.F.C. - *Union Démocratique des Femmes Camerounaises*

U.D.H.R. – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

U.N. - United Nations

U.N.E.K. - *Union Nationale des Étudiants Kamerunais*

U.N.E.S.C.O – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

U.S.C.C. - *Union des Syndicats Confédérés du Cameroun*

U.P.C. – *Union des Populations du Cameroun*

Abstract

Amongst Western political scientists and policy-makers, a perceived economic and political ‘crisis’ of the African state since the 1980s has produced a terminology of ‘weak states’, ‘quasi-states’ and ‘failed states’. Such terminology, however, represents a narrow and pathological understanding of the African state, one that has reduced its post-independence trajectory to a series of deviations from an ideal-typical – and largely Eurocentric – model of statehood. The normative standards of this ‘strong’ and ‘successful’ ideal of statehood have, predominantly, been defined by a government’s ability to exercise complete domestic authority, and to provide for the full welfare and development of its population. Within this paradigm, armed conflict, and a government’s reliance on foreign aid, are both seen to represent a country’s ‘lack’ of statehood.

The application of these universal standards to Africa has tended to ignore the distinct historical context from which independent African states emerged. Using the example of French Cameroon, this thesis firstly establishes such a historical context, one that was significantly shaped by the limiting and shallow development efforts of colonial administrations. Importantly, however, this context was also constituted by new opportunities for international support that emerged during the post-war period, represented by the newly formed U.N., an increasing number of independent (and former colonial) states, as well as former colonial powers. It is a context that necessitates a more specific set of standards to analyse the exercise of statehood in Africa.

The thesis consequently identifies one such standard – or function – of statehood: the ability to control access to external resources, through a claim to represent an internationally recognised state. It is a function in which recourse to external aid, and even armed conflict, become understandable as rational strategies that reinforce statehood in an African context, rather than negate it. The original contribution of the thesis, however, proceeds from identifying this function in a group that was excluded from the institutions, and even territory, of the Cameroonian state. That group was the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (U.P.C.); a nationalist party that waged a guerrilla insurgency against Cameroon’s colonial and independent governments, and whose leadership predominantly remained in exile.

By locating the U.P.C.’s history within this logic of African statehood, the thesis offers an alternative reading of the party’s campaign, and a means of understanding the relationship between its armed and diplomatic struggles. By examining how the U.P.C. competed with Cameroon’s government to successfully perform a fundamental function of African statehood, the thesis enables a more detailed analysis of its underlying dynamics, and interrogates the basis upon which the party – and indeed the African state – have been conventionally judged as ‘failed’. Finally, the thesis contributes to a growing number of studies that have sought to examine empire and decolonisation from a transnational perspective, studying the complex and contingent relationships between local, national, regional and international histories.

Declaration

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost I must thank my supervisors, Prof. Bertrand Taithe and Dr. Steven Pierce, for their enduring support, advice and patience. I would also like to thank Prof. Mirjam de Bruijn, for allowing me to stay at the Langaa research institute in Bamenda, Cameroon; Ernest Yuh and Walter Nkwi, for facilitating my stay there; and to Pius Fru Wallah (Echo) for being an invaluable guide and companion. Thanks must also go to the *Service Protestant de Mission*, for allowing me to outstay my welcome in Paris. This process would have been a lot more difficult without Kat Fennelly, who was the best darned flatmate I could have hoped to have, and who sustained me with Irish stew. It is questionable whether I would still be alive without Jim Greenhalgh, who has clothed me, sheltered me, watered me, and nurtured me into the questionable specimen I am today. Much love goes to my parents, who I realise must have found it very difficult to see me so little during these past few years, but who have nonetheless continued to support me as if they were right by my side. Finally I must thank Kate, who has ceaselessly stood by me with a patience and love to which no written acknowledgement could do justice. We did it, bubs.

Introduction

Amongst Western political scientists, an initial optimism towards the national development projects of African governments began to recede in the 1970s, as a growing tendency towards personalised rule and political instability was accompanied by falling economic growth rates and continued popular poverty.¹ By the 1980s, such disquiet had evolved into the perception of an African ‘crisis’, a crisis increasingly linked to the state’s lack of institutional capacity and domestic legitimacy, as well as corrupt and patrimonial forms of governance.² Terms such as ‘weak’ and ‘soft’ were consequently applied to the African state,³ which, by the 1990s, had given way to a more moribund terminology of ‘collapsed’ and ‘failed’, as the continent’s extant political and economic problems were joined by protracted armed conflicts and increasingly violent civil strife.⁴

Such terminology, however, represents a narrow and pathological understanding of the African state, one that has reduced its post-independence trajectory to a series of deviations from an ideal-typical – and largely Eurocentric – model of statehood.⁵ The normative standards of this ‘strong’ and ‘successful’ ideal of statehood have, predominantly, been defined by a government’s ability to exercise complete domestic authority, and to provide

¹ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 3-12; Frederick Cooper, ‘Africa’s Past and Africa’s Historians’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2000), pp. 298-336, p. 312. For a contemporary and highly detailed analysis of this perceptual change, see Donal Cruise O’Brien, ‘Modernization, Order, and the Erosion of a Democratic Ideal: American Political Science 1960-1970’, *The Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (1972), pp. 351-378.

² Goran Hyden, ‘African Studies in the Mid-1990s: Between Afro-Pessimism and Amero-Skepticism’, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (1996), pp. 1-17; Nicolas Van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 4; James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham NC, 2006), p. 4.

³ See for example: R. H. Jackson and C. G. Rosberg, ‘Why Africa’s Weak States Persist: The Empirical and Juridical in Statehood’, *World Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1982), pp. 1-24; Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton NJ, 1988); Goran Hyden, *No Shortcuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective* (London, 1983); D. Rothchild, ‘Hegemony and State Softness: Some Variations in Elite Responses’ in Z. Ergas (ed.), *The African State in Transition* (London, 1987), pp. 117-148; C. V. Scott, ‘Socialism and the “Soft State” in Africa: An Analysis of Angola and Mozambique’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (1988), pp. 22-36.

⁴ The examples of Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo have featured as prominent examples in such descriptions of the African state. See in particular: I. W. Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, 1995); Jeffrey Herbst, ‘Responding to State Failure in Africa’, *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (1996), pp. 120-44; J. Milliken (ed.), *State Failure, Collapse and Reconstruction* (Oxford, 2003); R. I. Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton, 2004).

⁵ Joel Migdal, *State in Society: Studying how States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 14-15.

for the full welfare and development of its population.⁶ Within this paradigm, armed conflict, and a government's reliance on foreign aid, are both seen to represent a country's 'lack' of statehood.⁷ What is more, such an ideal-typical and comparative approach often overlooks the fact that, as Abrams and Krasner have shown, 'Western' states themselves have often failed to meet these standards.⁸ In both instances, the result of applying these abstracted models of statehood, in the words of Pierce, is that they mask 'the empirical complexities of the various networks, factions, and institutions that collectively get called "the state."' ⁹ Ferguson makes a similarly important point in his study of foreign development projects in Lesotho, but which can be applied to studies of the African state. Namely, that a focus on why a political project 'failed' prevents a detailed analysis of what it actually *did* in a specific context.¹⁰

Accordingly, the application of these universal standards to Africa has tended to ignore the distinct historical context from which independent African states emerged, and which significantly defined the parameters in which African governments could operate. This historical context necessitates a more specific set of standards to analyse the exercise of statehood in Africa, which would allow one to better understand the African state – to paraphrase Mbembe – for what it actually is, rather than what it is not.¹¹ This thesis does not, however, seek to replace a generalised image of what the African state 'is not' with a similarly generalised image of what it 'is'. Instead, and building upon the work of Joel Migdal, it examines how the state could be *used* in particular contexts, an examination that requires the disaggregation of the state into the various practices that constitute it.¹² This thesis consequently identifies a fundamental practice – or function – of African statehood: the ability to control access to vital external resources, through a recognised claim to represent a sovereign state.

⁶ See Robert Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 1-18; W. I. Zartman, 'Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse' in W. I. Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, 1995), pp. 1-14; R. I. Rotberg, 'The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention and Repair' in R. I. Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton, 2004), pp. 1-50.

⁷ Arthur A. Goldsmith, 'Foreign Aid and Statehood in Africa', *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No.1 (2001), pp. 123-148; Jackson, *Quasi-States*, pp. 21-22; W. I. Zartman, 'Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse', pp. 1-5; Rotberg, 'The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States', pp. 1-3.

⁸ Philip Abrams, 'Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1977), pp. 58-89; Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, 1999).

⁹ Steven Pierce, 'Looking Like a State: Colonialism and the Discourse of Corruption in Northern Nigeria', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (2006), pp. 887-914, p. 898.

¹⁰ James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis, 1994).

¹¹ Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley, 2001), p. 9.

¹² Migdal, *State in Society*, pp. 16-25.

Using the decolonisation of French Cameroon as a case study, the thesis traces the origins of this function in the post-war period, and its initial manifestation during the 1950s and 1960s. In contrast to the ideal-typical approach outlined above, it is a function of statehood based upon an ability to exploit international opportunities, rather than overcome domestic limitations. It is also a function in which recourse to external aid, and even armed conflict, become understandable as rational strategies that reinforce statehood in Africa, rather than undermine it. Accordingly, it is based upon an understanding of the specific historical context in which many African states gained independence. This context was firstly constituted by the shallow development efforts of colonial administrations, which significantly limited the ability of African governments to exercise domestic authority over their territory and populations, and to provide for their development and welfare.¹³ Importantly, however, it was also constituted by opportunities for international support, represented by the newly formed U.N., an increasing number of independent (and hitherto colonial) states, former colonial powers, and the emergent geo-politics of the Cold War.

The original contribution of the present study does not, however, reside in identifying this function of African statehood. Indeed, and as will be expanded upon below, several studies have articulated the ability to access external resources as a fundamental prerogative of African governments. Rather, its originality proceeds from identifying this function through the study of a group that was consistently excluded from the governmental institutions, and even territory, of the Cameroonian state. That group was the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (U.P.C.); a nationalist party that waged a guerrilla insurgency against Cameroon's colonial and independent governments, and whose leadership predominantly remained in exile. In particular, this thesis traces the origins and emergence of this function through the armed and diplomatic strategies of the U.P.C.'s campaign against French rule. Most significantly, it demonstrates how the party was, for a brief moment during the 1960s, able to exercise this function in competition with Cameroon's first independent government, by accessing external aid through a claim to represent a recognised state.

By locating the U.P.C.'s campaign within this emergent function of African statehood, the present study elides a conceptual state/non-state divide that has separated and limited two recent developments in the writing of African history. These academic trends appeared in the 1990s, and, in a significant sense, represent two responses to the perceived crisis of

¹³Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 3-5, 196-197.

the contemporary African state. The first – evident in works by Terretta, Van Walraven, and an edited volume by Clapham – informs the empirical focus of this study: the U.P.C.¹⁴ Building upon the historical studies of nationalism ‘from below’ that began in the late 1960s, these more recent works have examined the specific and detailed histories of political groups that have been excluded by, and actively opposed to, African governments and their national development projects. The second trend, which informs the theoretical basis of this study and has been alluded to above, is represented in works by Mbembe, Mamdani, Bayart, Chabal and Daloz.¹⁵ These works have adopted a historicised approach to the African state; one that establishes it as a distinct political and historical phenomenon, with its own functions and logics of statehood.

Finally, by examining the U.P.C.’s armed and political struggle within the international logic of African statehood, the thesis employs a framework that can analyse the complex and shifting connections between local, regional, and international histories during the era of decolonisation. In this way, it contributes to a growing body of work that has sought to analyse colonial history from a transnational perspective, focusing on networks that transcended the territorial and conceptual boundaries of the nation-state.¹⁶ Importantly, however, the thesis does not dismiss the salience of the nation-state quite as readily as these studies, and argues that, when understood as a distinct historical phenomenon within the African context, it provides an important means to understand how transactions between local and international networks were enabled and mediated.

¹⁴ Meredith Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (2010), pp. 189-212; Klaas Van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief: A History of the Sawaba Movement in Niger* (Leiden, 2013); Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford, 1998). See also Klaas Van Walraven and John Abbink, ‘Rethinking Resistance in African History: An Introduction’ in John Abbink, Mirjam de Bruijn and Klaas Van Walraven (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Boston, 2003), pp. 1- 42.

¹⁵ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, 1996); Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London, 1993); Patrick Chabal and Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford, 1999).

¹⁶ See in particular Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine and Frank Trentmann (eds.), *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire, and Transnationalism* (Basingstoke, 2007); Gary Magee and Andrew S. Thompson (eds.), *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods, and Capital in the British World, c. 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 2010); Toyin Falola and Emily Brownwell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honour of A.G. Hopkins* (Durham, 2011).

The U.P.C.: Historical Context and Historiography

In 1946, French Cameroon, a League of Nations mandate administered by France, became a United Nations trust territory.¹⁷ As a trust territory, it was to be led ‘towards independence or self-government’ by the French administration, in accordance with the U.N. Charter.¹⁸ The government of the Fourth Republic, however, incorporated the territory into the political framework of the French Union, a framework that did not intend independence for its territories.¹⁹ The U.P.C., created in 1948, was French Cameroon’s first nationalist party, and protested the political and socio-economic inequalities of metropolitan rule with increasing militancy. The party soon demanded ‘complete independence’ from France and the French Union, as well as unification with the trust territory of the British Cameroons. The U.P.C.’s demands, as well as its growing organisation and popularity within the territory, appeared as an increasingly serious threat to French integrationist aims.²⁰ As a result, the party was banned in July 1955, forcing much of its leadership into exile.

As noted in Richard Joseph’s initial – and still seminal – studies, the U.P.C.’s campaign was made notable by two features. Firstly, before the U.P.C.’s proscription in 1955, its demand for independence distinguished it from the other leading nationalist parties in French sub-Saharan Africa, which sought political and socio-economic reform within the framework of the French Union. Secondly, eighteen months after its proscription, the U.P.C. launched the only armed anti-colonial struggle in French sub-Saharan Africa.²¹ As such, the U.P.C.’s campaign complicates the conventional paradigm of decolonisation in the region, which, in the words of Tony Chafer, has conventionally

¹⁷ Originally the German colony of *Kamerun*, the territory was, like Togoland, divided into two League of Nations mandates, to be separately administered by France and Britain after Germany’s defeat in the First World War. Although Kamerun’s division into a French and British mandate was decided at the Versailles Conference in 1919, it did not come into effect until 1922.

¹⁸ Charter of the United Nations, Chapter XII: International Trusteeship System; Article 76(b).

¹⁹ In this respect, although Cameroon occupied a distinct status within the French Union as an Associated Territory, France remained unwilling to accept any diminution or elimination of its sovereignty over the territory. Henri Brunschwig observed the same unwillingness in the case of Tunisia, which, as a protectorate, possessed a similar status to Cameroon within the French Union. See Henri Brunschwig, *French Colonialism, 1871-1914: Myths and Realities* (New York, 1966), p. 61.

²⁰ Within a year of its inception the U.P.C. was, according to Le Vine, ‘by all odds the best organised political party in the Cameroon’. It arguably enjoyed the most popular support of any nationalist movement in the territory, and was estimated to have 100,000 members by 1955. Victor T. Le Vine, *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence* (Berkeley, 1964), p.148; Richard Bjorson, *The African Quest for Freedom and Identity: Cameroonian Writing and the National Experience*. (Bloomington, 1991), p. 46.

²¹ Richard Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 293 (1974), pp. 428-444.

been viewed as a ‘smooth’ transition to independence.²² This was due to the largely negotiated, rather than violent, transfer of power to political leaders in French sub-Saharan Africa; a peaceable image that is reinforced when compared to the ‘traumatic’ anti-colonial confrontations in Algeria and Indochina.²³ Joseph accordingly argues that the U.P.C.’s struggle to achieve independence from France demonstrates a greater affinity with the aims and methods of the F.L.N. in Algeria, rather than the moderate nationalism of the leading political parties in French sub-Saharan Africa. More specifically, he argues that this affinity rested upon the fact that both the U.P.C. and F.L.N. prioritised the goal of independence in their political programmes, and were prepared to organise an armed insurgency to pursue such a goal.²⁴

Joseph’s comparison raises two related historiographical issues, which will be examined below. First of all, in terms of dedicated academic monographs, the U.P.C.’s anti-colonial struggle has received a minimal amount of attention compared to the Algerian conflict, both in the English and French literature. Such neglect has primarily been due to the dominance of state-centred historical narratives in studies of nationalism and decolonisation. The second historiographical issue is that studies of the U.P.C. have, as a consequence, tended to forego state-centred modes of historical analysis. This is evident both in works that have examined the local socio-economic and cultural dimensions of the U.P.C. campaign, as well as in more recent works that have examined its (often overlooked) international and diplomatic dimensions. By locating the U.P.C.’s struggle within a historicised function of African statehood – that is, by re-inserting the state – the present study accordingly provides an alternative reading of the party’s history. Importantly, such a function also provides a conceptual tool to link the ‘local’ and ‘global’ dimensions of the U.P.C.’s campaign.

In contrast to the numerous works dedicated to the F.L.N., there have only been two comprehensive academic monographs published on the U.P.C.²⁵ Richard Joseph’s *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun*, published in 1977, remains the only major English-language

²² Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France’s Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford, 2002), p. 2.

²³ Chafer, *The End of Empire*, p. 8.

²⁴ Richard Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun: Social Origins of the U.P.C. Rebellion* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 4, 341.

²⁵ Indeed, it would be unfeasible to list the number of academic monographs dedicated to the F.L.N. in the present study. However, a comprehensive guide can be found in the bibliography to Martin Evans’ recent work *Algeria: France’s Undeclared War* (Oxford, 2012).

book dedicated to the party.²⁶ In the Francophone literature the picture is not much improved, with Achille Mbembe's *La Naissance du Maquis dans le Sud Cameroun* – published in 1996 – representing the only academic monograph on the U.P.C.'s history.²⁷ As such, the conflict in Cameroon has been described as a 'hidden' and 'forgotten' war even in more recent historical analyses.²⁸ A possible reason for this relative neglect pertains to the availability of contemporary source material. An unpublished doctoral thesis by Jean-Jacques Vigoureux, for instance, comprehensively surveyed the metropolitan press coverage of the conflict in Cameroon – between 1956 and 1960 – and observed that it paled in comparison to the media attention accorded to Algeria.²⁹ The Algerian conflict, therefore, left behind a much richer archive of journalistic material for historians than for Cameroon.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to examine why events in Algeria enjoyed a high profile in the metropolitan press, particularly as these reasons have been discussed in depth elsewhere.³⁰ It is important to note, however, that the attention given to the Algerian conflict appeared to directly affect the journalistic coverage accorded to the concurrent U.P.C. insurgency. In 1958, Prince Dika Akwa, one of the U.P.C.'s representatives in North Africa and the U.N., stated that:

If the war in Algeria is weakening France, it is also hiding from the world the fact that a rebellion is taking place in Cameroon. Without this [Algerian] war, there is no doubt that the struggle of the U.P.C. *maquisards* against the French presence would have occupied a prime place in the newspapers.³¹

French military officials also acknowledged that the war in Algeria was the reason why France's operation in Cameroon had gone unnoticed in the media. Colonel Jean

²⁶ There is, however, a forthcoming study by Meredith Terretta, provisionally entitled *Grassfields Tradition, Nationalist Politics and Pan-Africanism in Cameroon, 1948-1971*.

²⁷ Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue, and Jacob Tatsitsa have written a highly detailed account of the U.P.C. in their book *Kamerun! Une Guerre Cachée aux Origines de la Françafrique 1948-1971* (Paris, 2011). None of the authors are professional historians, however, and the book is intended as a polemical *livre grand public* that focuses on the personal ties that existed – and persist – between French and African officials. There have also been three notable monographs written by academics based in Cameroon, although they are predominantly chronological accounts, and not as rigorous as the studies cited above. They are: Abel Eyinga, *L'U.P.C.: Une Révolution Manquée?* (Paris, 1991); Pierre Kamé Bouopda, *De la Rébellion dans le Bamiléké* (Paris, 2008); and François Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun, 1940-1971* (Paris, 2010).

²⁸ In addition to the sub-title of the book by Deltombe, Domergue and Tatsitsa, Marc Michel entitled a recent article on the conflict 'La Guerre Oublié du Cameroun' in *L'Histoire*, No. 318 (2007), p. 50.

²⁹ Jean-Jacques Vigoureux, *L'U.P.C. et la Presse Française : Essais sur les rapports entre les intérêts coloniaux et l'opinion publique métropolitaine*, PhD Thesis, (Université Paris Diderot, 1975).

³⁰ See Claude Liauzu, *Histoire de l'anticolonialisme en France du XVI^e siècle à nos jours* (Paris, 2007), esp. ch 6; and Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, 2006), pp. 63-73.

³¹ *La Nation Kamerunaise*, 16 July 1958, p. 4.

Lamberton, who had directed French military operations against the U.P.C. until 1960, later wrote in his private memoirs:

In another time, this operation that was, I might say, completed successfully, would have undoubtedly drawn much attention. But this victory...which was won against the Cameroonian rebels, could not have any impact at a time when the war in Algeria completely occupied the media.³²

It remains problematic, however, to ascribe the U.P.C.'s relative historical neglect to a paucity of journalistic accounts. Whilst the U.P.C. insurgency received less contemporary coverage than the F.L.N., Vigoureux's thesis, and indeed several archives in France, reveal that there is no shortage of journalistic reports on the Cameroonian conflict for the historian. Similarly, there is an abundance of material on the U.P.C. uprising in French government archives, material which was subject to the same thirty year restrictions, and subsequent availability, as reports on Algeria. National archives in Cameroon also provide material on the U.P.C. Finally, there is no shortage of contemporary texts written by the U.P.C. themselves, nor eye-witnesses who are still alive and willing to give testimony to events in Cameroon. Indeed, such source material forms the basis for the present study, and will be explored in more detail below. As such, the questions that one should be asking is why theses on the U.P.C. have remained largely unpublished or unreferenced in historical analyses of decolonisation, and why historians have not been more drawn to the archives or to seek testimonies on the conflict in Cameroon?

Underlying this oversight is what Bruce Berman has termed 'retrospective' history, whereby one begins with a certain set of contemporary or historical conditions, and works backwards to determine their causes. Within this teleological framework, such conditions appear 'as the inevitable consequence of a single linear path of development', so that historians are 'inclined to ignore all those factors that do not appear directly causally related to those conditions'.³³ Amongst historians of French decolonisation, a principal condition has conventionally been the success or failure of France's policy to preserve a strong presence in its former overseas territories, and thereby maintain its image of *grandeur* on the international stage.³⁴ It is a policy that can be located within the broader

³² Deltombe, Domergue & Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 12.

³³ Bruce J. Berman, "'A Palimpsest of Contradictions': Ethnicity, Class, and Politics in Africa', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2004), pp. 13-31, p. 15.

³⁴ See Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 74; Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 1-3; Philip G. Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur: Ideological Aspects of de Gaulle's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 1980).

historical project of a 'Greater France' or 'Franco-African' community.³⁵ During the era of decolonisation, the success of this policy depended upon the transfer of power to pro-French political leaders, and the maintenance of close political and economic ties between the French government and the governments of its former colonies. In other words, France's ability to successfully project an image of *grandeur* depended upon the French government appearing in control of the decolonisation process.

In much of French sub-Saharan Africa – including Cameroon – France's policy appeared as a success, to the extent that John Chipman described independence in the region as being 'intentionally granted as a "gift" by Paris'.³⁶ This was due to the fact that power was transferred to political leaders who had co-operated with France during the colonial period, and who signed political, economic and technical accords with the French government upon independence.³⁷ Regional studies of decolonisation in French sub-Saharan Africa have accordingly focused on discerning the origins of France's apparent foreign policy success. They have done so by examining the 1946 federal framework of the French Union, and its 1958 successor, the French Community, as progressive, planned, and inevitable steps towards Franco-African *co-opération* after independence.³⁸ The corollary to this retrospective analysis has been the study of African nationalists who supported and participated in these colonial institutions, and who eventually signed the co-operation accords with the French government. Conversely, those nationalists who actively opposed

³⁵ As several works have observed, the concept of a 'Greater France' and of a Franco-African community, founded upon close ties between the metropole and its imperial colonies, had been integral to French foreign policy from the early Nineteenth Century. See for example W. Lewis (ed.), *French-Speaking Africa: The Search for Identity* (New York, 1965); Raoul Girardet, *L'idée Coloniale en France: de 1871 à 1962* (Paris, 1972); D. Bruce Marshall, *The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic* (London, 1973); Henri Brunschwig, *French Colonialism 1871-1914: Myths and Realities* (New York, 1966); and Edward Mortimer, *France and the Africans 1944-1960: A Political History* (London, 1969). Cited in Chafer, *End of Empire*.

³⁶ John Chipman, *French Power in Africa* (Oxford, 1989), p. 86.

³⁷ When French Cameroon achieved independence in January 1960, it did so under the leadership of France's preferred candidate, Prime Minister Ahmadou Ahidjo, who immediately signed a series of military, economic, diplomatic, and technical co-operation agreements with Paris.

³⁸ Although studies that emphasise the 'clientelist' nature of Franco-African ties correctly decentre independence as a moment of historical rupture, they nevertheless present processes of continuity in terms of co-operation with *la présence française*, rather than its repudiation. See for example: François G. Constantin, 'The Foreign Policy of Francophone Africa: Clientelism and After' in Anthony Kirk-Greene and Daniel Bach (eds.), *State and Society in Francophone Africa since Independence* (London, 1995), pp. 183-199; Patrick Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, 1880-1985* (New York, 1988); Anton Anderегgen, *France's Relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa* (Westport, 1994); Francis Terry McNamara, *France in Black Africa* (Washington D.C., 1989); Guy Martin, 'France and Africa' in Robert Aldrich and John Connel (eds.), *France in World Politics* (New York, 1989), pp. 101-125; Shaun Gregory, 'The French Military in Africa: Past and Present', *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 396 (2000), pp. 435-448; G. Bossuat, 'French Development Aid and Cooperation Under de Gaulle', *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (2003), pp. 431-456; J.-F. Médard, 'France and Sub-Saharan Africa: A Privileged Relationship' in Ulf Engel and Gorm Rye Olsen (eds.), *Africa and the North: Between Globalization and Marginalization* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 38-54.

these institutions, and were excluded from the apparatus of state upon independence – such as the U.P.C. – have been significantly overlooked.³⁹

On the other hand, the French government appeared unable to control the ‘traumatic’ process of decolonisation in Algeria, whereby power was transferred to nationalist leaders who had actively and violently opposed French integrationist aims. As a result, the origins and actions of the political movement that delivered this failure of French foreign policy have received substantial scholarly attention. Of course, this failure of French policy also constituted a success for the F.L.N., as the movement was able to realise its own objective of loosening Algeria’s ties to the metropole. Importantly, the ability to loosen such ties was dependent upon another success of the F.L.N. in Algeria: the fact that it was able to occupy the government of the independent state. This additional register of success points to a second historical condition of decolonisation, one that is evident in retrospective analyses beyond the French context: the independent African state. It is a condition that produced state-centred and elitist histories of the nationalist struggle in Africa, and ensured the almost complete academic neglect of the U.P.C.’s anti-colonial campaign until the late 1970s.

Amongst Africanist academics during the 1960s and 1970s, the independent state was perceived to be the triumph and pinnacle of the nationalist struggle.⁴⁰ These two phenomena thus became inextricably intertwined, so that studies of the nationalist struggle were largely associated with tracing the histories of the political actors that occupied the governments of newly independent African states. As Basil Davidson wrote in 1977, the role of African history after independence was to study the ‘the advent and advance, one may even say the overwhelming victory, of nationalism’.⁴¹ Davidson’s use of the term ‘victory’ is important to note, as a successful nationalist movement became defined not only by its achievement of independence, but also by its occupation of the independent state’s governmental apparatus. As more recent works by Chafer, Cooper, Stoler, Roberts, Schler and Schmidt have observed, subsequent state-centred histories of Africa’s nationalist past have marginalised those actors who were not ‘winners’ at independence:

³⁹ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Crawford Young, ‘The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa? Reflections on Changing Political Dynamics’, *African Affairs* Vol.103, No. 410 (2004), pp. 23-49, p. 23.

⁴¹ Basil Davidson, ‘Questions About Nationalism’, *African Affairs* Vol. 76, No. 302 (1977), pp. 39-46, p.39.

that is, those excluded from the apparatus of the independent state.⁴² It is not surprising, therefore, that the lack of any dedicated study on the U.P.C. was often accompanied by its designation as a ‘failed’ nationalist movement.⁴³

There was a notable challenge to these trends from the late 1960s, one that allowed the pre-independence struggle of the U.P.C. its first significant instance of historical visibility. A perceived failure of African governments to resolve their national economic problems, as well as the proliferation of autocratic government practices and military coups, coincided with the increasing popularity of the ‘new social history’ within Western academia.⁴⁴ The result was that Africanist academics were increasingly interested in the colonial trajectory of African actors who had been excluded from the apparatus of state upon independence, with a shift in analysis from the ruling elites to alternative political movements, urban workers and the rural peasantry.⁴⁵ In 1977, this produced the first dedicated monograph on the U.P.C.: Richard Joseph’s seminal work *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun*. The enduring dominance of retrospective and statist histories of decolonisation, however, is evidenced by the fact that the next dedicated monograph on the U.P.C., Mbembe’s *La Naissance du maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun*, was not published until 1996.

The books of Joseph and Mbembe thus represented important correctives to certain academic trends, whilst providing detailed insights into the origins, politics, and support

⁴² Chafer, *End of Empire*, p.7; Cooper and Stoler, ‘Between Metropole and Colony’ p. 28; Richard Roberts, ‘History and Memory: The Power of Statist Narratives’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2000), pp. 513-522; Lynn Schler, ‘History, the Nation-State, and Alternative Narratives: An Example from Colonial Douala’, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (2005), pp. 89-108; Elizabeth Schmidt, ‘Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilization Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea (French West Africa)’, *American Historical Review* Vol. 110, No. 4 (2005), pp. 975-1014, pp. 981-983.

⁴³ Charles Atangana, in the conclusion to his monograph on decolonisation in Cameroon, asserts that: ‘Clearly, the French government was successful in realizing its ambitions for Cameroon, whereas the U.P.C., the main opposition force to France’s Cameroonian policy, failed to come to power.’ Jean-François Bayart describes the ‘decisive aspect’ of the U.P.C.’s struggle as ‘its failure to achieve power upon independence’. Abel Eyinga, a Cameroonian academic and former U.P.C. member, entitled his short book on the party “*A Failed Revolution*”. Meredith Terretta, whilst not advocating the term herself, acknowledges an academic perception of the U.P.C. as a “‘failed’ nationalist movement”. See Martin Atangana, *The End of French Rule in Cameroon* (Plymouth, 2010), p. 129. Jean-François Bayart, ‘L’Union des Populations du Cameroun et la Décolonisation de l’Afrique “Française”’, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1978), pp. 447-457, p. 457; Eyinga, *Une Révolution Manquée*; Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global’, p. 192.

⁴⁴ See Michael Adas, ‘Social History and the Revolution in African and Asian Historiography’, *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1985), pp. 335-348.

⁴⁵ See Allen F. Isaacman, ‘Peasants and Rural Social Protest in Africa’ in Frederick Cooper (ed.), *Confronting Historical Paradigms: Peasants, Labour and the Capitalist World System in Africa and Latin America* (Madison, 1993), pp. 205-317.

bases of the U.P.C. Similar to analyses of the African state, however, these two works have understood the U.P.C.'s strategies in terms of domestic constraints, rather than international opportunities. Joseph's study, for example, explains the party's political demands and armed action primarily as a local reaction against the socio-economic and political limitations of French rule within the territory. Employing Marxist categorisations of class, Joseph describes his approach as 'political sociology'; an attempt to uncover the local 'social dynamics' that were created by the political and economic inequalities of French rule, and which ultimately produced the U.P.C.'s turn to violence.⁴⁶ Mbembe similarly understands the U.P.C.'s politics and armed struggle as a response to local experiences of colonialism, but moves away from Marxist categories of analysis to employ a cultural historical approach. He examines the complex interaction of colonial and indigenous 'imaginaries' – in the realms of symbolism, psychology and linguistics – that contributed to the U.P.C.'s demands, and which complicate the conventional binary of 'African resistance' vs. 'European domination'.⁴⁷

Whilst the works of Joseph and Mbembe are therefore vital to understanding the U.P.C.'s historical trajectory, they have largely overlooked the party's activities outside of Cameroon's borders. In doing so, they have neglected the ways in which the party's campaign was shaped not only by local reactions against colonial constraints, but also by opportunities for material support and political alliances in the international arena. Such opportunities resided beyond the colony-metropole axis, and were firstly represented by the U.N., before encompassing Pan-African and Afro-Asian diplomatic networks. As will be expanded upon below, the possibility of support from these extra-metropolitan networks not only shaped the U.P.C.'s political demands, such as independence and unification, but also significantly determined the rhythms of the armed insurgency itself. By acknowledging these links between the local and global dimensions of the party's campaign, the present study expands upon Joseph's basis for comparison between the U.P.C. and F.L.N. In this respect, it draws upon Matthew Connelly's 2002 book *A Diplomatic Revolution*, in which he argues that the F.L.N.'s armed and diplomatic actions

⁴⁶ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, pp.1, 332.

⁴⁷ Achille Mbembe, *La Naissance du Maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun (1920-1960) : Histoire des Usages de la Raison en Colonie* (Paris, 1996), p. 10.

were ‘mutually reinforcing’, demonstrating how the movement employed anti-colonial violence to garner international political support, particularly at the U.N.⁴⁸

The studies of Joseph and Mbembe, moreover, stop their analysis before Cameroon’s independence, which brings one to a second neglected aspect of the U.P.C.’s struggle that the thesis redresses: its continuation after 1960. In part, this neglect reflected a persistent periodisation of African history, one that began amongst historians in the 1960s, and which divided its past into the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods.⁴⁹ From the late 1980s, historians of French sub-Saharan Africa began to elide this division, examining continuities of close political and economic ties between French and African political leaders, which straddled the late colonial and post-colonial periods.⁵⁰ Yet this elision also reflected a continued preoccupation with France’s ‘successful’ decolonisation, and with the governmental apparatus of the nation-state. As a result, continuities of opposition to *la présence française* by actors outside the institutions of the state, particularly those enacted beyond the colony-metropole axis, remained largely overlooked.

This historiographical neglect also reflected the fact that post-independence insurgencies enjoyed little political legitimacy amongst African and Western governments throughout the 1960s and 1970s. African political leaders, for example, became increasingly aware of the difficulties of national development and integration after independence, as well as the exigencies of establishing political stability and security. Within this imperative framework shared by most African governments – which became manifest in the doctrines of ‘non-interference’ and ‘territorial integrity’ of the O.A.U. Charter – there was little room for seeing insurgent movements as legitimate; a development that itself significantly contributed to the collapse of the U.P.C.’s diplomatic campaign.⁵¹ Amongst governments in Western Europe and North America, there was similarly a desire to ensure the political stability and economic viability of newly-

⁴⁸ Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 69-74, 110. See also Martin Thomas, ‘France Accused: French North Africa Before the United Nations, 1952-1962’, *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 10, No.1 (2001), pp. 91-121, p. 103.

⁴⁹ Stephen Ellis, ‘Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 43 (2002), pp. 1-26, p. 5.

⁵⁰ Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, 1880-1985* Chipman, *French Power in Africa*; McNamara, *France in Black Africa*; Gregory, ‘The French Military in Africa’.

⁵¹ Ruth Iyob, ‘Regional Hegemony: Domination and Resistance in the Horn of Africa’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1993), pp. 257-276, p. 273; Clapham, *African Guerrillas*, p. 215.

independent African states, particularly to prevent communist encroachment in the context of the Cold War.⁵²

From the 1990s, however, the visibility of opposition actors in post-independence Africa began to increase within historical scholarship.⁵³ In relation to the perceived crisis of the contemporary African state, these studies reflected the growing legitimacy of domestic opposition groups amongst Western policy-makers and political scientists. That is, the growing acceptance of these groups as authentic expressions of alienation from the nation-building projects of African governments, the latter of which have been increasingly blamed for the continent's current dilemma. This has been most clearly represented by the aid conditionalities of 'good governance' imposed on African governments by the I.M.F. and Western donor states, and by the fact that opposition groups – including armed insurgents – have been increasingly incorporated into political power-sharing settlements with the governments that they have actively contested.⁵⁴ The decreased legitimacy of African state actors thus corresponded to an increased historical visibility of non-state opposition actors. As a result, this academic development can be viewed as a continuation of the 'history from below' approach that began in the late 1960s amongst Africanists.

Two recent articles by Meredith Terretta have subsequently extended the historical analysis of the U.P.C. into the post-independence period. The first of these, published in 2005, builds upon Mbembe's book by examining how, throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, indigenous understandings of freedom and justice translated into popular support for the U.P.C. within Cameroon.⁵⁵ More importantly, the second article – published in 2010 – has brought a much-welcome focus to the U.P.C.'s diplomatic activities and its engagement with extra-metropolitan networks.⁵⁶ This study encompasses the decades both before and after Cameroon's independence, and further extends Joseph's study by comparing the U.P.C. and F.L.N.'s diplomatic strategies. In particular, Terretta indicates

⁵²Pinar Bilgin and Adam David Morton, 'Historicising Representations of "Failed States": Beyond the Cold War Annexation of the Social Sciences', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2002), pp. 55-80, pp. 57-62; Dean C. Tipps, 'Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies: A Critical Perspective', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1973), pp. 199-226, p. 209.

⁵³ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global'; Van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief*; Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas*, p. 227. See also Van Walraven and Abbink, 'Rethinking Resistance in African History: An Introduction', pp. 1-42.

⁵⁴ Van Walraven and Abbink, 'Rethinking Resistance', p. 11-13; Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 225.

⁵⁵ Meredith Terretta, "'God of Independence, God of Peace": Village Politics and Nationalism in the *Maquis* of Cameroon, 1957-1971', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (2005), pp. 74-101.

⁵⁶ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global'.

how the U.P.C.'s survival as a nationalist movement depended on its ability to obtain the support of foreign policy-makers.⁵⁷ By examining both the indigenous and international dimensions of the U.P.C.'s campaign, Terretta argues that it possessed both 'deeply local and broadly global' foundations. This created a 'dual anti-colonial front': one located inside the territory, the other outside its borders.⁵⁸

Importantly, however, by seeking to rescue the U.P.C.'s history from the dominance of state-centred narratives, and by reflecting a growing pessimism towards the political and economic practices of African governments, the works of Joseph, Mbembe, and Terretta – like many histories of nationalism 'from below' – have too readily dismissed the state as a conceptual framework.⁵⁹ In other words, they have studied these marginalised groups as inherently opposed to, and outside of, the historical and political logic of the African state, rather than partaking in it. On the one hand, such an understanding arises from what Roitman calls 'binary thinking' about the state, which fails to apprehend that 'non-state' actors can protest the exercise of power by governments, yet at the same time consider it logical.⁶⁰ On the other hand, this understanding results from a normative definition of what constitutes state actors and the exercise of statehood; a definition which, as cited above, is largely based upon controlling the domestic institutions and territory of the state. It is a definition by which the U.P.C., and indeed the African state, have been designated as 'failed'.

To locate the U.P.C.'s struggle within the logic of the state, therefore, requires an alternative and historicised understanding of African statehood and governance. It is an understanding that requires one to understand that, during the era of decolonisation, the struggle over the state was as much a struggle for international connections and support, as it was for domestic territory and institutions. Specifically, it requires one to acknowledge that a fundamental function of African statehood has been the ability to access external resources, through a recognised claim to represent an independent state.

⁵⁷ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 200.

⁵⁸ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 196.

⁵⁹ Florenica E. Mallon, 'Dialogues Among the Fragments: Retrospect and Prospect' in Frederick Cooper (ed.), *Confronting Historical Paradigms: Peasants, Labour and the Capitalist World System in Africa and Latin America* (Madison, 1993), pp. 371-402.

⁶⁰ Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa* (Princeton, 2005), p. 45.

The necessity of this acknowledgement is perhaps most evident in Terretta's work which, whilst innovative and important, does not provide a unifying framework through which to explain the linkages and interactions between the U.P.C.'s 'local' and 'global' fronts. A historicised understanding of the African state and its functions provides such a framework. It enables one to study the state as a Weberian 'social institution', which, as articulated by Bayart, acts to mediate relations between Africa and the rest of the world. In particular, Bayart argues that the study of such intermediary institutions allows one to reconstruct the concrete historical conditions of Africa's insertion into the international system – and the struggles to which this has given rise – while at the same avoiding the minutiae of local history.⁶¹ Before tracing how the U.P.C.'s campaign can be understood within this historicised function of African statehood, it would be pertinent to firstly trace how it has been articulated in academic analyses, and how the thesis builds upon these studies.

A Fundamental Function of African Statehood

Since the 1990s, works by Bayart, Chabal, Daloz, Mamdani, and Mbembe have argued that academic analyses of the (sub-Saharan) African state since independence have adhered to a conceptual fault-line. On the one side, there are those studies that analyse the African state through comparison to a universal standard of Western 'modernity'. African states are consequently examined in a residual capacity, rather than on their own terms. That is, African states are only understood in functionalist terms of what they 'should be', or, as they experienced economic and political instability, in pathological terms of what they are not. According to Mamdani *et al.*, the original proponents of such analyses were the modernisation theorists of the 1950s and 1960s, and it is an analytical trend that has persisted within comparative politics and history until the present.⁶² This comparative approach to the African state has, according to Mamdani and Mbembe, justified 'neoliberal' intervention programmes by international and foreign government actors since the perceived crisis of the African state arose in the 1980s. In particular, they have argued that I.M.F. structural adjustment programmes and donor conditionalities of 'good

⁶¹ Jean-François Bayart, 'Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion', *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 395 (2000), pp. 217-267, p. 246.

⁶² Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 9; Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, p. 7.

governance’ seek to place African states – which are seen as incapable of resolving their political and economic problems themselves - back on the universal path of progress.⁶³

On the other side of this fault-line – where Bayart *et al.* implicitly locate themselves – there are those studies that have sought to restore historicity, agency, and specificity to the African state. Historicity does not simply mean historical modes of explanation, but refusing what Mamdani calls ‘history by analogy’, whereby African history only becomes meaningful through its conceptual interaction with Europe.⁶⁴ Such analogical analyses may, therefore, acknowledge the shallow development efforts of colonial administrations as a historical constraint on independent African states.⁶⁵ They may also – as will be demonstrated below – subsequently recognise the ability to access external assistance as a vital prerogative of African governments. Nevertheless, these phenomena are only understood as deviations from an ideal-typical and Eurocentric standard of statehood and state-formation – normally based upon a government’s ability to exercise internal authority over its territory, and to provide for the welfare of its domestic population.

Instead, historicity entails a focus on how African actors could appropriate Western state institutions to create a unique and complex historical trajectory, one that refutes a linear path to the ‘modern’ state which can only be measured in terms of adherence or deviation. It is within this particular sense of history that African agency and specificity is located, and why Mamdani and Bayart in particular criticise dependency theory. Whilst dependency theory sought, through historical analysis, to contest the model of universal progress posited by modernisation theorists, it also reproduced certain of its assumptions. Namely, it subsumed the specificity of African states into an underdeveloped periphery, it defined African states primarily by what they were not (‘developed’), and it posited the relationship with the developed ‘core’ economies as one of passive subordination.⁶⁶

As regards the present study, the most important product of this historicised approach has been the work of Bayart, and particularly his concept of ‘extraversion’. Bayart defines extraversion as a strategy by which the ‘leading actors in sub-Saharan Africa’ have tended to compensate for difficulties in the ‘autonomisation of their power’ by actively mobilising

⁶³ Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 285; Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, p. 7.

⁶⁴ Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 9

⁶⁵ See for example: Tonya Langford, ‘Things Fall Apart: State Failure and the Politics of Intervention’, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1999), pp. 59-79; Charles Alao, ‘The Problem of the Failed State in Africa’ in Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, (eds.), *International Security Management and the United Nations* (Tokyo, 1999), pp. 83-102; pp. 83–102; Herbst, ‘Responding to State Failure in Africa’.

⁶⁶ Bayart, *The State in Africa*, pp. 5-8; Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pp. 9-11.

resources from the external environment.⁶⁷ Bayart locates this strategy as an enduring historical logic of African society, one that has expressed itself in the actions of African governments since independence. In this respect, the dependency of African governments on the external environment indicates an *adherence* to a more particular political logic, rather than a deviation from a universalised model of statehood. Chabal and Daloz build upon this point, arguing that the use of foreign assistance by African governments should be examined from a ‘less normative and more firmly analytical’ point of view, which allows a deeper understanding of how such assistance represents an integral part of the economic and political systems of African states.⁶⁸

Due to the fact that Cameroon achieved independence in the midst of violent and disruptive conflict, it was not until the beginning of the 1970s that political scientists began to view the country’s political and economic progress with a degree of optimism. By this time, the government – under Ahmadou Ahidjo – had quashed the U.P.C. insurgency, and been able to ensure that Cameroon possessed national economic growth rates to rival those of Gabon and the Côte d’Ivoire.⁶⁹ The first major monographs dedicated to analysing the independent Cameroonian state appeared in 1970-1971, and recognised the necessity and ability of the Ahidjo government to actively negotiate access to foreign assistance. Victor T. Le Vine, for example, argued that Ahidjo’s request for French military assistance in 1960 was an ‘astute’ move that had allowed his government to eliminate the U.P.C. insurgency as a viable military threat by 1962.⁷⁰ On the economic front, Willard R. Johnson wrote that Cameroon’s growth had been made possible through the negotiation of ‘large-scale assistance’ from France and the U.S.A, and augmented by Ahidjo’s liberal investment programme for foreign firms.⁷¹

Despite praise for the country’s political stability and economic growth, however, the practice of accessing external aid represented a *lack* of statehood against a normative model. In the preface to Johnson’s 1970 work, he explained that the study of Cameroon acquired its widespread relevance from ‘the ubiquitous process’ that was occurring across

⁶⁷ Bayart, *The State in Africa*, pp. 21-22.

⁶⁸ Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p.110.

⁶⁹ Between 1960 and 1966, the annual growth rate of the Cameroonian economy averaged between 7-8%, compared to that of Gabon (9.5%) and the Côte d’Ivoire (11%). Victor T. Le Vine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic* (London, 1971), p. 180.

⁷⁰ Le Vine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*, pp. 180-181.

⁷¹ Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society* (Princeton, 1970), p. 104.

the ‘new states’ of the world: ‘the modernization of societies and their political systems.’⁷² Whilst the Cameroonian state was new, therefore, it was understood by what it was not: modern. Instead, the Cameroonian state was ‘incipient’, and tasked with the integration of ‘fragmented’ and ‘traditional’ societies, a process that required its government to negotiate access to external assistance.⁷³

Johnson was writing at a time when modernisation theory was coming under increasing criticism amongst American political scientists, yet several of its key tenets persisted in his work.⁷⁴ Modernisation theory primarily emerged amongst North American academics in the 1950s, during a time when an increasing number of former colonial territories were joining the international community of nations. Certain political scientists and economists consequently sought to break out of their parochial fields of study – which had primarily focused on Western Europe and the U.S.A. – and apply their analytical rigour to political and economic systems that had hitherto largely been the realm of anthropology.⁷⁵ The fact that this was a theory of modernisation, suggests that its main purpose was to analyse processes of change within these newly independent states. Through the very act of designating this change as modernisation, however, a teleological goal of ‘modernity’ was assumed. As Dean Tipps wrote in 1973, modernisation ‘is not simply a process of change, but one which is defined in terms of the goals towards which it is moving’.⁷⁶

Whilst different standards of modernity were emphasised within different studies, they commonly articulated an industrialised market economy with positive rates of growth, and a participant political culture united around, in the words of Johnson, ‘shared national symbols of identity’.⁷⁷ As both contemporary and more recent academic studies have observed, underlying this image was an idealised vision of the United States of America, which was posited as the desirable outcome of the modernisation process, and indeed the

⁷² Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. vii.

⁷³ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. vii.

⁷⁴ O’Brien, ‘Modernization, Order, and the Erosion of a Democratic Ideal’. The first notable salvo against modernisation theory amongst U.S. academics was Samuel P. Huntington’s *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, 1968). Johnson cited several key modernisation theorists in his work to support his complex theoretical models of ‘integration’, notably David Apter, Gabriel Almond and Karl Deutsch.

⁷⁵ For a detailed overview of these developments, see Mark T. Berger, ‘Decolonisation, Modernisation, and Nation-Building: Political Development Theory and the Appeal of Communism in Southeast Asia’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (2003), pp. 421-448; Bilgin and Morton, ‘Historicising Representations of “Failed States”’.

⁷⁶ Tipps, ‘Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies’, p. 204.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. vii.

pinnacle of modernity.⁷⁸ The universalised standard of the modern nation-state found its analogue in the ahistorical designation of timeless ‘traditional’ societies, largely defined by subsistence agriculture and ethnic or ‘tribal’ affiliations.⁷⁹ By contrasting these ideal types, modernisation theorists posited a series of binaries to measure the transition from ‘tradition’ to ‘modernity’, a transition that would require significant foreign assistance channelled through the state apparatus.⁸⁰

By the 1970s, however, it was becoming apparent that the ability of African governments to negotiate access to external resources was not producing the desired process of modernisation, but instead represented a deviation from such a process. From the late 1970s, analyses of the Cameroonian state by political scientists accordingly adhered to the pattern outlined at the beginning of the chapter, whereby an initial optimism gradually gave way to increasingly pessimistic and pathological assessments of ‘weakness’ and ‘softness’.⁸¹ Indeed, it was the Ahidjo government’s use of French financial and technical assistance that formed the basis for a less optimistic assessment of the Cameroonian state in 1978: Richard Joseph’s edited volume *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo*.⁸² In the chapters of this work, the ‘political stability’ previously praised by Johnson and others belied a complete lack of democratic freedom within Cameroon, maintained by the use of foreign military assistance from France.⁸³ In economic terms, the country continued to be dependent on French capital investment and financial aid for its growth – primarily in the form of export commodities – yet the profits of such investment were repatriated, whilst financial aid was monopolised by a governmental elite

⁷⁸ Tipps, ‘Modernization Theory’, p. 208; Berger, ‘Decolonisation, Modernisation, and Nation-Building’, p. 429.

⁷⁹ Tipps, ‘Modernization Theory’, p. 204.

⁸⁰ See in particular: Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York, 1958); C. E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History* (New York, 1966).

⁸¹ See Jackson and Rosberg, ‘Why Africa’s Weak States Persist’, p. 7; Hyden, *No Shortcuts to Progress*, pp. 14, 100.

⁸² Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978).

⁸³ From 1961, Ahidjo administered largely by presidential decree, and every six months renewed an almost-perpetual state of emergency that gave the police force sweeping powers to arrest anyone suspected of ‘subversion against the state’. There were also at least six internment camps (*Centres d'internment administrative*) for political prisoners, each with a capacity of 8,000. Accusations of electoral fraud were also frequently made by exiled Cameroonians, so that by 1978, Ahidjo had already been in office for eighteen years. Such accusations did not prevent the French government from remaining Cameroon’s chief source of financial and technical assistance, particularly in regards to the police and armed forces. See Abel Eyinga, ‘Government by State of Emergency’ in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 100-110.

consisting of France's 'indigenous allies'.⁸⁴ The case of Cameroon, Joseph wrote, was one of a 'neo-colonial' and 'peripheral capitalist' state, whereby the majority of the population lacked both political and economic freedom.⁸⁵

Such terminology, and the fact that certain chapters in this book cite works by Samir Amin and André Gunder Frank, locates it within the dependency school that gained ascendancy from the early 1970s, and originated in studies of Latin America.⁸⁶ As applied to Africa – notably by Walter Rodney – dependency theorists cited the continued authoritarian practices of independent governments, and the continued poverty of their populations, to contest modernisation theory's assumption that African countries were 'undeveloped' due to 'traditional' or 'primitive' social structures.⁸⁷ Instead, it was due to the way in which these countries had been integrated into the capitalist world system by imperial expansion. By exploiting these countries primarily as a source of raw materials, colonialism prevented their industrialisation and development.

According to the dependency theorists, imperialism had changed in form but not in fact after independence. African political elites – which comprised a 'comprador bourgeoisie' – continued to allow their countries to be exploited for their raw materials. In exchange, these elites could collect money on import and export duties, but were nothing more than 'puppets' or 'lackeys' of foreign capital.⁸⁸ By positing African leaders as mere 'puppets' for foreign capital, however, and locating this within a long history of imperialism stretching back for centuries, dependency theorists lost sight of both the agency of African actors, and a changing historical context. What is more, African states were still defined in residual terms of what they were 'not', based upon comparison to an abstract ideal. They were not independent, they were not developed, and they were not in the 'core' of global exchange, only the periphery. As a consequence, African governments' mobilisation of external resources continued to be designated as a pathological deviation.

⁸⁴ Green, Reginald Herbold. 'The Political Economy of External Dependence in Cameroon' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Fourth Dimension Publishers: Enugu, 1978), pp. 162-178, p. 166.

⁸⁵ Richard Joseph, 'Introduction and General Framework' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 3-42, p. 29.

⁸⁶ The book frequently cites: Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* (New York, 1974); André Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York, 1969).

⁸⁷ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London, 1973).

⁸⁸ Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, 1964-1971* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 193-198.

Dependency theorists made an important point, however. Namely, that the narrow export-orientated development efforts of the colonial state significantly limited the ability of African governments to provide for the welfare of its citizenry, or for inspiring a sense of loyalty to the state. As Price and Cooper have more recently observed, this encouraged African governments to exploit their privileged position in relation to international aid and trade – especially from former colonial powers – to maintain their hold on power. As the representatives of independent states, African governments were able to use their access to external resources for strategies of patronage and coercion, thereby co-opting and suppressing political rivals.⁸⁹ The works of Bayart, Chabal and Daloz posit this ability – the use of external opportunities to compensate for domestic constraints – as an enduring and historicised logic of the African state.⁹⁰ It was an end in itself, rather than a means to ‘modernity’. Within this logic of extraversion, the institutions of state become a vital interface between domestic and international distribution networks. This conceptualisation of the state subsequently provides an entry-point into examining the ways in which local, regional, and international histories became linked in the era of decolonisation.

At the same time, however, the works of Bayart, Chabal and Daloz have overlooked significant international developments in the post-war period, developments that shaped how African governments were able to negotiate access to external resources. Importantly, this includes how internationally recognised sovereignty came to be deployed as a vital strategy of extraversion: that is, how it became a fundamental function of African statehood. This development has instead been noted in the works of academics specialising in the history of international relations, particularly Jackson, Clapham, Anghie, and Englebert.⁹¹ After the Second World War, there emerged a new ‘sovereignty regime’ underwritten by international law, and manifest in organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank. This legal and organisational nexus sought to maintain the viability of newly independent states by protecting them from external aggression, granting them access to significant development assistance, and providing them with a diplomatic platform – the U.N. General Assembly – where these states, in principle at least, stood on equal standing with the industrialised nations.

⁸⁹ Robert M. Price, ‘Neo-Colonialism and Ghana’s Economic Decline: A Critical Assessment’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1984), pp. 163-193, p. 189; Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 106.

⁹⁰ Bayart, *The State in Africa*, pp. 21-22 Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p.110-115.

⁹¹ Jackson, *Quasi-States*; Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, pp.11-22; Antony Anghie, ‘The Evolution of International Law: Colonial and Postcolonial Realities’, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 5 (2006), pp. 739- 753; Pierre Englebert, *Africa: Unity, Sovereignty, and Sorrow* (Boulder, 2009).

The result was that the recognition of sovereignty in international law provided governments with significant benefits. After African territories became independent, and externally recognised as such by membership in the United Nations, their governments could use their claim to represent a sovereign state in order to ‘make real deals with real resources’.⁹² As members of the U.N., for example, these states could provide key votes to support – or oppose – foreign governments at the General Assembly, in exchange for needed external material assistance. Indeed, several studies have observed how this practice has remained a key prerogative of African governments.⁹³ In France’s former African territories, this permits one to understand how the maintenance of close ties between France and its former African colonies has not simply been a matter of ‘neo-colonialism’, or France dictating the terms of the relationship. Instead, and as Lemarchand has argued on the national level, the dynamic that underlay such clientelist ties was one of reciprocity and mutual benefits.⁹⁴ By 1963, furthermore, recognised sovereignty provided the benefit of a non-interference pact between African states, becoming institutionally manifest in the creation of the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.).⁹⁵

Studies that recognise the importance of internationally recognised sovereignty have, however, limited their analyses to the government actors that occupied the territories and institutions of African states. By tracing how a fundamental function of African statehood emerged through the study of exiled ‘non-state’ actors – the U.P.C. – the present study makes three contributions to the literature on the African state. Firstly, it demonstrates that there was a brief moment of possibility in the immediate post-independence era, when governmental and non-governmental groups could compete to access external resources in the name of an independent state. Secondly, this moment of possibility allows a comparative approach, one that offers a more detailed insight into how this function of African statehood could be successfully performed. It does so by revealing the complex dynamics and strategies that determined how competing groups could achieve external recognition as the representative of an independent state, and thereby access crucial resources from the international environment.

⁹² Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, p. 22.

⁹³ Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, p. 22; Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 198; François G. Constantin, ‘The Foreign Policy of Francophone Africa: Clientelism and After’ in Anthony Kirk-Greene and Daniel Bachs (eds.), *State and Society in Francophone Africa Since Independence* (London, 1995), pp. 183-199, p. 187.

⁹⁴ René Lemarchand, ‘Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building’, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 66, No.1 (1972), pp. 68-90.

⁹⁵ Iyob, ‘Regional Hegemony’.

In this respect, the thesis finally demonstrates how armed conflict emerged as a key strategy in competing attempts to perform this function of African statehood. In doing so, it contests a growing trend amongst political scientists in which the African state is analysed against a Weberian ideal type.⁹⁶ It is a model of statehood that emphasises a government's ability to exercise complete domestic authority over its territory and populations, based upon Weber's definition of the state as 'an entity that claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence'.⁹⁷ The result is that within these political science analyses, instances of armed conflict in Africa – especially since the 1990s – increasingly indicate a 'lack' of statehood, resulting in pathological designations of 'collapsed' and 'failed' states.⁹⁸ In contrast, by demonstrating how armed conflict emerged as a key strategy to obtain external recognition – and resources – as the representative of an independent state, the present study argues how warfare could constitute a fundamental practice of African statehood. It therefore adds an important historical dimension to works by Reno, Bayart, Ellis and Hibou, which have argued that since the 1990s, conflict in Africa can be seen as an integral part of statehood and state-formation, rather than its negation.⁹⁹

Methodology and Sources: A Transnational Approach

The armed conflict in Cameroon, and its location within the extraverted logic of African statehood, thus provides a way of linking local and international histories during the decades before and after independence. In order to analyse these historical connections, the thesis adopts a transnational approach, rather than that of global history. That is, it traces exchanges and connections that cross national boundaries, but which do not claim to encompass the entire globe. As Kearney notes, whilst global processes are largely decentred from any specific national territory, transnational processes are more specific, and can be anchored in one or more nation-states whilst at the same time operating across their territorial boundaries.¹⁰⁰ Even within this more limited scope, however, an analysis of the specific ways in which a nationalist movement – and its armed insurgency – was linked

⁹⁶ Stein Sundstol Eriksen, "'State Failure' in Theory and Practice: The Idea of the State and the Contradictions of State Formation', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2011), pp. 229-247, p. 236. The first notable appearance of this normative standard appeared in a 1982 article by Jackson and Rosberg. See Jackson and Rosberg, 'Why Africa's Weak States Persist', esp. p. 2.

⁹⁷ Migdal, *State in Society*, pp. 15-16.

⁹⁸ Eriksen, "'State Failure'", p. 232.

⁹⁹ Jean-François Bayart, Stephen Ellis, and Beatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Oxford, 1999); William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, 1998).

¹⁰⁰ M. Kearney, 'The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24 (1995), pp. 547-565, p. 548.

to international actors and institutions, poses significant problems in terms of research methodology. These problems become manifest in two respects, and broadly correspond to the study of the U.P.C.'s 'local' and 'global' anti-colonial fronts, as articulated by Terretta.

First of all, in terms of recovering the 'local' history of the U.P.C. and its armed insurgency, there are the challenges of finding documents produced by a group that, for most of its existence, was illegal and forced to operate underground. As Scagliola has noted in her study of the Dutch war of decolonisation in Indonesia, a defining characteristic of guerrilla warfare – particularly in a colonial context – is the asymmetry of forces involved.¹⁰¹ Faced with the superior weaponry, numbers, and training of the colonial power, guerrilla fighters were forced to be constantly mobile and to operate in an extremely clandestine manner. Such a mode of operation is not conducive to the production or collation of documents with which the historian can later piece together the U.P.C.'s domestic struggle. In Cameroon, moreover, French forces often seized or destroyed U.P.C. documents when they uncovered a *maquis* encampment, both for the purposes of intelligence-gathering, and to ensure that the party's subversive ideas could not spread amongst the population.¹⁰² As the armed struggle persisted after independence, so too did this dynamic. Cameroonian armed forces locked away any 'subversive' U.P.C. documents in a Security Bureau Library of Prohibited Publications, or destroyed them by fire.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, it is precisely the greater resources of the French and Cameroonian governments, and their predilection for intelligence-gathering, that serve to provide the richest source of information for the U.P.C.'s activities within Cameroon. In particular, the French military archives of the *Service Historique de la Défense* in Vincennes, and the South-West Provincial archives of the Cameroonian government in Buea, furnished documents detailing both the tactics and strategies of U.P.C. fighters, as well as letters and pamphlets produced by the party members themselves. As a result, these archives evoke Martin Thomas' conception of the imperial 'intelligence state' – whereby practices of police surveillance became as important as armed force in suppressing dissent – but they

¹⁰¹ Stef Scagliola, 'The Silences and Myths of a "Dirty War": Coming to Terms with the Dutch-Indonesian Decolonisation War (1945-1949)', *European Review of History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, (2007), pp. 235-262, p. 236.

¹⁰² Achille Mbembe, 'Pouvoir des Morts et Langage des Vivants: Les Errances de la Mémoire Nationalisée au Cameroun', *Politique Africaine*, No. 22 (1986), pp. 37-76, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰³ *Subversive Activities by U.P.C. and Other Political Parties like K.D.M., 1962-1972*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/8).

also demonstrate how these practices persisted in the post-colonial era.¹⁰⁴ Importantly, such practices have also enabled the collation of documents and reports produced by U.P.C. members themselves, sources which would otherwise have been scattered, lost, or destroyed. In doing so, one is able to mitigate the evident bias of reclaiming the U.P.C.'s historical voice from foreign and government archives.¹⁰⁵

Secondly, in terms of locating sources to analyse the U.P.C.'s diplomatic activities, there is the problem of geographical scope. This problem is particularly acute not only due to the relatively limited time and resources of a doctoral project, but also because the party engaged with extra-metropolitan networks that encompassed actors as far afield as the U.S.A., West Africa, North Africa, Europe, and the Far East. Academics of transnational history have addressed the problem of tracking movements across such networks in two ways. First of all, they have sought out the archives of international organisations – particularly the U.N. – which serve as a 'hub' for tracing the diplomatic activities of both government and non-government actors.¹⁰⁶ Within the scope of the present project, however, a trip to New York was not feasible. Nevertheless, elements of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library – particularly resolutions of the General Assembly – have been made available online, and thus mitigated this issue to a significant degree.¹⁰⁷

The second way in which historians have been able to trace transnational connections is through multi-archival research in several countries, including both state and private archives.¹⁰⁸ As the U.P.C. engaged with a significant number of foreign governments and international organisations, however, research for the present study had to be more limited, and was therefore restricted to two countries: France and Cameroon. Once again, government archives in Vincennes and Buea proved a valuable hub of collated and centralised information. In this instance, it was due to the fact that both the French and Cameroonian intelligence services demonstrated a marked concern with tracing the cross-border movements and diplomatic activities of U.P.C. members. This aspect of intelligence-gathering adheres to the extraverted logic of the state in Africa, and in

¹⁰⁴ Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder After 1914* (Berkeley, 2008).

¹⁰⁵ See Stephen Ellis, 'Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa', p. 14.

¹⁰⁶ For an overview of works that have used such an approach, see Glenda Sluga, 'The Transnational History of International Institutions', *Journal of Global History*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2011), pp. 219-222.

¹⁰⁷ The library can be located at: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl>

¹⁰⁸ An excellent example of what such research can achieve is Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa: 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill, 2002).

particular Price and Cooper's notion of the 'gatekeeper state'.¹⁰⁹ Since there was a relative lack of socio-economic and political opportunity within African territories, even a small quantity of external support could make a vital difference to those that could control access to it. As such, both colonial and post-colonial governments, in the words of Cooper, sought to 'police their citizens' access to the wealth that lay outside.'¹¹⁰

It would, however, be pertinent to mention three restrictions experienced whilst performing research in government – and particularly military – archives; restrictions that demonstrate the U.P.C. insurgency remains somewhat of a politically sensitive topic. First of all, access was not granted to the papers of Jacques Foccart – the French President's Chief of Staff for African and Madagascan Affairs – held at the National Archives in Paris, despite a lengthy 'procédure de dérogation' with the archivist. This was significantly due to a law introduced on 3rd January 1979 that prohibits – for up to sixty years – access to documents that involve either the private lives of individuals or the defence interests of France. Indeed, such a law also restricted access to certain documents at the French Communist Party archives in St. Denis. Secondly, access was restricted at the National Archives in Yaoundé, owing to the fact that the time of research unfortunately – and unavoidably – coincided with forthcoming presidential elections, resulting in heightened security. Thirdly, whilst access was granted to the departmental archives in Buea, Cameroonian government officials had recently 're-classified' the material on the U.P.C., with the result that much of it had been removed.

To compensate for these gaps, both non-state archives and oral testimonies were sought in Cameroon and France. The former, represented by the collections of the Protestant missionary organisation *Défap*, and of the French political activist Daniel Guérin, were important repositories of the U.P.C.'s numerous newspapers and pamphlets. Building upon the approach of 'New Imperial History', these archives represent important instances of the political and humanitarian circuits that linked colony to metropole.¹¹¹ As regards oral testimony, the most important work was to be conducted with Ndeh Ntumazah, one of the

¹⁰⁹ Price, 'Neo-Colonialism', p. 189; Cooper, 'Africa Since 1940', p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Cooper, 'Africa Since 1940', p. 160.

¹¹¹ See for example: Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Re-thinking a Research Agenda' in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 1-59; A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002); Antoinette Burton (ed.), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (North Carolina, 2003). For a more detailed analysis of how humanitarian circuits operated between Cameroon and France, see Guillaume Lachenal and Bertrand Taithe, 'Une Généalogie Missionnaire et Coloniale de l'Humanitaire: le Cas Aujoulat au Cameroun, 1935–1973.' *Le Mouvement Social*, Vol. 227, No. 1 (2009), pp. 45-63.

last surviving members of the U.P.C.'s original leadership, and who spent significant time both within Cameroon and abroad. Unfortunately, Ntumazah passed away in 2010, before a trip to Cameroon could be made. A close associate of Ntumazah, however, subsequently provided valuable assistance in making contact with former U.P.C. members, members that had both fought in the *maquis* and spent time in Accra, Europe and the Far East. These interviews not only provided information missing from government archives, but also draw attention to the histories and agency of individuals as they participated in transnational networks. Following from the work of Basch, Schiller and Blanc, such a focus helps to substantiate and nuance the sometimes abstract analysis of 'flows' and 'circulations' that often accompany transnational studies.¹¹²

Perhaps most importantly, by tracing how specific individuals and groups engaged with transnational political, ideological, and economic networks over time, these 'flows' and 'circulations' are shown to be uneven and uncertain. Historically – and as Cooper has further observed – transnational economic and political relations are filled with 'lumps' where power coalesces, whilst structures and networks penetrate certain places with great intensity, yet tail off elsewhere.¹¹³ As such, a changing international environment consisted of constraints as well as opportunities for African actors. This becomes evident in the U.P.C.'s diplomatic struggle, and particularly its attempts to use sovereignty as an international claim-making device. Whilst the U.P.C. was able to engage with extra-metropolitan support networks, and to access external resources as the recognised representative of an independent state, these possibilities had closed down by the end of the 1960s. By tracing how and why these opportunities opened and closed, the present study reveals the dynamics underlying an emergent function of African statehood, and the complex relationship between domestic and international processes during the era of decolonisation.

¹¹² Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Basel, 1994). An influential book on the more abstract approach has been Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, 1999).

¹¹³ Frederick Cooper, 'What is the Concept of Globalization Good For? An African Historian's Perspective', *African Affairs*, Vol. 100, No. 399 (2001), pp. 189-213, p. 190.

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter one establishes the broader historical context of domestic constraints and international opportunities from which a fundamental function of African statehood, and the U.P.C., emerged. In particular, it demonstrates how French reform efforts during the post-war period caused the U.P.C. to view the institutions of state as a vital interface to the international environment, through which to access and distribute the external resources necessary for popular socio-economic development. Whilst modernisation theorists and Africanists often disagreed over the exogenous or indigenous origins of the state in Africa, many nonetheless shared the view of African nationalists that foreign development assistance would be vital to its further development.¹¹⁴ In addition, due to the limited socio-economic development efforts of the French administration, and the terms of Cameroon's trusteeship, the U.P.C. began to imagine internationally recognised sovereignty – represented by membership in the United Nations – as the most effective means to access such vital foreign assistance.

The chapter further demonstrates that, due to restricted opportunities for political representation within African territories, the nationalist struggle for the state was international not only on the level of political imagination, but also in terms of political activism. In this sense, the U.N. constituted a vital extra-metropolitan diplomatic platform through which the U.P.C. could pursue its claims for independence. As such, the chapter builds upon works by Anghie, Anderson, Fedorowich and Thomas, which have examined how the development of an international 'anti-colonial consensus' during and after the

¹¹⁴ For modernisation theorists, the modernising process of political integration, and the transformative vehicle of the state, were essentially opposed to traditional African society, and had no roots in it. If there were any precedents within Africa, they were 'historical accidents' that resulted from the impact of colonialism, or, in the pre-colonial period, from the importation of ideas and practices that originated in more developed countries. See for example G. A. Almond and G. B. Powell Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Development Approach* (Boston, 1966), p. 285; David Apter, *The Politics of Modernization* (Chicago, 1965), p.42. At the same time, however, Walter Rostow notably described how, with sufficient economic and technical aid from foreign governments, newly independent states could reach the 'take-off' stage necessary for modernisation. Walter Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, 1960). Certain Africanist historians – particularly within the Ibadan school - aimed to counter the modernist view of the new 'imported' state during the 1960s, by tracing its precedents in Africa's pre-colonial past. African kingdoms and empires had functioned as integrated 'proto-nations' or 'quasi-national units' which were not 'tribal' or riven by ethnic factions. The progress and growth of these polities had been interrupted by the colonial encounter, and was allowed to resume upon independence. See Paul E. Lovejoy, 'The Ibadan School of Historiography and its Critics' in Toyin Falola (ed.), *African Historiography: Essays in Honour of Jacob Ade Ajayi* (Longman: Harlow, 1993), pp.195-202. Nevertheless, many Africanists – and nationalist leaders – shared the belief that foreign development assistance was necessary for independent states to 'catch up' with the West. See Thandika Mkandawire, 'Running While Others Walk: Knowledge and the Challenge of Africa's Development', *Africa Development*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (2011), pp. 1-36.

Second World War – particularly the creation of the U.N. – encouraged nationalist claims for sovereignty.¹¹⁵ Importantly, however, it also complicates such works by demonstrating that this ‘anti-colonial consensus’ was initially ambiguous in its aim of extending sovereignty to Cameroon.

Chapter two places the beginning of the U.P.C.’s guerrilla insurgency within an international context, and subsequently traces how armed conflict became a key strategy within an emergent function of African statehood. It firstly demonstrates how, after the U.P.C. was banned and much of its leadership forced into exile in British Cameroon, the party did not immediately launch into an armed struggle. Instead, it continued to concentrate on its diplomatic efforts, particularly towards the U.N. In part, this effort consisted of appropriating a transnational discourse of human rights to support the party’s claim for independence. In doing so, the chapter complicates recent transnational histories that adopt a universalist understanding of human rights, and view it as essentially opposed to the concept of state sovereignty.¹¹⁶

Importantly, the chapter argues that when the U.P.C.’s insurgency did begin in 1956, it was a means of petitioning the U.N. for independence when other channels to the organisation had been closed off. In 1958, when a date for Cameroon’s independence was finally set, the armed struggle became intertwined with a struggle to perform a fundamental function of African statehood. From this moment, competing political factions in Cameroon sought to legitimise themselves as the rightful representative of an independent state before the U.N. The U.P.C. sought to assert such international legitimacy through a mass armed uprising. As Connelly has similarly observed in his study of the F.L.N., the U.P.C. insurgency could not hope to establish such legitimacy by controlling territory – as its forces were vastly outmatched by the French – but by demonstrating popular support for the party.¹¹⁷ Ultimately, however, the national interests of France and the U.S.A. undercut the U.P.C.’s claims at the U.N., so that the pro-French Ahmadou Ahidjo became the head of Cameroon’s first independent government. The party thus remained in exile upon independence, and began to engage with an alternative Afro-Asian and Pan-African diplomatic network based around Cairo and Accra.

¹¹⁵ Carol Anderson, ‘International Conscience, the Cold War, and Apartheid: The NCAAP’s Alliance with the Reverend Michael Scott for South West Africa’s Liberation, 1946-1951’, *Journal of World History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2008), pp. 297-325, p. 308; Anghie, ‘The Evolution of International Law’; Kent Fedorowich and Martin Thomas (eds.), *International Diplomacy and Colonial Retreat* (London, 2001).

¹¹⁶ See for example: Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York, 2007) p. 206; Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard, 2009), pp. 85-88.

¹¹⁷ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 38.

Chapter three examines the continuation of these dynamics in the immediate post-independence era, and further reveals the complex relationship between domestic and international developments. It does so by analysing the armed conflict between U.P.C. and Cameroonian government forces as competing attempts to perform a fundamental function of African statehood. By shifting the emphasis of the armed struggle from controlling the state's domestic territory and institutions, to controlling its international support networks, the chapter interrogates the basis upon which the U.P.C. – and indeed the African state – have conventionally been designated as 'failed'. For the U.P.C. leadership, the armed insurgency was a strategy to undermine the government's claim to popular legitimacy amongst Cameroonians. Such a claim enabled the Ahidjo government to be recognised as the rightful representative of an independent state by foreign governments, and thus access crucial external support networks. The U.P.C.'s attempt to undermine the government's claim was initially successful. Intense insurgent activity in 1960 allowed the party to access material, political, and technical assistance from foreign governments within its alternative Afro-Asian diplomatic network, including Ghana, Guinea, Egypt, China, and the U.S.S.R. What facilitated such assistance was that the governments of Ghana, Guinea, and China explicitly recognised the U.P.C. leadership as the legitimate government of Cameroon over the Ahidjo administration.

The chapter also, however, demonstrates that the U.P.C. leadership's ability to exercise this fundamental function of African statehood – whilst remaining outside of Cameroon's territory and institutions – did not represent a precedent to a globalised era of deterritorialised sovereignty, as suggested in the works of Connelly, Piot, Hardt and Negri.¹¹⁸ Rather, it was a contingent moment of possibility for the party, which significantly relied upon the vicissitudes of the armed struggle and the shifting diplomatic strategies of foreign governments during the Cold War. Importantly, the closing down of this moment further demonstrates that more 'conventional' attributes of statehood – such as the ability to exercise domestic authority – still mattered, and were important factors in determining external recognition and support. The Cameroonian government's growing ability to exercise domestic authority, and its consequent ability to draw external recognition and support away from the U.P.C., was, moreover, significantly due to material and technical aid from France. As such, the chapter demonstrates that in terms of

¹¹⁸ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 138; Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), pp. 114-136. Charles Piot, *Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa After the Cold War* (Chicago, 2010), pp. 8-9.

successfully performing a fundamental function of African statehood, transnational ties that ran along the former colony-metropole axis increasingly proved more effective than the extra-metropolitan networks engaged by the U.P.C.

The final chapter examines the steady decline of the U.P.C.'s armed and diplomatic struggle from 1962, but continues to locate the party's actions within a historicised logic of African statehood. It does so by identifying a process of state-consolidation in which armed conflict continued to play a key role. Importantly, however, it also refuses ahistorical comparisons to processes of state-consolidation observed in Europe, whereby war enabled governments to forge a 'national identity' amongst their citizenry, and to increase their domestic revenue base through taxation.¹¹⁹ Instead, and building upon Price and Cooper's concept of the 'gatekeeper state', the chapter examines how armed conflict was used to monopolise access to external revenue bases. In particular, it looks at how the presentation of a credible U.P.C. security threat was used by both the Ahidjo government, and U.P.C. leaders, to guard access to external financial resources against rival claimants from within their own party ranks. In doing so, the chapter once again seeks to extend a state-centred model of analysis to ostensibly non-state actors, which offers a new reading of the U.P.C. leadership's growing internecine strife throughout the 1960s, and reveals how competing attempts at gatekeeping interacted.

By examining how the gatekeeping strategies of the Ahidjo government and U.P.C. leadership interacted, the chapter finally examines the complex combination of domestic, international, and contingent factors that led to the final collapse of the U.P.C.'s campaign. In doing so, Western standards of statehood – such as the exercise of domestic authority and the provision of popular socio-economic development – are shown not to be completely absent in Africa. Instead, these characteristics of statehood emerged and receded at different times and in different places, according to the exigencies of gatekeeping. Thus the Ahidjo government was quite effective in securing territorial borders and policing the population in areas where such practices would undermine the U.P.C.'s access to external support. In addition, the Ahidjo government was able to initiate and publicise popular development projects, and thus undermine the U.P.C.'s support amongst foreign governments and Cameroonian students studying abroad. U.P.C. factions

¹¹⁹ Jeffrey Herbst, for example, has notably attempted to understand the 'failure' of African states through a comparison to the Eurocentric studies of Charles Tilly, which have posited that war was intrinsic to state-formation in Western Europe since it permitted the forging of national identities and the collection of taxes. See Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, 2000) and Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States: A.D. 990-1990* (Cambridge Mass., 1990).

attempted to adapt to the consequent withdrawal of support from Ghana, Egypt, China, and the U.S.S.R. by basing themselves in Congo-Brazzaville and obtaining aid from Cuba, yet this 'second front' similarly collapsed by the end of the decade.

Chapter One: Metropolitan Constraints and Extra-Metropolitan Opportunities, 1922-1953

This chapter establishes the broader historical context from which both the U.P.C., and a fundamental function of statehood in Africa, emerged. For the leaders of the U.P.C., and other nationalist movements in post-war French Africa, it was a context firstly constituted by the domestic constraints of colonial rule. The result was that the nationalist struggle significantly centred upon a struggle to appropriate international political and economic resources. This became evident in both the political actions and imaginations of nationalist leaders. Firstly, they responded to limited options for political representation by seeking external political alliances and channels of protest, which could in turn be used to consolidate domestic bases of support. Secondly, due to the French government's limited financial and infrastructural investment in its African territories, nationalist leaders realised that any future efforts at popular socio-economic development would depend upon their ability to secure access to vital external technical and financial assistance.

In both the political actions and imagination of the U.P.C. leadership, the ability to use recognised sovereignty as a claim-making device became crucial in this struggle over international support. In terms of the party's political actions, it was crucial for the reason that, as Cooper has observed, anti-colonial movements which made their claims in the model of the European nation-state had a greater 'chance of being heard' by foreign governments and international organisations.¹ Conversely, those that expressed their protest as other forms of 'cultural distinctiveness' – that is, ethnic or other sub-national forms of identity – were often excluded from the decolonisation process; a fact that Jean Allman has demonstrated in her study of the Asante movement in Ghana.² In terms of the U.P.C.'s political imagination, internationally recognised sovereignty would allow a future Cameroonian government to negotiate access to external aid and trade networks on an equal standing with other sovereign states. This would enable foreign investment that benefitted the Cameroonian population, rather than simply the economies of the more industrialised nations.

¹ Frederick Cooper, 'Africa's Pasts and Africa's Historians', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2000), pp. 298-336, p. 314.

² Jean Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an Emergent Ghana* (Madison, 1993).

Importantly, it was the United Nations that significantly shaped the political actions and imagination of the U.P.C. Firstly, because French Cameroon was a United Nations trust territory, independence outside the French Union was an explicit option for the U.P.C. to pursue, as outlined in Article 76(b) of the U.N. Charter. Secondly, the U.N. provided a crucial diplomatic platform, where the U.P.C.'s demand for the fulfilment of the Charter had a real 'chance of being heard' by member states, which included a growing number of former colonial territories. In this respect, the trusteeship system provided a set of concrete political tools through which the U.P.C.'s independence campaign could be pursued, particularly when it found itself excluded from metropolitan political institutions. Indeed, the U.P.C.'s claim for unification can be read as a strategy to exploit these tools, a strategy which enabled the party's appearance before the General Assembly in 1952.

Finally, membership in the U.N. - as a recognised state - represented the possibility of belonging to a more equitable community of nations outside of the French Union. Membership in this community was defined by a shared sovereignty, and would allow an independent Cameroonian government to negotiate access to external aid and trade on its own terms. This extra-metropolitan dynamic of the U.P.C.'s campaign is revealed using the pronouncements made at the party's second congress at Eseka in 1952, as well as its numerous pamphlets and political tracts.

By demonstrating how the U.P.C.'s campaign was shaped by the possibilities offered by the U.N., the chapter demonstrates how African nationalism can be understood as a response to international opportunities, as much as a reaction against the constraints of colonial rule. As such, one can move beyond a reductionist conception of African nationalism as 'resistance' to external forces, which denies these actors a sense of historical initiative and agency in their interactions with the international environment.³ Such an understanding extends to the 'moderate' nationalist parties that desired to remain within the French Union, as much as the 'radical' nationalists that demanded complete independence. As Chafer has noted, the moderates' desire for continued Franco-African co-operation was based upon the realistic consideration that their territories needed significant socio-economic development. For these nationalist leaders, France was the most

³ This sentiment was notably expressed by G. Shepperson, who described nationalism as 'the product of a reaction against external forces'. G. Shepperson, 'External Factors in the Development of African Nationalism with Particular Reference to British Central Africa' in T. O. Ranger (ed.), *Historians in Tropical Africa* (Salisbury, 1961), pp. 317-332, p.317. Although Shepperson was writing in 1961, this reduction of nationalism to a reaction against European colonialism, can still be seen in much more recent works. In particular, see Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals* (New York, 2001).

readily exploitable source of foreign assistance to make such development possible, though this would require sufficient political pressure to be put upon the metropole.⁴

Indeed, to placate growing pressures for reform during the post-war period, the French government increased economic investment and political reforms in its African territories, which expanded the institutions and capacity of the local state apparatus. For both moderate and radical nationalists, the state subsequently became the most viable vehicle for accessing and distributing the external resources necessary for popular development; if it could be captured and Africanised. In terms of how future African leaders could exploit the international environment, therefore, late colonial state-building was crucial as, in the words of Lonsdale, it ‘offered new institutions of access to the world’.⁵ As such, the chapter identifies the post-war period as an important historical moment in the extraverted logic of the African state. It is a moment that Bayart largely dismisses by locating the logic of extraversion in the *longue durée* of Africa’s pre-colonial past.⁶ Accordingly, Bayart further overlooks the importance of the newly founded United Nations, which is vital for understanding how strategies of extraversion evolved into a fundamental function of statehood in Africa: the ability to access international resources as the representative of a recognised state.

By acknowledging how the U.N. shaped the U.P.C.’s early campaign, the chapter not only traces how internationally recognised sovereignty – represented by membership in the U.N. – became crucial to strategies of extraversion. It also interrogates the preponderance of colonial histories to privilege the colony-metropole axis. This is particularly true for studies of French sub-Saharan Africa, in which the leading nationalist parties tended to forge external political alliances centred upon the National Assembly in Paris.⁷ What is more, these moderate parties articulated their anti-colonial claims not in a desire for a sovereign state, but in a desire to belong to a Greater France; albeit on more equal terms. This tendency to privilege the colony-metropole axis also results from retrospective historical analyses, in which historians have sought to trace the origins of the close ties that

⁴ Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France’s Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 3, 231.

⁵ John Lonsdale, ‘Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from “the Hopeless Continent”’ in A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002), pp. 194-220, p. 207.

⁶ Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London, 1993), p. ix.

⁷ Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-speaking West Africa* (Oxford, 1964).

remained between France and its former African territories after independence.⁸ By focusing on how the U.N. shaped the U.P.C.'s campaign, the chapter subsequently contributes to a growing body of work that has sought to emphasise the 'extra-metropolitan' dimensions of anti-colonial movements in French sub-Saharan Africa.⁹

Beyond the French context, however, the chapter also contributes to a growing body of work that has adopted a transnational approach to colonial history, particularly in studies of the British Empire. These studies have sought to de-centre the colony-metropole axis through the concept of imperial 'networks' and 'webs', in which colony-metropole interactions were components of much more extensive networks that connected multiple colonial sites, and which could by-pass the metropole.¹⁰ In doing so, these works constitute a corrective to studies within the 'New Imperial History', which have similarly sought to examine transnational political, cultural, and economic networks, but were largely restricted to how these networks linked colony to metropole.¹¹ Importantly, however, by demonstrating the difficulties that the U.P.C. experienced in accessing the U.N., the chapter also shows that these 'webs' could coalesce in very specific areas of territory, which were subject to the coercive practices of the colonial administration.

Cameroon's Experience of French Rule, 1922-1945

After Germany's defeat in the First World War, its African colony of *Kamerun* was, like Togoland, divided into two League of Nations mandates, to be separately administered by Britain and France. The division came into effect in 1922, creating the mandated territories of British Cameroon and French Cameroon. Despite French Cameroon's distinct *de jure* status as a mandate, the Third Republic's development efforts were largely

⁸ For a list of such works, see fn. 38 of the introductory chapter.

⁹ See for example: Meredith Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest Maquis to a Pan-African Accra', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (2010) pp.189-212; Klaas Van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief: A History of the Sawaba Movement in Niger* (Leiden, 2013).

¹⁰ Alan Lester, 'Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire', *History Compass*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2006), pp. 124-141, pp. 133-134; Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire* (Basingstoke, 2002); C. Bridge and K. Fedorowich (eds.), *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (London, 2003).

¹¹ See for example: Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Re-thinking a Research Agenda' in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (1997), pp. 1-59; A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002); Antoinette Burton (ed.), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (North Carolina, 2003). Whilst much of this transnational history has emerged within Anglo-American academia, it owes a strong intellectual debt to the French *Annales* school, particularly the work of Braudel. See Tony Ballantyne, 'Putting the Nation in its Place? World History and C. A. Bayly's *The Birth of the Modern World*' in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (eds.), *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra, 2005), pp. 23-44, pp. 29-30.

restricted to extending the *pacte colonial* to the territory.¹² That is, to facilitating the export of cash-crops and timber for the profit of European settlers and business concerns. It was a strategy that ensured a tight control of Cameroon's import and export markets, and made widespread use of forced labour.¹³ As France began to suffer the economic effects of the Depression in the early 1930s, and demands for exports decreased, forced labour and the taxation of Cameroonians increased, as did the use of force to quell local protest against these practices.¹⁴ Whilst France's Popular Front government advocated greater investment in public works projects, the decreasing use of forced labour and taxation, and the limited authorisation of trade unions, these reforms were effectively terminated by the outbreak of the Second World War.¹⁵

During the Second World War, France's demonstrated vulnerability through occupation by Germany, the explicit racism of Vichy rule in Africa, and the contribution of Africans to the war effort, all encouraged wider sections of colonial populations to call for greater equality and prosperity.¹⁶ Although French Cameroon was spared the worst excesses of Vichy rule – as Free French forces had re-captured the territory by the end of August 1940 – the use of forced labour and violent punishments for refusal nevertheless increased from 1941.¹⁷ What is more, although the Treaty of Versailles prohibited the French government from conscripting soldiers from the population of a mandated territory, the *Comité Français de Libération Nationale* (C.F.L.N.), headed by General de Gaulle, found a way to circumvent this international law. It did so by instructing local chiefs to forcibly recruit men from their villages and then 'offer' their services to the Free French forces, thereby

¹² Martin Thomas, *The French Empire Between the Wars: Imperialism, Politics, and Society* (Manchester, 2005), p. 31.

¹³ Ralph A. Austen and Jonathan Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers: The Duala and their Hinterland c.1600-c.1960* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 141; Richard Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun: Social Origins of the U.P.C. Rebellion* (Oxford, 1977) Ch. 2; Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 28, 110.

¹⁴ Austen and Derrick, *Middlemen*, p. 151; Michael D. A. Callahan, *A Sacred Trust: The League of Nations and Africa, 1929-1946* (Sussex, 2004), p. 49.

¹⁵ Callahan, *A Sacred Trust*, pp. 110-112.

¹⁶ Amongst Anglophone Africanists, an interest in the impact of the Second World War on Africa's colonies notably emerged in the 1970s, but was already present within Francophone scholarship due to more immediate impact of the war in France. J. Brignon, writing in 1968, remarked how 'La deuxième guerre mondiale a en effet ébranlé le système colonial et en a démontré les faiblesses. La défaite de la France en 1940 et les divisions des Français ont ébranlé le mythe de l'invulnérabilité de la puissance occupante.' J. Brignon, *Histoire du Maroc* (Casablanca, 1968), p. 396. See also: David Killingray and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Africa and the Second World War* (New York, 1986); and *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Special Edition: World War II and Africa (1985); James S. Coleman, (ed. Richard L. Sklar), *Nationalism and Development in Africa: Selected Essays* (Berkeley, 1994), p. 23.

¹⁷ François Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun, 1940-1971* (Paris, 2010), pp. 33-38.

enabling the French administration to designate such troops as volunteers.¹⁸ Out of a total indigenous population of roughly 3,000,000, over 10,000 Cameroonians were conscripted to forced labour during the War, and 3,600 ‘volunteered’ for armed service.¹⁹

The French government was consequently aware of the sacrifices made by its colonial subjects during the war effort, which needed to be recognised with a degree of imperial reform.²⁰ A fear of growing local anti-colonial protest was, however, only one half of a ‘historical pincer movement’ that now faced the French Empire.²¹ The other half resided outside the colony-metropole axis, and was represented by a new anti-colonial consensus between the two most powerful states of the allied war effort - the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Importantly, both the U.S. and Soviet governments sought to extend the principle of self-determination to the colonial territories.²² From 1943, the C.F.L.N. was consequently faced with negotiating a central tension: that of placating increasing anti-colonial pressures – both from within and outside of Africa - whilst resisting any changes that could result in the loss of France’s overseas territories.

In January 1944, senior colonial officials and Free French politicians met at Brazzaville to discuss how greater political and socio-economic rights could be granted to French Africans. The central tension of French colonial rule remained, however, as French officials also sought to ensure that African labour and national resources could still be exploited for the war effort, and that any possibility of self-government or secession for the African colonies was precluded.²³ Attempts by the C.F.L.N. – and later de Gaulle’s French Provisional Government – to reconcile these tensions soon produced unintended outcomes,

¹⁸ Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue, and Jacob Tatsitsa, *Kamerun! Une Guerre Cachée aux Origines de la Françafrique, 1948-1971*, (Paris, 2010), pp. 35.

¹⁹ Deltombe, Domergue and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 35.

²⁰ Myron Echenberg, *Colonial Conscripts: The Tirailleurs Sénégalais in French West Africa, 1857-1960* (London, 1991), pp. 87-146.

²¹ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven, 1994), p. 189.

²² ‘Self-determination for all peoples’ first emerged as an international political principle within article 3 of the Atlantic Charter of 1941, and was significantly the result of pressure from President Roosevelt. Although Britain and France, as signatories of the Charter, attempted to refute that article 3 applied to non-European territories, Roosevelt clearly stated the U.S.A.’s contrary position in a broadcast of February 22nd, 1942: ‘The Atlantic Charter applies not only to the parts of the world that border the Atlantic but the whole world.’ E. Nwaubani and C. Nwaubani, ‘The United States and the Liquidation of European Colonial Rule in Tropical Africa, 1941-1963’, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, Vol. 43, No. 171 (2003), pp. 505-552, p. 507. Although the Nwaubanis’ study, and that of Marc Aicardi, have dismissed the U.S.’ anti-colonial proclamations during this period as rhetoric, David N. Gibbs has demonstrated that they contained a significant policy substance, through a study of previously classified U.S. intelligence documents. See Marc Aicardi de Saint-Paul, *La Politique Africaine des États-Unis: Mécanismes et Conduite* (Paris, 1984) ; David N. Gibbs, ‘Political Parties and International Relations: The United States and the Decolonization of Sub-Saharan Africa’, *The International History Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1995), pp. 306-327.

²³ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 57.

as increased rights of representation were used by local populations to protest the aspects of French rule that remained limiting or exploitative. Increasingly, the French government was forced to react to nationalist actions as much as the converse, so that the colonial state in French Africa certainly did not appear to represent the all-powerful image of 'Bula Matari' as argued by Young.²⁴

On August 7 1944, for example, trade union activity was authorised, yet forced labour would only be phased out over a five year period to support France's war effort, whilst demands for wage increases were continually blocked by the Free French officials.²⁵ As a result, urban workers in French Cameroon's port city of Douala used the new channels of trade union organisation to demand the cessation of forced labour and wage increases. In September 1944, the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (C.G.T.), the communist-dominated and largest trade union in France, helped to establish Cameroon's first trade union, the *Union des Syndicats Confédérés du Cameroun* (U.S.C.C.).²⁶

Aided by the C.G.T., the U.S.C.C. immediately embarked on a mass propaganda campaign to encourage local support for a new labour code. External political and material resources were thus mobilised to protest the exclusionary practices of French rule, which allowed the creation of wider bases of domestic support than had hitherto been possible. In this respect, the utilisation of the C.G.T.'s organisational support by African workers allowed the latter to build upon the lessons they had learned from Marxist study circles that had been organized by the *Parti Communiste Français* (P.C.F.) from 1943.²⁷ As U.S.C.C. support grew, and French authorities appeared unwilling cede to demands, a series of strikes erupted in Douala between 21st and 30th September 1945, resulting in the deaths of nine Cameroonians at the hands of French forces.²⁸ This formed part of a growing pattern of worker protest in French Africa, particularly French West Africa, throughout 1945 and 1946.²⁹

The French Provisional Government's attempts to negotiate the tensions of reform consequently resulted in growing demands for greater equality amongst Africans, who

²⁴ Young, *The African Colonial State*, p. 283.

²⁵ Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, p. 228.

²⁶ Victor T. Le Vine, *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence* (Berkeley, 1964), p. 143.

²⁷ See Jean Suret-Canale, *Les Groupes d'Études Communistes en Afrique Noire* (Paris, 1994).

²⁸ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 143.

²⁹ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 69; Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 228-229.

mobilised both external and domestic support networks. The danger now was that such demands could evolve into claims for independence, particularly in a changed international climate. Whilst the U.S.A. blunted its demands for self-determination after the death of President Roosevelt in April 1945, and because it was increasingly preoccupied with the Soviet threat, historians of decolonisation have often pointed to the emergence of an even greater international challenge to France's African Empire in the post-war period: the United Nations, founded in September 1945.³⁰ The U.N. provided a forum – the General Assembly – where recently independent states, particularly from the Middle East and Asia, could campaign for the liberation of territories remaining under colonial rule.³¹ Importantly, these newly independent states included two of France's mandates; Syria and Lebanon, which all found a powerful anti-colonial ally at the U.N. in the form of the Soviet Union.³²

In an effort to respond to these pressures, and present an image of greater political equality between the metropole and its colonies, a limited number of Africans were allowed to stand for election to the First Constituent Assembly in October 1945, which was tasked with drafting the constitution of the Fourth Republic. In French Cameroon, it was Manga Bell, one of the most prominent Duala elite, that was elected. During the negotiations for the constitution, African *députés* were able to push through a number of laws and decrees, including the abolition of forced labour on 11th April 1946; named the Houphouët-Boigny law after the Ivorian *député*. Freedom of assembly and association were further granted in March and April 1946, effectively opening the way for the establishment of African political parties.³³ Metropolitan parties first began to create local branches, with the socialist *Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière* (S.F.I.O.) and Gaullist *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* (R.P.F.) soon establishing themselves in

³⁰ This is often articulated by academics as a 'new international scrutiny' or 'critical gaze' towards the colonial powers. See for example: Crawford Young, 'The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa? Reflections on Changing Political Dynamics', *African Affairs* Vol. 103, No. 410 (2004), pp. 23-49, p. 27; Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 138; Paul Nugent, *Africa Since Independence: A Comparative History* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 43; Raymond F. Betts, *Decolonization* (London, 2004), p. 24.

³¹ Carol Anderson, 'International Conscience, the Cold War, and Apartheid: The NCAAP's Alliance with the Reverend Michael Scott for South West Africa's Liberation, 1946-1951', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2008), pp. 297-325, p. 308.

³² Harold K. Jacobson, 'The United Nations and Colonialism: A Tentative Appraisal', *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 1, (1962), pp. 37-56, pp. 39-40.

³³ Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens, 2007), p.22.

Cameroon. Local quasi-parties also made their appearance in the territory, such as the *Mouvement Démocratique Camerounais* and *Union Camerounaise Française*.³⁴

The draft constitution of April 1946 further sought to re-present Franco-African relations within a new political framework, one that was divested of the negative associations and inequalities of colonial empire. A new French Union was proposed, one that would be ‘freely chosen’ by Africans. The Union would be constituted by an Assembly and High Council, where elected representatives of African territories and the metropole would debate and enact legislation together. French Africans would similarly become, along with residents of the metropole, common citizens of the French Union.³⁵ African *députés* were furthermore to be represented in the National Assembly, whilst local assemblies would give Africans a greater political voice in their own territories.³⁶ On the economic front, the *Fonds d’Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social* (F.I.D.E.S.) was created, which would channel significant development funds from the metropole to the colonies, in the form of infrastructural development for transport, education, agriculture and industry.³⁷

As a League of Nations mandate, French Cameroon – like French Togoland – occupied a distinct status as an Associated Territory (*territoire associé*) within the proposed constitution. The distinction, however, was largely superficial. Cameroon was to become a member of the French Union, though it could only send representatives to its Assembly, and not its High Council.³⁸ Secondly, whilst Cameroonians were distinguished as *administrés français*, they would be covered by a ‘citizenship of the French Union’. Thirdly, Cameroon was to send three (later four) *députés* to the National Assembly.³⁹ Fourthly, it was similarly granted a local assembly, (*l’Assemblée Représentative du Cameroun*; ARCAM) with sixteen elected African representatives; the only major difference being that it did not participate in the inter-territorial *Grand Conseils* of the A.E.F. In practice, however, French Cameroon was still administered as part of French Equatorial Africa, a fact underlined by the frequent dossier headings of ‘A.E.F.-Cameroun’

³⁴ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 142.

³⁵ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 135.

³⁶ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 64.

³⁷ John D. Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (London, 1996), pp. 102-3.

³⁸ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 135.

³⁹ French Cameroon sent three deputies in 1946, elected from a dual roll: two representing the African voters; Jules Ninine and Douala Manga Bell; and one representing the Europeans; Louis Aujoulat. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 135.

in government reports.⁴⁰ Finally, Cameroon would also receive the investment of French capital from F.I.D.E.S.: between 1946 and 1950 alone, this investment constituted nearly 26 billion French francs (\$50 million).⁴¹

Possibilities and Constraints of the Post-war Period

Histories of decolonisation that begin with the post-war period, have, broadly speaking, conventionally focused on two causal agents. The first pertains to the actions of metropolitan governments, which has been significantly due the accessibility and availability of government archives for European historians. As a result, the transition to independence in Africa is largely portrayed to be the product of a planned strategy by European governments.⁴² Concerning French Africa, this tendency has been further encouraged by the perception that the transition to independence was a ‘smooth’ process for the French government, due to the relative lack of violence and the maintenance of close Franco-African ties.⁴³ The second focus has been on the activism of African nationalists, in which independence was won through the anti-colonial struggle. This largely holds true for works that have studied the nationalist struggle from ‘above’ – and which have focused on the leaders who eventually became the heads of African states – and from ‘below’, which have focused on the struggles of the rural peasantry, urban workers, and women.⁴⁴

In each case, these studies have often implied that decolonisation, and the creation of independent African states, had become inevitable by the end of the Second World War. Recently, however, certain academics have argued that decolonisation was in no way an inevitable outcome from the view-point of the immediate post-war period, and that a range

⁴⁰ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 69. The label ‘AEF-Cameroun’ would remain in French government reports throughout the 1950s in French military reports on Cameroon. Indeed, in the archives of the Service Historique de l’Armée de Terre in Vincennes, the military reports on Cameroon are classified under the sub-series for French Equatorial Africa (6H).

⁴¹ Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1970), p. 108. In fact, between 1947 and 1955, Cameroon received a greater *per capita* investment of French funds than any other territory in sub-Saharan Africa. Martin-René Atangana, *French Investment in Colonial Cameroon: The FIDES Era (1946-1957)*, (New York, 2009) p. 81.

⁴² John Hargreaves, ‘Decolonisation: French and British Styles’ in Anthony Kirk-Greene and Daniel Bachs (eds.), *State and Society in Francophone Africa Since Independence* (London, 1995), pp. 3-15; Dietmar Rothermund, *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 21-23.

⁴³ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Schmidt, ‘Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilization Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea (French West Africa)’, *American Historical Review* Vol. 110, No. 4 (2005), pp. 975-1014, pp. 981-983.

of alternative possibilities to independence were being imagined at the time.⁴⁵ A closer analysis of French post-war reforms, and how they applied to Cameroon, consequently demonstrates that independence was not a desired option for the French government at this juncture, nor indeed for many African nationalist leaders.

French policy makers accordingly sought to dilute the proposals advocated by the African *députés* at the beginning of 1946. This could be read in the differences between the April 1946 draft of the constitution, which was defeated by referendum in May, and its final promulgation in October. In the October constitution, membership in the French Union could no longer be ‘freely chosen’, whilst its Assembly now had little more than an advisory role in regard to legislation affecting African territories.⁴⁶ The principle of a common citizenship in the French Union did not stipulate what rights would be attached to this citizenship, nor if Union citizens would enjoy the same voting and residential rights as French citizens.⁴⁷

The number of seats allocated to Africans in the National Assembly was also reduced, placing the African *députés* on a significant unequal standing with their French counterparts. On the territorial level, the powers of the new local assemblies were reduced to that of consultation.⁴⁸ Finally, a double electoral college for the local assemblies was maintained. The first college was constituted by French citizens and those Cameroonians who had acquired civil law status, whilst the second college was constituted by Cameroonians who had to meet a certain number of conditions.⁴⁹ The result was that of disproportionate representation: the 2,611 registered voters in the first college elected sixteen representatives, whilst the 38,976 in the second elected eighteen.⁵⁰

For the rest of the 1940s and into the 1950s, the metropole’s attempts to negotiate African and international pressures for reform would significantly shape the political actions and imagination of nationalist leaders. Firstly, Western-educated Africans were

⁴⁵ See for example Frederick Cooper, ‘Possibility and constraint: African independence in historical perspective’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (2008), pp. 167–96; G. Wilder, ‘Untimely Vision: Aimé Césaire, Decolonization, Utopia’, *Public Culture*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2009), pp. 101–40.

⁴⁶ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 135.

⁴⁷ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 64.

⁴⁸ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 66.

⁴⁹ In 1946, suffrage in the second college extended to Africans who had at any time held posts of responsibility in private or public enterprises, or who were veterans, owners of property whose title had been legally registered, or holders of hunting or driving licenses. The list was supplemented in 1947 to include those literate in French.

⁵⁰ Atangana, *French Investment*, p. 6.

granted new political platforms to protest the continued political and economic constraints of French rule, and to organise wider bases of local support. Secondly, and as works by Berman, Lonsdale, and Young have observed, colonial development efforts now rendered the institutions of state as a desirable target of appropriation – or Africanisation – by these emergent nationalist leaders.⁵¹ As European investment increased, so did the scope and capacity of the state, which, if it could be captured and directed away from benefiting European interests, nationalists now saw as a vehicle for popular development.

Due to the fact that the metropole's reform efforts nevertheless remained relatively limited, the nationalist struggle for the state significantly remained a struggle to appropriate and exploit international political and economic connections. In the first instance, nationalists in French Africa were still faced with significant constraints in terms of access to representative political institutions within their territories and the metropole. As a result, they continued to seek support from external political organisations to help channel nationalist protest. The geopolitical landscape from which such support originated, however, was ambiguous and uncertain, so that African nationalists were constantly forced to adapt and seek new opportunities when existing ones closed down.

The nationalist struggle was also international in a more fundamental sense, however, and constituted an important development in the extraverted logic of the African state. The continued limitations of French socio-economic investment, which failed to overcome the narrow export-orientated development efforts of the past, made African nationalists fully aware that the viability of a future Africanised state, and its capacity as a vehicle for popular development, could not be realised without continued external assistance. In the political imagination of nationalists, therefore, to capture the state was to capture a 'gate' to international resources; in the form of foreign technical, financial, and educational aid.⁵²

⁵¹ Young, *The African Colonial State*, p. 213; John Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism' in Preben Kaarsholm and Jan Hultin (eds.), *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*, (Roskilde, 1994), pp. 131-150, p. 132; Bruce Berman, "'A Palimpsest of Contradictions": Ethnicity, Class, and Politics in Africa', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2004), pp. 13-31, p. 29. Whilst these works largely drew upon the example of British Africa, Frederick Cooper has demonstrated how the post-war development efforts of both France and Britain in Africa had similar results in terms of expanding the capacity of local state institutions. In addition, Tony Chafer has observed how in French West Africa, the post-war nationalist movement sought to 'Africanize' the state, to 'take it over...and redirect it towards the promotion of African-controlled, rather than European-controlled, development efforts'. Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 167-170; Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 230.

⁵² Young, 'The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa', p. 28; Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p. 119; Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 3.

Importantly, this was a significant reason why leading nationalist parties in French Africa did not envision or demand independence from France during the 1940s and into the 1950s, as party leaders believed that their territories would be unable to stand alone without continued metropolitan assistance.⁵³ Indeed, a metropolitan-centred federation was a desirable option for African politicians as late as 1958, and, as Schmidt has recently shown, this held true even for the ‘radical’ Sékou Touré of Guinea, which was the first sub-Saharan territory to achieve independence from France.⁵⁴

Before detailing how the case of French Cameroon can be used to trace these developments, it would be pertinent to note a third causal agent that has been emphasised in studies of decolonisation, one that has received less attention than the actions of metropolitan governments and nationalist activists: namely, the international community, particularly the foundation of the United Nations.⁵⁵ A study of French Cameroon during the immediate post-war period, however, reveals that independence was not inevitable from this international and extra-metropolitan view-point. In addition, it reveals that the emergence of a fundamental function of African statehood – in which internationally recognised sovereignty and membership in the U.N. played a central role – was similarly not an inevitable outcome during the immediate post-war period.

Building upon works by Anderson, Mazower, Amrith and Sluga, an analysis of Cameroon’s transition to a U.N. trust territory in 1946 shows that the internationalism of the U.N. was uneven, as the organisation was constituted by powerful states with individual interests.⁵⁶ As such, the foundation of the U.N. in 1945 did not, as certain Africanist historians have assumed, represent a complete rupture with the League’s limited anti-colonial efforts.⁵⁷ It is thus worth briefly indicating the ambiguities of the U.N.’s anti-

⁵³ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 73.

⁵⁴ Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946–1958* (Athens, 2007), pp. 157-180; Frederick Cooper, ‘Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (2008), pp. 167-196, p. 168.

⁵⁵ See for example: Kent Fedorowich and Martin Thomas (eds.), *International Diplomacy and Colonial Retreat* (London, 2001); Fabian Klose, *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* (Philadelphia, 2013).

⁵⁶ Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights* (Cambridge, 2003); Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton, 2009); Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, ‘New Histories of the United Nations’, *Journal of World History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2008), pp. 251-274.

⁵⁷ See for example Nugent, *Africa Since Independence*, p. 20; Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960-2010* (Madison, 2012), p.106. For recent critiques of the axiom that the U.N. represented a complete rupture with the League, see Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*; Amrith and Sluga, ‘New Histories of the United Nations’.

colonialism during the immediate post-war period, particularly as it also explains how Cameroon continued to be subject to the limited reform efforts of France.

First of all, Chapter XI of the U.N. Charter, which constituted a 'Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories', stated that the colonial powers 'accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote...the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories', and did not make any explicit demands for their eventual independence. Studies that have, by contrast, posited the U.N. as a body that consistently demanded the independence of colonial territories, have tended to read the organisation's history retrospectively, from the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of December 1960. In addition, and as Mark Mazower has demonstrated, newly independent member states of the U.N. were not able to seriously organise and advocate an anti-colonial agenda in the General Assembly until the beginning of the 1950s.⁵⁸

Secondly, and most importantly for the case of Cameroon, the U.N.'s ambiguous anti-colonial stance at this stage was evident in its trusteeship system, which assumed the role of the mandate system after the League's dissolution in April 1946. The result was that all League mandates – including Cameroon – now became U.N. trust territories.⁵⁹ Certain academics have emphasised that the trusteeship system represented a rupture with the mandate system due to the wording of Article 76(b) of the U.N. Charter.⁶⁰ The League's mandate system only explicitly envisioned independence for the Class A mandates – Iraq, Syria-Lebanon, and Palestine – which were deemed as being the most 'developed'. For the Class B mandates of sub-Saharan Africa, however – of which French Cameroon was one – the administering authorities only had to ensure the general 'well-being and development' of these territories, with no explicit goal of independence.⁶¹ Article 76(b), however, stated that the administering authorities – in this case France – had an obligation to promote trust territories' 'progressive development towards self-government or independence'. The option of independence was now, in principle, open to all trust territories.

⁵⁸ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, Ch. 4.

⁵⁹ The exception to this was Southwest Africa. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 138.

⁶⁰ Nugent, *Africa Since Independence*, p. 20; Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa*, p. 106. Indeed, even Mazower, who acknowledges the continuities between the U.N. and the League's imperial orientations, suggests that the trusteeship system represented the only genuine rupture with the League. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, p. 150.

⁶¹ Callahan, *A Sacred Trust*, p. 113.

Whilst this option would become significant in Cameroon during the 1950s, one should again not read history backwards and assume that this was always the case. In this respect, it is important to point out that the trusteeship system did not offer independence as the only option for trust territories in 1946; there was also the ill-defined notion of ‘self-government’. It was an ambiguity that the French government was willing to exploit. In December 1946, the Fourth Republic government sent a delegation to the U.N. in New York to finalise the Trusteeship Agreement for Cameroon. Led by Louis-Paul Aujoulat, the delegation exploited the vague wording of Article 76(b), particularly: the lack of an explicit obligation for independence; the lack of definition for self-government itself, and the lack of a specific timetable for either.⁶² The delegation argued that the economic and political reforms of the October constitution demonstrated a visible effort towards socio-economic development and increased political representation for its African territories, thereby adhering to Article 76(b)’s obligation to ‘promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories’.

As a result, the delegation successfully argued that the French Union would prove a sound framework for the ‘progressive development’ of Cameroon towards the trusteeship goals of Article 76(b), even though the Union did not envisage independence for its African territories.⁶³ The U.N. General Assembly subsequently granted the French government full legislative, administrative, and jurisdictional powers over the territory, ‘in accordance with French law’, and, significantly, ‘as an integral part of the French territory’.⁶⁴ As a result, and in an echo of the territory’s mandate experience, Cameroon’s new international status inserted the territory into the same political and economic framework as France’s other African territories

The Emergence of the U.P.C.

It was from this complex historical context of possibility and constraint, on both the territorial and international level, that the U.P.C. emerged as French Cameroon’s

⁶² Aujoulat was a French Algerian and trained doctor who directed the *Ad Lucem* Catholic medical foundation between 1936 and 1945. He became a *député* in the National Assembly for the Popular Republican Movement (M.R.P.) in November 1945, and was subsequently appointed Commissioner for Overseas Territories. For a detailed analysis of Aujoulat’s political, missionary, and humanitarian work in Cameroon, see Guillaume Lachenal and Bertrand Taithe, ‘Une Généalogie Missionnaire et Coloniale de l’Humanitaire : le Cas Aujoulat au Cameroun, 1935–1973.’ *Le Mouvement Social*, Vol. 227, No. 1 (2009), pp. 45–63.

⁶³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 67, Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 80.

⁶⁴ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 139.

predominant nationalist party. With the promulgation of the Fourth Republic's constitution, African nationalist leaders quickly sought to articulate their long-standing and more immediate grievances, both within the new local assemblies and at the National Assembly. In October 1946, several African *députés* of the Constituent Assembly met in Bamako, to form the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (R.D.A.), the first inter-territorial party of French Africa. The R.D.A. was represented throughout West and Central Africa by newly-formed national parties that became members – or *sections* – and voiced the R.D.A.'s concerns within the new local assemblies. From November 1946, the R.D.A. was furthermore represented in the French National Assembly.

Importantly, however, due to the very limitations of the metropole's political reform efforts, the nationalist struggle continued to seek external channels of support. The reduced numbers of seats of African *députés* in the National Assembly meant that the R.D.A. had to mobilise P.C.F support to form a viable parliamentary group. The P.C.F, like the R.D.A. leaders, did not advocate independence for France's sub-Saharan territories outside the French Union, due to their perceived lack of economic and political development.⁶⁵ Instead, their shared political platform proceeded from protesting French African workers' lack of rights and opportunities.⁶⁶ The P.C.F. thus proved a useful ally for the R.D.A.'s political objectives, particularly as it was the most popular political party in France at the time. These objectives were: that Africans were given greater representation within the National Assembly; that local assemblies were more democratically elected; that more social and labour rights be granted to French Africans; and that membership of the French Union should be freely chosen by each territory.⁶⁷

It was the R.D.A. that provided the first significant political platform for the founding members of the U.P.C. Like many of the R.D.A.'s membership, the leadership of the U.P.C. grew out of Marxist study circles organized by the P.C.F. from 1943, which had been organised in Douala and Yaoundé, the respective commercial and administrative capitals of the territory.⁶⁸ In 1946, five Cameroonian participants of these study groups

⁶⁵ Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 63, 73

⁶⁶ Jonathan Derrick, 'The Dissenters: Anti-Colonialism in France, c. 1900–1940' in T. Chafer and A. Sackur (eds.) *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Visions of Empire in France*, (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 55–68, pp. 63–64. Elizabeth Schmidt, 'Cold War in Guinea: The Rassemblement Démocratique Africain and the Struggle Over Communism', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 48, No.1 (2007), pp. 95–121, p. 99.

⁶⁷ Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 72–73.

⁶⁸ See André Mawo Nyetam, 'Les Relations entre le Parti Communiste français et l'Union des Populations du Cameroun entre 1948 et 1958', Masters Thesis, (Université Paris 1 Pantéon-Sorbonne), 2007–2008.

travelled to Bamako, to act as the territory's representatives at the inaugural conference of the R.D.A.⁶⁹ One of these representatives was Ruben Um Nyobé, a government clerk who had ascended through the ranks of the U.S.C.C. to become its General Secretary in November 1947.⁷⁰ Nyobé would subsequently become the first General Secretary of the U.P.C., and was the party's most important and defining founding figure.

Nyobé, educated by Presbyterian missionaries and politicised by the Marxist studies circles, had first-hand experience of the inequalities and limitations of French rule during the interwar period and after. Firstly, Nyobé originated from the Bassa population of the Sanaga-Maritime region, in the immediate hinterland of Douala. Whilst the area was a focus for European industry and investment - particularly forestry - the Bassa were largely used as a source of forced labour, and constituted one of the most impoverished groups in Cameroon, both relatively and absolutely.⁷¹ As a leading member of the U.S.C.C., moreover, Nyobé was also constantly engaged against the socio-economic deprivations suffered by the Cameroonian labourers of Douala – particularly in the crowded immigrant quarter of New Bell – and the corresponding wealth and commercial dominance of European traders and industrialists in the city.⁷² After the strikes of September 1945, Nyobé was further versed in the colonial administration's use of violence to suppress dissent against such conditions.

Nyobé and several other members of the U.S.C.C. leadership quickly became dissatisfied with the parties that contested the first elections to Cameroon's local assembly (ARCAM) in December 1946, as their political programmes did not articulate any grievances of the peasantry or urban workers.⁷³ Desiring to form a party that was more national in scope, support, and political goals, Nyobé and six others founded the U.P.C. on April 10 1948 in Douala.⁷⁴ Since the party was formed after the first elections to the local

⁶⁹ Meredith Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest Maquis to a Pan-African Accra', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (2010) pp.189-212, p. 193.

⁷⁰ The USCC was founded by the P.C.F.'s *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT) in September 1944, soon after the legalisation of trade unions in French Africa. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 143.

⁷¹ Richard A. Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé and the "Kamerun" Rebellion', *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 293 (1974), pp. 428-444, p. 432.

⁷² Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé', p. 434.

⁷³ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 145-6.

⁷⁴ The others were Léonard Bouli, Guillaume Bagal, Yapp Emmanuel, Jacques Biboum, Ernest Owona, and Raphaël Nkoudou. The U.P.C. arguably formed from the remnants of the *Rassemblement Camerounais* (RACAM), an attempt by the USCC to form a nationalist party with less moderate tendencies, and was formed in the spring of 1947. RACAM, however, lasted only for several months. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 144.

and National Assembly, the U.P.C. lacked any institutional political representation. Nevertheless, it was the U.P.C., rather than the extant political parties, that became the official Cameroonian *section* of the R.D.A. in June. This was because the trade unions in Cameroon, due to the external assistance of the P.C.F., had a much broader base of support and tighter organisational structure. Nyobé was elected General Secretary of the U.P.C. in November, and elected a Vice-President of the R.D.A. at its second congress in January 1949. The party's initial programme – although lacking in detail – appeared to echo that of the R.D.A. The U.P.C.'s founding charter stated its aim as assisting the Cameroonian people to 'organise themselves for social and economic improvement', and to do so 'within the framework of the French Union.'⁷⁵

The U.P.C.'s aim of social and economic improvement soon cohered into the first goal of the party's more permanent political programme: that of 'raising the living standards of all Cameroonians.' The articulation of this goal by the party leadership demonstrated how, through the post-war reform efforts of the French government, the state had become viable as a vehicle for popular development, and a target for appropriation by African nationalists. From 1946, Cameroon witnessed not only the creation of new representative institutions, but the extension of its banking system, increased imports of specialised and heavy technical machinery, an expansion of the transport network, large public-private works projects, and an increase in primary and secondary education.⁷⁶ Accordingly, the U.P.C.'s pamphlets and tracts reflected the expanded role and resources of the state by articulating its role for the social uplift and development of all Cameroonians. The party promised that, once elected to the local assembly, it would demand greater representation for Africans in both ARCAM and the civil service, and that the state's resources would be used to enact a rapid modernisation of the industrial and agricultural sectors, as well as free primary education.⁷⁷

From 1950, the U.P.C. increasingly located the struggle for the state, and for Cameroonians' development, as a struggle for international resources. The party leadership realised that the viability of an Africanised state, and its capacity as a vehicle for popular

⁷⁵ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 136.

⁷⁶ Atangana, *French Investment*, pp. 39-40.

⁷⁷ These claims are repeated throughout issues of *La Voix du Kamerun* from the early 1950s until well into the 1960s, and can be found in the *Archives de la Section de Politique Extérieure, Fonds du PCF* in the Archives Départementales de Seine-Saint-Denis (261 J7) and *Fonds Daniel Guérin* at the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine, Paris (F 721 / 98 / 7 [D29]).

development, could not be realised without continued external assistance. The previous shallow development efforts of the French colonial administration had provided both an insufficiently trained population and lack of infrastructure within Cameroon, as in the rest of its African territories.⁷⁸ Although the source of such assistance was not yet specified, the U.P.C. accordingly proposed a ‘Plan of foreign technical assistance’ for the construction of the economy. It would also ‘favour the investment of foreign capital in the domain of research of trade and industry’, which would serve as a means ‘not only to ensure the exploitation of our resources but also secure a great financial stability.’⁷⁹

The party further acknowledged that in order to develop the Africanised state within an acceptable time period, an increasing number of scholarships had to be obtained for Cameroonian students to study and train abroad.⁸⁰ The need for foreign education and technical training, which represented the lack of educational provision by the French administration, remained a central contention of the U.P.C.’s politics. An article of a U.P.C. affiliated newspaper, ‘Kamerun Today’, was still demanding on 1st November 1956 that ‘The country needs more scholarships for technical and academic studies’ as Cameroon was ‘still very short of trained and skilled men.’ As late as May 1958, an issue of *L’Opinion au Cameroun* – a newspaper sympathetic to the U.P.C.’s goals – lamented the fact that French reforms had been ‘too slow at providing a sufficient amount of educated Cameroonians to Africanise the state’. The newspaper accordingly described how the first foreign scholarship to Cameroonian students had been granted in 1947, but ten years later only 500 students possessed a *Baccalauréat*.⁸¹

It also became increasingly evident, however, that this vital socio-economic investment continued to be orientated towards sustaining an export-orientated infrastructure for European profit, rather than popular development. F.I.D.E.S.-funded projects brought an increased number of French settlers to Cameroon, and the dual-college electoral system guaranteed this settler community a disproportionate representation in the territorial assembly, as two-fifths of its members had to be elected from the first college.⁸² Whilst ARCAM still possessed a largely advisory role, the settler community – and its allies in the

⁷⁸ Young, ‘The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa’, p. 28; Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p. 119; Chafer, *The End of Empire*, p. 3.

⁷⁹ Report of speech made by Ruben Um Nyobé in Douala, 17/11/1949, *Political Parties: KDM, KDY, UPC*; South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1960/10).

⁸⁰ Report on the U.P.C.’s Second Congress at Eseka, 29/09/1952 (Vb/b 1960/10).

⁸¹ ‘La Coopération Technique Face à Notre Indépendance’, *L’Opinion au Cameroun*, 23/05/1958, pp. 3-4.

⁸² Le Vine *The Cameroons*, p. 137.

National Assembly – was nevertheless able to exert pressure on the French administration to orientate development efforts towards European export concerns, rather than socio-economic development for the Cameroonian population.⁸³ The resultant inequalities were most acutely evident in the areas where the U.P.C. began to develop its strongest bases of domestic support, and intensified the international dimension of the nationalist struggle in two senses.

Firstly, French investment in the Mungo Valley – which was Cameroon's agricultural heartland, and received the second largest amount of F.I.D.E.S. funds in the territory – created conflicts over the control of export markets.⁸⁴ The French administration cited the massive increase of cocoa exports from the region to demonstrate the success of their investment efforts and its benefits to Cameroonians, but as Eyinga has demonstrated, the profits of this export industry remained largely in the hands of Europeans, which owned the majority of plantations and whose share of the export market was artificially protected.⁸⁵ In particular, this affected enterprising Bamileke commercial farmers who had settled in the region from the 1930s. Due to demographic pressures in their homeland, which was located further west near the border with British Cameroon, this Bamileke settler population had increasingly become the primary Cameroonian landholders in the region.⁸⁶ Faced with increasing exclusion from valuable export markets, however, the Bamileke soon formed the most significant support base for the U.P.C. The group saw the U.P.C. as the only political organisation that was fighting for the national interests of Cameroonians, so that the party provided an alternative to the regionalist politics of the other local parties, or the questionable motivations of metropolitan branch parties that were seen to be in collusion with France.⁸⁷

The second way in which French investment intensified the international aspect of the U.P.C.'s struggle was in a broader sense. Namely, the party became increasingly aware that if popular development were to be achieved, then Cameroonians needed to be able to negotiate commercial and investment agreements with France – as the party's literature

⁸³ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 336.

⁸⁴ Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement, Direction de la Documentation, Paris, *Notes Et Études Documentaires: La République Du Cameroun*, 19/01/ 1961, No. 2471, pp. 49-50 (261 J7).

⁸⁵ A. Eyinga, 'Dix années de FIDES au Cameroun (1947-1957)', *École Nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer* (1958), pp. 15-20.

⁸⁶ Austen and Derrick, *Middlemen*, p. 166; Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 334.

⁸⁷ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 334

increasingly professed – on their ‘own terms’.⁸⁸ This realisation resulted from the fact that, between 1948 and 1952, the U.P.C.’s two other key bases of support were in the areas that had seen the largest investment of foreign capital, yet whose populations continued to suffer the most visible economic disadvantage.

This was first of all evident in the port city of Douala, where the U.P.C. was founded, and the surrounding Wouri region, which had received the greatest amount of F.I.D.E.S. loans and witnessed the highest number of projects for infrastructural development.⁸⁹ The French government used F.I.D.E.S. capital to expand the harbour at Douala, and construct a bridge linking the city to the Mungo Valley region.⁹⁰ Although this investment boosted exports for the French government, the Cameroonian population of Douala continued to suffer high rates of unemployment and incredibly poor working conditions, whilst Europeans continued to dominate the middle and upper echelons of industry and commerce.⁹¹

A similar situation was evident amongst the U.P.C.’s third important base of support: the Bassa population of the Sanaga-Maritime region. Although the area did not receive the greatest amount of F.I.D.E.S. funds in total, it was the site of its most capital-intensive development projects after Douala; particularly the hydroelectric dam and aluminium works at Édea.⁹² As these projects were capital-intensive, rather than labour-intensive, and focused on the manufacture and export of aluminium, the Sanaga-Maritime region remained one of the most economically-depressed areas in southern Cameroon.⁹³

The overall result was that the south-west region of Cameroon became an area in which transnational flows of capital investment coalesced. It was here too that the U.P.C. based its campaign and drew its greatest support, underlining the fact that the struggle for the state was significantly a struggle for international resources. Lonsdale has accordingly argued that one of the primary consequences of colonial conquest was that it ‘sharpened

⁸⁸ See for example *La Voix du Kamerun*, May-June 1951, p. 3 and October 1951, p. 2 (261 J7).

⁸⁹ *Notes Et Études Documentaires*, p. 50 (261 J7).

⁹⁰ Austen and Derrick, *Middlemen*, p. 178.

⁹¹ Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé’, p. 338; Atangana, *French Investment*, pp. 137-8.

⁹² This included intensive forestry and the sophisticated ALUCAM metallurgical project. Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, p. 432.

⁹³ U.P.C. publications were subsequently beset with denunciations of French forestry concessions and the huge hydro-electric dam at Edea, whose flight of profits to Europe they contrasted with the continued poverty of local inhabitants. Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, pp. 431-2; Atangana, *French Investment*, p. 98.

the competition between states and local communities to keep the gate of Africa's global business.⁹⁴ The U.P.C. began to build upon the local grievances in this region, creating an impressive network of local committees throughout the south-west of the territory.⁹⁵ The party also began to create subsidiary organisations to mobilise wider sections of the population, such as the *Association des Ancients Combattants* and the *Comité Feminin de l'U.P.C.* As a result, within a year of its creation the U.P.C. had, according to Le Vine, become the best organised political party in French Cameroon.⁹⁶ By 1955, the party arguably enjoyed the most popular support of any nationalist movement in the territory, and was estimated to have 100,000 members out an electorate of 747, 000.⁹⁷

The Extra-Metropolitan Opportunities of Trusteeship

The party leadership, however, was faced with severe limitations in terms of the political channels through which it could pursue its aim of raising Cameroonian living standards. U.P.C. members and meetings were continually subject to acts of physical intimidation, unwarranted searches, seizures, and arrests by the French administration.⁹⁸ In addition, the administration began to sponsor the creation of opposition parties to undermine U.P.C. support.⁹⁹ International factors played a significant role in this political repression by the French administration, as the emergent geopolitical tensions of the Cold War began to be felt within Africa. In the first instance, the U.S government's international anti-communism was increasingly taking precedence over its previous anti-colonialism.¹⁰⁰ Since the U.S.A. was France's most important source of economic assistance for post-war reconstruction, the former's changing foreign policy priorities became manifest in the aid conditionalities imposed upon the metropole.¹⁰¹ By 1947, the U.S. had become disconcerted by the large presence of the P.C.F. in the French government, and made it

⁹⁴ John Lonsdale, 'Globalization, Ethnicity and Democracy: A View from "the Hopeless Continent"' in A. G. Hopkins (ed.) *Globalization in World History*, (New York, 2002), pp.194-220, p. 206.

⁹⁵ Initially, almost half of these committees were in the Sanaga-Maritime region, with the rest spread amongst the urban centres where trade union activity flourished amongst the labourers and plantation workers. Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé and the "Kamerun" Rebellion', p. 432; Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 147.

⁹⁶ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 148.

⁹⁷ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 195.

⁹⁸ Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé', p. 440.

⁹⁹ Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé and the "Kamerun" Rebellion', p. 432; The two most important 'anti-U.P.C.' parties supported by the French administration were the *Évolution Sociale du Cameroun*, created in 1949, and the *Bloc Démocratique Camerounaise* (B.D.C.), formed in 1951 by Louis Paul Aujoulat, See Achille Mbembe, *La Naissance du Maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun (1920-1960) : Histoire des Usages de la Raison en Colonie* (Paris, 1996), pp. 254- 285.

¹⁰⁰ Nwaubani and Nwaubani, 'The United States', p. 519.

¹⁰¹ Frances M. B. Lynch, *France and the International Economy: From Vichy to the Treaty of Rome* (London, 1997), pp. 24-57.

clear that continued aid for France's post-war reconstruction would be dependent upon the elimination of communists from positions of authority.¹⁰²

It was not simply a matter of the U.S.A. dictating terms to France, however, as U.S. attitudes fed into anti-Communist sentiments already growing within the French government.¹⁰³ In May 1947, the two other major parties in France's tripartite government, the M.R.P. (*Mouvement Républicain Populaire*) and S.F.I.O., subsequently dismissed all P.C.F. ministers from government. The colonial lobby in the French government was able to take advantage of these new developments in order to subdue growing nationalist protest in sub-Saharan Africa. The result was that colonial officials became less constrained in their repression of nationalist movements that were now seen as 'Communist-inspired'.¹⁰⁴ With its links to the P.C.F., the French government sought to physically suppress the R.D.A. and its local branches from the end of 1948.¹⁰⁵ Particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, which was seen to be the inter-territorial party's stronghold, representatives of the R.D.A. were subjected to arrest without trial, and their demonstrations were forbidden or dispersed with deadly force.¹⁰⁶

In Cameroon, however, the French government's attempts to restrict nationalist activities would once again encourage the forging of international channels of political support. It is from this point that the territory's trusteeship status began to play a significant role, one that increasingly distinguished the U.P.C. from the other members of the R.D.A. To this effect, trusteeship allowed the U.P.C. to seek extra-metropolitan political networks that circumvented the National Assembly, and, importantly, gave access to a powerful diplomatic platform: the U.N. The institutional mechanisms that provided such access did not come into effect in Cameroon until 1949, but, importantly, they appeared much more potent than the mechanisms provided by the League's mandate system. Firstly, the U.N. provided a termly-elected Trusteeship Council, in which the administering powers –

¹⁰² Schmidt, 'Cold War in Guinea', p. 99. See also: Irwin M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945–1954* (New York, 1991), pp. 44–8, 59, 67–8, 74–5, 188; Edward Rice-Maximin, 'The United States and the French Left, 1945–1949: the View from the State Department', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.19, No.4 (1984), pp. 730–6.

¹⁰³ Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, pp. 99–105.

¹⁰⁴ See Alexander Keese, 'A Culture of Panic: "Communist" Scapegoats and Decolonization in French West Africa and French Polynesia (1945–1957)', *French Colonial History*, Vol. 9 (2008), pp. 131–145; and Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun*, p. 171; Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 104–5.

¹⁰⁵ Georges Chaffard, *Les Carnets Secrets de la Décolonisation : Vol 1* (Paris, 1965), p. 107.

¹⁰⁶ Schmidt, 'Cold War in Guinea', p. 102.

including France - were often outnumbered by non-administering ones.¹⁰⁷ Through the Fourth Commission, the Council was furthermore able to directly coordinate with the U.N. General Assembly, whose membership was increasingly constituted by newly independent states with an anti-colonial agenda.

Finally, the Trusteeship Council could receive petitions from the inhabitants of trust territories. These could either be posted to New York, or given directly to the visiting missions of the Council, which were to be sent to the trust territories to ensure the administering authorities were undertaking their duties as outlined in the Trusteeship Agreement.¹⁰⁸ The first of the U.N.'s visiting missions arrived in the territory in May 1949, and received six long petitions from the U.P.C. After detailing the harassment suffered by U.P.C. supporters, the key point made in these petitions was a protest against Cameroon's Trusteeship Agreement; particularly the phrase 'as an integral part of French territory'. According to the party's *Bureau du Comité Directeur*, this phrase was 'nothing less than the ratification of a barely disguised step of annexation, which is clearly incompatible with the Trusteeship system.' The petitions further outlined the steps that needed to be taken towards the trusteeship goal of 'self-government' – including greater powers for ARCAM and the abolition of the dual college system.¹⁰⁹

From 1951, the trusteeship system increasingly appeared as the only political channel through which the U.P.C. could pursue its programme. Despite the party's growing popularity, in the elections to the National Assembly in June 1951, and to the local assembly in March 1952, the U.P.C. failed to obtain any seats. The party claimed that the French administration had intimidated its voters and purposefully miscounted the votes.¹¹⁰ Whilst this is not unlikely, the U.P.C.'s lack of success was also due to the limited suffrage of Cameroonians, as the second college largely excluded the party's most important bases of support amongst young agricultural and urban workers. As such, whilst the number of seats for African *députés* at the National Assembly had been increased, and whilst the local assembly – now renamed the *Assemblée Territoriale du Cameroun* (ATCAM) – provided

¹⁰⁷ Austen and Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers*, p. 177.

¹⁰⁸ For an contemporary assessment of how these mechanisms were deployed in other trust territories, see Sherman S. Hayden, 'The Trusteeship Council: Its First Three Years', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (1951), pp. 226-247. For an analysis of how these supervisory mechanisms were created, see Ganeshwar Chand, 'The United States and the Origins of the Trusteeship System', *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1991), pp. 171-230.

¹⁰⁹ Claude E. Welch, *Dream of Unity: Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa* (New York, 1966), p. 174.

¹¹⁰ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 320.

Cameroonian representatives with more than advisory powers – these improvements were enjoyed only by those whom the French did not see as ‘subversive’.¹¹¹

After suffering French repression in 1948-1949, the R.D.A. leadership was also formulating a response to the uncertain geopolitics of the Cold War landscape, and the political restrictions it engendered. In October 1950, the R.D.A. President, Houphouët-Boigny, called for its members to sever ties with the P.C.F., and to work in closer co-operation with the metropole.¹¹² The U.P.C., alongside the *Union Démocratique Nigérienne* and *Union Démocratique Sénégalaise*, immediately refused the moderated stance of the R.D.A.¹¹³ What made the U.P.C. unique amongst these dissenting R.D.A. members, however, was that, by 1952, it had formulated a programme that sought secession from the French Union.¹¹⁴ The party had changed its goal from self-government, and now pursued the option of independence. This programme received its first coherent articulation in September, at the U.P.C.’s national congress in Eseka. It was defined by three key aims of: i) Independence from France and the French Union; ii) Reunification with British Cameroon; and iii) The Raising of Cameroonians’ Living Standards.¹¹⁵

Richard Joseph locates the U.P.C.’s distinct ‘radicalism’ in the local social and political tensions caused by French rule, but the party’s unique stance cannot be explained solely by Cameroon’s experience of metropolitan constraints.¹¹⁶ In terms of exclusion from representative political institutions, most R.D.A. members similarly found themselves subject to electoral fraud and harassment, even after the 1950 decision to split with the P.C.F.¹¹⁷ In addition, Cameroon was certainly not the only territory in French Africa to see limited popular benefits from F.I.D.E.S. investment.¹¹⁸ Neither can the U.P.C.’s independence demand be explained by the party’s strong trade union links – which are often posited as a radicalising force for nationalist parties – since the R.D.A. sections in Niger and Senegal had similar bases of political support.¹¹⁹ The U.P.C. leadership, like the other R.D.A. members, was also fully aware that its territory required continued external

¹¹¹ The number of representatives in the second (Cameroonian) college rose from 24 to 32. Within the new Territorial Assembly, chairmanships and *rapporteur* positions increasingly passed into African hands, whilst the French Administration annulled fewer of its decisions. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 150.

¹¹² Richard A. Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, p. 430.

¹¹³ Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ Joseph, ‘Um Nyobé’, p. 430.

¹¹⁵ Report on the U.P.C.’s Second Congress at Eseka (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹¹⁶ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, Ch.1.

¹¹⁷ Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 147-8.

¹¹⁸ Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 176-204.

¹¹⁹ Chafer, *End of Empire*, pp. 147-8.

assistance for popular development. In a similar vein, Nyobé echoed the sentiments of the majority of nationalist leaders, by stating that the U.P.C.'s desire was for Cameroon to stand on 'equal terms' with France.¹²⁰

Mbembe suggests that Nyobé's ability to imagine Cameroon outside the French Union resulted from the fact that he, unlike many French nationalist leaders in the R.D.A., received his education within Cameroon, rather than at a French university, or the National Assembly in Paris.¹²¹ This is a somewhat vague and partial explanation, however, as the U.P.C.'s rejection of the French Union was political rather than cultural, and based in Cameroon's specific experience of limited reform. The party's political imagination was, to paraphrase Glassman, forged by the interaction of the everyday struggle.¹²² Nyobé's attitude towards French political and cultural values was thus more nuanced: he did not oppose them *per se*, but rather the fact that they were not applied to Africans. As such, he concluded at the Eseka congress: 'It is not the principle of the French Union that we contest; the French Union would have been a progressive innovation if it had been enacted in the sense of the constitution of October 27th, 1946'.¹²³

Accordingly, neither did Nyobé's desire for Cameroon to stand on equal terms with France, and the fact that he did not reject French Republican values, represent a desire for political assimilation with the metropole. Rather, it was an expression of what may be termed a transnational ideology. As articulated by Bernal and Ferguson, it signifies that one's desires are based upon standards that include a 'larger world', and that demands to converge with such transnational standards represent an 'aspiration to overcome categorical subordination'.¹²⁴ Due to continued subordination of French rule, however, the U.P.C. began to see these broader standards as residing beyond the metropole. To explain the U.P.C.'s political stance, therefore, it is necessary to understand that the party leadership was responding not only to the constraints of colonial rule, but extra-metropolitan opportunities. As a result of the French Union's evident limitations, the

¹²⁰ Report on the U.P.C.'s Second Congress at Eseka (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹²¹ Achille Mbembe, *Le Problème National Kamerunais* (Paris, 1984), p. 8.

¹²² Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (London, 1995), p. 11.

¹²³ Report on the U.P.C.'s Second Congress at Eseka (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹²⁴ Victoria Bernal, 'Eritrea Goes Global: Reflections on Nationalism in a Transnational Era', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (2004), pp. 3-25, p. 5; James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham NC, 2006), p. 20.

U.P.C. leadership increasingly embraced the extra-metropolitan opportunities offered by Cameroon's trusteeship status.

Joseph has, to a certain extent, acknowledged such opportunities, by stating how the U.P.C.'s aims were partly inspired by the goals of the trusteeship system.¹²⁵ Although the wording of Article 76(b) in the United Nations Charter was somewhat ambiguous, it presented a tangible political alternative – independence – not open to the other members of the R.D.A. From the mid-1950s, therefore, U.P.C. publications were consistently filled with demands for the U.N. to enforce article 76(b) of its Charter, in accordance with international law. Indeed, the U.P.C.'s repeated promise for the equality of sexes, races and religions echoed article 76(c) of the Charter, and is evident throughout numerous issues of the party's main newspaper, *La Voix du Kamerun*.¹²⁶ Indeed, this argument appears confirmed by the fact that the only other leading African nationalist party to demand independence from France at this time was that of the Togo trust territory: the *Comité de l'Unité Togolaise*.¹²⁷ Trusteeship thus rendered tangible what seemed a distant possibility to nationalists in other French African territories, due to the metropole's refusal to consider independence. Um Nyobé accordingly stated at Eseka:

We don't consider that problem [of independence] from only a local point of view, where many politicians consider our claims 'impracticable' and 'unrealisable'. For those who not only see the struggle of our people but also the development of international opinion towards us [independence] is perfectly realisable.¹²⁸

What has been overlooked in the extant literature, however, is that the U.P.C. leadership increasingly saw the U.N. as more than simply an international underwriter for independence. It began to view the organisation as an alternative source of external assistance to ensure that Cameroon would be viable – or 'realisable' – as an independent state. It was assistance, moreover, that the U.P.C. believed Cameroon was entitled to due to the territory's trusteeship status. For the party leadership, the U.N. firstly offered a more rapid means to Africanise the state, so that Cameroonians would be able to effectively govern an independent territory. After the U.P.C.'s failure to obtain any seats in the 1952 elections to ATCAM, the party's executive committee sent a petition to the Trusteeship

¹²⁵ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, p. 340.

¹²⁶ E.g. May-June, 1953; Jan-Feb, 1954. (261 J7).

¹²⁷ D. E. K. Amenumey, 'The Pre-1947 Background to the Ewe Unification Question: A Preliminary Sketch', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. 10, (1969), pp. 65-85.

¹²⁸ Report on the U.P.C.'s Second Congress at Eseka (Vb/b 1960/10).

Council which rejected the ‘puppet institution’ of ATCAM as a means to train Cameroonians in self-government.¹²⁹ The alternative they envisioned was an Executive Council presided over by a U.N. High Commissioner. In Nyobé’s words, U.N.-sponsored institutions would provide the ‘only valid school’ where Cameroonians ‘would learn to lead the government of their country’.¹³⁰ The U.P.C.’s local branches similarly began to see the U.N. as a means to expand and train a nascent civil service.¹³¹

Nyobé was, like other nationalist leaders in French Africa, aware that Cameroon was not ready for immediate independence, which is why at the Eseka congress he demanded it for the 1st January, 1957. Yet he believed that independence was viable as long as Cameroonians had been sufficiently trained in political governance; an apprenticeship that could be achieved in five years with U.N. assistance. The question then becomes that of the external economic and technical assistance that many nationalist leaders saw as vital to render an independent state viable. There appeared to be no conceivable source of such assistance outside the French Union, membership in which was predicated upon a disavowal of independence. For the U.P.C. leadership, however, the U.N. represented an alternative political community, one whose membership was defined by a shared recognised sovereignty. This shared recognition would provide a more genuine basis for equality and partnership than the French Union, and allow Cameroonians to negotiate access to external assistance in a way that would benefit popular development.

At Eseka, Nyobé accordingly stated that at the moment when Cameroon achieved independence, it would immediately demand membership in the United Nations. Such membership would allow Cameroon to have ‘free trade with all countries’, and to negotiate access to technical assistance and foreign investment ‘on equal terms’; both of which would facilitate the raising of Cameroonian living standards.¹³² Such pronouncements reveal two significant developments. Firstly, the U.P.C. leadership began to see that Cameroon’s independence was not precluded by a lack of development, but that

¹²⁹ The executive committee, which was voted in on April 10 1950 in Dschang – a meeting that was retrospectively termed the U.P.C.’s First National Congress – consisted of Nyobé as General Secretary, Mathias Djiomessi as President (a largely ceremonial role at this juncture), and Vice-Presidents Guillaume Bagal, Phillipe Essama Essi, Félix Moumié, and Samuel Noumouwe.

¹³⁰ Report of speech made by Ruben Um Nyobé to the Trusteeship Council, 25/11/1954, *Political Parties: KDM, KDY, UPC*; South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹³¹ A telegram sent by the U.P.C.’s local branch in Kumba to the Secretary General of the U.N. in 1957 stated: ‘This SOS requires that you train/reorganise civil service/economy and draw constitution. Grateful appoint U.N. economic experts to Kamerun.’ O.K. Press Release Information Service, No. 043, 05/11/57 (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹³² Report on the U.P.C.’s Second Congress at Eseka (Vb/b 1960/10).

development was being precluded by its lack of independence. This reflected a broader political shift at the U.N., which resulted from the increasing assertiveness of former colonial territories in the General Assembly.¹³³ In particular, Resolution 637 of 1952 declared that the right to self-determination was now ‘a *prerequisite* to the full enjoyment of all fundamental human rights’.

Secondly, the U.P.C. accordingly began to see internationally recognised sovereignty – and by extension, membership at the U.N. – as the most potent means to access the vital external resources necessary for development. Former colonial states in Asia and the Middle East increasingly formed into a vocal political bloc at the U.N., and used their voting power as a bargaining tool to negotiate access to vital international trade and aid networks.¹³⁴ As a result, whilst the majority of nationalist leaders in French Africa sought to make claims on the international environment – or rather, France – in the name of an equal French citizenship, the U.P.C. sought to do it in the name of a recognised independent state. In other words, the U.P.C. began to perceive sovereignty as a more potent international claim-making device.

In 1952, however, the most immediate use of the U.N. for the U.P.C. was that of an international political platform to pursue its programme, through the channels of the trusteeship system. In refuting the R.D.A.’s moderation after 1950, and being effectively barred from the local and National Assembly, the U.P.C. found itself with an increasingly shrinking platform from which to campaign. What is more, the visiting mission of 1949 had barely registered the U.P.C.’s protest against the French administration.¹³⁵ By acknowledging the U.P.C.’s difficulties at this time, one can begin to understand how the party’s political programme of 1952 was itself a strategy to exploit the international opportunities of the trusteeship system; a strategy that becomes apparent by examining the U.P.C.’s goal of unification with British Cameroon. Importantly, the outcome of this strategy demonstrates how the party then began to use a claim to sovereignty as a means to access international resources, even before Cameroon’s independence.

¹³³ Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 76.

¹³⁴ Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge, 1996), p.22; Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, Ch. 4.

¹³⁵ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 126.

Unification already had a basis for support in the British and French territories. This was mainly due to the presence of French Cameroonian immigrants working in the former German plantations of British Cameroon, and of several ethnic groups in the border regions that straddled the two territories, and who shared close cultural and historical affinities.¹³⁶ These groups saw the unification campaign as a possible solution to the severe border controls that restricted trade between the British and French territories, and made it difficult for friends and relatives to visit each other.¹³⁷ As such, the demand for unification did make an appearance in the U.P.C.'s 1949 petitions, but it was only brief, and largely mentioned the inconvenience of border restrictions for visiting relatives and conducting trade.¹³⁸ After 1949, however, the U.P.C. would become the most vocal proponents of unification.¹³⁹

The reason for this lay with recent developments regarding the trusteeship territories of French and British Togoland. Due to British and German colonial expansion, and then the dividing of Germany's colony of Togoland after the First World War, the Ewe people found themselves divided by the territorial boundaries of the Gold Coast, and the trust territories of British and French Togoland. Represented by the All-Ewe Conference, Ewe campaigners from both trust territories stated that the U.N. had an obligation to amend this artificial separation of a people. The group sent numerous petitions to the U.N., which not only argued for unification, but also argued that the only way in which this unification would be viable was through an independent state. The unification claim had proven highly effective in garnering international attention for the Ewe, and their demand for independence, as it became a topic on the agendas of both the U.N.'s Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly. As Amenumey has observed, by 1950, 'the world suddenly became aware of what has been called the "Ewe Problem"'.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ French Cameroonian immigrants in the region had formed the French Cameroons Welfare Union (FCWU) in 1948, which soon had over 4,000 members. In the British territory, groups such as the Bakossi, Bangwa and Bakweri shared notable ethnic and historical ties with the Bamileke, Bamoun and Duala in French Cameroon. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 147.

¹³⁷ Joseph Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun" and its Southern Cameroons Connection', *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, t. 83, No. 310 (1996), pp. 7-24, p. 10.

¹³⁸ Welch, *Dream*, p. 174.

¹³⁹ It should be noted that the idea of unification had been articulated as a cornerstone policy of RACAM, by its founder, Paul Soppo Priso. Martin Zachary Njeuma, 'Reunification and Political Opportunity in the Making of Cameroon's Independence', *Paideuma*, Vol. 41 (1995), pp. 27-37, p. 28.

¹⁴⁰ See D. E. K. Amenumey, 'The Pre-1947 Background to the Ewe Unification Question: A Preliminary Sketch', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. 10, (1969), pp. 65-85.

The U.P.C. consequently realised that by claiming an artificial separation of peoples by the U.N.'s predecessor, the League of Nations, the party could garner the attention of the U.N. for its wider cause of independence. Research carried out by Johnson and Welch during the 1960s reveals that, from the early 1950s, U.P.C. petitions to the U.N. subsequently made increasing reference to Togoland and unification.¹⁴¹ The party claimed that the League of Nations mandate system, under the influence of France and Britain, had arbitrarily split the former German territory of Kamerun into two, an act which it was now the duty of the United Nations to rectify.¹⁴² It was for this reason that the U.P.C. began to use the German spelling of 'Kamerun' in its publications, and refer to the unification of the territories, from 1952, as a 'reunification', to represent the fact that a unified Cameroon had been artificially split in two by the British and French colonial powers. Unlike the Ewe, however, the U.P.C. could not base its claim on a pre-colonial identity, and so had to establish a colonial identity that resulted from much more recent forces. The party subsequently argued that 'Kamerun is a historical reality, since social forces have caused the people to live together and become integrated for almost a century'.¹⁴³

To give greater visibility and substance to its claim, the U.P.C. organised a series of conferences in British Southern Cameroon, mostly in the town of Kumba. The first important meeting was held in August 1951, to which the U.P.C. sent a twelve-man delegation, including its Vice-Presidents, Ernest Ouandié and Abel Kingué, and which led to the formation of the Kamerun United National Congress (K.U.N.C.), which would campaign for unification in the British territory.¹⁴⁴ Whilst the conferences in the British Cameroons provided an important alternative platform for the U.P.C., one which it had been denied in the French territory, these meetings were a means to access a much larger political platform: the United Nations. By March 1952, the unification strategy had begun to prove effective in this respect, as the U.N. agreed to send a visiting mission later in the year, with an explicit aim to investigate the unification claim.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 125; Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 167.

¹⁴² This demand is most explicitly articulated in a U.P.C. document entitled: 'Appel Lancée par le Bureau du Comité Directeur de L'U.P.C. à Tous les Chefs D'Etat et à Tous les Organisations Démocratiques Du Monde Entier à la Vielle de la Réunification du Kamerun', published from Accra on 21/08/1961 (261 J 7).

¹⁴³ U.P.C. Pamphlet, *8 Steps to Peace in Kamerun*, 1961, p. 14 (261 J7).

¹⁴⁴ Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun" and its Southern Cameroons Connection', p. 12.

¹⁴⁵ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 125.

In August 1952, Nyobé himself travelled to Tiko in the British territory, to coordinate a common strategy with the K.U.N.C. for the imminent visiting mission.¹⁴⁶ The decision was taken to organise a congress in September, to coincide with the U.N. delegation's arrival.¹⁴⁷ The result was the U.P.C.'s second congress of Eseka. It was at this congress that the party's image of a Cameroonian state, constituted by its three key demands, was coherently articulated for the first time. As such, the timing of the congress demonstrates how the party's political programme significantly evolved as a response to extra-metropolitan international possibilities, as much as domestic metropolitan constraints. Yet the political platform of the trusteeship system remained uncertain. This was reflected in the conclusion of the 1952 visiting mission, which found no popular basis of support for the unification issue.¹⁴⁸ The 1952 mission, like the 1949 mission, had been heavily supervised and guided by the French administration, so that, in the words of one ARCAM member, these visits resembled a 'Potemkin Village'.¹⁴⁹ The U.P.C.'s access to an international political platform was, therefore, constrained by the party's restricted political presence within the territory itself. This limitation reveals how an international anti-colonial gaze coalesced around, and was anchored to, territorialised and domestic institutions: a factor that would affect the U.P.C.'s diplomatic campaign after 1952.

Um Nyobé, however, was determined to by-pass these limitations, and directly petitioned the U.N. General Assembly to grant him an audience at the Fourth Commission, so that he could put the case forward for unification.¹⁵⁰ The party was made aware, however, that the limitations of the U.N.'s anti-colonialism also resided in its constitution by individual states, which were furthermore subject to the increasing geopolitical tensions of the Cold War. The French government again sought to exploit these tensions by labelling the U.P.C. as a communist party, and subsequently succeeded in persuading the U.S.A. to vote against Nyobé's request.¹⁵¹ Yet the individual statism of this anti-colonial gaze would also work in the U.P.C.'s favour, as the U.N. was increasingly constituted by a number of former colonial territories. As a result, the Asian and Arab states mobilised their votes to approve Nyobé's visit.¹⁵² In November 1952, Nyobé was able to travel to New

¹⁴⁶ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 127.

¹⁴⁷ Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun" and its Southern Cameroons Connection', p. 13.

¹⁴⁸ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 127; Welch, *Dream*, p. 183.

¹⁴⁹ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 126.

¹⁵⁰ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 197.

¹⁵¹ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 94.

¹⁵² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 126.

York, where, on the 19th December, he made an appeal for a unified and independent Cameroon before the Fourth Commission of the U.N. General Assembly.

Although the U.P.C. had now gained a vital political platform to express its demands, its material resources were still meagre, and Nyobé's first trip was funded entirely by local donations of party members.¹⁵³ The difficulty in obtaining such funds is evidenced by an impassioned plea by a local publication of the party: 'if you should sell your only shirt...whatever means the money might come, let us do our utmost best to see that our delegate who is going to defend our right before the world's peaceful organ has sufficient money for his transport to and from America.'¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the benefits of this initial visit soon became apparent, on both the domestic and international levels. The U.P.C. published news of Nyobé's appearance in pamphlets distributed throughout Cameroon, giving the party even greater publicity and support amongst the population.¹⁵⁵ As a result, the party was able to mobilise popular support through the exploitation of external resources, but now to a much greater extent than had previously been possible during the leadership's time in the trade union.

Conclusion

Nyobé made subsequent appearances before the General Assembly in December 1953 and November 1954, and was accompanied by an increasingly large U.P.C. delegation. The party was now given a truly international platform for its claim of independence, so that by December 1953 the Trusteeship Council had passed two resolutions urging France to advance Cameroon towards self-government or independence.¹⁵⁶ Nyobé's presence at the U.N. further allowed the party leadership to attend meetings of international organisations such as the League for Human Rights, to forge diplomatic connections with other African anti-colonialists, and to make presentations directly before foreign statesmen at the Trusteeship Council.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Mbembe, *Naissance*, p. 243 ; Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 105.

¹⁵⁴ U.P.C. Popular Appeal, 30/10/52 (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹⁵⁵ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 85.

¹⁵⁶ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁷ In New York, Um Nyobé was able to meet Bouhafa, the Tunisian representative of Algerian nationalist Messali Hadj in the United States, and Sylvanus Olympio, the future President of Togo. Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists', p. 197.

Perhaps most importantly, the U.P.C. was able to partially realise the extra-metropolitan and U.N.-centred exchanges that it had imagined for an independent Cameroon. In effect, therefore, the party leadership was already beginning to use its claim to sovereignty as a means to access international resources. In this respect, one can see how the party's actions at the U.N. were not altogether different from the diplomatic activities of future independent African governments. As outlined by Christopher Clapham, these functions constituted an ability to make presentations before the United Nations, in the name of an independent state, in order to: i) advance the interests of a national population; ii) to strengthen its own domestic support base, and iii) to gain access to external resources.¹⁵⁸

The key difference, however, was that the U.P.C. could not yet claim to be the governmental representative of an internationally recognised state. It could not, therefore, claim to access the international benefits that such recognition would entail in terms of negotiating access to trade and aid networks. This would change in 1958, as a date for Cameroon's independence was finally set. Consequently, a new struggle for recognition would begin between competing political factions in Cameroon, one that would decide who had the right to represent the independent state, and thus be able to make claims on the international environment as a recognised government. It was a struggle that would not be fought in the local assembly, as the U.P.C. was outlawed in 1955. Instead, it was fought in the General Assembly with petitions and speeches, but also in the Cameroonian *maquis* with arms. It was also a struggle that necessitated a reversal in strategy for the party. Whilst the U.P.C. had been able to use their international profile at the U.N. to consolidate their domestic support base, they would now need to mobilise that domestic support base in order to show the U.N. that they were the legitimate representatives of the Cameroonian people.

¹⁵⁸ Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, pp. 222-3.

Chapter Two: An International Insurgency, 1954-1959

By 1955, the U.P.C. had capitalised upon the increased domestic support that resulted from Um Nyobé's appearances at the U.N., by building an impressive organisational infrastructure within the territory. As Gardinier observed, however, 'Any group which sought independence outside the French Union, though a quite legitimate goal under the trusteeship system, seemed subversive.'¹ The U.P.C.'s international and domestic successes subsequently increased the extant tensions between the party and the French administration, resulting in violent confrontations throughout May 1955, and the U.P.C.'s proscription in July. From this moment, the U.P.C. took to the *maquis*, and would soon begin armed action against the French administration

Several works have consequently identified this period in 1955 as the start of the U.P.C. 'rebellion'.² More detailed analyses, however, have correctly noted that the U.P.C. leadership did not organise any armed action until December 1956, amongst the Bassa population. Instead the party sought a non-violent route, including legalisation, until this moment.³ In either case, however, it is the U.P.C.'s recourse to an armed insurgency, rather than its diplomatic strategies, which is seen to define the party's trajectory from the mid-1950s. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the insurgency was the only incident of significant armed resistance against colonial rule in French sub-Saharan Africa. Secondly, Um Nyobé, the party's leading figure and key spokesperson at the United Nations, took to the *maquis*, so that his 1953 trip to New York was to be his last. It would also appear, therefore, that

¹ David Gardinier, *Cameroon: United Nations Challenge to French Policy* (London, 1963), p. 44.

² The earliest example of this interpretation is Willard R. Johnson, 'The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion: The Integrative Backlash of Insurgency' in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui (eds.), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 671-692, p. 672. It is a perception, however, that has remained persistent, amongst Cameroonian specialists as well as within more general works. See for example: Victor T. Le Vine, *Politics in Francophone Africa* (London, 2004), p. 214; Kevin Shillington (ed.), *Encyclopedia of African History: Volume I, A-G* (New York, 2005), p. 354; Piet Konings, *Neoliberal Bandwagonism: Civil Society and the Politics of Belonging in Anglophone Cameroon* (Bamenda, 2009), p. 45.

³ Richard Joseph was the first to criticise Johnson's view, pointing out instead that 'there was a gap of *nineteen months* between the riots of May 1955, and the launching of a guerrilla movement by the U.P.C. in December 1956.' Richard A. Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun: Social Origins of the UPC Rebellion* (Oxford, 1977), p. 316. See also Achille Mbembe, *La naissance du maquis dans le Sud Cameroun, 1920-1960*, (Paris, 1996), pp. 327-364; Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue, and Jacob Tatsitsa, *Kamerun! Une guerre cachée aux origines de la Françafrique 1948-1971* (Paris, 2010), pp. 179, 201-216.

the U.P.C.'s previous ability to enact the diplomatic relationships of its imagined statehood, had ended.

This chapter argues, however, that a focus on the territorialised aspects of the U.P.C.'s struggle overlooks important continuities that occurred beyond Cameroon's borders. Firstly, the period between July 1955 and December 1956 was a moment of intense diplomatic activity for the U.P.C., as the party leadership continued to seek access to the United Nations as a primary strategy to achieve its goals. It furthermore appropriated international ideologies and discourses – such as Marxism and human rights – and adapted them to the contextual exigencies of its struggle. What becomes evident is that the appropriation of these ideologies, and indeed the insurgency itself, were strategies by which the U.P.C. leadership continued to exploit and negotiate a dynamic international political environment, one in which the U.N. still played a vital role.

Correspondences by the U.P.C. leadership, U.N. documents, and French military reports will be used to explore this continuity. The chapter will first of all examine the U.P.C.'s growing domestic support structure within Cameroon, and how this increased tensions with the French administration. In response to the repressive measures undertaken by the French authorities in 1955, however, the U.P.C. leadership did not turn to violence, but instead sought to alert international opinion via the French Communist Party. Secondly, after the U.P.C.'s proscription in July 1955, the leadership's primary concern is revealed to be the preservation of its international connections to the United Nations, rather than the launching of an armed insurgency. In particular, the U.P.C. sought a return to legality primarily as a means to maintain its access to the General Assembly and visiting missions.

The second half of the chapter will demonstrate how the U.P.C.'s armed actions, from 1956 until 1959, can be seen as a series of attempts to petition the U.N. by non-conventional means. First of all, the party's initial quest for legality had definitively failed in December 1956, a fact that severely limited the U.P.C.'s normal channels of access to the U.N. As such, the first instance of organised armed action by the U.P.C., in December 1956, can be seen as an alternative means to protest the French *Loi-Cadre* reforms to the U.N. Next, the chapter will show that there was a significant hiatus in any concerted armed action by the U.P.C. between December 1956 and November 1958, when troubles began in the Bamileke region. During this hiatus, the party continued to seek political channels to

petition the General Assembly, and began to engage with a U.N.-centred discourse of human rights. Finally, the chapter will demonstrate that the resurgence of armed activity after November 1958 explicitly adhered to developments concerning the United Nations. In particular, the upsurge in violence continued to correspond with failures of the U.P.C. to petition the U.N. by conventional means.

By viewing the rhythms of the insurgency within this international context, the chapter will further interrogate the view that the resurgence of armed activity in November 1958 marked a transition from a ‘Bassa phase’ of the insurgency to a ‘Bamileke phase’.⁴ This is not to deny the influence of regional and socio-economic factors in determining armed activity within Cameroon.⁵ Rather, it is to demonstrate that the most organised and concerted armed actions were significantly determined by the diplomatic successes and failures of the party leadership. As a result, the U.P.C. insurgency adheres to Matthew Connelly’s concept of a ‘diplomatic revolution’, which he used to describe the actions of the F.L.N. in the Algerian war of independence. According to this concept, ‘human rights reports, press conferences...and fighting over world opinion and international law’ were the weapons of greater importance for insurgents than conventional arms.⁶ Most importantly, however, this chapter demonstrates how, from 1958, the U.P.C. began to use its armed struggle as a means to support a new international claim: namely, that the party represented the legitimate government of an independent Cameroon.

The Proscription of the U.P.C.

Between 1952 and 1955, the U.P.C. consolidated its popular support by building a comprehensive organisational infrastructure. The party firstly organised its domestic support base into a hierarchical pyramidal structure, which began with the base committees at the village level. Next there were the central committees, which were set up according to

⁴ See for example Victor T. Le Vine, *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1964), p. 20; Mark DeLancey, Mark D. DeLancey, and Rebecca Neh Mbuh, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cameroon* (4th ed. Lanham, 2000), p. 6; Johnson, ‘The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion’.

⁵ For a detailed analysis of how local cultural, social and economic factors influenced armed activity amongst the Bassa and Bamileke respectively, see: Achille Mbembe, ‘Domaines de la Nuit et Autorité Onirique dans le Maquis du Sud-Cameroun’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1991), pp. 89-121; and Meredith Terretta, “‘God of Independence, God of Peace’: Village Politics and Nationalism in the *Maquis* of Cameroon, 1957-1971’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (2005), pp. 74-101.

⁶ Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002), p.4. Meredith Terretta has similarly applied this concept to the U.P.C. See Meredith Terretta ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra’, *Journal of African History*, 51 (2010), pp. 189-212.

the number of U.P.C. members in a given area, rather than along the lines of the official administrative divisions. Thirdly there were the regional committees, which were designed to coordinate the activities of several central committees. Finally, there was the executive committee, elected by the congress of the party, and which consisted of a political bureau, a secretariat, and a treasury.⁷ In 1955, the U.P.C.'s political bureau remained the same as that elected at the second congress of 1952: Um Nyobé as General Secretary, Félix Moumié as President, and Abel Kingué and Ernest Ouandié as Vice-Presidents.⁸

By 1955, the party was estimated to have 450 base committees and 100,000 members.⁹ The base committees were largely distributed in Douala, the Sanaga-Maritime region, the West region, and to a slightly lesser extent, the Mungo and Wouri regions.¹⁰ U.P.C. support was thus largely located in the more populous southwest of the territory, and particularly in areas where the Bassa and Bamileke populations were most prominent. There were bases of support in the Central and North regions, though these were limited to the major urban centres of Yaoundé and Garoua, respectively.¹¹ In spite of these regional concentrations, the perceived popularity and appeal of the U.P.C. was such that by 1955, almost all the political parties in Cameroon had adopted its goals of eventual independence and unification.¹²

The U.P.C. had also formed a number of subsidiary organisations, most notably the Democratic Union of Cameroonian Women (U.D.F.C.), formed in 1952, and the Cameroonian Democratic Youth (J.D.C.), formed in 1954. The U.D.F.C. and J.D.C. acted as propaganda centres and organisational bases, within which the future leadership of the party could gain valuable political experience.¹³ To this end, in March 1955 the U.P.C. also

⁷ Colonel Aufeuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion', *Synthèse Historique sur les Événements*; Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 241), p. 3.

⁸ Aufeuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 3. Moumié, originally from Foumban in the Bamileke region, had trained as a doctor in Brazzaville and Dakar, before returning to work in Douala in 1947. Ouandié, also from the Bamileke region (Haut-Nkam), had been a teacher and trade unionist in Douala. Kingué, also from the Bamileke region, had been a nurse and merchant in Douala.

⁹ Aufeuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 3; Richard Bjorson, *The African Quest for Freedom and Identity: Cameroonian Writing and the National Experience*. (Bloomington, 1991), p. 46.

¹⁰ Aufeuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 3.

¹¹ Abel Kingué, Letter to Louis Odru, 14/04/1955, *Archives de la Section de Politique Extérieure, Fonds du PCF*; Archives Départementales de Seine-Saint-Denis (261 J7); Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 231.

¹² Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 153.

¹³ The U.D.F.C. was founded after Cameroonian female political activists - particularly Gertrude Omog, Marie-Irène Ngapeth, Marthe Moumié, and Marthe Ouandié, -were invited by the Women's International Democratic Federation (W.I.D.F.), to attend a conference in Vienna in 1951. Ngapeth, Moumié and Ouandié were married to the U.P.C.'s treasurer, President, and Vice-President, respectively. The J.D.C. was the larger of the two movements, and its members would eventually take on prominent roles within the upper echelons

created an *École des Cadres* in Douala, which sought to grant an alternative political education to Cameroonians, by which they could learn to govern the country outside the ‘puppet institutions’ of the Territorial Assembly.¹⁴ These subsidiary organisations, alongside the intermediary committees and party newspapers, constituted a vital link between the grass-roots support base and the U.P.C. leadership.¹⁵

By 1955, therefore, the U.P.C. had begun to realise its vision of a unified and independent Cameroon in three senses. First of all, it had created important political connections with the British territory. Secondly, it had independently forged diplomatic linkages at the U.N., outside of and against French integrationist desires. Finally, it now appeared to be creating, in the words of the territory’s High Commissioner, Roland Pré, ‘a secret state’ within French Cameroon.¹⁶ Pré’s description would be echoed in the memoirs of his successor, Pierre Messmer, who described the U.P.C. as having formed a ‘parallel administration’ during this period.¹⁷

In addition to its continued ties to the P.C.F., and its demands for independence from the French Union at the U.N., the U.P.C.’s new domestic growth would serve to increase the extant tensions with the French administration. It is within this context that one can view the appointment of Pré as Cameroon’s High Commissioner in November 1954. Pré’s

of the U.P.C. In particular, this would pertain to the J.D.C.’s President, Mayi Matip; its Vice-President, William Ngembus; its Secretary General, Francis Fosso; and its Propaganda Secretary, Aloys-Marie Ndjock. Both the U.D.F.C. and J.D.C. replicated the U.P.C.’s pyramidal structure of executive, regional and local Committees. For the U.D.F.C.’s origins see M. Terretta, ‘A Miscarriage of Revolution: Cameroonian Women and Nationalism’, *Stichproben: Vienna Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 12 (2007), pp. 61–90. For the J.D.C. see ‘Statutes of the Cameroon Democratic Youth Recast at the Second Congress of Kumba’, 02/12/1956, *Political Parties: KDM, KDY, UPC*; South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹⁴ The *École* educated nationalists in six-week courses, which comprised of some thirty students who were nominated by their central committees. Courses included one on Colonial Administration, which emphasised ‘the difference between a national government, [which is the] institution of a sovereign state, and a colonial administration, [which is the] the apparatus of a foreign power’s oppression of a subjugated people.’ Other courses drew comparisons between UPC nationalism and anti-colonial political activism on an international scale. Terretta, ‘A Miscarriage of Revolution’, pp. 69–70. According to Jean-Martin Tchaptchet, at the beginning of 1955, the U.P.C. was close to building a planned *Lycée Populaire* in the village of Obala, through the contributions of party members. Jean-Martin Tchaptchet, *Quand les Jeunes Africains Créaient l’Histoire* (Paris, 2006), p. 28.

¹⁵ Aside from the *Voix du Kamerun*, by 1955 the U.P.C. had three more newspapers: *L’Étoile*, a weekly; *Lumière*, a bimonthly regional newspaper; and *La Vérité*, a youth bulletin. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 148.

¹⁶ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 167. Indeed, the U.P.C. had already created a national flag for an independent Cameroon; a black crab on a red background. It represented the origins of the territory’s name, from the Portuguese word for prawns – *Camarões* – which explorers had used to denote the abundance of shellfish in the estuaries of the region. The party also had adopted a national anthem from a piece originally composed in 1928, by students of the Presbyterian Mission school in Foulassi. Indeed, the first four lines of this anthem would be adopted as the opening lines of Cameroon’s national anthem after independence in 1960. See Jean Paul Messina and Jaap Van Slageren, *Histoire du Christianisme au Cameroun: Des Origines à Nos Jours* (Paris, 2005), p. 97.

¹⁷ Pierre Messmer, *Après Tant de Batailles: Mémoires* (A. Michel: Paris, 1992), p. 206.

appointment represented the French administration's attempt to quell the growing U.P.C. threat in the same way that it had subdued the R.D.A. in the Côte d'Ivoire. That is, by installing a new 'strong man' to break the organisation. In February 1955, Pré instructed local authorities to forcibly disperse U.P.C. meetings, to harass and arrest party members, and to raid its local headquarters.¹⁸ With the tacit support of French regional administrators, local chiefs and rival political groups went further still, burning down U.P.C. buildings and attacking party members.¹⁹ Pré further issued a warrant for Nyobé to appear before local magistrates, with the effect that the party leadership began to be concerned for their own personal safety.²⁰

The U.P.C.'s response to these measures demonstrated that the party's political strategies remained firmly international in their outlook, as the leadership would attempt to utilise its external connections in order to publicly protest the actions of Pré.²¹ At this particular moment, however, the U.P.C.'s access to the United Nations was rather limited, a factor that no doubt influenced the timing of Pré's actions. Nyobé had only recently returned from petitioning the ninth session of the U.N. General Assembly in December 1954, and the next visiting mission of the Trusteeship Council was not scheduled until the latter half of 1955.²² The U.P.C. executive responded to this temporary inaccessibility by utilising its links with the P.C.F., in order to publicise Pré's actions to a wider international audience. In particular, Moumié, Nyobé and Kingué, who were now based in the party's *École des Cadres* in Douala, wrote successive letters to the P.C.F. throughout March and April in 1955. These letters were addressed to Louis Odru in Paris, a *député* in the National Assembly whom the P.C.F. had charged with maintaining informal links with R.D.A. members, after the 1950 split.

Writing to Odru on the 30th March, Moumié detailed the acts ordered by Pré and asked that they be published in the P.C.F. newspaper, *l'Humanité*.²³ On 14th April, Kingué posed a similar request, concluding his letter with: 'the people of France must be informed of these

¹⁸ Kingué, Letter to Louis Odru (261 J7). See also Johnson, 'The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion', p. 673; Richard A. Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé and the "Kamerun" Rebellion', *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 293 (Oct 1974), pp. 428-444. p. 435; and Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 163.

¹⁹ Félix Moumié, Letter to Louis Odru, 30/03/1955; and Kingué, Letter to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²⁰ Letter from Kingué to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²¹ In this respect, one such incident was indicative of how the U.P.C. saw its political trajectory as inextricably bound to the United Nations. On the seventh anniversary of the U.P.C.'s foundation, on 19th April 1955, militants in Garoua had attempted to raise the U.N. flag next to the French flag. The flag was quickly removed by local authorities, and there were several injuries and arrests in the ensuing confrontation.

²² Letter from Kingué to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²³ See Resolution 859 (IX) of the United Nations General Assembly, 14/12/1954.

²³ Letter from Moumié to Louis Odru (261 J7).

colonial crimes.’²⁴ *L’Humanité* subsequently mentioned Pré’s actions in a short article on 26th April, and the U.P.C. leadership accordingly wrote a letter to the P.C.F. in January 1956, thanking the communist press for the ‘solidarity it had shown to the victims of colonial repression in Cameroon’.²⁵

What also becomes evident from these exchanges is that the U.P.C.’s *École des Cadres* was an important interface for receiving information from abroad, as well as for transmitting domestic events along international anti-colonial networks. To this effect, Moumié thanked Odru for sending information on anti-colonial motions undertaken by the P.C.F. in Paris, information which the U.P.C. President had subsequently distributed to the students of the *École*.²⁶ Such information allowed the party leadership to disseminate its more nuanced conception of anti-colonialism to the rank-and-file, a conception that was not based upon an outright rejection of French culture and society – or ‘anti-racist racism’ as Nyobé termed it.²⁷ Accordingly, Moumié wrote that: ‘our militants now understand that that, in France, there exists a strong current that condemns the politics practised by colonialists in Africa in the name of the French people.’²⁸

Importantly, the U.P.C. used the P.C.F., and its *École de Cadres*, to access and disseminate information which could be used to address the more practical exigencies of the domestic campaign. Um Nyobé, writing on the 14th April, subsequently requested that Odru send information on Roland Pré’s actions in his previous post as Governor of Guinea.²⁹ In the same vein, he thanked Odru for sending him two brochures written by Mao Tse Tsung. Nyobé stated that he was subsequently able to organise a lecture on Mao’s doctrine of ‘self-criticism’ at the *École*, a lecture that would be valuable in teaching the party’s base committees how to politicise supporters at the village level.³⁰

In 1955, therefore, the U.P.C.’s ties to the P.C.F. constituted a pragmatic engagement with the international environment on two levels. Firstly, such ties allowed the party to publicise events in Cameroon to a wider external audience, in the absence of the U.N.

²⁴ Letter from Kingué to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²⁵ Letter from Louis Odru to Félix Moumié, 02/05/1955; ‘Déclaration du Bureau Politique de l’Union des Populations du Cameroun au Parti Communiste Français’, 25/01/1956 (261 J7).

²⁶ Letter from Moumié to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²⁷ Quoted in U.P.C. brochure *L’Unique Voix du Succès* (Cairo, 1960), p. 57.

²⁸ Letter from Moumié to Louis Odru (261 J7).

²⁹ Letter from Ruben Um Nyobé to Louis Odru, 14/04/1955 (261 J7).

³⁰ Letter from Nyobé to Louis Odru (261 J7). Nyobé believed that the practice of self-criticism by the central committees, which consisted of encouraging debate on the party’s aims and methods, would further the political education of the Cameroonian population at the village level. In this respect, Mao’s focus on the peasantry proved particularly applicable to the situation of Cameroon. For Mao’s own articulation of the self-criticism doctrine, see *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse Tung* (San Francisco, 1972), pp. 258-268.

Secondly, they allowed the U.P.C. to access information from abroad, information that could serve the party in its on-going domestic campaign. This information was intended to be disseminated to the wider population through the *École* and base committees, demonstrating that within the U.P.C.'s territorialised 'secret state', popular development was still bound to international networks of exchange. As such, it can be seen to reinforce the fundamental role of the state in Africa, as an interface between international and domestic distributive networks.

The pragmatism of the U.P.C.'s engagement with the P.C.F. is further emphasised by the fact that, during this same period, the U.P.C. leadership continued to denounce attempts by France and the U.S.A. to paint the party as a communist movement.³¹ Nyobé's statement at the party's first congress, at Dschang in 1950, was continually reiterated in this respect: 'Everyone knows that we are not a communist party. We do not say this because we detest communists, or that we fear becoming communists, but because we believe that the struggle for our national liberation cannot be reduced to a particular ideology.'³² The party's engagement with the P.C.F. cannot, therefore, be reduced to an adherence to a communist or Marxist-Leninist ideology, just as its demand for independence could not be reduced to a 'radical' resistance ideology.

Instead, the U.P.C.'s engagement with the P.C.F. at this time was, once again, a pragmatic response to the specific challenges of the anti-colonial struggle, and to the opportunities that the international environment could offer in this respect.³³ The P.C.F. not only allowed the U.P.C. access to international anti-colonial networks, which it used to publicly contest the actions of the French administration, but it also enabled the party to appropriate communist doctrine for the practical organisation of its domestic campaign. Such a pragmatic appropriation is revealed in Nyobé's use of self-criticism, and is further evident in the very configuration of the party's structure of base committees, congresses, and political bureaus, which mirrored that of the P.C.F.³⁴

³¹ See for example: Ernest Ouandié, Petition to the Secretary General of the United Nations, 30/05/1955; Letter from Félix Moumié to Gamel Abdel Nasser, 01/07/1955 (261 J7).

³² 'Report on the U.P.C.'s Second Congress, Dschang, 10/04/1950'; (Vb/b 1960/10).

³³ Indeed, just as the U.P.C. was not inherently 'communist', the P.C.F. was not inherently 'anti-colonial'. Both parties were far more pragmatic and fluid in this respect, with their attitudes corresponding to certain contextual exigencies, as can be seen in the P.C.F.'s changing and ambiguous stance on Indochina. See Edward Francis Rice-Maximin, *Accommodation and Resistance: The French Left, Indochina, and the Cold War, 1944-1954* (Westport, 1986).

³⁴ See M. Adereth, *The French Communist Party: A Critical History (1920-1984): from Comintern to "The Colours of France"* (Manchester, 1984), pp. 297-288. Marxism was an eminently practical and adaptable doctrine in this respect, and thus suited the U.P.C.'s own pragmatic and flexible political strategy. As Young

That is not to say, however, that the party leadership was completely united in its views on communist or Marxist doctrine. Moumié in particular advocated a more ‘revolutionary’ interpretation of Marxism in comparison to Nyobé’s heedful and pragmatic approach.³⁵ Indeed, it was Moumié’s calls for more immediate and drastic forms of action that began to appeal to the U.P.C.’s domestic support base, as the repressive measures undertaken by Pré continued.³⁶ As a result of this increasing militancy, on April 22nd 1955, the U.P.C., the U.S.C.C. trade union, the J.D.C., and the U.D.F.C., issued a Joint Proclamation, one which constituted an important shift in the party’s political programme. It abrogated the U.P.C.’s previous stipulation of a timetable for independence, and instead demanded ‘immediate independence’. The Proclamation further called for: i) General Elections for a constituent assembly before the end of the year; ii) The immediate installation of a United Nations Commission to supervise the establishment of new state institutions; and iii) The immediate establishment of an African executive committee, that would serve as a provisional government.³⁷

The French administration, which still sought to maintain Cameroon within the French Union, perceived the proclamation as a ‘declaration of war’, and its response was immediate.³⁸ U.P.C. committees in the Bamileke region were attacked by groups of youths organised by local chiefs – under the orders of Pré - with Nyobé and Kingué being physically attacked whilst on speaking tours in the area.³⁹ Violent confrontations between U.P.C. supporters, and forces employed or supported by the French administration, multiplied throughout May, eventually culminating in mass rioting that erupted in Douala

observed, ‘Marxism historically provided the theoretical inspiration and most effective political practice for twentieth-century anti-colonial resistance’ and that it constituted a ‘an instrument through which the anti-colonial struggle could be translated from one colonial arena to the other’. Robert C. J Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 16, 169. As will become evident, however, during the 1960s, when French-educated students began to assert themselves within the U.P.C., the party’s engagement with Marxist doctrine would move beyond the exigencies of the everyday struggle, and would begin to be incorporated within the party’s evolving image of Cameroon’s statehood.

³⁵ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 143. Johnson, ‘The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion’, p. 673.

³⁶ Joseph, ‘Ruben um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, p. 435.

³⁷ Aueuvre, ‘Historique de la Rébellion’ (6H 241), pp. 4-5.

³⁸ Aueuvre, ‘Historique de la Rébellion’ (6H 241), p. 5.

³⁹ Joseph, ‘Ruben Um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, p. 435.

on the 22nd.⁴⁰ The unrest soon spread to Yaoundé and a number of towns throughout the Sanaga-Maritime, West and Mungo regions.⁴¹

The violence provided an ideal justification by which the French administration could finally remove the U.P.C. from domestic politics, and dismantle its ‘secret state’ within the territory. In July 1955, at the request of Pré, the party was made illegal.⁴² After its proscription, the U.P.C. was forced underground. Moumié and the party’s Vice-Presidents, Abel Kingué and Ernest Ouandié, escaped across the border to British Cameroon, where the party’s proscription was not in force. Um Nyobé remained inside the French territory, taking to the forests near his natal village of Boumnyebel, in the Sanaga-Maritime region.⁴³

The U.P.C.’s proscription immediately lost the party important bases of political support, both within and outside of the territory. The U.S.C.C. immediately announced its severance of ties with the U.P.C. to avoid persecution by the French authorities, and the R.D.A. finally expelled the party after five years of tense relations.⁴⁴ With the U.P.C.’s members now facing threat of arrest, and its leadership having left the territory or taken to the *maquis*, the party’s ability to collect membership fees for any future trips to New York was furthermore severely compromised. Even if such funds could be collected, Um Nyobé, the U.P.C.’s recognised spokesperson at the U.N., would find it difficult and dangerous to leave the territory. Proof of this could be found in the obstacles that Nyobé had already encountered in his previous trips to New York, when the party was still legal.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ouandié, Petition to Secretary General (261 J7). See also Johnson, ‘The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion’, p. 673; Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p.156

⁴¹ Out of the ‘civilian’ casualties – a label that the French administration used to designate those who were neither ‘rioters’ nor ‘forces of order’ – there were four killed and thirteen injured. Of these, two of the dead and twelve of the injured were European. Amongst the ‘forces of order’, there was one killed and sixty-two injured, whilst amongst the ‘rioters’, there was twenty killed and ‘around a hundred’ injured. Colonel Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée (6H 241), p. 24.

⁴² Joseph, ‘Ruben Um Nyobé and the “Kamerun” Rebellion’, p. 436.

⁴³ Aufeuvre, ‘Historique de la Rébellion’ (6H 241), p. 6.

⁴⁴ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 156.

⁴⁵ In 1953, for example, French doctors in the Douala Health Centre, who were responsible for issuing the medical certificates necessary to travel to Paris en route to New York, instituted special formalities for U.P.C. members. Attendants were not allowed to examine any U.P.C. member without prior permission from the Director of the Health Centre; a delaying tactic that sought to prevent Nyobé reaching the U.N. until its sessions were in their concluding stages. At the U.S. Embassy in Paris, U.P.C. members faced inordinately long delays for the issuing of entry visas – thirty-seven days in 1952 and forty-two days in 1953 – and faced significant harassment by U.S. immigration authorities in New York. Abel Kingué, Petition to U.N. Secretary General, 18/08/1954; [T/Pet. 4 and 5/L.6/Add.1], p. 3. *Petitions Concerning British and French Cameroons*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1956/5).

Yet this was not the beginning of an ‘armed rebellion’ by the U.P.C. In the first instance, the U.P.C. had no military infrastructure in place at this point, and so it is problematic to attribute the 1955 disturbances to the organisation of the party. Indeed, the U.P.C. would not organise any military wing, nor enact any concerted armed offensive, until December 1956. Secondly, the May disturbances appeared to be a manifestation of local and long-standing socio-economic grievances, rather than a coordinated attack on the institutions of administrative authorities.⁴⁶ That is not to say, however, that such grievances would not play their role, as they would enable the U.P.C. to recruit willing participants for its future armed action.

A subsequent examination of the party leadership’s correspondences during 1955 reveals two further points. Firstly, the party leadership - even the more militant Moumié – desired a peaceful solution and a return to legality. Secondly, the U.P.C.’s desire to return to legality was significantly framed by an anxiety that it would lose access to the international political platform of the U.N. Overall, what becomes apparent is that during 1955-1956, the U.P.C.’s primary concern was not to instigate armed action against the French administration, but to maintain access to international political channels.

The political objectives of the U.P.C. in this respect became apparent during the May disturbances themselves. On the 30th May, Ouandié - still in Douala at this point - wrote a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations. The letter firstly denounced the French government’s attempts to portray the U.P.C. as an ‘armed rebellion’, describing instead how the administration had deployed deadly force against ‘unarmed Cameroonians’. He next described his ‘alarm’ at the ‘silence of the U.N.’ following the violent repression of Pré. A key concern that emerges from Ouandié’s description of Pré’s

⁴⁶ The violence was first of all in areas which had received the greatest F.I.D.E.S. investment, and largely directed against European settler populations, therefore demonstrating the local economic grievances against French reforms outlined in the previous chapter. Whilst this may explain the violence amongst the Bassa in the Sanaga-Maritime region, and the Bamileke migrant worker population in the Mungo region, one has to look to more long-standing issues for the violence in the Bamileke ‘homeland’, in the West Region. First of all, there were demographic pressures resulting from high population growth and land shortages. There was always the danger that the hierarchical structure of chieftancies in the region, and the practice of primogeniture, would exacerbate these pressures by creating an inter-generational conflict as elder chiefs monopolised the distribution of land and wealth. The potential for such abuse was conventionally held in check by a *kamveu*, or council of notables. However, with the arrival of the French, the chiefs were given more power and became more autocratic, so that the area became, in the words of a French military report ‘an ideal terrain to sow subversion’. Aufeuvre, ‘Historique de la Rébellion’ (6H 241), pp. 1-5; Johnson, ‘The Union des Populations du Cameroun in Rebellion’, p. 693; Enoch Kwayeb, *Les Institutions de Droit Public au Pays Bamiléké* (Paris, 1960), pp. 142-143; Claude Tardits, *Les Bamiléké de l’Ouest Cameroun* (Paris, 1960), p. 17.

actions, however, is of how they could undermine the ability of the U.P.C. to remain in contact with the United Nations.

In this respect, the first concern expressed by Ouandié is that Pré's repressive measures have prevented the U.P.C.'s written correspondences reaching New York, which would, in his opinion, account for the 'silence' of the United Nations. To ascertain whether this was the case, Ouandié requested that the U.N. provide him with a notification of the date on which the present letter was received by the organisation. He followed this concern with an observation that the 'main consequence' of Pré's arbitrary arrests and intimidations was that U.P.C. supporters have been 'forced into the maquis'.⁴⁷ What is intimated in this last statement, and which becomes explicit in subsequent correspondences, is an overriding political consideration of the U.P.C. at this juncture. Namely, that Pré's repressive measures would undermine the U.P.C.'s ability to make its representations before the next visiting mission. Whilst the party was still sending thousands of petitions to the U.N. via air mail during this period, in the absence of being able to travel to New York, it was the visiting mission that appeared as the party's next opportunity to more directly engage the U.N.⁴⁸

The party's driving concern to maintain access to the U.N. becomes more explicit after Moumié, Kingué, and Ouandié, fled to the British territory in July. One of the first acts of the President and Vice-Presidents was to issue a joint declaration with the U.D.F.C, the J.D.C., and the K.N.D.P., from Bamenda on the 26th August.⁴⁹ The declaration firstly demonstrates that the U.P.C. still sought to realise its image of a unified and independent state through the international channels of the U.N., rather than an armed uprising. Its opening demand was that the U.N. supervise a national referendum on reunification, and

⁴⁷ Ouandié, Petition to Secretary General (261 J7).

⁴⁸ Between 1954 and 1955, the Trusteeship Council received 40,000 communications from French Cameroon, 90% of which were from the U.P.C., its affiliates, or supporters. In 1956, it received 33, 026 – 95% of which were from U.P.C. sources. Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 284.

⁴⁹ During the period of trusteeship, many British Cameroonians felt that the British had treated the territory as an appendage of Nigeria, resulting in a lack of political and economic investment by the administrative authorities. The Kamerun National Democratic Party (K.N.D.P.) was a British Cameroonian party that had advocated the unification idea as a means to capitalise on local resentments against Nigerian domination – particularly that of Igbo traders in the region. For the K.N.D.P., it was hoped that a unified Cameroon would prevent the British territory being subsumed into Nigeria, just as the U.P.C. hoped that unification would prevent the French territory being incorporated into the French Union. See Victor Julius Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961: A Constitutional History* (Farnham, 2001), p. 150; Dickson Eyoh, 'Conflicting Narratives of Anglophone Protest and the Politics of Identity in Cameroon', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 2 (1998), pp. 249-276, p. 263

that the General Assembly adopt a resolution to lift both territories' trusteeship status after the referendum.⁵⁰

In terms of the U.P.C.'s more immediate strategic concerns, however, it is the party's desire for representation before the forthcoming visiting mission that is predominant. After its opening demands for a U.N. referendum and resolution, and before any mention of Pré's repressive measures, the declaration accordingly states: 'We furthermore believe that the forthcoming visiting mission must not follow an itinerary outlined by the French administration, but one in which the Cameroonian people can be properly received'.⁵¹

Even within the French territory, where armed action would eventually occur, local branches of the party expressed a similar desire for a peaceful resolution via the United Nations. On the 18th September, the U.P.C.'s central committee in Dschang wrote a cablegraph to the U.N. in New York. The opening statement of the cablegraph again demonstrated how the U.P.C. sought to achieve its image of a unified and independent state through the international channels of the U.N., rather than an armed struggle within the territory:

The U.P.C. salutes the United Nations and the spirit of international détente that surrounds it, and hopes that it will contribute to the peaceful resolution of the Cameroonian problem... We hope that the United Nations will safeguard the noble principles of its Charter, and will grant reunification and independence upon Cameroon by a unanimous vote.⁵²

The more immediate concern of the party was again to represent itself before the forthcoming visiting mission. Importantly, it is within such terms that the U.P.C. understood the potential significance of the party's repression and illegality, as it was feared that such actions would undermine its ability to access U.N. observers. The cablegraph accordingly goes on to demand the lifting of the party's ban, the freeing of political prisoners, and the cessation of judicial proceedings against party members. Crucially, however, these demands were made 'so that the visiting mission can objectively proceed to survey the opinion of Cameroonians'.⁵³

⁵⁰ 'Déclaration Commune', 26/08/1955, (261 J7).

⁵¹ 'Déclaration Commune', 26/08/1955, (261 J7), p. 1.

⁵² Cablegramme from U.P.C. central committee, Dschang, to United Nations General Assembly, 18/09/1955; (261 J7).

⁵³ Cablegramme from U.P.C. central committee, Dschang (261 J7).

Conscious of the previous failures of the Trusteeship Council and the visiting missions, however, the U.P.C. leadership also began to seek alternative channels to petition the U.N. General Assembly. With Nyobé effectively isolated within the *maquis*, it was left to the leadership in the British Cameroons to make such contacts. The party first of all sought out the emergent Afro-Asian bloc, whose entry onto the geopolitical stage had been confirmed at the Bandung Conference of April 1955.⁵⁴ In July, Moumié subsequently wrote to Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and in September Ouandié wrote to the Chinese Federation of Democratic Youth in Peking.⁵⁵

In the letter to Nasser, Moumié first of all thanked Egypt and the Arab states for their previous support at the U.N. He reiterated that the party still sought to achieve its objectives peacefully, through the international channels of the U.N.⁵⁶ Importantly, he also demanded the freeing of political prisoners, and the legalisation of the party, for the specific purpose of being able to petition the forthcoming visiting mission.⁵⁷ Moumié also used this letter, however, as an alternative means to petition the General Assembly, in case of a failure regarding the forthcoming visiting mission. Moumié subsequently asked that the Egyptian government ‘do everything in its power to publicise our demands’ and to ‘publicly take a position on the Cameroonian problem through an official declaration’ at the United Nations General Assembly.⁵⁸

In the British Cameroon, it was not only the U.P.C. executive that sought to engage the United Nations via alternative channels. The same was true for rank-and-file U.P.C. militants who had crossed the border from the French territory since the violence of May 1955. Lacking food, shelter and medical care, these U.P.C. supporters subsequently formed

⁵⁴ The conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia, on the 18th-24th April. Attendees at the conference included twenty-nine representatives of independent and recently independent states, as well as non-independent observers. The stated aims of the conference were to promote Afro-Asian economic and cultural co-operation and to oppose colonialism or neo-colonialism, including that practiced by the United States and the U.S.S.R. in the context of the Cold War. See J.A.C. Mackie, *Bandung 1955: Non-Alignment and Afro-Asian Solidarity* (Paris, 2005).

⁵⁵ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p 182.

⁵⁶ Moumié denounced the attempts by the French government to ‘falsely portray the U.P.C. as inciting an armed rebellion’, and the administration’s imprisoning of U.P.C. supporters. Letter from Félix Moumié to Gamel Abdel Nasser (261 J7).

⁵⁷ Once again, Moumié firmly locates these grievances within a strategy to access the forthcoming visiting mission. After describing how the French administration had proscribed the party and arrested many of its members, Moumié writes: ‘Following these events which continue in our country, we have been forced to take to the *maquis* in order to await a United Nations Visiting Mission.’ He then writes that the U.P.C. demands ‘the immediate and unconditional liberation of prisoners and the cessation of judicial proceedings against the leaders of progressive organisations so that we may be able to illuminate the mission as regards the politics of the colonialists.’ Letter from Félix Moumié to Gamel Abdel Nasser (261 J7).

⁵⁸ Letter from Félix Moumié to Gamel Abdel Nasser (261 J7).

a Refugee Committee.⁵⁹ One of the Committee's first acts, in December 1955, was to appeal directly to the U.N. for aid, rather than the British government. It accordingly sent a petition to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, stating that 5,000 French Cameroonian refugees had sought shelter since the 25th May, after the 'French government opened fire on the innocent and unarmed Cameroonian people.'⁶⁰ Rather than expressing any desire to retaliate against the French government, the petition went on to express its hope that 'through your action, the lives of these thousands of poor black people, who have committed no crime other than that of believing in the right of peoples to self-determination, will be preserved.'⁶¹

Ultimately, however, the party's fears about being excluded from the forthcoming visiting mission were shown to be well-founded. The Trusteeship Council, after scheduling the mission to arrive in October, took the decision to only receive representatives of 'organisations having a legal existence'; a decision that immediately excluded the U.P.C.⁶² The party leadership was furthermore unable to mount any significant effort to disrupt the visiting mission, as it was still in disarray from the French administration's repressive measures, and indeed its members continued to be subject to a campaign of mass arrests. As a result, the French administration was able to shepherd the mission on its tour, presenting an amenable image of peaceful development and co-operation with the French administration.⁶³ It was an image in which the U.P.C.'s actions could only appear as a disruption to progress, and as such, the mission's only reference to the U.P.C. was one of condemnation for its supposedly violent activity.⁶⁴

Although the U.P.C. appeared to have lost its more direct means of access to the General Assembly – both in its inability to travel to New York, and its inability to petition

⁵⁹ Joseph Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun" and its Southern Cameroons Connection', *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, Vol. 83 No. 310, (1996), pp. 7-24, p. 15.

⁶⁰ 'Communication from the Refugees of the U.P.C. Concerning the Cameroons Under French Administration', 05/12/1955, *Union of the Populations of Cameroon 1956*; (Vb/b 1956/1).

⁶¹ 'Communication from the Refugees of the U.P.C' (Vb/b 1956/1). The observation on this appeal made by J. S. Dudding, Commissioner of the British Cameroons, was far from sympathetic: 'The petition is not one that need to be treated seriously as: There is nothing to prevent these people returning to French Cameroons and some in fact have done so; This territory has no obligation to feed and clothe them; The figure claimed of 5,000 is obviously exaggerated'. Subsequent correspondences between the Commissioner and District Officers did seem to confirm, however, that the figure of 5,000 was indeed exaggerated. (Vb/b 1956/1).

⁶² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p 181.

⁶³ François Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun, 1940-1971* (L'Harmattan : Paris, 2010), pp 133-4 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p 182.

⁶⁴ Victor T. Le Vine, 'Cameroun' in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg (eds.), *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley, 1964), pp.132-186, p. 142.

the visiting missions - the party still did not seek an armed uprising. Instead, it continued to search for alternative means to access and exploit international anti-colonial networks. Immediately after the visiting mission of 1955, the U.P.C. leadership in the British territory re-focused its attention on friendly contacts in the metropole. In addition to continued appeals to the P.C.F., the party executive also sought to mobilise a growing base of Cameroonian student support in Paris.⁶⁵ After the violence of May and the U.P.C.'s proscription in July, members of the *Association des Étudiants Camerounais* (A.E.C.), and the much larger *Fédération des Étudiants de l'Afrique Noire en France* (F.E.A.N.F.), formed the Union Nationale des Étudiants Kamerunais (U.N.E.K.), which became the *de facto* U.P.C. section in France, with its base in Paris.⁶⁶

Nyobé had already formed preliminary contacts with Cameroonian students in Paris between 1952 and 1954, during stop-overs on his voyages to New York.⁶⁷ The leadership in Kumba now sought to use these contacts in order to publicise its struggle abroad and create further international linkages. In December 1955, Moumié and Ouandié issued an official party mandate for Benoît Balla, a Cameroonian student based in Paris. The mandate permitted Balla to: 'make political trips throughout the Arab and Asian countries, as well as Western Europe' for the purposes of 'press conferences, speeches made on foreign radio stations, official declarations, contacts with governments'. Balla was to do this with the aid of the Egyptian government, and was to have his permanent residence in Cairo.⁶⁸

The *Loi-Cadre* and Domestic Attempts at Legalisation

In contrast to works that perceive the events of May-July 1955 as the beginning of an armed rebellion, therefore, the U.P.C. continued to seek non-violent and international channels to achieve its political objectives. The next part of the chapter will examine the U.P.C.'s domestic attempts to have the party legalised, until the first outbreak of armed

⁶⁵ These actions reflected a broader trend throughout 1955 and 1956, as African student organisations in France had begun to make efforts to cement their links with nationalist and youth organisations within French Africa. See Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (Berg: Oxford, 2002), p. 202 ; See Abdoulaye Gueye, *Les Intellectuels Africains en France* (Paris, 2001) esp. Ch. 1, and Robert C. J. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 177-178.

⁶⁶ Tchaptchet, *Quand les Jeunes Africains*, pp. 242-243 ; Daniel Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga alias Commandant Kissamba: 'Cameroun, ma part de vérité'* (Paris, 2005), pp. 40-41.

⁶⁷ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 193.

⁶⁸ It is unclear, however, how successful Balla was in this endeavour, as his presence in Egypt is not mentioned in any subsequent U.P.C. literature, nor any other academic text, that the author is aware of. Félix Moumié and Ernest Ouandié, 'Mandat', 15/12/1955 (261 J7).

action in December 1956. The analysis agrees with the findings of Joseph, Mbembe and Deltombe *et al.*, which have correctly emphasised that the U.P.C. pursued the route of legalisation right up until the first outbreak of organised violence. These works have also rightly identified that the decision to take armed action was a last-minute attempt to boycott important domestic elections, elections that could demonstrate Cameroonian support for the *Loi-Cadre* reforms, and by extension the French Union.⁶⁹

Importantly, however, these works have examined the U.P.C.'s pursuit of legalisation in 1956, and its eventual armed action, largely in terms of an on-going ideological debate amongst the leadership: that is, of Um Nyobé's non-violence against Moumié's more 'radical' militancy. As a result, they have failed to appreciate two important points, which reveal a broader international context for these events. Firstly, the party had continued in its attempts to petition the United Nations throughout 1955 for a peaceful resolution – a strategy significantly undertaken by the 'radical' Moumié. Secondly, and more importantly, the U.P.C.'s grievances over its illegality and repression had been significantly framed in terms of being excluded from the U.N. visiting mission. As such, the party's campaign for legalisation in 1956 needs to be viewed as part of an on-going attempt to regain access to the political platform of the United Nations

It should be noted, however, that an important aspect of this international context is one that the analyses of Mbembe *et al.* have correctly identified as affecting the U.P.C.'s actions in 1956. Specifically, the French government's attempts to retain the dependency of its African territories in the face of new pressures for reform. Having experienced a humiliating withdrawal from Indochina in 1954, and facing an increasingly violent uprising in Algeria, the French government was eager to prevent either scenario recurring in its other overseas territories. It is this context that Tunisia and Morocco achieved independence in March 1956.⁷⁰ The Gold Coast's rapid progress towards independence further pressured the French government to grant greater autonomy to its sub-Saharan African territories, and indeed forced the metropole's hand in granting its trusteeship of Togo an 'autonomous status' within the French Union in 1956.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Joseph, *Radical Nationalism*, pp. 200-217 ; Mbembe, *La naissance*, pp. 327-364; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, pp. 179, 201-216.

⁷⁰ Martin Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War* (Oxford, 2011), p. 147; Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 165.

⁷¹ J. Kent, *The Internationalisation of Colonialism: Britain, France, and Black Africa, 1939-1956* (Oxford, 1992), pp.259, 298-299.

Within the metropole itself, a general election in January 1956 had two important effects regarding these reformist pressures. Firstly, these elections returned the Socialist S.F.I.O. to the Ministry of Overseas France, which had been controlled by the centre-right M.R.P. for the past eight years. The new Minister for Overseas France was Gaston Defferre, who had long advocated reform of the 1946 Constitution that had established the French Union.⁷² Secondly, the R.D.A. had emerged as the largest African party in the National Assembly. This victory paved the way for the R.D.A.'s President, Houphouët-Boigny, to be awarded a full cabinet post in the French government, and thus enabled him to exert significant influence on France's overseas policies.⁷³

In March 1956, Defferre articulated the new pressures that the French Union was faced with before the National Assembly: 'we must not let ourselves be bypassed and then dominated by events, only to concede demands when they express themselves in a violent form'.⁷⁴ As in 1946, the French government was forced to negotiate the tension between placating pressures for the greater autonomy of its African territories, whilst avoiding a dilution of French authority that could lead to these territories' independence. Defferre's solution was the *Loi-Cadre*, or 'enabling act'; a series of reforms that sought to devolve greater power to the local Territorial Assemblies, whilst ensuring that these territories remained within the French Union.⁷⁵ The reforms of *Loi-Cadre* were debated in the National Assembly throughout March and April, and voted into law on the 23rd June. As had been the case with the constitutional reforms of 1946, Defferre made it clear that Cameroon was to be included in the *Loi-Cadre* reforms, and that the territory was to subsequently remain in the French Union.⁷⁶

Through the visiting mission of 1955, the Trusteeship Council had made it clear that if the U.P.C. wanted access to the U.N. beyond the mailing of petitions, the party would need to be legalised. As such, if the party were to continue to effectively protest the French

⁷² Le Vine, *Politics in Francophone Africa*, p. 67; Chafer, *End of Empire*, p.172.

⁷³ Houphouët-Boigny was initially a Minister delegated to the Présidence de Conseil and then a Minister of State with responsibility for implementing the *Loi-Cadre* and for the Overseas Territories. Le Vine, *Politics in Francophone Africa*, p. 67; Chafer, *End of Empire*, p.172.

⁷⁴ Donal Cruise O'Brien, 'The Limits of Political Choice in French West Africa: 1956 to 1960', *Civilisations*, Vol. 15, No.2 (1965), pp. 206-226, p. 207.

⁷⁵ The Territorial Assemblies were to be given increased budget responsibilities and greater legislative powers, but these were left rather vague until the *Loi-Cadre* was specifically implemented within each territory. What was certain, however, was that the French government would maintain control over foreign affairs, the police (except for municipal and rural police), defence, the customs service, financial and monetary regimes, media, and higher education. Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 166.

⁷⁶ François Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 141.

Union by its preferred diplomatic strategies, legalisation within the territory would have to be achieved. An opening appeared in this respect through the opportunistic politics of Paul Soppo Priso, the current President of the Territorial Assembly. Like his main political rival in the Territorial Assembly, André-Marie Mbida, Soppo Priso pursued a platform that sought close co-operation with the French administration.⁷⁷ After Mbida's party, the *Groupe des Démocrates*, won the legislative elections of January 1956, however, Soppo Priso decided to change his political strategy.

He did so by creating a new party, one that sought to capitalise on the popularity of the U.P.C.'s political programme. On 6th June, Soppo Priso created the *Courant Mouvement d'Union Nationale* (C.M.U.N.), whose political programme was defined by the following demands: i) Complete Independence (rather than the vague 'autonomy' that Mbida and the metropole desired); ii) a complete rejection of the *Loi-Cadre* reforms iii) an amnesty for the 'agitators' of May 1955; iv) the legalisation of the U.P.C.; and v) the election of a new Territorial Assembly.⁷⁸ From 9th June, the U.P.C. leadership consequently encouraged its membership to support the C.M.U.N. programme.⁷⁹

The task of assessing how the *Loi-Cadre* would be implemented in Cameroon was given to the territory's new High Commissioner, Pierre Messmer, who had replaced Roland Pré in April 1956. In August, Messmer outlined his plan, one that aimed to mollify the growing demands for independence amongst the Cameroonian population, whilst circumventing the possibility of a resurgent U.P.C. via the C.M.U.N. Messmer announced that the *Loi-Cadre* would be implemented through the dissolution of the present Territorial Assembly, and that elections would be held for a new Legislative Assembly in December.⁸⁰ In line with the reformist image of the *Loi-Cadre*, the new Assembly would have greater powers, and would furthermore be elected by universal adult suffrage for the first time.⁸¹ The ban on the U.P.C. would not, however, be lifted.

Messmer's logic, supported by Defferre, was three-fold. Firstly, mass voter participation for the new assembly – via universal suffrage – would give the appearance of popular

⁷⁷ J. F. Bayart, 'The Political System' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 45-81, pp. 45-46.

⁷⁸ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 140 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 205.

⁷⁹ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 140 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 205.

⁸⁰ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 207.

⁸¹ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 158.

assent for the *Loi-Cadre*, and by extension, the French Union. Secondly, since this popular vote would take place without the U.P.C., it would similarly appear to sanction the party's proscription by popular mandate. Thirdly, the French administration was aware that the U.P.C. was attempting to re-enter domestic politics through Soppo Priso's party. Defferre's fear at this time was that if the U.P.C.'s demand for immediate independence was articulated legally – i.e. through the Territorial Assembly – then the U.N. would have little reason not to support such a demand, and the French government would have little choice but to assent. By holding elections that would, in effect, demonstrate popular support for the French Union merely through voter participation, Messmer and Defferre hoped that the U.P.C./C.M.U.N. would boycott them. This third consideration, one that was defined by an awareness of the territory's trusteeship status, becomes evident in a letter sent by Defferre to Messmer, in October 1956:

In the case that [the U.P.C./C.M.U.N.] will boycott the elections like in Togo, we will be able to successfully realise our plans with our friends who remain loyal. What concerns us is that if the U.P.C. succeeds in sending fifteen representatives to the Assembly, our plans will fail, and they will succeed through the fact of having a majority, and the subsequent ability to adopt a constitution proclaiming independence. In this case, we will be faced with a *fait accompli* and the U.P.C., whether we like it or not, will have international support.⁸²

Nyobé, however, did choose the boycott option, as he believed that a wide support for his party's objectives would ensure that a U.P.C.-sponsored abstention would encompass the vast majority of the electorate.⁸³ The boycott would have two purposes. Firstly, it would compel the French to lift the party's proscription, as they would be forced to realise that no election could be held without the U.P.C.'s participation. Secondly, it would rob the elections of any legitimacy, and importantly, demonstrate a popular rejection of the French Union to the United Nations, in a manner more immediate and direct than any petition. This becomes evident in a speech that Nyobé reportedly made in the *maquis* regarding the boycott: 'It will show the world that no popular consultation has taken place in the country, and that the Assembly which will open in January does not represent Kamerunian [*sic*] opinion.'⁸⁴

⁸² Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, pp. 140-141.

⁸³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 208.

⁸⁴ *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 10

As the C.M.U.N. was now the official mouthpiece of the U.P.C., Soppo Priso's abstention from the elections - now scheduled for December 22nd - was crucial for the boycott. Soppo Priso's political opportunism, however, would now become a disadvantage for the U.P.C. On 28th November, he suddenly announced that the C.M.U.N. would participate in the elections for the new Assembly.⁸⁵ As a result of Soppo Priso's 'betrayal' on the 2nd and 3rd December Nyobé organised a meeting in the village of Makaï, in the Sanaga-Maritime region.⁸⁶ The purpose of the meeting was to begin recruiting for a paramilitary organisation: the *Comité National d'Organisation* (C.N.O.).⁸⁷ With no other option to achieve legalisation or boycott the elections in such a short space of time, the U.P.C. turned to armed action. From the 18th December, throughout the Wouri and Sanaga-Martime regions, the C.N.O. sabotaged voting ballots, destroyed roads and bridges, and assassinated ninety-six Cameroonians deemed 'servants of colonialism'.⁸⁸ As a result, there were high rates of abstention for the election in these regions, with the vote in Eseka having to be abandoned altogether.

Outside of these regions, however, voter participation was still relatively high, and Mbida's party won the most seats.⁸⁹ In accordance with the reforms envisaged by the *Loi-Cadre*, the Territorial Assembly now became a Legislative Assembly, with increased powers over the budget and civil service. The territory would also now have a Prime Minister; the first of whom was Mbida. It was only the French High Commissioner that could nominate the Prime Minister, however, and the territory's trade, defence, foreign policy and monetary policy remained under the control of the metropole.⁹⁰

A U.N.-Inspired Insurgency

The first organised armed action of the U.P.C. was, therefore, a specific attempt to force a boycott of the December elections. Importantly, this action can be located within a wider set of responses to an international political environment, one in which the United Nations continued to play an important role. Its role was not only apparent in how the French government sought to implement the *Loi-Cadre* in Cameroon, but also in the

⁸⁵ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 141 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 210.

⁸⁶ Fotso, *La Lutte Nationaliste au Cameroun*, p. 142 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 211.

⁸⁷ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H241), p. 6.

⁸⁸ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H241), p. 6.

⁸⁹ Le Vine, 'Cameroun', p. 143.

⁹⁰ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 219.

U.P.C.'s response to such an implementation. By taking into account the political priorities of the U.P.C. throughout 1955, Nyobé's domestic attempts at legalisation can be seen as a strategy to maintain access to the political channels of the United Nations, in order to protest the integrationist policies of the French government to the organisation.

In this context, the actions of the C.N.O. in December 1956 were not simply a domestic response to the actions of the French administration and Soppo Priso, nor were they the beginning of an armed struggle that sought to overthrow or capture the state. Instead, they constituted a specific strategy to demonstrate to the United Nations that there was no popular mandate for the French Union, when other channels of access to the organisation had been closed off. The political rationale underlying the U.P.C.'s deployment of armed force is reinforced by three further developments, which will be examined below. First of all, the armed action of the U.P.C. would remain sporadic and low-key until November 1958, confirming that the December actions were not the beginning of an armed uprising. Secondly, after the initial action of the C.N.O, the party continued to orientate its strategies towards New York, demonstrating that petitioning the U.N. remained its priority. Finally, when the armed actions of the U.P.C. again increased in November 1958, such action was, and would continue to be, significantly determined by developments within the United Nations.

The French administration responded to the C.N.O.'s initial actions by sending an intervention force of French paratroopers and commandos from Congo-Brazzaville, which supported the nascent Cameroonian army and gendarmerie.⁹¹ By March, however, the French government had withdrawn its troops in the Sanaga-Maritime, owing to a lack of armed activity by the C.N.O.⁹² French military reports indicated that subsequent insurgent activity in the region was limited to a few targeted assassinations, looting, and the burning down of village residences, and that the insurgents were 'poorly armed'.⁹³ It is subsequently difficult to define French armed actions at this juncture, as they could not be called a full-scale military operation.⁹⁴ As such, and in line with Martin Thomas, it may be better to apply a more fluid conception of colonial 'policing' to describe such low-level

⁹¹ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H241), p. 7 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 214.

⁹² Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H241), p. 7.

⁹³ Colonel Max Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun', 24/03/1961 (6H241), p. 11.

⁹⁴ Shaun Gregory, 'The French Military in Africa: Past and Present', *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 396 (2000), pp. 435-448.

military activity.⁹⁵ Whether the C.N.O.'s actions can be seen as the beginning of a long-term military strategy is similarly problematic, as it is difficult to know the precise activities of Nyobé during 1957, and to what extent he was involved in these subsequent actions. Deltombe *et al.* have indicated that this was a time in which he sought to consolidate and strengthen the C.N.O. for its future armed action.⁹⁶ Yet this appears as somewhat of a retrospective analysis when one considers the analysis of Bayart, who describes how Nyobé was reluctant to engage in any future armed action during this period.⁹⁷

In the context of this lack of organised armed activity, what is more certain is that throughout 1957, the U.P.C. continued to make appeals to the United Nations, and to seek international diplomatic channels in which to campaign for Cameroon's independence. The U.P.C.'s growing support base amongst Cameroonian students in Paris proved an important alternative conduit in this regard. In January 1957, the A.E.C. had written a letter addressed to all the U.N. ambassadors of the organisation's member states, demanding that they intervene to stop French acts of repression and to respect the Cameroonian people's right to unification and independence.⁹⁸ In February, the U.N. Fourth Committee agreed to receive a representative of the A.E.C. The trip was made by Castor Osende Afana, a student of law in Toulouse, who repeated the party's claim that the U.N. was the 'guardian' of the Cameroonian people's right to independence, legality, and peace.⁹⁹ As a result of this appearance before the Fourth Committee, and continued mailed petitions, the eleventh session of the General Assembly requested that the Trusteeship Council compile a report on the situation in French Cameroon. This was to be reviewed at the General Assembly's twelfth session, which would run from September until December 1957.¹⁰⁰

Rather than becoming an insular and violent movement in 1957, therefore, the U.P.C. remained unwaveringly international in its outlook. In this regard, the party also continued to engage with transnational ideological discourses to further its aims. At the very moment that the U.P.C. began to engage in armed action, therefore, it simultaneously began to

⁹⁵ Martin Thomas, *Violence and Colonial Order: Police, Workers, and Protest in the European Colonial Empires, 1918-1940* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 2-8.

⁹⁶ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 232.

⁹⁷ Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 54.

⁹⁸ Tchaptchet, *Quand les Jeunes Africains*, p. 240.

⁹⁹ Tchaptchet, *Quand les Jeunes Africains*, p. 240.

¹⁰⁰ A/RES/1067 (XI). All U.N. General Assembly Resolutions - indicated by A/RES - have been obtained from the Dag Hammarskjöld Library website: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl>.

articulate a human rights discourse; one that focused on the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.D.H.R.).¹⁰¹ An apt example of this juxtaposition emerges from the exiled J.D.C. leadership, which held its second congress in December 1956, in the town of Kumba, British Cameroon.

At the congress, attended by Kingué, the J.D.C. had voted to support the armed action of the C.N.O. At the same time, however, the organisation finalised its statute, the final article of which was: 'To fight for the effective application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and particularly the arrangements relating to the people's right for self-determination'.¹⁰² In a similar vein, a 1957 'Popular Appeal' published by the U.P.C. leadership in Kumba stated that the party's demand for independence 'conforms to the articles of the Atlantic Charter, the Human Rights Declaration and the United Nations Charter...In the above mentioned documents, it precisely states that every country, be it small or big, is entitled to self-determination.'¹⁰³

The U.P.C. consequently occupies an interesting position within recent academic debates on the history of human rights, particularly during the era of decolonisation. On the one hand, authors such as Lynn Hunt and Samuel Moyn view the 1950s as a moment when a global human rights movement 'took a back seat', or was 'marginalised', due to an international preoccupation with anti-colonial struggles, which concerned itself with independence rather than human rights.¹⁰⁴ In contrast to this view, however, Roland Burke has claimed that a 'Third World' anti-colonial movement actively embraced and expounded international human rights during this period. In particular, Burke argues that at Bandung, the official recognition of the U.D.H.R. as one of the conference's key declarations marked a 'high point in support for the universality of human rights among the Third World.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ The first such articulation was contained within the Bamenda joint declaration in 1955, immediately after its demand that the U.N. visiting mission should be free from French manipulation: 'We demand of the visiting mission the liberation of all political prisoners, the cessation of judicial proceedings against leaders of progressive political parties in Cameroon under French administration, as well as the comprehensive application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all of which are prior, necessary, and principle conditions for the attainment of independence as outlined in Article 76 of the U.N. Charter.' 'Déclaration Commune' (261 J7).

¹⁰² 'Statutes of the Cameroon Democratic Youth Recast at the Second Congress of Kumba' (Vb/b 1960/10).

¹⁰³ U.P.C. Popular Appeal, 30/10/1957 (VB/b 1960/10)

¹⁰⁴ Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (W.W. Norton & Co.: New York, 2007) p. 206; Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard, 2009), pp. 85-88.

¹⁰⁵ Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights* (Philadelphia, 2010), pp. 14-15.

Both viewpoints, however, are based upon an overly generalised conception of human rights, one that overlooks the way in which such a discourse was deployed by the U.P.C. Moyn, for example, bases his view upon a conception of international human rights that is necessarily opposed to state sovereignty; that the aim of a ‘genuine’ global human rights movement is to rein in state power. Indeed, one can agree with Moyn insofar as a right to ‘self-determination’ was not included in the U.N.H.D.R. during the 1950s. The U.P.C.’s articulation of self-determination as a human right is not, therefore, intelligible within Moyn’s paradigm.

For his part, Burke over-emphasises the ‘universality’ of human rights at Bandung, and thus overlooks the fact that it was imbued with a very specific meaning at the conference, one taken up by the U.P.C.: namely, that self-determination was the ‘pre-requisite for the full enjoyment of human rights’.¹⁰⁶ Both these viewpoints, therefore, articulate a generalised idea of human rights that does not take into account the contextualised exigencies of the anti-colonial struggle. It is an approach that cannot appreciate how the U.P.C. sought to appropriate and redefine the concept of human rights for the specific aim of self-determination. As such, the U.P.C.’s articulation of the U.D.H.R. at this time was not a simple misunderstanding or ideological incoherence; it was a conscious and pragmatic attempt to appropriate a transnational discourse for its own campaign. In addition, because such an attempt was centred on a doctrine articulated by the U.N., the U.P.C. demonstrated its continued determination to exploit its trusteeship status. This strategy becomes further evident in the actions of the U.P.C. leadership in British Cameroon, during the first few months of 1957.

Whilst awaiting the twelfth session of the General Assembly - to which the U.P.C. still hoped to be able to send representatives - Moumié and Ouandié used their presence in the British territory to build support for the party’s unification claim. They firstly did so by performing a series of lectures and rallies in the territory, and by running candidates in the March 1957 legislative elections.¹⁰⁷ The leadership’s politics, however, remained firmly orientated towards the U.N., and indeed the party continued to fly the U.N. flag outside its

¹⁰⁶ Jan Eckel, ‘Human Rights and Decolonization: New Perspectives and Open Questions’, *Humanity*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2010), pp. 111-135, p. 118.

¹⁰⁷ Letter from District Officer, Mamfe Division, to Commissioner, 25/07/1956, (Vb/b 1956/1).

local headquarters.¹⁰⁸ The leadership further demonstrated an acute understanding of the U.D.H.R., and indeed used it as leverage against attempts by the British authorities to obstruct its activities within the territory. Accordingly, when the British authorities refused a U.P.C. meeting in Bamenda, on the grounds that the party did not give seven days' notice, Ouandié wrote a letter to the deputy commissioner stating that such an act 'prevents us from enjoying the rights of democracy and also violates articles 13 and 20 of the Human Rights Declaration.'¹⁰⁹

In commenting on Ouandié's letter, the Acting Resident in Bamenda revealed that the British authorities were rather more wary than their French counterparts regarding the U.P.C.'s ability to petition the United Nations. He wrote that:

To attempt to muzzle any one political party by refusing them permits to hold public meetings, would, in a Trust Territory in this age of democracy and nationalism, produce inevitable petitions to the United Nations Organisation, and would provide the oppressed with an admirable stick with which to belabour colonial policy.¹¹⁰

Aside from its political rallies, the U.P.C. leadership in the British territory continued to seek alternative diplomatic channels to further the party's aims, and thus strengthen its claim before the next General Assembly session. In April 1957, Moumié wrote to the Colonial Office in London demanding that the party be allowed to send a delegation to the London Constitutional Conference. The Conference was to discuss the future of the British Cameroons, and the U.P.C. wished to attend in order to argue for the unification of the French and British territories.¹¹¹ The request was refused, but the U.P.C. was nevertheless able to persuade the British government to deliver 354 copies of the party's memorandum to the conference by airfreight.¹¹²

By June, however, the increasingly confrontational stance of the U.P.C., and the growing fear that violence in the French territory could spill over the border, caused the British administration to ban the party, including its branches of the U.D.F.C. and J.D.C. The U.P.C.'s former political allies in the region – notably the K.N.D.P. – did not put up

¹⁰⁸ Letter from U.P.C. Victoria Branch to Superintendent of Police, Victoria, 17/07/1956 (Vb/b 1956/1).

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Ernest Ouandié to Deputy Commissioner of Southern Cameroons, 05/05/1957 (Vb/b 1956/1).

¹¹⁰ Letter from Acting Resident, Bamenda, to the Southern Cameroons' Commissioner, 28/05/1957 (Vb/b 1956/1).

¹¹¹ Letter from Moumié to Colonial Secretary, London, 15/04/1957, (Vb/b 1956/1).

¹¹² Letter from Chief of Federal Security, Nigeria, 22/05/1957 (Vb/b 1956/1).

much protest, due to increasing tensions between the two parties. The K.N.D.P.'s President, John Foncha, had become displeased with the U.P.C.'s aggressive attempts to dominate the political scene in the British territory, particularly the fact that the latter had run for the March 1957 elections to the House of Assembly, despite the K.N.D.P.'s request that they abstain.¹¹³

The proscription of the U.P.C. in the British territory revealed that the leadership's main concern remained the party's ability to access the United Nations. This became evident in three important acts. First of all, Moumié wrote a letter to Roger Baldwin, chairman of the International League of the Rights of Man (I.L.R.M.) in New York. The I.L.R.M. was a human rights N.G.O. that had a consultative status at the U.N., and which the U.P.C. leadership had made contact with on its previous trips to the General Assembly. Moumié subsequently requested in his letter that the organisation 'defend our cause to the United Nations.'¹¹⁴

Secondly, Moumié asked Ndeh Ntumazah, a U.P.C. activist from Bamenda, to form a new party, through which the U.P.C. could legally operate within the British territory. In June 1957, the One Kamerun Party (O.K.) was subsequently created. In historical analyses, the formation of the O.K. is perceived as having a purely domestic purpose: that is, to pursue the U.P.C.'s objectives within the British territory.¹¹⁵ Yet the O.K. party was also imbued with a distinctly diplomatic function, one that Ntumazah himself recalled in his autobiography:

Um [Nyobé] could no longer go to the U.N. to argue Cameroon's case. I was immediately chosen to represent the U.P.C. at the U.N. To legitimise my presence at the U.N. we needed another umbrella under which we could still fight the French in Cameroon. I was therefore advised to form a party and act as the mouth piece of that party, OK was the result of that decision.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun"', pp. 16-19.

¹¹⁴ Meredith Terretta, "'We had been Fooled into Thinking that the UN Watches over the Entire World': Human Rights, UN Trust Territories, and Africa's Decolonization', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2012), pp. 329-360, p. 347.

¹¹⁵ Takougang, 'The "Union des Populations du Cameroun"', p. 21; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 239.

¹¹⁶ Linus T. Asong and Simon N. Chi (eds.), *Ndeh Ntumazah: A Conversational Autobiography* (Bamenda 2001), p. 73.

Ntumazah's personal recollection of his party's diplomatic purpose may appear somewhat self-aggrandising, given that it would be Moumié, the party's President, who would continue to be the U.P.C.'s main representative at the U.N. Instead, the O.K.'s diplomatic purpose resided in its ability to organise the sending of petitions to the United Nations, to support the party's campaign at the twelfth session of the General Assembly. The sending of petitions by mail was something that was increasingly difficult to organise within the French territory, due to increasing supervision of mail by the authorities. A Trusteeship Council report from 5th November 1957 accordingly states that between June and October 1957, 4,480 petitions were sent to New York from the British and French Cameroons. Of these, the Council remarked that: 'With a few exceptions, all were sent from the Cameroons under British administration', that a 'very small number were posted from the Cameroons under French administration', and that concerning the latter, 'Many of these communications are marked "sous maquis"' Indeed, of the total 4,480 petitions received, 3,382 were written by members of the O.K. party.¹¹⁷

Finally, after the U.P.C.'s proscription by the British administration, Moumié, Kingué, and Ouandié did not seek to organise an armed insurgency within the territory, but to continue the diplomatic struggle.¹¹⁸ The leaders allowed themselves, and ten others, to be taken into custody, being informed that the British authorities intended to send them to a foreign independent state of their choice.¹¹⁹ Sudan was the only country on the leadership's list that would accept them. After only a month in Khartoum, however, the Sudanese government was made increasingly uneasy by the party's attempts to turn its offices into a hub of international anti-colonialism.¹²⁰ Under pressure from the French and British

¹¹⁷ [T/Pet. 4 95/L] (Vb/b 1956/5).

¹¹⁸ The party's attitude in this respect had already been made clear by Ouandié. In July 1956, Jabea K. Dibonge, the President of the K.N.C. – a pro-Nigerian party in the British territory – had accused the U.P.C. of 'being a communist party whose activities might lead to bloodshed in the near future'. In response, Ouandié wrote a letter to J. O. Field, the British Commissioner for the territory, proclaiming firstly that the U.P.C. 'was neither pro nor anti-communist', and secondly that 'if there would be bloodshed in this country, the U.P.C. will not be responsible.' Ouandié's statement appeared to be genuine, as when the U.P.C. headquarters in Bamenda was burned down a month later, and two of its members killed, the U.P.C. did not respond with force. Although this act was subsequently revealed to have been committed by French Commandos, at the time, the U.P.C. believed it was the work of British authorities. Having learned the lessons of May 1955, the party instead wrote a flurry of telegrams to Field, stating that the attack was 'a deliberate provocation so that the U.P.C. would violently react and thus be accused of endangering peace in Southern Cameroon.' Ernest Ouandié, letter to J. O. Field, 21/08/1956 (Vb/b 1956/1). See also Félix Moumié and Ernest Ouandié, *Le Peuple Kamerunais En Lutte* (Cairo, 1957), p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 240; Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 201.

¹²⁰ Nkrumah, for example, supposedly visited the U.P.C. whilst in Khartoum. Dieudonné Pouhe, 'Les Liaisons Extérieures de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun : 1948-1963', MA Thesis, (University of Yaoundé I), 1999, p. 41.

governments, the Sudanese government asked the U.P.C. leadership to leave in July.¹²¹ Fortunately, the thirteen members of the party were able to take advantage of the contact that Moumié had previously established with Nasser, and the U.P.C. executive was granted asylum in Cairo.

Nasser provided the U.P.C. with funding, accommodation (in the form of a villa that had been requisitioned from a British businessman after the nationalisation of Suez), the means to publish newspapers and pamphlets, and a weekly slot on *Radio Cairo*.¹²² The most important opportunity for the U.P.C. leadership, however, was that it was now given improved access to the anti-colonial bloc – particularly of the Afro-Asian countries – at the U.N. General Assembly. In February 1957, Chinese, Soviet and Indian diplomats had discussed with Nasser the possibility of hosting a conference in Egypt to succeed Bandung. It was subsequently agreed that an Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference would be held in Cairo in December.¹²³

In the months preceding the conference, delegations from the Middle East, Africa and Asia formed National Committees in Cairo, a development which the U.P.C. took advantage of.¹²⁴ Moumié and Ouandié liaised with these committees, requesting that their national representatives at the U.N. General Assembly put pressure on the twelfth session to ‘recognise the aspirations of the Cameroonian people, by the restoration of peace and the return of the U.P.C. to legality.’¹²⁵ The leadership’s focus on the General Assembly corresponded to its increasing lack of faith in the Trusteeship Council, particularly in light of the recent visiting missions. Accordingly, Moumié and Kingué wrote from Cairo that ‘We speak of the General Assembly because the Trusteeship Council remains in collusion with the colonial authorities to condone the latter’s crimes. As such, the trusteeship territories can no longer place any faith in this subsidiary organ of the United Nations, which has established itself as an International Colonial Ministry.’¹²⁶

¹²¹ Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global’, p. 201.

¹²² Ntumazah, *A Conversational Autobiography*, pp. 712-714.

¹²³ Charles Nehauser, *Third World Politics: China and the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organization: 1957-1967* (Harvard, 1968), p. 11.

¹²⁴ The Conference’s Director’s Committee would eventually be comprised of 27 members, each one representing a particular nation: Algeria, Cameroon (UPC), Peoples’ Republic of China, Belgian Congo, North Korea, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Mongolia, Morocco, Uganda, Pakistan, Somalia, Southern Rhodesia, South-West Africa, Tunisia, UAR, USSR, North Vietnam, and Yemen.

¹²⁵ Moumié and Ouandié, *Le Peuple Kamerunais En Lutte*, p. 6.

¹²⁶ Moumié and Ouandié, *Le Peuple Kamerunais En Lutte*, p. 6.

By the 13th December, the twelfth session of the General Assembly had reviewed the petitions sent to the organisation, and the report submitted by the Trusteeship Council. Importantly, Moumié himself had been able to travel to New York, to make a speech before the Fourth Committee in December. Moumié was able to make this appearance through his affiliation with the I.L.R.M., which, as an N.G.O. with consultative status, was able to protect the U.P.C. leaders' right to appear at the U.N.¹²⁷ What becomes apparent, therefore, is that a transnational human rights discourse was not only used by the U.P.C. leadership to translate and communicate its grievances to a broader international audience. It was also, like the party's previous unification claim, a diplomatic tool to allow access to the political platform of the U.N. As Hafner-Burton and Ron have correctly observed, however, academic analyses should refrain from perceiving such a use of human rights discourse as a cynical instrumentalisation.¹²⁸ Rather, it was a pragmatic response by the U.P.C., which was forced to seek alternative political openings when faced with repression within the territory, and with the limitations of the Trusteeship Council and its visiting missions.

The conclusions of the twelfth session, reached on the 13th December, requested that 'appropriate steps' be taken by the Administering Authorities to 'further facilitate the realization in both Territories of the final objectives of the Trusteeship System, in accordance with the free expression of the populations concerned.' In particular, it recommended for French Cameroon 'the early promulgation of an amnesty law by the Administering Authority, and the renunciation of the use of violence by all political parties.'¹²⁹ Importantly, it was the Trusteeship Council that would be entrusted with assessing the 'free expression of the populations', as the General Assembly requested that a visiting mission be sent to the territory in October 1958.¹³⁰

From February 1958, the attitude of the French administration towards Cameroon, and its incorporation into the French Union, appeared to have changed. In that month, Messmer was replaced by Jean Ramadier as High Commissioner of the territory. One of Ramadier's first acts was to dismiss Mbida as Prime Minister, and to replace him with Ahmadou Ahidjo, a Muslim from the North and leader of the *Union Camerounaise* party. Ahidjo,

¹²⁷ Terretta, "“We had been Fooled”", p. 348.

¹²⁸ Emilie M. Hafner-Burton and James Ron, 'Seeing Double: Human Rights Through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes', *World Politics*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (2009), pp. 360-401, p. 369.

¹²⁹ A/RES/1211 (XII)

¹³⁰ A/RES/1211 (XII)

like Mbida, was a pupil of Aujoulat's B.D.C., and had supported Mbida's co-operative attitude towards the metropole in his capacity as Vice-Prime Minister in the Legislative Assembly. In his inaugural speech, however, Ahidjo declared himself in favour of unification, and pledged that he would obtain independence within the shortest space of time.¹³¹

To explain this apparent change in metropolitan attitudes, one must again examine domestic developments within the context of a particular international political environment, one in which the United Nations continued to play a key role. Within Cameroon, the policies of Mbida, defined by an enthusiastic support for the repression of the U.P.C., and a desire to closely co-operate with France, had proved increasingly unpopular not only with the Cameroonian population, but also the other parties in the Legislative Assembly.¹³² There was, consequently, a growing awareness amongst the French administration that military superiority, and the installation of a political moderate as Prime Minister, was not sufficient to defeat the U.P.C., nor the popularity of its political objectives.¹³³ Importantly, the French administration was still being pressured by the General Assembly to grant amnesty to the U.P.C. and lead the territory towards independence, as the conclusions of the twelfth session demonstrated.

The French administration was thus faced with the task of placating persistent demands for independence - from the Cameroonian population, political parties, and the United Nations - whilst ensuring that the U.P.C. did not return to power, and, as a consequence, ensuring that the territory would remain within the French sphere of influence. Ramadier's proposed solution was to grant Cameroon's independence - thereby undermining support for the U.P.C. - but granting it under a regime that desired to maintain close ties to France. Within this context, one can more clearly understand the appointment of Ahidjo. By resigning from Mbida's government in January, Ahidjo was able to sufficiently distance himself from the former's politics to appropriate the U.P.C.'s demands.¹³⁴ Importantly, however, Ahidjo would remain amenable to co-operation with the metropole. Ahidjo's appropriation of the U.P.C.'s politics, and his vital commitment to maintain close ties to France, became evident in the three commitments that he announced in his inaugural

¹³¹ See Bayart, 'The Political System', pp. 48-50.

¹³² Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 42.

¹³³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 304.

¹³⁴ Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 49.

speech as Prime Minister: 'Cameroonian unity, Cameroonian nationhood, Franco-Cameroonian co-operation'.¹³⁵

For this plan to work, however, the U.P.C. would have to be safely removed as a rival threat to Ahidjo. As a result, at the same moment when French attitudes towards Cameroon's independence appeared to be relaxing, its measures to eradicate the U.P.C. within the territory increased. From the beginning of 1958, the French administration stepped up its military involvement in an attempt to wipe out the U.P.C.'s political and military cells within the territory.¹³⁶ It would, however, take a combination of events in Algeria, Paris, and the countryside of the Sanaga-Maritime region, before the agreement for Cameroon's independence would be accepted as official French policy in Paris, and a definite timetable set.

Firstly, the military coup by French officers in Algiers in May, and the subsequent fall of the Fourth Republic, brought de Gaulle back to power in June.¹³⁷ With the prospect of a new French constitution, de Gaulle began to speak of a new confederated structure for the French Union, based on freely negotiated contracts with the overseas territories. The French Union was now re-modelled as the French Community. More importantly, a referendum on the constitution of the new Fifth Republic, to be held in September, would allow the African territories to freely choose the Community or independence.¹³⁸ The results of the referendum showed that the Community was a desirable option for many French African leaders, as only Guinea voted 'No'.¹³⁹ Even as late as 1958, therefore, independence was by no means an inevitable or planned option, either from the viewpoint

¹³⁵ Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 50.

¹³⁶ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', 6H241, p. 7 ; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, pp. 258, 270, 278.

¹³⁷ In spite of an undeniable continuity in how the Fourth Republic had sought to retain its overseas territories, the loss of Indochina, the *Loi-Cadre* reforms, and persistent cabinet instability, caused elements of the French army to fear that an 'abandonment of Algeria' was imminent. Jacques Soustelle, the Governor General of Algeria, organised a military coup in Algiers, and on 13th May General Salan assumed control of a Committee of Public Safety. The coup leaders demanded the return of de Gaulle to power, who had withdrawn from government politics in 1946, as the only means to give direction and leadership to the French government. Evans, *Algeria*, pp. 234-7.

¹³⁸ Chafer, *End of Empire*, p. 173.

¹³⁹ Elizabeth Schmidt has shown, however, that the Community was a desired option even for the exemplary 'radical' nationalist leader of Guinea, Sékou Touré. Schmidt ably demonstrates that it was largely de Gaulle's intransigence to modify the terms of the French Community, and pressure from grassroots activists in Touré's party, that led to the infamous 'No' vote of the 1958 referendum. Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens, 2007), pp. 157-180.

of prominent African nationalists, or of the French government.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, from the French viewpoint, the independence option was more a disincentive than a desire to grant autonomy, as such an option would in effect sever all ties of development assistance with France.¹⁴¹

Due to the pressures from within the territory and from the United Nations, however, French Cameroon would be granted a third option: independence and continued close ties with Paris. On June 12th, the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly requested a modification to its statute, which would allow the territory to acquire independence without participating in the September referendum.¹⁴² Ahidjo went to Paris in the same month, to present this request for independence to de Gaulle, and to ensure that Paris would not sever ties of co-operation with Cameroon if it were accepted. By August, de Gaulle had agreed, thereby offering Cameroon a unique option that was not open to France's other African territories.¹⁴³

The role of the United Nations in de Gaulle's decision was not, however, limited to the requirements of trusteeship. In this respect, one must also take into account the increasingly volatile situation in Algeria. De Gaulle, and the Ministry for Overseas France, hoped that the granting of Cameroon's independence would alleviate criticism of France's refusal to do the same in Algeria; criticism that was particularly acute amongst the Afro-Asian bloc at the U.N.¹⁴⁴ The French government further hoped that the appointment of a Muslim to lead Cameroon's path to independence would prove favourable to France's image in this respect.¹⁴⁵ Finally, an independent Cameroon, one that desired close co-operation with France, would prove a useful ally at the United Nations, particularly at a time when the F.L.N. was attempting to put pressure on the organisation.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ As Frederick Cooper has demonstrated, this was particularly evident for Mamadou Dia and Léopold Senghor of Senegal, who envisioned the Community as a supranational configuration of French African states that would participate alongside France as an equal partner in a confederation. Frederick Cooper, 'Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (2008), pp. 167-196, p. 168.

¹⁴¹ Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, pp. 157.

¹⁴² Joseph, 'Ruben um Nyobé and the "Kamerun" Rebellion', p. 435.

¹⁴³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 319.

¹⁴⁴ Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p. 164; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 189.

¹⁴⁵ Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 46.

¹⁴⁶ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 119. See also Martin Thomas, 'France Accused: French North Africa Before the United Nations, 1952-1962', *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 10, No.1 (2001), pp. 91-121.

As yet, however, there was no official announcement of Cameroon's independence to the United Nations, as there remained one last obstacle to the metropole's plan: Um Nyobé. During the first half of 1958, and in spite of increased French repression, Nyobé still attempted to negotiate the U.P.C.'s legalisation and a peaceful return to political life; attempts that continued until June at least.¹⁴⁷ It should be noted at this point that there was a spike in violence in the Sanaga-Maritime region in September 1957.¹⁴⁸ Yet this can itself be attributed to a failed attempt by Nyobé to negotiate a return to legality with Messmer, via the intermediary of a Cameroonian Catholic bishop, Thomas Mongo.¹⁴⁹ Nyobé's persistent desire to return to legality was a threat to Ahidjo's position, and thus an obstacle to the future co-operation of an independent Cameroon with France. On the 13th September, however, this obstacle was removed, as Nyobé was killed in the *maquis*.¹⁵⁰

From this one incident in the forests of the Sanaga-Martime region, events progressed rapidly. Ahidjo, still seeking to capitalise on the popularity of the U.P.C.'s political objectives, now demanded 'immediate independence'.¹⁵¹ On the 19th October, the French administration now recognised the 'freely expressed' desires of the Cameroonian people, and announced that independence would be given on January 1st, 1960.¹⁵² Ahidjo and a French delegation subsequently travelled to the U.N. in November, and it was agreed that Cameroon's trusteeship would also be lifted on 1st January, 1960, pending the report of the forthcoming visiting mission.¹⁵³

Cameroon would now achieve independence outside of a metropolitan-centred federal structure. As a result, whichever party controlled the Legislative Assembly upon independence, would be able to determine Cameroon's future ties to France. The U.P.C., whilst never desiring a complete severance of these ties, nevertheless sought to loosen them, a desire that had become more resolute in the face of increasing French repression. The party's earlier desires to forge ties with the U.N. had thus progressed into its severance of links with the co-operative stance of the R.D.A., and its subsequent seeking of alternative Afro-Asian solidarity networks. The important issue now became whether the

¹⁴⁷ In June 1958, Nyobé demanded: i) The withdrawal of French troops; ii) The cessation of arrests; iii) Total amnesty; iv) The return of political exiles; and v) Immediate Recognition of Independence. *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 9.

¹⁴⁸ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée' (6H 241), p. 7.

¹⁴⁹ Bayart, 'The Political System', p. 43; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 253,

¹⁵⁰ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée' (6H 241), p. 12.

¹⁵¹ *L'O.N.U. et le Problème Kamerunais* (Cairo, 1959), p. 19.

¹⁵² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 320-321.

¹⁵³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 321.

U.P.C. would be able to enter the Legislative Assembly before the simultaneous lifting of trusteeship and the granting of independence.

For the U.P.C., such an entry would not only require a complete amnesty and legalisation, but also an election supervised by the U.N. Without such supervision, the U.P.C. feared that Ahidjo, with the assistance of the French government, would be able to manipulate any subsequent elections, thus securing Cameroon's narrow ties to the metropole.¹⁵⁴ In this respect, the recent example of Togo proved a hopeful example for the U.P.C.¹⁵⁵ For Cameroon to have U.N.-supervised elections, however, they would have to occur before the lifting of trusteeship on January 1st 1960. It was this crucial question, of whether a complete amnesty and a U.N.-supervised election was necessary before the lifting of trusteeship, that was now to be decided by the imminent visiting mission.

Notwithstanding its previous criticisms of the Trusteeship Council, U.P.C. publications demonstrated an optimism in the U.N. from October 1958, citing the organisation's supervision of elections in Togo as evidence that it had 'recomposed itself' and offered the possibility of a 'fair and just solution in keeping with the Charter.'¹⁵⁶ In the same month, Moumié's wife, as head of the U.D.F.C., had made an appearance before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, to appeal for a total amnesty and U.N.-supervised elections before Cameroon's trusteeship was lifted.¹⁵⁷ Within Cameroon, however, France was determined to show the U.N. visiting mission that there was no need for either a complete amnesty, or general elections before independence. It did so by staging a grand reconciliation between the government and U.P.C., selectively freeing certain prisoners and showcasing U.P.C. militants who had now rallied to Ahidjo. The most important example in this respect was that of Mayi Matip, Um Nyobé's second-in-command in the *maquis*, and a fellow Bassa. Only a few days after Nyobé's death, Matip rallied to the

¹⁵⁴ *Le Peuple Kamerunais en Lutte*, p. 6. Indeed, in December 1959 Ahidjo would sign a series of secret co-operation agreements with France that would ensure close commercial, financial, and military ties between the two territories after independence. Atangana, *French Investment*, p. 104.

¹⁵⁵ In French Togoland, the *Comité de l'Unité Togolaise*, like the U.P.C., had been campaigning for complete independence from France and unification with the trust territory of British Togoland. The C.U.T., after boycotting a 1956 referendum on the application of the *Loi-Cadre* reforms, had successfully appealed to the U.N. to disregard the vote on account of French 'irregularities'. The C.U.T. also demanded subsequent U.N.-supervised elections to the Legislative Assembly, in which the party would finally participate. The U.N. agreed, and as a result of these elections, in April 1958, the C.U.T. came to power. See D. E. K. Amenumey, 'The General Elections in the "Autonomous Republic of Togo", April 1958: Background and Interpretation', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1975), pp. 47-65.

¹⁵⁶ *L'O.N.U. et le Problème Kamerunais*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁷ *L'O.N.U. et le Problème Kamerunais*, pp. 11-19.

government, an act that the French administration proudly paraded before the visiting mission.¹⁵⁸

It is at this same moment, with the death of Nyobé and the rallying of Matip, that analyses of the U.P.C. 'armed rebellion' in Cameroon have posited its transition to a 'Bamileke phase'.¹⁵⁹ French military reports seem to support this interpretation, as in November 1958 Colonel Aufeuvre reported a subsequent upsurge of armed activity in the West and Mungo regions, areas with a large Bamileke population.¹⁶⁰ Yet there are two factors that complicate such an assertion, and further demonstrate that the rhythms of the insurgency were significantly defined by events at the United Nations. Firstly, armed action in the Bamileke region had begun much earlier than the death of Nyobé. Secondly, whilst this armed action was largely sporadic and ill-organised until November 1958, the reasons for its sudden upsurge, was, like the actions of December 1956, an attempt to access the international gaze of the United Nations, when other channels had been closed off.

To examine these factors, one must return to a final act that Moumié undertook before his deportation from the British Cameroons in June 1957. When the party's proscription was announced, Moumié gave instructions to Martin Singap, a Bamileke who had edited the party newspaper *Lumière*, to reorganise the U.P.C. and J.D.C. in the West Region of the French territory, and to form an armed organisation along the lines of the C.N.O.¹⁶¹ Singap took advantage of the violent unrest that followed the removal of a local chief in the region, and organised the latter's supporters into the *Sinistre de la Défense Nationale* (S.D.N.)¹⁶² The S.D.N., however, being composed mostly by local villagers with no military training, was soon effectively dismantled by local police.¹⁶³ Singap consequently recruited another U.P.C. militant from Baham, Paul Momo, to organise a tighter and better-trained organisation, creating the *Sinistre de la Défense Nationale Kamerunaise* (S.D.N.K.) in October 1957.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Johnson, 'The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion', p. 675.

¹⁵⁹ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 20; DeLancey, DeLancey, and Mbuh *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cameroon*, p. 6; Johnson, 'The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion', pp. 682-689.

¹⁶⁰ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée' (6H 241), p. 4.

¹⁶¹ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée' (6H 241), p. 11.

¹⁶² In November 1956, the French administration had arrested Pierre Kamdem Ninyim, the chief of Baham in the West Region, who was a known U.P.C. sympathiser.

¹⁶³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 227.

¹⁶⁴ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H 241), p. 7. The use of the term 'sinistre' by Singap is difficult to ascertain. Deltombe *et al.* have advanced the theory that the term should be translated in terms of a 'disaster',

Throughout 1957 and 1958, French military reports indicate that the S.D.N.K. applied the same methods as the C.N.O. – ‘murders, looting and burning’ – but that it was far less organised, with the actions of individual groups ‘most often left to the initiatives of their captains, who indulged in a complicated game of reprisals and settling of scores.’¹⁶⁵ The S.D.N.K.’s activities were fairly limited, moreover, with attacks occurring only a ‘few times per month’, and largely consisting of burning down guard posts and targeted assassinations.¹⁶⁶ The full military capabilities of the S.D.N.K., however, would not be demonstrated until November 1958, when French forces would be ‘taken to task for the first time’ according to the French army’s report.¹⁶⁷

This sudden upsurge in violence coincided with the arrival of the visiting mission in the region. In particular, just days before the mission was due to visit Dschang, the capital of the West Region, around twenty S.D.N.K. members launched an attack on the well-guarded compound of the local chief, Mathias Djoumessi.¹⁶⁸ These actions were intended to show the visiting mission that no reconciliation between the U.P.C. and French administration had been achieved, and that the U.P.C. was still a force that needed to be taken into account. The armed struggle was, therefore, an attempt to attract the attention of the U.N. to the cause of amnesty and pre-independence elections. The visiting mission, which left in December, submitted its report to the General Assembly in January 1959. It would be reviewed at a special session between from 20th February and 13th March.¹⁶⁹ At this session, the U.N. General Assembly would decide whether to confirm the lifting of trusteeship, and whether elections were necessary before that time.

In December 1958, however, an even more significant event took place. Between 1957 and 1959, the U.P.C. leadership had been attending conferences and building political alliances in Cairo, Accra, and Conakry. The principal aim of these contacts was to find alternative political channels to put pressure on the United Nations. An additional result of these activities, however, was that the U.P.C. leadership was able to embed itself within a certain diplomatic infrastructure. In December 1957, Moumié had firstly been elected to

signifying that the SNK emerged from the disaster that had befallen the Baham chieftancy through French intervention. Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 221 (f.n.).

¹⁶⁵ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’ (6H 241), p. 20.

¹⁶⁶ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’ (6H 241), p. 20.

¹⁶⁷ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’, (6H 241), p. 8.

¹⁶⁸ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 331.

¹⁶⁹ A/RES/1211 (XIII).

serve on the directors' committee at the first conference of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation (A.A.S.O.) in Cairo, and the U.P.C. was designated a member of the Permanent Secretariat.¹⁷⁰ This membership allowed Moumié to establish contact with Sékou Touré of Guinea and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, which further enabled the U.P.C. to attend the first All-African People's Conference (A.A.P.C.) in Accra, in December 1958.¹⁷¹ At the conference, Moumié was similarly elected to a position in the directors' committee.¹⁷²

At the A.A.P.C. conference, Moumié declared that the U.P.C. executive in exile now constituted the legitimate government of Cameroon.¹⁷³ To understand this claim, two developments need to be taken into account. First of all, Moumié's declaration was made two months after France had set a date for Cameroon's independence. Secondly, the U.P.C.'s attendance at the A.A.S.O. and A.A.P.C. conferences, and its prominent position within their directors' committees, put the party leadership on a similar - if not equal - footing as the representatives of extant independent states. As a result, the exiled U.P.C. leadership saw itself as making diplomatic representations in the name of an independent state, and effectively acting as Cameroon's legitimate government.

Significantly, the A.A.P.C. – convened by the independent states of Ghana, Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia – appeared to recognise the U.P.C.'s claim to represent an independent Cameroon. It did so, moreover, at the expense of Prime Minister Ahidjo. Ahidjo had also been invited to the A.A.P.C., but refused to attend unless Moumié's invitation was revoked. The convenors of the A.A.P.C., however, did not revoke Moumié's invitation, and instead effectively recognised his claim to represent Cameroon by maintaining his position within the directorate. With Cameroon's independence now set for January 1st 1960, the first A.A.P.C. signalled the beginning of a new struggle. Specifically, it was a struggle over which political actors would be externally recognised as the legitimate representatives of an independent Cameroon.

In January 1959, whilst the General Assembly reviewed the visiting mission's findings, U.P.C. members in Cairo and France published tracts and articles speaking of a 'day of truth' and the 'weight of responsibility' now upon the United Nations.¹⁷⁴ Moumié was

¹⁷⁰ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', 6H241, p. 30.

¹⁷¹ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 201.

¹⁷² Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 204.

¹⁷³ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 204.

¹⁷⁴ *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 10; *L'O.N.U. et le Problème Kamerunais*, p. 3.

determined to represent the U.P.C. in New York to contest the presence of Ahidjo. In this instance, the U.P.C. President was able to take advantage of Guinea's decision to accept independence in 1958, as Sékou Touré accepted Moumié's request to attach himself to the new Guinean delegation at the U.N. General Assembly.¹⁷⁵ At the special session between February and March, two resolutions were on the table. The first was proposed by Guinea, Ghana, Libya, Liberia, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and the R.A.U., and demanded that before the lifting of trusteeship, the government of French Cameroon was obliged to abrogate the decree banning the U.P.C., to proclaim a general amnesty, and to hold general elections under the supervision of the U.N. The second resolution, proposed by the U.S.A., Haiti, and New Zealand, was to set independence at a date chosen by the Prime Minister of Cameroon without a prior election.¹⁷⁶

Whilst the first resolution was defeated, the second succeeded, signalling a resounding defeat for the hopes of the U.P.C. There were a number of factors that explained this outcome. Firstly there were the findings of the visiting mission, which had reported that the U.P.C. was no longer a visible force within the territory.¹⁷⁷ Secondly, Ahidjo had promised an amnesty and elections immediately after independence and the lifting of trusteeship – still set for January 1st, 1960.¹⁷⁸ Thirdly, the Asian and Latin-American states, led by India, had been persuaded of the U.P.C.'s 'Marxist' orientation, and so had voted against the party.¹⁷⁹ Finally, there was the role of the U.S.A., which had rallied other states under its influence to vote in France's favour, and in return France had promised to allow NATO bases in Cameroon after its independence.¹⁸⁰

The U.N.'s decision demonstrated that the perceived 'international community' was a shifting and ambiguous realm of constraint as much as opportunity for Cameroonian statehood, as the equitable horizontal ties of the U.N. now became blurred with the hierarchical and vertical ties of French foreign policy. This was evident in U.P.C. publications, as they denounced the entire U.N. as the 'Ministry of Colonies'.¹⁸¹ The benign international gaze of trusteeship was revealed to have been blind all along, as the

¹⁷⁵ Le Vine, *The Cameroons*, p. 243.

¹⁷⁶ Aufeuvre, 'Action Menée', (6H 241), p. 12.

¹⁷⁷ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 333.

¹⁷⁸ A/RES/1211 (XIII)

¹⁷⁹ Gardinier, *Cameroon*, pp. 89-90.

¹⁸⁰ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 333.

¹⁸¹ U.P.C. (No specific author), *Un Sursaut de l'Opinion Française*, October 1960, p. 6.

U.P.C. now ‘strongly condemned’ the visiting missions ‘which always favoured the administrative authorities’, whilst ‘petitions were simply filed away’.¹⁸²

It was in response to this vote that the U.P.C. re-launched its armed struggle. In April 1959, Martin Singap, who had organised the U.P.C.’s armed action the previous November, was called to Conakry to meet Moumié.¹⁸³ Moumié had re-located to the Guinean capital from Cairo shortly after the U.N. special session, and gave instructions to Singap to create a new armed organisation; *l’Armée de Libération Nationale du Kamerun* (A.L.N.K.). From the end of June, the French military detachment in Cameroon reported ‘the resumption of actions on a grand scale’ in Douala and Yaoundé, as well as major towns in Mungo and Bamileke regions.¹⁸⁴ Europeans and Cameroonians deemed ‘valets’ of colonialism were assassinated, roads were blocked, communication lines were ‘almost totally destroyed’, and a large number of plantations were set ablaze.¹⁸⁵

This armed action was not an attempt to take the institutions of state by force, nor to control its territory. In the first instance, it was not directed at the central seats of government, nor did the A.L.N.K. seek to hold any of the territory it attacked. Although this was significantly due to the A.L.N.K.’s lack of military capacity, such a limitation was acknowledged by the A.L.N.K. command, and undoubtedly realised by Moumié. As a result, it forces one to seek a more political rationale for these armed actions. Such a rationale becomes evident by noting a final reason why the U.N. special session in March 1959 had voted in favour of Ahidjo.

With the aid of the French administration, Ahidjo had been able to legitimate his government as representing the ‘freely expressed wishes of the peoples’ for independence, as outlined in Article 76 of the U.N. Charter pertaining to trusteeship. This strategy required undermining the U.P.C.’s own legitimacy in representing such wishes, through portraying the party as a violent minority of criminal bands and terrorists before the U.N.¹⁸⁶ The scale and co-ordination of the U.P.C.’s armed actions thus sought to prove to the U.N. General Assembly that Ahidjo did not represent the wishes of the Cameroonian population for independence. It correspondingly sought to demonstrate that the U.P.C. was the popular and legitimate representative of an independent Cameroon, and not simply a

¹⁸² *Kamerun Today*, No. 7, 1st November 1960, p.3.

¹⁸³ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’ (6H 241), p. 30.

¹⁸⁴ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’ (6H 241), p. 27.

¹⁸⁵ Aufeuvre, ‘Action Menée’ (6H 241), p. 26.

¹⁸⁶ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 333.

handful of bandits or criminals. It is, moreover, a rationale that becomes explicit in the U.P.C.'s publications during these armed actions.

One of the party's newspapers declared in August 1959: 'The special session of the U.N. has not resolved the Kamerunian problem, as is being proved today by the resumption of armed resistance on a grand scale.'¹⁸⁷ The newspaper declared that the extent of such action proved that it was not the result of a 'handful of bandits', but a 'national insurrection' directed by the U.P.C.¹⁸⁸ These armed actions were a final effort to petition the General Assembly before the lifting of trusteeship on January 1st. The same newspaper subsequently demanded the 're-examination of the Kamerunian case at the 14th session of the General Assembly in September'. After the U.P.C.'s crucial defeat at the special session in March, armed action now appeared the only way in which the party could put pressure on the organisation. Accordingly, an ultimatum was posed at the end of the article: 'Will the U.N. obstinately uphold such an injustice, which risks engulfing central Africa in a fire whose dimensions no one can foresee?'¹⁸⁹

The fourteenth session of the U.N. General Assembly, however, passed without any resolution on French Cameroon. The U.P.C. saw one final opportunity to demonstrate both a popular rejection of the Ahidjo government, and that the party represented and directed the national will of the people. It was the independence day celebrations of January 1st, which were to be held primarily in Douala and Yaoundé, and most importantly, were to be attended by international observers, including the U.N. Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld. French military detachments reported that a 'resurgence of rebel activity marked the independence celebrations', particularly in Douala. Five armed groups launched a series of attacks in the city from the evening of the 30th December, resulting in nine killed; amongst whom were two French gendarmes. Shops and administrative buildings were ransacked, and protest demonstrations held at which portraits of Um Nyobé were carried by the crowd.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 9.

¹⁸⁸ *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 11.

¹⁸⁹ *Le Patriote*, May-August 1959, p. 11.

¹⁹⁰ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 381.

Conclusion

The contest between the U.P.C. and Ahidjo at the A.A.P.C. and the U.N., the acknowledgement by both sides of an independent Cameroon's external dependency, and the A.L.N.K.'s armed actions, demonstrate an important point. They indicated that the exercising of Cameroon's sovereignty would not necessarily reside in the control of the state's domestic institutions, populations, and territory, nor in the state's self-reliance in terms of external aid. Instead, it would reside in the ability to present, to an external audience, a legitimate claim to represent an independent state. As such, these developments were a portent for a fundamental function of African statehood, one that would increasingly express itself in the post-independence era. It was a function based in the ability to access external resources in the name of an independent state, and thereby compensate for a lack of domestic political authority, territorial control, and socio-economic self-sufficiency. In addition, the A.L.N.K.'s actions demonstrated how armed conflict could be used as a means to enforce and mediate this ability.

The Cameroonian state that achieved independence on the 1st January 1960 did so without the U.P.C. leadership in government. It was an independence that furthermore did not conform to the U.P.C.'s vision of statehood, either in the widening of its international relationships beyond the metropole, or in its capacity to enable popular socio-economic and democratic development. Importantly, the lifting of trusteeship, and Cameroon's subsequent membership at the U.N., would effectively cut off the U.P.C. leadership from the organisation completely. In spite of these events, the next chapter will demonstrate that the post-independence period was a moment when the U.P.C.'s extra-metropolitan vision of independence not only continued to appear possible, but was partly realised. This realisation, however, was not to be found in the U.P.C.'s control of territory or the creation of parallel domestic institutions. Instead, the exiled U.P.C. leadership was able to perform a fundamental function of its imagined statehood, by accessing external political and socio-economic resources in the name of the Cameroonian state. Importantly, the ability of the U.P.C. to sustain its armed struggle remained a crucial factor in performing this fundamental function of statehood.

Chapter Three: Domestic Constraints and International Possibilities: The Emergence of African Statehood, 1960-1962

When the Republic of Cameroon achieved independence in January 1960, the U.P.C.'s position appeared increasingly weak, both within and outside the territory. The party's armed actions were largely limited to the Bamileke region, and had failed to provoke its planned nation-wide insurrection. The Ahidjo government furthermore refused any reconciliation with the U.P.C. leadership, which remained in exile, and dependent on the support of Presidents Nkrumah and Touré. Finally, the lifting of the country's trusteeship status had effectively denied the U.P.C. leadership its most important diplomatic platform at the U.N.

Yet the Ahidjo government was also faced with significant challenges. It was unable to cover its own administrative costs, let alone fund the popular development projects that the new Prime Minister had promised. The government was furthermore incapable of exercising any real authority within the populous Bamileke region, where the armed insurgency had reached its most intense phase. Massive financial and military assistance from the French government appeared to be the only means for the new government's survival, and allowed Paris to maintain a significant presence in the new Republic's political and economic infrastructure.

Despite these difficulties, this chapter examines the immediate post-independence period, between 1960 and 1962, as a moment of opportunity and agency for both the Ahidjo government and the exiled U.P.C. Neither leadership could claim to exercise effective authority within Cameroon, or self-sufficiency in terms of military, technical, and financial resources. Both, however, could claim to represent an internationally recognised state. The acceptance of this claim by foreign governments enabled access to vital external assistance, allowing the Ahidjo government and U.P.C. to strengthen their own political position, and undermine that of their opponents.

The on-going conflict thus constituted a series of competing attempts to perform an emergent, yet fundamental, function of African statehood: the ability to access international resources by representing a recognised state. By emphasising this function, the overarching aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that within Africa, the exercise of

statehood did not necessarily correspond to internal authority within the state's borders, or autonomy from foreign aid. As a result, it represents a criterion of statehood that avoids more generalised Western or Eurocentric models, by which African states and their governments have often been judged as weak, deficient or, in later analyses, as 'failed'.¹ It is a function that signifies a more contextualised understanding of the domestic constraints facing African states after independence, and the international strategies employed to overcome them.

By identifying this function - and its consequences - in the actions of the Ahidjo government, the first part of the chapter builds upon works by Bayart, Cooper, Clapham, and Constantin. These studies demonstrate how African governments have used the benefits of internationally recognised sovereignty to actively manage and exploit their external dependency. As the representatives of recognised states, African governments have been able to negotiate direct access to financial, developmental, and military assistance from more powerful international actors, and used it to compensate for a lack of domestic authority and resources within their territories.²

To this effect, the chapter firstly examines how, throughout 1960, the Ahidjo administration accessed significant foreign financial, technical, and military assistance, primarily from France. By the end of 1960, this foreign aid had allowed Ahidjo to augment his personal authority within the National Assembly, and also to assert his administration's political and military presence in the Bamileke region. Importantly, the ability to negotiate and appropriate such assistance was significantly due to the Ahidjo government's diplomatic status - especially at the U.N. - as the representative of the internationally recognised Republic of Cameroon.

¹ See in particular: Robert H. Jackson and Carl Rosberg, 'Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and Juridical in Statehood', *World Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1982), pp. 1-24; Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, 1988); I. William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, 1995); Jean-Germain Gros, 'Towards a Taxonomy of Failed States in the New World Order: Decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda, and Haiti', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1996), pp. 445-471; Richard Devetak, 'Incomplete States: Theories and Practices of Statecraft' in John Macmillan and Andrew Linklater (eds.), *Boundaries in Question: New Directions in International Relations* (London, 1995), pp. 19-39.

² Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London, 1993); Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002); Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge, 1996); François G. Constantin, 'The Foreign Policy of Francophone Africa: Clientelism and After' in Anthony Kirk-Greene and Daniel Bachs (eds.), *State and Society in Francophone Africa Since Independence* (London, 1995), pp. 183-199

By next identifying this function in the actions of the exiled U.P.C., however, the chapter exposes significant limitations in the studies of Constantin *et al.*, particularly regarding the crucial act of international recognition. Firstly, these studies do not disaggregate the recognising audience, overlooking the fact that it was not homogeneous or static. Secondly, they posit international recognition as applying only to the sovereignty of a state, and not to its political representative. As a result, these studies overlook the possibility that actors outside the domestic institutions – and even territory – of a recognised state could be accepted as its representative by certain foreign governments. More importantly, these actors could exploit this acceptance to access political, military, financial, and even developmental resources from the international environment.

The second part of the chapter demonstrates this parallel and deterritorialised function of African statehood, by re-examining the events of 1960 from the viewpoint of the exiled U.P.C. It subsequently engages with another historiographical trend, which has given a new visibility to post-independent insurgencies in Africa.³ Terretta's work has been particularly important in this respect, particularly as her ability to access the Foccart papers in Paris, and the Ghanaian National Archives in Accra, serves to supplement the present study's own research into the U.P.C.'s exiled activities after 1960.⁴ Due to the close ties that the Cameroonian government forged with France and the U.S.A., certain states – notably Egypt, Morocco, and the U.S.S.R. – were hesitant to recognise the Ahidjo regime as Cameroon's legitimate government. More significant, however, was the fact that the leaders of Ghana, Guinea, and China explicitly recognised the exiled U.P.C. in this capacity. This disaggregated gaze of recognition allowed the U.P.C. leadership to participate in an alternative diplomatic network, and to negotiate access to significant international resources. Throughout 1960, the U.P.C. attended international conferences of African states, as well as sent Cameroonians abroad for military training and higher education in Morocco, the Far East, and the Eastern Bloc.

³ See for example: Klaas Van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief: A History of the Sawaba Movement in Niger* (Brill: Leiden, 2013); Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (James Currey: Oxford, 1998). See also Klaas Van Walraven and John Abbink, 'Rethinking Resistance in African History: An Introduction' in John Abbink, Mirjam de Bruijn and Klaas Van Walraven (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Brill, 2003), pp. 1- 42. In the context of post-independence Francophone Africa, these studies have revealed that continues of resistance to *la présence française* existed alongside the more widely acknowledged instances of *co-opération*. See chapter one, f.n. 80 for a list of the works that examine these continuities of co-operation.

⁴ Meredith Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra', *Journal of African History*, 51 (2010), pp. 189-212.

Whilst 1960 thus appeared as a moment of deterritorialised possibility and plurality for the functioning of African statehood, more conventional and territorialised attributes of sovereignty – such as membership at the U.N., domestic elections, and territorial control – were still important. The last part of the chapter demonstrates this fact by comparing how effectively the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government were able to access international resources in the name of the Cameroonian state. By 1961, the Ahidjo government's domestically elected status, its increasing political and military authority within Cameroon, as well as its seat at the U.N., all proved to be superior assets in gaining the recognition of foreign governments and external aid. To compensate for these inequalities, the U.P.C. not only sought to renew its armed struggle, but to re-present it. Directing its diplomacy to the Casablanca group of African states, the party portrayed its fight as one for Pan-African unity against a neo-colonial regime.

The Ahidjo Government in 1960: A Quasi-State?

On 30th April 1959 - eight months before French Cameroon's agreed date for independence - the territory's last High Commissioner, Xavier Torr  , made the following statement in the administration's official newspaper:

There will be no real liberation and independence for the country. Cameroon cannot avoid the support of France...In the realm of technical aid, France will provide Cameroon with the technicians it needs...French assistance will further be necessary in the realms of finance, economics, and national defence.⁵

Torr  's prediction - that there would be no 'real' freedom or independence for Cameroon - evokes Robert Jackson's later definition of 'quasi-states', a concept articulated in his 1990 book of the same name.⁶ Jackson used the term to describe the former colonies that achieved independence in the post-war period, and it has since found a wide currency in academic analyses of post-colonial African politics.⁷ According to Jackson, quasi-states

⁵ *La Presse du Cameroun*, No. 2705, 30/04/1959, p. 2.

⁶ Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (Cambridge, 1990). Jackson had first used the term three years earlier in a journal article. See Robert H. Jackson, 'Quasi-States, Dual Regimes, and Neoclassical Theory: International Jurisprudence and the Third World', *International Organization*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (1987), pp. 519-549.

⁷ See for example A.J. Christopher, "Nation-States", "Quasi States", and "Collapsed States" in Contemporary Africa', *GeoJournal*, Vol. 43, No.1 (1997), pp. 91-97; William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, 1998), esp. pp. 18-19; A.G. Hopkins, 'Quasi-States, Weak States, and the Partition of Africa', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26, No.2 (2000), pp. 311-320; Guy Martin, *Africa in World*

exhibit ‘juridical statehood’ insofar as they are recognised as independent by ‘international society’.⁸ In Jackson’s terminology, however, quasi-states lack the ‘freedom to act’ of ‘real’ states; a freedom he defines as ‘empirical statehood’.⁹ More specifically, the governments of quasi-states are incapable of exercising authority over their territory and populations, or of providing for their development and welfare, without external assistance.¹⁰

The Republic of Cameroon’s juridical statehood was implicit at the Independence Day celebrations of January 1960, which were attended by representatives of the U.N. and numerous foreign governments.¹¹ The newly-independent Republic also, however, exhibited the lack of empirical statehood that defines Jackson’s quasi-state model. The Cameroonian government was unable to pay for its nascent civil service, with Prime Minister Ahidjo declaring that ‘We are staggering under the weight of our recurrent expenditure, particularly expenditure on personnel’. Ahidjo also noted that the state’s investment budget was ‘notoriously inadequate’ for the country’s socio-economic development projects.¹² The French government accordingly contributed \$2.4 million to the Republic of Cameroon’s budget in the first three months of 1960 alone.¹³

The first two months of independence also demonstrated the Ahidjo government’s lack of domestic authority. In January, the exiled U.P.C., largely based in Accra and Conakry, re-launched the armed insurgency in the Bamileke department, and the adjoining department of the Mungo. According to French military reports, the administrative centres in the region were ‘besieged’, its major transport and communications networks were ‘sabotaged to the point of being completely unusable’, and convoys were ‘continually harassed’, even during the day time.¹⁴ At the beginning of 1960, the Cameroonian army consisted of only three-hundred men, supplemented by two French infantry companies that

Politics: A Pan-African Perspective (Trenton, 2002); Gerard Kreijen, *State Failure, Sovereignty and Effectiveness Legal Lessons from the Decolonization of Sub-Saharan Africa* (Leiden, 2004); Clapham, *Africa and the International System*.

⁸ Jackson, *Quasi-states*, p. 21.

⁹ Jackson, pp. 21, 22, 169, 187.

¹⁰ Jackson, pp. 21-22.

¹¹ This included the Secretary-General of the U.N., Dag Hammarskjöld, as well as representatives from numerous foreign governments including France, Britain, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., and Israel. Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue, and Jacob Tatsitsa, *Kamerun! Une guerre cachée aux origines de la Françafrique 1948-1971* (Paris, 2011), p. 389.

¹² Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society* (Princeton, 1970), p. 109.

¹³ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 109.

¹⁴ Lieutenant-Colonel Gribelin, ‘Situation dans le Département Bamiléké, Début Février 1960’, 10/01/1961, *Synthèse Historique sur les Événements du Cameroun, Année 1960 à 1962*; Service Historique de l’Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 241), p. 2.

had remained behind after independence.¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, therefore, the situation quickly deteriorated.

A French military report observed that by February 1960, the Ahidjo government ‘only exercises authority over the administrative centres and on certain groups, who themselves remain faithful more by tribal animosity than by any true attachment to a government which is far away, and which they have only heard people speak about.’¹⁶ It was estimated that out of the 510,000 inhabitants of the Bamileke region – which constituted roughly ten per cent of Cameroon’s total population – one could ‘hardly count 150,000 that are truly loyal’ to the Ahidjo government.¹⁷

Lacking the means to assert control in the region, Ahidjo sent a request to the French Prime Minister, Michel Debré, for ‘the assistance of the French army in on-going operations to maintain or establish internal order in Cameroon’, for at least the first six months of independence.¹⁸ As a result of this secret military agreement, eight French infantry companies and a squadron of Ferret armoured cars had arrived in Cameroon by the end of February, under the command of General Max Briand, a veteran of Indochina and Algeria. In addition to the troops that had remained in Cameroon after independence, the French army’s presence in the Bamileke region now consisted of 2,000 infantry, three units of armoured cars, and two helicopters.¹⁹

Against these developments, Jackson’s quasi-state model does provide a useful initial framework for analysing the newly independent Cameroon. It demonstrates that in certain contexts, statehood can be constituted more by external recognition than by a government’s internal authority, territorial control, and autonomy from foreign aid. Importantly, however, whilst Jackson’s concept of juridical statehood contextualises and disaggregates more generalised models of sovereignty, the same cannot be said for his corresponding concept of empirical statehood. First of all, the defining characteristics of the concept are very broad, so that even ‘real’ (i.e. Western) states cannot be said to possess empirical statehood at all times.²⁰ Secondly, by designating former colonies as

¹⁵ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 437.

¹⁶ Gribelin, ‘Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké’ (6H 241), p.1.

¹⁷ Gribelin, ‘Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké’ (6H 241), p.7.

¹⁸ ‘Letter from the Cameroonian Prime Minister to the French Prime Minister For the Maintenance of Order’, 17/02/1960 (6H 262).

¹⁹ Gribelin, ‘Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké’ (6H 241), p.7.

²⁰ There are, therefore, multiple situations in which even the ‘real’ states of the West – against which Jackson defines quasi-states – can be seen as lacking empirical statehood. See in particular Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, 1999).

lacking empirical statehood, it is a concept that propagates a Western model of sovereignty, by which African states are often judged as somehow incomplete, inauthentic, or indeed ‘failed’.²¹

To label states like Cameroon as ‘quasi’ is thus to marginalise the contextual realities of statehood in Africa. The difficulties of internal governance for newly independent African states, and their subsequent dependence on external aid, was an unavoidable empirical reality, largely due to the shallow development efforts of colonial administrations.²² It was a fact not only recognised by the French government and its Cameroonian allies on the eve of independence, but also one that had long been anticipated by the U.P.C., as the previous chapters have demonstrated. A different criterion of empirical statehood is therefore needed to re-assess the Republic of Cameroon in 1960, one that takes these realities into account, and allows the analysis of African states on their own terms.

It is a criterion firstly articulated in Bayart’s concept of ‘extraversion’. According to Bayart, African statehood is not exercised through internal control and national self-sufficiency, but the ‘successful management’ of external dependency.²³ More specifically, African governments exercise statehood by mobilising external resources, and thereby compensate for domestic difficulties in the ‘autonomisation of power’.²⁴ The actions of the Ahidjo government in 1960, therefore, need to be assessed in terms of how foreign assistance was used to counteract a lack of domestic capacity. In keeping with Jackson’s model, the Cameroonian government’s domestic capacity pertained to: i) the socio-economic development of the state’s territory and population; and ii) the exercising of political authority over them.

The success of the Ahidjo government in mobilising external resources for national development, however, is problematic to assess in the immediate post-independence period. Firstly, foreign financial and technical assistance in 1960-1961 was inadequate for

²¹ In addition to the works cited above, for an excellent overview of this literature, see Pinar Bilgin and Adam David Morton, ‘Historicising Representations of “Failed States”: Beyond the Cold War Annexation of the Social Sciences?’, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2002), pp. 55-80.

²² Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, pp. 4-5.

²³ Jean-François Bayart, ‘Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion’, *African Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 395 (2000), pp. 217-267, p. 228.

²⁴ Bayart, *The State in Africa*, p. 21.

the projects previously promised by the Cameroonian government.²⁵ Secondly, even if such assistance were adequate, the results would not be seen for several years. What can be assessed in 1960, however, is the way in which the Cameroonian government was able to use French financial and military assistance to augment its domestic authority. It is a strategy that becomes most visible when one analyses Ahidjo's attempts to suppress the most critical threat to his government's political position: the U.P.C.

As Ahidjo had promised the U.N. the previous March, the ban on the U.P.C. was lifted in February 1960. Ahidjo had already made it clear, however, that this legalisation would not apply to the party's leadership-in-exile, and was a key reason for the latter's re-launching of the armed insurgency.²⁶ In its place, a legal wing of the U.P.C. was formed within Cameroon under Mayi Matip, who had parted ways with the exiled leadership in 1958.²⁷ Before tackling the armed insurgency directly, Ahidjo used French assistance to secure his political position against the legal U.P.C. within government, and to suppress the party's broader domestic support. To understand how he did so, one needs to examine Ahidjo's path to becoming Cameroon's first President in May 1960.

From December 1959, Ahidjo had begun to draw up a constitution with French political advisors, one that was based upon the constitution of the Fifth Republic. Within this constitution, the executive powers of a new Cameroonian President would be considerable, including the power to dismiss the National Assembly, and to unilaterally declare a state of emergency.²⁸ To exercise these powers with an appearance of popular support – and thereby undermine the U.P.C.'s claims to represent the Cameroonian people – Ahidjo first of all needed the constitution to be approved by a referendum. The referendum took place

²⁵ This was admitted by Ahidjo himself at an international press conference held in Yaoundé on 11th November, 1961. Ahmadou Ahidjo, *Conférence de Presse Tenue le 11 Novembre 1961 à Yaoundé*, p. 2. Archives de Service Protestant de Mission Défap, Paris (20.966 ; 63.051 ; B.220).

²⁶ At the U.N. in March 1959, for example, Ahidjo stated: 'It is no longer possible to consider Moumié to be the leader of an opposition party. He is only a rebel chief who has blood on his hands....Even if he is granted amnesty for his previous doings, he will have to answer in court for his actions over the past month'. Quoted in Martin-René Atangana, *The End of French Rule in Cameroon* (Plymouth, U.K., 2010) p. 114. See also J.-F. Bayart, 'The Political System' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadou Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 45-81, p. 56.

²⁷ To cite just one example of this animosity, in the January-February 1960 issue of *La Voix du Kamerun* – the exiled leadership's main newspaper – Matip was denounced as an 'agent of colonialism' who sought to 'destroy our National Movement'. Ndongo Diye, 'En Guise de Discussion du Rapport de Mission au Kamerun Après de Mayi Matip', *La Voix du Kamerun*, Jan-Feb 1960, p. 16.

²⁸ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 385.

in February 1960, and, whilst Matip and other political figures vehemently opposed the constitution as ‘dictatorial’, it was adopted by 60% of the popular vote.²⁹

Importantly, this result was achieved through the massive manipulation of the electoral process in the North of the country, in which the territorial administration was significantly staffed by French ‘technical advisors’. These advisers helped to ensure that, through supervising the counting of votes, the referendum went in Ahidjo’s favour.³⁰ With the constitution approved, Ahidjo’s next goal was the presidency itself. A clause in the constitution stated that Cameroon’s first President was to be elected solely by the country’s National Assembly. As a consequence, the constituency boundaries for legislative elections in April were gerrymandered, and the candidate lists limited, to ensure that Ahidjo loyalists dominated the Assembly. Again, this was enabled by French technical and financial assistance within the Ministry for Territorial Administration.³¹ With the legislative elections resulting in Ahidjo’s favour, the way was paved for his election as Cameroon’s first President in May 1960.³²

As President with a majority in the National Assembly, Ahidjo exploited the on-going insurgency to weaken the parliamentary opposition of the legal U.P.C. wing. Although the exiled U.P.C. leadership had long denounced and severed all ties with Matip, Ahidjo corralled the National Assembly into accusing the legal U.P.C. of complicity with the insurgency. This campaign against Matip pressured his party to soften its criticism of the government, and to denounce the exiled U.P.C. leadership in even stronger terms.³³

Ahidjo further used his presidential privileges to suppress political opposition outside of the National Assembly, thereby undermining the domestic support base of both the legal and exiled U.P.C. wings. The constitution stated that Ahidjo could declare a state of emergency by presidential decree, without the approval of the Assembly. It was a privilege that he exercised immediately after obtaining office, and was justified by the on-going violence in the Bamileke region. The state of emergency allowed the President to order: the restriction of movement regarding goods and persons; the banning of any meeting or publication that ‘disturbs public order’; the dissolution of all groups and associations that

²⁹ J.-F. Bayart, *L’État au Cameroun* (Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques: Paris, 1979), p. 76; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 386.

³⁰ Bayart, *L’État au Cameroun*, p. 76; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 386.

³¹ Bayart, ‘The Political System’, p. 57.

³² Bayart, *L’État au Cameroun*, p. 57.

³³ Bayart, ‘The Political System’, p. 59.

‘provoke unrest’; the control and censorship of all newspapers and radio transmissions; and the authorisation of the police to enter and search any premise at any time.³⁴

Importantly, this state of emergency could not be enforced without the assistance provided by the secret military agreement with the French government. France would not only assist in the ‘keeping of public order’ with its own armed forces, but would instruct and equip Cameroonian government forces for the same purpose. By April 1960, the first 144 units of a national gendarmerie took up their posts, having been trained at a school in Yaoundé - under French instructors - since January. By the end of the year, they would be joined by 350 additional recruits. In May, 1,500 Cameroonian Civil Guards, trained and equipped by the French army, also became operational.³⁵

With access to French technical and financial assistance, the Ahidjo government next sought to consolidate its authority amongst the population of the Bamileke region, and thereby undermine support for the armed insurgency. With the aid of French armed forces, the Civil Guard, and the legislation of the emergency laws, Ahidjo was able to ‘regroup’ the isolated Bamileke villages into new settlements. These *régroupements* were located along the main road networks, away from the region’s forested and mountainous areas.³⁶ The Bamileke *régroupements* thus provided a concentrated populace over which the Ahidjo government could exercise its new mechanisms of intervention and coercion, as enabled by the emergency laws and the Civil Guard. Any political gathering of Bamileke in the *régroupements* was forcibly dispersed, their houses were continually searched, and their travel to and from the settlements severely restricted.³⁷

The *régroupements* also demonstrate how the Ahidjo government used external resources to secure its authority in a less coercive fashion. Within the settlements, schools and medical dispensaries were soon set up, and hospitals were constructed in the towns of Mbouda and Bafang – all with French financial and technical assistance.³⁸ This was accompanied by an intense propaganda campaign conducted by the Civil Guard, which sought to demonstrate, through leaflets and lectures, how the U.P.C. *maquisards* wished to

³⁴ Lieutenant-Colonel Gribelin, ‘Note de Service : Convention Franco-Camerounaise a/s utilisation des Troupes Françaises en Maintien de l’Ordre’, 07/03/1960. (6H 262).

³⁵ Colonel Max Briand, ‘Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun’, 01/04/1961 (6H 241), Annexe 3.

³⁶ Le Chef de Bataillon Gales, ‘Synthèse Historique sur les Événements du Cameroun, Octobre 1960 à 1962’, 24/04/1962 (6H 241), p. 11.

³⁷ Frequent arrests were made, along with frequent accusations of torture. Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 445.

³⁸ Gribelin, ‘Situation dans le Département Bamiléké’ ; (6H 241), p. 52.

sow only instability and violence, whilst the government would provide safety and welfare.³⁹

To quash the insurgency directly, however, the Ahidjo government exploited its access to foreign military resources. Briand's troops were organised, well-equipped, and had learned important lessons regarding anti-insurgency warfare from Indochina and Algeria.⁴⁰ Just as important, however, was how the French government provided the technical and financial means to train and expand the nascent Cameroonian army. In August, a Joint Military Academy was established in Yaoundé, which, by October, was training 109 Cameroonian officers.⁴¹ This was in addition to the twenty-four Cameroonian officers that were already being instructed abroad, in France's most prestigious military academy, *Saint-Cyr*.⁴² By the end of October 1960, French training and equipment had enlarged the Cameroonian army to 3,475 infantry and 589 non-commissioned officers.⁴³

Successive operations by Franco-Cameroonian forces began to inflict heavy losses on the exiled U.P.C.'s armed wing, the A.L.N.K., representing the increasing asymmetry of the conflict. By November 1960, French military reports stated that 4,414 'rebels' had been killed, with 5,594 arrested. Concerning 'friendly' losses, 614 had been killed, 583 of which were Cameroonian.⁴⁴ Franco-Cameroonian forces had furthermore seized 5,500 rifles, the majority of which were outdated or had been fabricated in local workshops.⁴⁵ As a result, Colonel Briand, in summing up the year's military activities, stated that at the beginning of 1960, the Cameroonian government was faced with 'a rebellion which all were left to think was in danger of spreading rapidly.'⁴⁶ On the eve of 1961, however, Briand concluded that 'although not extinguished, the rebellion is dying and seems henceforth to be reducible by Cameroonian forces alone.'⁴⁷ Even in areas where there was still 'rebel activity' – notably the areas of Metchie and Bamenjo – the insurgency had 'lost all its aggressive character'

³⁹ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, pp. 551-557.

⁴⁰ By using mobile and light infantry detachments with air support, and by cordoning off 'hot zones' in which to conduct search-and-destroy missions, French battalion commander Gales reported of how 'The tactics employed by the F.M.O. [Franco-Cameroonian armed forces] are the most adapted to the enemy, to the skills of the F.M.O., and to the terrain. They are those that we have known in Indochina and Algeria.' Gales, 'Synthèse Historique sur les Événements du Cameroun'; (6H 241), p. 11.

⁴¹ Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 8.

⁴² Bouopda Pierre Kamé, *De la Rébellion dans le Bamiléké* (Paris, 2008), p. 42.

⁴³ Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 8.

⁴⁴ Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 6.

⁴⁵ Colonel Aufeuve, 'Riposte des Forces de l'Ordre', 12/05/1962, *Commandement Opérationnel du C.O.S.M.N. (Commandement Opérationnel de Sanaga-Maritime et du Nkam)*; (6H 241), p.16.

⁴⁶ Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 7.

⁴⁷ Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 7.

and was ‘reduced to its most basic expression’.⁴⁸ In December 1960, the majority of French forces withdrew, with Briand reporting that the new Cameroonian army ‘has been able, without any major difficulties, to relieve the French army’, and that the former ‘has held its own, grown, organised itself, and become battle-hardened’.⁴⁹

What the events of 1960 demonstrate, therefore, is that the Cameroonian government’s dependency on French assistance did not represent a ‘lack’ of statehood, but the exercising of a specific form of statehood in an African context. In line with Bayart’s concept of extraversion, Ahidjo was able to exploit his government’s external dependency, using foreign assistance to compensate for a lack of domestic resources and political authority. He was even able to exploit the internal limitations of his government in this respect, since instability in the Bamileke region was used to justify the state of emergency, and enabled the government access to external coercive resources.

Building upon Jackson’s concept of juridical statehood, and Bayart’s strategy of extraversion, several studies have observed that, within this empirical reality of African statehood, the most important asset for governments was the external recognition of a state’s independence. Clapham writes that ‘those who formed the government of an internationally recognised state’ were able to utilise recognised statehood as a ‘bargaining counter, with which to attract resources, such as weapons or development aid, which could enhance their ability to retain domestic control.’⁵⁰ Constantin corroborates that ‘The very status of sovereign statehood is in itself an asset in a deeply fragmented world with no lack of actors in search of allies, supporters – or clients.’⁵¹ Cooper goes so far as to state that the very survival of African states was dependent upon ‘being recognized from outside, and that resources, such as foreign aid and military assistance, came to governments for that reason.’⁵²

The ways in which recognised statehood allowed African governments – including that of Ahidjo - to compensate for their domestic limitations were varied. As members of the United Nations, recognised African states could provide key votes to support foreign governments at the General Assembly, in exchange for external material assistance. For the French government, allies at the U.N. in 1960 were vital as the F.L.N. and Afro-Asian bloc

⁴⁸ Gribelin, ‘Situation dans le Département Bamiléké’ (6H 241), pp. 49-50.

⁴⁹ Briand, ‘Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun’ (6H 241), p. 4.

⁵⁰ Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, p.19.

⁵¹ Constantin, ‘The Foreign Policy of Francophone Africa’, p.187.

⁵² Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p.156.

were applying pressure for Algerian independence.⁵³ It is for this reason that France supported Cameroon's membership to the organisation in September, and, as the last chapter demonstrated, was a significant reason why Cameroon's independence would ensure that the Ahidjo government would continue to have access to French aid.⁵⁴

Juridical statehood would also ensure French aid for the Ahidjo government in another sense. Whilst the French government was still eager to maintain its influence in Africa, recognised independence for states such as Cameroon allowed it to do so at a much reduced economic and political cost. Although France still provided significant material assistance to maintain its African presence, it was not burdened with the far greater administrative costs of funding African governments' entire budget.⁵⁵ The symbolic importance of juridical independence also reduced the risk of anti-colonial protest against the French government, both domestic and international. This was particularly important in an era where Britain was granting independence to its own African colonies, and the examples of Indochina and Algeria had demonstrated the severe costs of withholding such independence from France's overseas territories.⁵⁶

The military, financial, technical, and developmental assistance being granted to Cameroon was given a legal framework in November 1960, when Ahidjo signed a series of bilateral Co-operation Accords with the French government. France would provide substantial technical assistance through 2,000 technical advisors, whilst the Republic of Cameroon would be able to train its civil servants and diplomats in the universities and *Grands Écoles* of France.⁵⁷ Cameroon would not open its first university until 1962, again with substantial French assistance.⁵⁸ In addition, France's continued financial contribution

⁵³ John D. Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (London, 1996), pp. 172. Ahidjo's diplomatic support for the French government was demonstrated in November 1960, when the Cameroonian President went to Tunis to mediate between de Gaulle and the F.L.N.'s provisional government, the G.P.R.A. Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002), p. 349.

⁵⁴ Dieudonné Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France ? La Politique Africaine du Cameroun depuis 1969* (Paris, 1990), p. 41.

⁵⁵ Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p. 173.

⁵⁶ In this respect, juridical statehood also allowed the French government to present its on-going presence in Africa as one of co-operation and equality between two independent states, distancing it from the racial and exploitative connotations of colonial rule. To this effect, the Ministry for Overseas France was renamed the Ministry of Cooperation shortly before 1960, and was responsible for controlling French aid to Africa. See Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (Berg: Oxford, 2002), pp. 229-235.

⁵⁷ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Mark DeLancey, Mark D. DeLancey, and Rebecca Neh Mbuh, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cameroon* (4th ed Lanham, 2010), p. 200.

to the Cameroonian budget would total \$13 million in 1960.⁵⁹ A military assistance accord further arranged for France to continue training the nascent Cameroonian army, whilst, in the intervening period, a defence accord would allow the Cameroonian government to call upon French armed intervention to restore internal order.⁶⁰

These accords undoubtedly allowed the French government certain privileges, and to maintain significant control over Cameroon's economic and natural resources. In return for continued financial assistance, for example, Cameroon would remain in the Franc zone, so that the country's foreign exchange reserves would be kept in the *Banque de la France*, and French products would be given preferential tariffs.⁶¹ The original military agreement had further stated that, in exchange for French assistance, the French government would have privileged access to the natural resources of Cameroon that could be used in the manufacture of 'defensive equipment'. The list included thorium and uranium (for the nuclear weapons that France had begun testing in Algeria), as well as lithium and beryllium (for aircraft and missile manufacture).⁶²

Yet this was not a simple matter of France using Cameroon's dependent status to dictate terms to its former territory. When the Franco-Cameroonian Co-operation Accords are understood against the challenges faced by the Ahidjo administration, they appear as a rational response to the internal constraints and external opportunities faced by many African governments. The U.P.C. was a significant factor regarding the Ahidjo government's internal constraints, whilst France's willingness to maintain an influence in Africa significantly defined its external opportunities. The close ties maintained between the French and Cameroonian governments were, therefore, dictated by the domestic imperatives of Yaoundé, as much as the foreign policy concerns of Paris.

In this respect, Ahidjo was able to exploit Cameroon's recognised independence beyond the former colony-metropole axis, as juridical statehood rendered African states as viable regional allies in the geopolitical context of the Cold War. In the case of Cameroon, this

⁵⁹ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 109.

⁶⁰ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?* p. 42. In fact, this intervention was already in effect when the November accords were signed, as the previous six-month agreement signed with Debré had been renewed in July 1960. Gribelin, 'Note de Service' (6H 262).

⁶¹ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 110.

⁶² 'Letter from the Cameroonian Prime Minister to the French Prime Minister For the Maintenance of Order' (6H 262).

gave the Ahidjo government the ability to widen the country's channels of international assistance beyond France. The U.S.A. in particular was searching for African allies as a bulwark against communist encroachment, and as a result, provided the Ahidjo regime with \$1.5 million of aid in its first year of independence, as well as military equipment.⁶³

In recognising and supporting former colonies' right to statehood, international and multi-governmental organisations also undertook a duty to ensure these states were viable, and so provided African governments with significant development assistance.⁶⁴ As a result, Ahidjo was able to access bilateral aid not only from foreign governments, but also multilateral aid from organisations such as U.N.E.S.C.O., which provided scholarships for Cameroonians to study at foreign universities, as well as funds for the construction of schools within the territory.⁶⁵ As the years passed, these extra-metropolitan networks of foreign aid would become increasingly important for Ahidjo to shore up his political authority against domestic and international challenges.

The U.P.C. in 1960: A Parallel State?

From the above analysis, one can extract and specify a fundamental function of statehood in Africa: the ability to access international resources by claiming to represent a recognised state. Building upon Jackson's concept of quasi-states, Werner and De Wilde have argued that the recognition of a country's sovereignty does not depend on its correspondence with an 'empirical reality', but on it 'being accepted as valid by members of an international society'.⁶⁶ Yet this legitimating audience of an 'international society' has never been a fixed and singular actor, or, in the words of David Ellis, an 'ontological certainty'.⁶⁷ What this indicates, therefore, is that the studies of Clapham, Cooper *et al.* oversimplify the element of international recognition that is so crucial for exercising the fundamental function of African statehood. Indeed, whilst the Republic of Cameroon was

⁶³ Ambassade de France au Cameroun, 'Bulletin Mensuel d'Information Politique : 1-30 Juin 1961'; Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 264) p. 12.

⁶⁴ See Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, 1995), p. 26; Jackson, *Quasi-States*, p. 112.

⁶⁵ In 1960-1961, U.N.E.S.C.O. provided scholarships for Cameroonians to study at universities abroad, as well as contributed \$90,296 to higher education and teacher training. 'Directory of technical co-operation projects in the field of education implemented with UNESCO's support and financed from extra-budgetary funds', http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/50y/proj_50/africa/af_camer.htm. Accessed 18/05/2012.

⁶⁶ Wouter G. Werner and Jaap H. De Wilde, 'The Endurance of Sovereignty', *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 7, No. 3, (2001) pp.283-313, p. 300.

⁶⁷ David C. Ellis, 'On the Possibility of the "International Community"', *International Studies Review* Vol.11, Issue 1 (2009), pp. 1-26, p. 2.

universally recognised as an independent state by foreign governments and the U.N., the Ahidjo government was not universally recognised as the state's legitimate representative. Instead, it was the exiled U.P.C. that was recognised in this capacity by certain foreign governments, a recognition that allowed the party access to military, financial, and educational resources.

As a result, 1960 appears as a moment when African statehood could be exercised in parallel, by opposition actors outside the domestic institutions, and even territory, of the independent state. To demonstrate this moment of possibility, the events of 1960 need to be re-examined from the viewpoint of the exiled U.P.C. leadership, which reveals important similarities with the limitations experienced, and opportunities exploited, by the Ahidjo government. The armed conflict's resurgence in the Bamileke region, in February 1960, provides a useful starting point for drawing out these similarities.

First of all, the exiled U.P.C. leadership, like the Ahidjo government, did not possess the means to exercise any definitive control over the region's territory. The U.P.C.'s armed organisation – the A.L.N.K. – had to remain mobile in order to avoid a direct confrontation with the superior armed forces of the French, which were supported by the nascent, but increasingly well-trained and well-equipped, Cameroonian army. The A.L.N.K.'s actions were largely those of sabotage and targeted assassinations, followed by immediate retreat into the dense forests and surrounding mountains.⁶⁸ The U.P.C. was not able, as it had been in the 1950s, to set up an alternative administrative or welfare infrastructure within the territory. Like the Ahidjo government, therefore, its political presence in the territory at the start of 1960 was tenuous.

As a result, the U.P.C. similarly lacked the means to exercise any significant authority over the Bamileke population at the beginning of 1960, or to provide for their welfare and development. The most striking example of this fact occurred in February 1960, when an estimated 100,000 Bamileke deserted their villages to live in the *maquis*. The head of the French military mission interpreted this act as a mass defection to the U.P.C., and as demonstrating the Ahidjo government's substantial lack of authority in the region.⁶⁹ Importantly, however, the A.L.N.K. was unable to support this displaced population. After

⁶⁸Gribelin, 'Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké' (6H 241), p. 12.

⁶⁹Colonel Aufeuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion', 12/05/1962. *Action Menée par les Forces Françaises et Camerounaises Contre la Rébellion, 1959-1961*; Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 241), p. 13.

this mass flight of the Bamileke to the A.L.N.K. camps, the A.L.N.K. commander, Martin Singap, soon realised that his organisation did not possess the resources to provide for their welfare. As a result, he ordered that all those who were not fighting must immediately return to their villages. Tens of thousands of potential U.P.C. supporters subsequently returned to a position in which they would be regrouped by government forces.⁷⁰

The U.P.C. did not even appear to possess the means to exert significant control over, or maintain the welfare of, the A.L.N.K fighters. Singap was facing dissension from his sub-commanders Paul Momo and Jérémie Ndelene, whilst his decision to order the mass return of the Bamileke refugees had not been authorised by the exiled leadership in Accra and Conakry.⁷¹ An article in the U.P.C.'s newspaper, *La Voix du Kamerun*, further confirmed French military reports on the severe lack of material resources and weapons that the *maquisards* were suffering from.⁷² The January-February issue, published from Cairo, reported that 'amongst the *maquis* commanders, one finds those who do not have a *sou* to even buy a newspaper, whilst others use the most basic means to fight the enemy.'⁷³

Despite this lack of domestic capacity, the exiled U.P.C. leadership was, like the Ahidjo administration, able to obtain external recognition as the legitimate government of Cameroon, albeit for a different set of reasons. The members of this recognising audience corresponded to those governments that had supported the U.P.C.'s claim to represent Cameroon at the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation (A.A.S.O.) conference, and the All African People's Conference (A.A.P.C), of 1958 and 1959. In January 1960, Ghana, Guinea, and China immediately announced that they acknowledged the exiled U.P.C. leadership as the legitimate government of Cameroon, over the Ahidjo administration.⁷⁴

Nkrumah and Touré's recognition partly resulted from the fact that the U.P.C.'s opposition represented the continuation of its anti-colonial struggle, one that both leaders had supported since 1958. In this respect, Ahidjo's close ties to the French government,

⁷⁰ Yet Singap was also quite shrewd in this respect, as he sent a number of his fighters back with the villagers, to infiltrate the government's new settlements. Aueuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), pp.13-14.

⁷¹ Aueuvre, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 13.

⁷² Gribelin, 'Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké' (6H 241), p. 11.

⁷³ Ndongo Diye, 'En Guise de Discussion du Rapport de Mission au Kamerun auprès Mayi Matip', *La Voix du Kamerun*, Jan-Feb 1960, p. 17.

⁷⁴ Comité Directeur de l'U.P.C., *L'U.P.C. à la Conférence d'Addis Abeba* (Cairo, 1960), pp. 4-5; Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, p. 59.

and the presence of French troops in Cameroon, were an explicit example of ‘neo-colonial’ practices as outlined by Nkrumah at the A.A.P.C. conferences.⁷⁵ In addition, the U.P.C.’s goal of unification with the British Cameroons (which was still under British trusteeship at the beginning of 1960) appealed to Nkrumah and Touré’s goal of Pan-African unity, a unity that would have to overcome the cultural, linguistic and political differences that resulted from French and British colonial rule.⁷⁶ China’s recognition was both a product of the U.P.C.’s visits to the country in 1959, and of an emergent Sino-Soviet split. In particular, China’s recognition represented the assertion of a more ‘revolutionary’ foreign policy, to contrast the moderation that Peking had begun to denounce in Khrushchev’s ‘revisionist’ government.⁷⁷

Nkrumah’s continued support and recognition permitted the exiled U.P.C. leadership to consolidate its nascent administrative infrastructure in the Ghanaian capital, where, since 1959, it had been given office space and accommodation at the Bureau of African Affairs.⁷⁸ The party’s Vice-Presidents, Abel Kingué and Ernest Ouandié, were the party’s more permanent residents at the Bureau, whilst President Moumié travelled between Guinea and China in order to consolidate the U.P.C.’s presence in Conakry and Peking. Moumié also made several trips to the Congo, in order to express the U.P.C.’s support for the Lumumba government.⁷⁹ In Accra, the party was able to partially recreate the organisational infrastructure that it had built up within Cameroon before its proscription in 1955, although its members in the Ghanaian capital numbered hundreds, rather than thousands. The U.P.C. set up a network of base committees in the migrant quarter of Nima, subsumed to a Central Committee in the same district, which in turn liaised with Ouandié and Kingué at the Bureau of African Affairs.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ See Richard Gott, John Major, and Geoffrey Warner (eds.), *Documents on International Affairs 1960* (London, 1964), p. 351; Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global’, p. 205.

⁷⁶ In 1958, Ghana and Guinea had formed a political union, which was named the Union of African States in 1959, and would form the basis for Nkrumah’s vision of a United States of Africa. In May 1959, therefore, the Conakry Declaration opened the Union to all African countries. See Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora Since 1787* (London, 2003), pp. 143–146, 177–180.

⁷⁷ See Tareq Y. Ismael, ‘The People’s Republic of China and Africa’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (1971), pp. 507–529; Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 226.

⁷⁸ Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global’, p. 204.

⁷⁹ Deltonbe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 525. The elected government of Patrice Lumumba was attempting to contain a secessionist rebellion in the Katanga province, as well as the C.I.A.-backed armed forces of Mobutu. See Madeleine Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa – from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York, 1982); Jacques Brassine and Jean Kestergat, *Qui a tué Patrice Lumumba?* (Paris, 1991).

⁸⁰ Daniel Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga alias Commandant Kissamba: ‘Cameroun, ma part de vérité’* (Paris, 2005), pp. 92–94.

The external recognition of the U.P.C. also operated on a less explicit level. Certain independent African governments – particularly Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt - as well as the U.S.S.R, demonstrated an ambiguity towards the Ahidjo government at the beginning of 1960. Whilst these governments did not recognise the U.P.C. as the legitimate government of Cameroon, neither did they immediately establish diplomatic relations with Ahidjo.⁸¹ The reasons for this ambiguity were complex, and again varied according to the strategic and ideological positions of each government.⁸²

In the first months of 1960, the exiled U.P.C. leadership was able to exploit this ambiguity to form a parallel diplomatic infrastructure to that of the Ahidjo government. The party was allowed to establish its own political bureaus in the capitals of Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco, which largely served as propaganda centres.⁸³ Buoyed by the more explicit support of Nkrumah and Touré, however, the U.P.C. leadership was able to retain a diplomatic presence at high-profile international conferences. The U.P.C. maintained its membership status in the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation (A.A.S.O.), and attended its second conference of April 1960, held in Conakry.⁸⁴ The U.P.C. also attended the second Conference of Independent African States, held in Addis Ababa in June 1960. The conference was attended by representatives of eleven governments: Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Liberia, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia, Togo, Egypt (as part of the U.A.R.), and Cameroon, with China and the U.S.S.R. as observers.⁸⁵ Whilst an independent Cameroon was represented by Ahidjo's foreign minister, Charles Okala, the U.P.C., was also allowed to send a delegation, led by Ouandié.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France ?*, pp. 60-62.

⁸² For its part, the U.S.S.R. disapproved of the links that the Ahidjo government sought with the U.S.A., and had further maintained indirect links with the U.P.C. through the P.C.F. The maintenance of U.P.C.-P.C.F. ties is evidenced through letters of support from the P.C.F. in 1960-1961, although it is difficult to say whether this manifested in any concrete aid. Nasser's hesitancy to recognise the Ahidjo government similarly resulted from the latter's ties of co-operation with the U.S.A., but also the support it received from Israel. Morocco and Tunisia sympathised with the U.P.C. due to the similar presence of French troops operating within their territories, a presence that resulted from cross-border raids against the F.L.N. See: *Archives de la Section de Politique Extérieure, Fonds du PCF* in the Archives Départementales de Seine-Saint-Denis (261 J7); Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France ?*, p. 61; Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, pp. 240-241.

⁸³ These posts were largely staffed by Cameroonians who had recently been students at French universities, particularly in Paris and Toulouse. The Cairo bureau was headed by Osende Afana (see previous chapter), the Tunis bureau by Ndongo Diye, and the Rabat bureau by Nicanor Njiawue.

⁸⁴ Comité Directeur de l'U.P.C., *L'U.P.C. à la Conférence d'Addis Abeba*, p. 2.

⁸⁵ Carol A. Johnson, 'Conferences of Independent African States', *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1962), pp. 426-429, p. 428.

⁸⁶ Comité Directeur de l'U.P.C., *L'U.P.C. à la Conférence d'Addis Abeba*, p. 8.

Most significant, however, was that the external support which the U.P.C. received allowed it to exercise the fundamental function of African statehood. Ghana, Guinea, and China's explicit support of the exiled leadership fulfilled an essential precondition in this respect. Namely, the U.P.C. leadership was externally recognised as the government of a juridically independent state. The U.P.C. used this recognition, and the logistical support it provided, to indirectly access military, technical, and educational resources from the governments that were hesitant to recognise the Ahidjo administration.

Cooper has written that although African governments had trouble 'extending their power...inward', the administrative apparatus of a recognised state represented an 'interface between a territory and the rest of the world', through which these governments could access and channel vital external assistance.⁸⁷ What Cooper does not acknowledge, however, is that this interface could be constituted outside the boundaries of the recognised state. Nkrumah's continued support and recognition of the exiled U.P.C. allowed the leadership to effectively set up such an interface in Accra, which became an administrative and transport hub that linked the party to transnational support networks. Echoing the actions of the Ahidjo government, the U.P.C. was able to access and channel foreign military aid to support the conflict in the Bamileke region, and even to send Cameroonians abroad for training and education.

According to the U.P.C.'s chief representative in British Cameroon, Ndeh Ntumazah, Accra became a 'springboard' from which Cameroonians could be sent for military training in China, North Korea, and Morocco, with the U.S.S.R. providing vital transport links for travels to the Far East.⁸⁸ A.L.N.K. commanders in the Bamileke *maquis* would select promising guerrilla fighters, and send them to Accra with special liaison agents. The recruits and their liaison agents travelled to Ghana at night, by first crossing the border to British Cameroon, then to Nigeria. In Lagos, U.P.C. contacts at the Cameroonian embassy provided temporary passports to enable travel to Ghana and Guinea.⁸⁹ Finding accommodation in the African Affairs Centre or in the houses of Cameroonian immigrants

⁸⁷ Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 157.

⁸⁸ Linus T. Asong and Simon N. Chi (eds.), *Ndeh Ntumazah: A Conversational Autobiography* (Bamenda 2001); See also the reports of Cameroonian government security services in *Activities of Cameroonians Who Have Studied in Communist Countries (1962-1965)*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/7)

⁸⁹ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 86; Unknown Author, 'Report from Cameroonian Security Services, Bamenda', 06/09/1962. *Activities of One Kamerun Party Abroad*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/9).

in Nima, these recruits would await passports and plane tickets to travel to foreign training camps, or were sent on to Conakry if these documents were unavailable in Accra.⁹⁰ Due to the secrecy under which this operation took place, it is difficult to know precisely how many Cameroonian recruits were sent abroad for military training in 1960, although French intelligence put it at no more than 120.⁹¹

After they arrived in the training camps, U.P.C. recruits were firstly given courses in political education, which consisted of learning the basics in Marxist political and historical analysis. Interviews with fighters trained abroad suggest that this education was not dissimilar to the courses that the U.P.C. had taught within Cameroon during the 1950s.⁹² As such, just as the U.P.C. had relocated its organisational infrastructure from Cameroon to Ghana, it had now effectively displaced its *École des Cadres* from Douala to the Maghreb and the Far East.

After this political education, the recruits were instructed in the core aspects of guerrilla warfare, including sabotage, the fabrication of explosives, the use of detonators, and small arms training.⁹³ Trained recruits normally returned to Conakry and Accra after six to nine months.⁹⁴ Whilst the route back from Morocco is not precisely known, recruits that had trained in the Far East normally returned via commercial Aeroflot flights through Moscow.⁹⁵ Once back in Accra, the trained recruits had to await liaison officers from the Cameroonian *maquis*, who would lead them back into the Bamileke region via Kumba.⁹⁶ In 1960, at least forty of these trained recruits returned across the border in this way.⁹⁷

In terms of the foreign military equipment that the U.P.C. had access to, arm imports were limited to Czech-manufactured pistols, which were shipped into Conakry and Accra, although never in large numbers.⁹⁸ Due to logistical limitations, it was skills and training,

⁹⁰ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 86.

⁹¹ Général de Division Sizaire, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun', 05/06/1961 (6H 266).

⁹² Interviews with Akenji Tah Musah and Simon Achu, Bamenda, April 2011.

⁹³ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 208; Interviews with Akenji Tah Musah and Simon Achu, Bamenda, April 2011.

⁹⁴ Sizaire, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266).

⁹⁵ Interview with Akenji Tah Musah, Bamenda, April 2011.

⁹⁶ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 86

⁹⁷ Sizaire, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266).

⁹⁸ The French armed forces reported that, in 1960, no more than forty Czech pistols had been intercepted on the Cameroonian border. Although the number successfully smuggled past French forces may have been higher, interviews with former *maquisard* fighters suggest that only the A.L.N.K. leadership had access to

rather than equipment and weapons, that were the most vital external military resources for the U.P.C. Unlike the Ahidjo administration, the party did not have access to an air-base or seaport within Cameroon, and so it was far easier to send trained men, rather than guns and ammunition, back over the border. In addition, the asymmetrical nature of the conflict meant that mobility was the A.L.N.K.'s most valuable asset, so that heavy weaponry was not practical, nor indeed affordable.⁹⁹

Guerrilla training abroad taught the U.P.C. fighters to turn their weaknesses into strengths, and to turn the enemy's strengths into weaknesses. *Maquisards* were instructed to steal the rifles of the French army, and in doing so use the enemy's own superior weaponry against them.¹⁰⁰ Weapons training in China, North Korea and Morocco allowed A.L.N.K. fighters to use French PM MAT 39 and MAS 36 rifles, weapons that had previously been unusable when obtained by fighters in the *maquis*.¹⁰¹ The existence of these foreign-trained fighters consequently presented a 'new danger' in the opinion of Briand.¹⁰² *Maquisards* with foreign guerrilla training and modern weaponry now existed alongside those armed with machetes, and who had never left the territory. The Bamileke *maquis* thus came to represent the exiled U.P.C.'s new abilities in exercising the fundamental function of African statehood.

Whilst the insurgency evidenced the U.P.C.'s ability to access international resources, it was also used to undermine Ahidjo's ability to do the same. Although the U.P.C. did not possess the means to overthrow the government by force, the insurgency could nevertheless be used to undermine the government's access to foreign financial reserves. The A.L.N.K. did so by disrupting the government's export of cash crops. In the first few months of 1960, the French military mission reported that insurgent actions significantly focused on burning the banana and coffee crops in the fertile Mungo Valley, as well as destroying the roads and railways that connected the large commercial plantations to Douala. Although the exact financial impact on export revenue was not disclosed,

imported weapons. Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241) ; Interviews with Akenji Tah Musa, 'Étienne', and 'Felisita', Bamenda and Bafoussam, April 2011.

⁹⁹ Interview with Akenji Tah Musah, Bamenda, April 2011.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Akenji Tah Musah, Bamenda, April 2011.

¹⁰¹ Gribelin, 'Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké' (6H 241), p.11.

¹⁰² Sizaire, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266).

according to one French report, these acts caused ‘enormous damage’ to the harvest, and constituted a form of ‘economic sabotage’ against the government.¹⁰³

More significant, however, was how the insurgency aimed to undermine the Ahidjo administration’s international legitimacy as the government of Cameroon. The U.P.C.’s publications and conference declarations repeated how the ‘national insurrection’ in Cameroon revealed the government’s rejection by the population.¹⁰⁴ Even after Ahidjo’s election as President, Ouandié maintained at Addis Ababa that ‘Kamerun [*sic*] is the only independent country to have two delegations: one “governmental”, the other popular.’¹⁰⁵ The Cameroonian politician Dieudonné Oyono, in a historical study of the country’s early foreign policy, has supported this rationale. Oyono also acknowledged how certain foreign governments were hesitant to recognise the Ahidjo administration in the first half of 1960. Importantly, however, Oyono’s access to governmental archives has revealed that this hesitancy was significantly due to the scale of the on-going insurgency, which undermined the Ahidjo government’s claim to have a popular mandate.¹⁰⁶

Aside from external military aid, the exiled U.P.C. leadership was also able to access educational resources abroad, in order to compensate for its lack of domestic capacity regarding socio-economic development. As Samoff and Carrol have observed, higher education was a vital component of the nation-building project throughout post-independence Africa, but it was also one that had to be outsourced whilst the capacity of domestic universities was being developed.¹⁰⁷ What is not acknowledged, however, is how this project could be engaged by actors outside the domestic institutions and territory of independent states.

At the beginning of 1960, Moumié had been negotiating with the governments of the U.S.S.R., China, and the U.A.R, in order to obtain state-sponsored grants for Cameroonians to attend universities in these countries.¹⁰⁸ Accra – and to a lesser extent Conakry – subsequently became a transnational hub from which the U.P.C. could distribute scholarships for young Cameroonians to study abroad. Throughout 1960, the

¹⁰³ Aufeuvre, ‘Historique de la Rébellion’ (6H 241), pp. 11-12.

¹⁰⁴ In this respect, the U.P.C. denounced the label of a ‘Bamileke rebellion’, as it undermined the insurgency’s status as a ‘national uprising’. *La Voix du Kamerun*, Jan-Feb 1960, p. 16, 28.

¹⁰⁵ Comité Directeur de l’U.P.C., *L’U.P.C. à la Conférence d’Addis Abeba*. pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁶ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁷ Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol, ‘The Promise of Partnership and Continuities of Dependence: External Support to Higher Education in Africa’, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 47, No.1 (2004), pp. 67-199.

¹⁰⁸ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 86.

U.P.C. leadership at the Bureau of African Affairs prepared scholarship application forms for Cameroonian youths who arrived in much the same manner as the guerrilla recruits, except for the fact that these youths had been selected for their intellectual promise.¹⁰⁹

Nkrumah's Bureau again provided airfare and passports for these prospective students, so that by the end of 1960, at least thirty-nine Cameroonians had been supplied with U.P.C. scholarships to study in the Eastern Bloc, China, and the U.A.R.¹¹⁰ The course subjects that U.P.C.-sponsored students undertook consisted largely of degrees in engineering, economics, chemistry, and medicine.¹¹¹ These subjects suggest that - in 1960 at least - the party was seeking extra-metropolitan channels of foreign assistance for Cameroon's socio-economic development. In effect, therefore, the party was partially realising the nation-building project that it had been espousing since the 1950s.

The first graduates of the U.P.C. scholarship programme, however, would not return until 1965. In the intervening period, and again echoing the strategies of the Ahidjo government, the U.P.C. leadership used its limited access to foreign development resources to gain domestic support, particularly amongst Bamileke youth. Scholarship application forms intercepted by the Cameroonian police force demonstrated that there was no shortage of youths seeking further education in 1960, whilst the higher education capacity of the country was still being built.¹¹² In one of its 1960 pamphlets, which found a limited circulation within the Bamileke region, the U.P.C. accordingly used the example of its foreign scholarships programme to concretely demonstrate its intention to 'obtain education for all.'¹¹³

Although the Ahidjo government lacked the capacity to effectively police the borders in 1960, it was able to partially limit the U.P.C.'s access to foreign resources in more indirect ways. In the summer of 1960, for example, Ahidjo requested that the French government rescind one-hundred and fifty scholarships of Cameroonians studying in Paris. They

¹⁰⁹ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 205.

¹¹⁰ Letter from Chief of District, Federal Security, Buea, 01/08/1962 (Vb/b 1962/7).

¹¹¹ Letter from Chief of District, Federal Security, Buea, 01/08/1962 (Vb/b 1962/7).

¹¹² There are numerous interceptions of scholarship applications by the Cameroonian government security services, which will be examined more thoroughly in the next chapter. See *Activities of Cameroonians Who Have Studied in Communist Countries (1962-1965)*; (Vb/b 1962/7). For an example of how the Sawaba group used scholarship applications to mobilise support amongst Nigerien youth, see Klaas Van Walraven, 'Sawaba's rebellion in Niger (1964-1965): Narrative and Meaning' in Abbink, de Bruijn and Walraven, *Rethinking Resistance*, pp. 218-252.

¹¹³ Comité Directeur de l'U.P.C, *La Révolution Kamerunaise : ses Objectifs, sa Signification et ses Repercussions dans le Continent Africain* (Cairo, 1960), p. 45.

belonged to the National Union of Kamerunian Students (U.N.E.K.), a group that constituted the *de facto* French section of the U.P.C.¹¹⁴ As the year progressed, however, the Ahidjo government – supported by France – was able to use a combination of diplomatic and military strategies to more directly undermine the U.P.C.’s external support. In terms of exercising the fundamental function of African statehood, therefore, significant inequalities began to emerge between the U.P.C. and the Ahidjo regime, which would grow throughout 1961 and 1962.

Inequalities of Statehood, 1960-1962

Due to the exiled U.P.C.’s ability to obtain external recognition and support, Ouandié had the confidence to declare after Addis Ababa: ‘Even the fact that the government against which we are fighting is “legal” and “recognised by the United Nations” in no way shakes our firm faith in the final victory.’¹¹⁵ In 1960, the U.P.C. had obtained this support despite lacking either ‘legal’ domestic election, recognition by the U.N., or control over any significant territory or institutions within Cameroon. The diplomatic success of the U.P.C. consequently evokes certain parallels with the F.L.N. of Algeria, and its provisional government, the G.P.R.A. The F.L.N. also attended the Addis Ababa conference, and the G.P.R.A. obtained external recognition as Algeria’s government in exile. Like the U.P.C., this recognition – and the external support it engendered – was in spite of the fact that, in 1960, the F.L.N. possessed very little territorial control within Algeria, nor did it constitute a domestically elected government.¹¹⁶

In his study of the F.L.N.’s ‘diplomatic revolution’, Matthew Connelly has consequently observed that, from the late 1950s, ‘the institution of sovereignty means so little that even self-proclaimed governments that cannot control their own territory are accorded diplomatic recognition.’¹¹⁷ Connelly subsequently argues that an ‘erosion of state sovereignty’ had begun before the end of the Cold War, in contrast to globalisation

¹¹⁴ French Section of the U.P.C., *Un Sursaut de l’Opinion Public Française* (Paris, 1960), p. 9.

¹¹⁵ Comité Directeur de l’U.P.C., *L’U.P.C. à la Conférence d’Addis Abeba*, p. 9.

¹¹⁶ As Connelly has observed: ‘The French had effectively sealed off Algeria’s borders by 1958 and reduced the remaining *mujahedeen* to scattered and increasingly desperate bands by 1960. In fact, when the G.P.R.A. arrived for the Evian talks, it could not truthfully claim to govern any territory in Algeria, and what is more, the F.L.N.’s forces within the borders had dwindled to less than 15,000 men with weapons no heavier than mortars and machine guns, facing an occupying army of half a million men that was then testing its first nuclear weapons in the Sahara. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 4.

¹¹⁷ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 5.

theorists who posit this decline as beginning in the 1990s.¹¹⁸ Yet Connelly, and indeed many globalisation theorists, are employing a Western model of sovereignty, by which its ‘erosion’ is perceived in recognised governments’ lack of internal authority and the prevalence of cross-border flows. What Connelly perceives, therefore, is not so much a ‘proto-globalisation’, but the emergence of statehood in a non-Western context.¹¹⁹ By labelling this as a decline, Connelly employs a model of sovereignty that ignores the political realities, and indeed the fundamental function, of statehood in Africa.

As a result, Connelly also overlooks how the conventional ‘institutions of sovereignty’ - domestic election, territorial control, and recognition by the U.N. - could have a significant role during this period. In particular, they could make a difference in how effectively the fundamental function of African statehood was exercised. The first part of this chapter demonstrated how French support enabled the Ahidjo government to augment its internal authority, and thereby strengthen these institutions of sovereignty. The final part of the chapter will demonstrate how the government was able to use these institutions to augment its diplomatic recognition and external support, and undermine that of the U.P.C. It will then analyse the strategies employed by the U.P.C. to mitigate these growing inequalities.

In the first instance, domestic elections provided the Ahidjo government with certain diplomatic advantages within Africa. After the presidential elections of May 1960, the administration’s status as Cameroon’s political representative was difficult to deny amongst other African governments, even those that sympathised with the U.P.C. A month after these elections, therefore, the Ahidjo government attended the Addis Ababa conference with the benefits of full member status. The U.P.C., however, was only allowed to attend in an observational capacity, meaning that it could not actively participate in the conference’s discussions and votes.¹²⁰ Domestic elections also played a role in the Ahidjo administration’s ability to represent Cameroon at the U.N. after September 1960. As the

¹¹⁸ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 138. Examples of the post-Cold War ‘decline of state’ argument are now too numerous to cite comprehensively here. For some key and concise earlier examples, see: Susan Strange, ‘The Erosion of the State’, *Current History*, Vol. 96, No. 613 (1997), pp. 365-369; David Held and A. McGrew, ‘The End of the Old Order?’, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (1998), pp. 219-245.

¹¹⁹ The ‘Proto-Globalisation’ argument is one that has been taken up by other historians, notably in A.G. Hopkins edited volume, *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002).

¹²⁰ Comité Directeur de l’U.P.C., *L’U.P.C. à la Conférence d’Addis Abeba*. p. 8.

last chapter demonstrated, domestic elections had been one of the U.N.'s conditions for recognising the Ahidjo administration as the territory's first independent government.

These diplomatic inequalities between the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government translated into the amount of external material resources that each side could obtain. Cameroon's membership in the United Nations facilitated the Ahidjo government's access to millions of dollars in financial, developmental and military aid from France, the U.S.A., and U.N.E.S.C.O. The U.P.C.'s much more limited diplomatic recognition, however, did not permit this degree of external assistance. The party's newspaper consequently lamented how 'one has to be naïve to believe for an instant that the finances of the Afro-Asian states are shared by the U.P.C. leadership', and that 'the majority of promises made are never more than platonic'.¹²¹ To make matters worse for the party, Moumié died from poisoning whilst on a trip to Geneva in November 1960.¹²² The U.P.C. had lost not only its President, but its diplomatic figurehead and effective breadwinner, since Moumié had been the party's primary negotiator in accessing external aid from foreign governments.

The resulting imbalance of diplomatic recognition and external aid between the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government became most manifest in the on-going armed conflict. By the end of 1960, the A.L.N.K. was reduced to about 1,500 fighters, armed with roughly 500 rifles fabricated in local workshops, 100 shotguns, 65 Czech pistols, and a handful of captured French weaponry.¹²³ The limited number of foreign-trained *maquisards* had not been enough to offset this imbalance of forces, as French military reports observed that there was 'no evidence' of trained specialists amongst the rebels, and that the quality of U.P.C. combatants was generally 'very mediocre'.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Diye, 'En Guise de Discussion', p. 17. As Immanuel Wallerstein has observed regarding the presence of 'radical nationalist opposition movements' at these conferences: 'this group...had the least real power...it was the second group (the governments) that dominated the structure, and held the purse strings'. Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Unity* (New York, 1967), p. 52.

¹²² Moumié had travelled to Geneva – via Accra – after being forced to leave the Congo. The reason for his departure was that Mobutu Sese Sekou, then the Congolese army's chief of staff, had threatened Moumié in the country's national newspaper, stating that: 'If I lay my hands on him, I will make him a present to the President of Cameroon'. Fearing for his life, Moumié sought sanctuary in Switzerland. Whilst in a hotel bar in Geneva, however, his drink was laced with thalium. It was an act supposedly committed by the Red Hand, a shadowy armed organisation allegedly operating under the auspices of the French secret service. See Jean-Francis Held, *L'Affaire Moumié* (Paris: Maspéro, 1961) and Castor Osende Afana, *Halte aux Crimes de la Main Rouge* (Cairo, 1960).

¹²³ Author Unknown, 'Fiche de Renseignements: Situation en Igamie Bamiléké à la Date du 20 Septembre 1961', 20/09/1961, *Géographie et Institutions, Région Bamiléké, 1959-1961*. Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 264).

¹²⁴ 'Fiche de Renseignements' ; (6H 264).

Due to the death of Moumié and the successes of Franco-Cameroonian armed forces, moreover, the A.L.N.K. fighters were lacking both morale and organisation. The result was that their actions had increasingly descended into acts of banditry and violence against the local population.¹²⁵ In addition to Ahidjo's regrouping strategy, this led an increasing number of Bamileke to withdraw their support for the insurgency, further undermining the U.P.C.'s claim of leading a popular insurrection.¹²⁶ Weakening Bamileke support was also due to the huge number of deaths caused by the on-going conflict, with many seeking a return to peace. French military estimates, for example, put the civilian death toll in the region at 15,000 for the year of 1960 alone, which equated to nearly three percent of the local population.¹²⁷

The decline in the U.P.C.'s armed struggle, and the corresponding increase in the Ahidjo government's internal authority, proved to be a decisive factor in aggravating extant inequalities of diplomatic recognition. As Oyono observed, the perpetuation of an insurgency with strong local support had been vital for the U.P.C. to obtain external recognition and aid, as it undermined the Ahidjo government's claim to have a popular legal mandate. By 1961, therefore, the Cameroonian President had been able to gain the recognition of Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt; represented by the establishing of diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.¹²⁸ Even the U.P.C.'s most ardent supporter, Nkrumah, was under increasing pressure from his foreign ministry to recognise and establish diplomatic relations with the Ahidjo government.¹²⁹

Amongst the remaining U.P.C. leadership, it was Ouandié who most explicitly articulated this link between maintaining the insurgency and accessing external support. In a letter to the political bureau of the F.L.N., he wrote: 'I have not lost sight of the importance of international diplomacy. But I underline that international diplomacy, in order to be effective, must be the echo of the prevalent situation on the national level'.¹³⁰ It was a sentiment echoed by Ngondo Diye, the U.P.C.'s remaining representative in Tunis,

¹²⁵ Gribelin, 'Situation Dans le Département Bamiléké' (6H 241), p. 6.

¹²⁶ Sizaïre, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266); Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 161.

¹²⁷ Willard R. Johnson, 'The *Union des Populations du Cameroun* in Rebellion: The Integrative Backlash of Insurgency' in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali. A. Mazrui (eds.), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 671-192, p. 688; Briand, 'Rapport sur les Opérations Militaires en Cameroun' (6H 241), p. 6.

¹²⁸ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, pp. 63-64.

¹²⁹ K. Armah, *Peace Without Power: Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966* (Accra, 2004), pp. 158-161.

¹³⁰ Letter from Ouandié to the Political Bureau of the F.L.N., 1963 (precise date unknown), *U.P.C. Party Correspondences Concerning 1963*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon, (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 82.

who iterated that: 'What is certain is that the U.P.C. leadership abroad is only respected as long as there are revolutionary actions within the territory.'¹³¹

Throughout the first few months of 1961, the A.L.N.K. had accordingly launched attacks on various roads and military posts in the Bamileke region, under the command of Singap.¹³² Whilst these attacks were enough for Ahidjo to request a limited return of French troops, they were on a much smaller scale than the previous year, and in no way represented the 'popular insurrection' that Ouandié had planned.¹³³ Nevertheless, the U.P.C. Vice-President believed he could instigate a more popular show of strength, by restoring organisation and discipline within the *maquis*. Singap, however, had shown an increasing refusal to listen to the commands of the leadership in Accra, and to exert control over his own forces.¹³⁴

Ouandié consequently made plans to leave Accra and return to the Bamileke region, in order to revive and revitalise the insurgency himself. At the end of July 1961, he travelled to the Mungo valley, adjacent to the Bamileke region, via British Cameroon.¹³⁵ In terms of indiscipline and disorganisation, however, the situation amongst the A.L.N.K. was worse than Ouandié had anticipated.¹³⁶ Accordingly, there was no significant resurgence of insurgent activity for the rest of the year, as the Vice-President undertook the mammoth task of re-organising his fighters.

Regarding the link between the insurgency and external recognition, however, the ability to demonstrate popular support was only part of the problem for the U.P.C. The larger issue was that African governments increasingly saw themselves as sharing the concerns of the Ahidjo administration, rather than the U.P.C. Like the Ahidjo administration, these governments were grappling with the problems of socio-economic development with limited resources. On the international stage, therefore, they were in search of allies at the U.N. and potential partners for trade agreements; both of which the Ahidjo government could offer over the U.P.C.¹³⁷ Perhaps most importantly, these governments were similarly

¹³¹ Diye, 'En Guise de Discussion', p. 17.

¹³² Sizaïre, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266).

¹³³ Sizaïre, 'Appréciation de la Situation au Cameroun' (6H 266). This 'protection force' consisted of three infantry companies and a squadron of armoured vehicles. Colonel Aufeuve, 'Riposte des Forces de l'Ordre : Deuxième Partie', 12/05/1962, *Commandement Opérationnel du C.O.S.M.N. (Commandement Opérationnel de Sanaga-Maritime et du Nkam)*; (6H 241), p. 6.

¹³⁴ Aufeuve, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 14.

¹³⁵ Aufeuve, 'Historique de la Rébellion' (6H 241), p. 14.

¹³⁶ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 529.

¹³⁷ The importance of these factors can be seen in the fact that Tunisia supported Cameroon's membership to the U.N. in September 1960, and that immediately after establishing diplomatic relations with Tunisia,

becoming aware of the imperative and difficulty of establishing stability and security within their territories.¹³⁸ One way of safeguarding national security was to ensure that other African governments did not sponsor armed opposition groups. As Iyob has noted, a recognition of non-interference between independent governments, normally through the establishment of diplomatic relations, subsequently became a mutual insurance policy.¹³⁹

As a result, the only way in which an African government could safely support and recognise an insurgency in another independent state - without any diplomatic or military repercussions - was if that insurgency had a real chance of military success.¹⁴⁰ Without this chance of success, the only insurgencies that were offered substantial support by African governments were those waged against a colonial power. As many African governments were themselves the product of anti-colonial struggles, these 'liberation insurgencies', in the words of Clapham, 'fit clearly into the conventions of African statehood', and consequently acquired 'a legitimate and even honoured place in the international relations of the continent'.¹⁴¹

For the U.P.C. to maintain and increase its external recognition and support, therefore, it not only aimed to re-launch the insurgency, but to re-present it as an anti-colonial liberation struggle. By April 1961, this strategy was particularly pertinent in light of the fact that the self-proclaimed Casablanca group of states – Ghana, Guinea, the U.A.R., Morocco, Mali and Libya – had created a special fund for aiding struggles against continued colonial rule, particularly that of the F.L.N.¹⁴² In an attempt to tap into this new

Morocco, and Egypt, the Ahidjo government signed a series of trade agreements with these countries. Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, pp. 62-64.

¹³⁸ The security concerns of many African governments, including Nkrumah's, were accentuated by the crisis in the Congo. Nkrumah's own security concerns emerged from fierce opposition – sometimes violent – from the Ashanti and Ga populations. In 1959, moreover, a Ghanaian army officer, Captain Benjamin Awhaitey, was arrested for allegedly plotting to assassinate the President. The Ghanaian President was consequently faced with a dilemma, which evoked notable similarities with the Ahidjo regime's use of foreign military resources to ensure his domestic authority. Namely, Nkrumah desired to keep a number of British officers in his armed forces to ensure discipline and security, but was aware that this expatriate presence would undermine his own denunciations of the French presence in countries such as Cameroon. See David E. Apter, 'Ghana's Independence: Triumph and Paradox', *Transition*, No. 98 (2008), pp. 6-22, pp. 13, 16; Simon Baynham, 'Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes?: The Case of Nkrumah's National Security Service', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1985), pp. 87-103.

¹³⁹ Ruth Iyob, 'Regional Hegemony: Domination and Resistance in the Horn of Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1993), pp. 257-276, p. 273.

¹⁴⁰ As Clapham has observed in his study on exiled insurgencies, the support of foreign governments 'could not be expected to jeopardise their relations with the target state [in this case Cameroon], in support of a movement which had only negligible prospects of success.' Clapham, *African Guerrillas*, p. 215.

¹⁴¹ Clapham, *African Guerrillas*, p. 209. Such an insurgency would not only possess international legitimacy amongst African governments, but also at the U.N. In 1961, Resolution 1541 (XV) of the General Assembly had created a Special Committee on Decolonization.

¹⁴² Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, p. 57.

resource, the exiled U.P.C. made the point that its struggle obeyed the ‘General Law of Liberation Movements of Colonised Countries.’¹⁴³ Unlike the F.L.N., however, the U.P.C. was fighting against an independent African government, not a colonial French one. It was undoubtedly a significant reason why, compared to the U.P.C., the F.L.N. enjoyed a much greater degree of diplomatic recognition and material support amongst recently independent governments.¹⁴⁴

To validate its presentation of the struggle to the Casablanca states, therefore, the U.P.C. faced a rhetorical balancing act. On the one hand, the party could not deny Cameroon’s independence, which had been universally recognised, even by the Casablanca states. In addition, the U.P.C. relied upon this independence for a degree of prestige, as the party leadership claimed to have wrested it from France through the previous armed struggle.¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, however, an affirmation of Cameroon’s independence presented the U.P.C. as a potential security risk. Supporting the party’s struggle would, in effect, constitute the Casablanca states’ legitimisation of armed opposition against independent African governments, including their own. Cameroon’s independence also risked distinguishing the U.P.C.’s struggle from those being waged within territories still under direct colonial rule, like that of the F.L.N.

Fortunately for the U.P.C., an emergent doctrine of neo-colonialism - as articulated at the second All-African People’s Conference of January 1960 - provided a solution to this impasse.¹⁴⁶ In particular, the U.P.C. could employ its conceptual distinction between ‘nominal’ and ‘real’ independence, in order to simultaneously affirm and deny Cameroon’s sovereignty. ‘Nominal’ independence pertained to internationally recognised sovereignty, whilst ‘real independence’ could only be achieved by removing the former colonial power’s ‘indirect’ control over the state.¹⁴⁷ Within this taxonomy of statehood, ‘neo-

¹⁴³ Diye, ‘En Guise de Discussion’, p. 20.

¹⁴⁴ Whilst the U.P.C. was unambiguously recognised as a legitimate government by three states, the G.P.R.A. was recognised by thirteen, and within the first ten days of its creation. At the Addis Ababa conference, moreover, the F.L.N. was granted full membership status, whilst the U.P.C. delegation could attend only in an observer role. This diplomatic inequality translated into access to external resources. Whilst it was rumoured that Moumié had gradually amassed up to \$1.2 million in foreign aid, deposited in Swiss bank accounts, the G.P.R.A. had received \$34 million from the Arab League alone. See Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 195; Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 528.

¹⁴⁵ *La Révolution Kamerunaise*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁶ Held in Tunis, the conference outlined the dangers of neo-colonialism in its General Resolution. Gott, Major, and Warner, *Documents on International Affairs 1960*, p. 351.

¹⁴⁷ See ‘Report on All African People’s Conferences’ [Author Unknown], *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1962), pp. 429-434, pp. 431-432.

colonial' states were defined by a lack of real independence. That is, by their close economic, political, military, and technical ties to the former colonial power.¹⁴⁸

In its newspapers and conference publications, the U.P.C. was thus able to affirm Cameroon's independence by articulating its 'juridical', 'international', and 'nominal' aspects.¹⁴⁹ More importantly, the party could simultaneously deny this independence, by claiming that the Franco-Cameroonian Co-operation Accords, and the presence of French troops, represented a 'neo-colonial' state that lacked 'real' independence.¹⁵⁰ As a result, the U.P.C. was able to present its insurgency as an anti-colonial liberation struggle, albeit against a more 'indirect' and 'hidden' form of colonial rule.¹⁵¹ The party was conscious of this definitional caveat, and that support for its struggle could still be perceived as a security risk for foreign governments. As a result, the leadership was careful to assuage the potential anxieties of the Casablanca group, emphasising that the 'national liberation struggle' did not represent a 'civil war' against a 'truly independent government', nor were the U.P.C. 'traitors' to their country.¹⁵²

The U.P.C.'s articulation of neo-colonialism had a limited diplomatic impact. At the Third All-African Peoples' Conference, held in Cairo in March 1961, a resolution was passed calling for the 'immediate and complete withdrawal' of French troops from Cameroon.¹⁵³ In the conference's General Resolution, however, the case of Cameroon was not cited as a 'Manifestation of Neo-Colonialism'.¹⁵⁴ In addition, although the U.P.C. attended the Third A.A.P.C. in place of an Ahidjo delegation, this did not constitute a recognition of the former over the latter as Cameroon's legitimate government. Unlike the previous A.A.P.C. of 1959, Ahidjo had not requested an invitation to Cairo, let alone been denied one. Rather, Ahidjo's absence represented the fact that the Third A.A.P.C. was not attended by the vast majority of Francophone governments. Instead, twelve of these governments, which constituted the Brazzaville group, held a parallel set of conferences to the A.A.P.C.¹⁵⁵ Importantly, this parallel diplomatic network demonstrated Ahidjo's growing international prestige. In the same month that the U.P.C. struggled to obtain

¹⁴⁸ Gott, Major, and Warner, *Documents on International Affairs 1960*, p. 351.

¹⁴⁹ The U.P.C. used the term 'juridical', 'formal', and 'international' to describe this form of independence. See the brochures: *Un Sursaut de l'Opinion Public Française* (October 1960), p. 7; *L'U.P.C. à la Conférence d'Addis Abeba*, p. 4; *Unité Africaine ou Néo-Colonialisme ?* (Accra, 1962), p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ See: *L'Oppression Française au Kamerun* (1962), pp. 40-50; *Un Sursaut*, pp. 7-8; *Unité Africaine*, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ *La Révolution Kamerunaise*, p. 4; *Unité Africaine*, p. 6.

¹⁵² *La Révolution Kamerunaise*, p. 19.

¹⁵³ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 205.

¹⁵⁴ Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Unity*, p. 52.

¹⁵⁵ The Brazzaville group consisted of: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Malagasy, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta.

acknowledgement at the Third A.A.P.C., the Cameroonian President played host to the third Brazzaville Conference, held in Yaoundé.¹⁵⁶

Neo-colonialism was not, however, the only tool of rhetorical diplomacy that the U.P.C. had at its disposal. It also re-imagined its vision of a future Cameroonian state, in order to appeal to the Pan-Africanism of the Casablanca group. Whilst denouncing the neo-colonialism of the Ahidjo regime, therefore, the U.P.C.'s publications simultaneously cited the party's intention for Cameroon to form part of a supranational United States of Africa.¹⁵⁷ The party's Pan-Africanism can again be seen as an adaptive diplomatic strategy, as it sought to exploit new international openings after other support networks had been closed off. In this respect, it is necessary to point out that the U.P.C.'s articulation of Pan-African unity began in 1960-1961, and not in 1957-8, as Terretta has suggested.

Although Terretta correctly points out that the U.P.C.'s Pan-African ideology was a diplomatic tool, she indicates that it began to be articulated by the party in 1957, with no evidence to substantiate such a proposal. The research for the present study has not found any articulation of Pan-Africanism by the U.P.C. before January 1960. There may be earlier instances that the present study has missed, or that Terretta simply did not mention in her otherwise excellent work.¹⁵⁸ The party's Pan-Africanism thus emerged only after it had effectively lost the political platform of the U.N. in 1960, and sought the support of Nkrumah, and the emergent Casablanca group.¹⁵⁹ As Clifford Bob has written – in his study of insurgent diplomacy since the 1990s – the presentation of a political ideology is: ‘a

¹⁵⁶ ‘Report on the Brazzaville Powers’ [Author Unknown], *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1962), pp. 434-437, p. 435.

¹⁵⁷ In 1958, Ghana and Guinea had formed a political union – named the Union of African States in 1959 – which would form the basis for Nkrumah's vision of a United States of Africa. In July 1961, this Union expanded to include Mali under Modibo Keita. The U.P.C.'s desire for a United States of Africa becomes evident in its brochures and newspapers from 1960. The party's Pan-Africanism possessed both a political-ideological dimension and also an economic rationale. In the U.P.C.'s 1960 brochure *La Révolution Kamerunaise*, therefore, it claims that ‘Real independence will take place within the context of Pan-African Unity’, whilst also framing such unity in terms of an economic union. A Pan-African common market would, according to the leadership, grant Cameroon ‘additional weight’ negotiating the terms of supply for its agricultural products on the international stage. It would consequently avoid the potential for exploitation that would result from unilateral negotiations with Western states, due to unequal levels of economic development *La Révolution Kamerunaise*, p. 62.

¹⁵⁸ Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global’, p. 196.

¹⁵⁹ The shift in focus could be read in the party's January-February 1960 issue of its newspaper, *La Voix du Kamerun*. In an editorial entitled ‘Whither the United Nations?’, Vice-President Kingué wrote that ‘Today the spell is finally broken. After fourteen years of existence, the U.N. has proven itself to be in the service of colonialists’ (p.21). In a declaration signed by Kingué, Ouandié and Moumié in the same issue, the party said they were now ‘launching a particular appeal to the political leaders of Africa to support the just cause of the Kamerunian people’ (p.9.).

matter of manoeuvre rather than position...of seizing opportunities and capitalising on accidents as much as preplanning.¹⁶⁰

Like the example of neo-colonialism, however, this diplomatic manoeuvring needed to be based in certain political realities for it to be accepted by a target audience. In this respect, the U.P.C.'s campaign for unification with British Cameroon (still a trust territory) was vital for validating its status as a proponent of Pan-African unity. The question of British Cameroon's political future was to be decided by a U.N. plebiscite within the territory, which was to take place in February 1961. After much deliberation, the agreed questions of the plebiscite were:

- i) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria?
- ii) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon?¹⁶¹

As the last chapter demonstrated, however, Ahidjo had been an avid supporter of unification since 1958, in an attempt to undermine domestic support for the U.P.C.¹⁶² The U.P.C. was thus faced with a political dilemma in 1961. If British Cameroonians decided against unification, then one of the party's founding demands, and its desired status as an influential proponent of Pan-Africanism, would be defeated. Yet if British Cameroonians

¹⁶⁰ Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005), p. 28.

¹⁶¹ The questions of the plebiscite were reached after a lengthy bout of disagreements between the leaders of the two biggest parties of British Cameroon, the Kamerun National Democratic Party (K.N.D.P.), led by John Ngu Foncha, and the Cameroon People's National Convention (C.P.N.C.) – led by Dr. E.M.L. Endeley. The K.N.D.P. had originally desired complete independence for British Cameroon without any sort of unification, whilst the C.P.N.C. desired to remain a part of Nigeria, as the territory had formerly been administered as part of the Nigerian federation by the British government. The K.N.D.P. consequently wished for the plebiscite choice to be between remaining with, or seceding from, Nigeria. The rationale was that if British Cameroonians later decided to join the Republic of Cameroon, they could negotiate such a unification on their own terms, as a sovereign state. Although 'independence without joining' was the most popular choice amongst British Cameroonians, the British government, and the Casablanca group at the U.N., opposed the K.N.D.P.'s choice for the plebiscite questions, and pressured Foncha to accept the choice that was eventually issued in the plebiscite. The British government did not believe that an independent British Cameroons would be economically viable, and would consequently remain a drain on British resources. The Casablanca group was against British Cameroon's independence as it believed it would represent the 'Balkanisation' of Africa, and undermine its vision of Pan-African unity. See Victor Julius Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961: A Constitutional History* (Farnham, 2001), pp. 123-129; Claude E. Welch Jr., *Dream of Unity: Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa* (New York 1966), p. 171.

¹⁶² Ahidjo continued to support – or at least not actively oppose – the Republic's unification with British Cameroon in 1960 and 1961. It is for this reason that the trust territory's future was to be decided by British Cameroonians alone, as the U.N. assumed the Republic's support for the scenario of unification. See Nicodemus Fru Awasom, 'The Reunification Question in Cameroon History: Was the Bride an Enthusiastic or a Reluctant One?', *Africa Today* Vol. 47, No. 2 (2000), pp. 91-119, pp. 106-7.

voted in favour of unification, then Ahidjo could portray himself as a champion of Pan-African unity, undermining the U.P.C.'s support from the Casablanca group. The way in which the plebiscite results were counted, however, provided the U.P.C. with a possible solution. British Cameroon was constituted by two provinces – British Northern Cameroon, and British Southern Cameroon. The plebiscite results for each province were counted separately, with the result that whilst the Southern province voted to join the Republic of Cameroon, the Northern province voted to join Nigeria.¹⁶³

The U.P.C. thus sought to use the plebiscite result in the North to undermine Ahidjo's apparent support for unification, and by extension, his Pan-African credentials. In a communiqué issued from Accra, Kingué claimed that the result in the North was a product of the 'monstrous rigging' of the vote by 'Franco-British imperialists and their valets', who sought to 'drown the legitimate aspirations of our people' by ensuring that unification was only 'partial'.¹⁶⁴ The U.P.C. also used the result to regain access to the U.N. Ndeh Ntumazah, leader of the One Kamerun Party (the U.P.C.'s *de facto* section in the British Territory), was permitted to travel to New York to petition the Fourth Committee about the plebiscite in the North. Ntumazah used his appearance to denounce both the 'partial unification' engineered by Ahidjo, and the presence of French troops within the Republic.¹⁶⁵

The U.P.C.'s protests were poorly calculated, however, indicating that its diplomatic strategies were becoming somewhat desperate. Ahidjo had, in fact, strongly desired the integration of Northern British Cameroon into the Republic, as it was largely populated with his own Fulani ethnic group.¹⁶⁶ To this end, Ahidjo similarly sought an international body to protest the plebiscite result in the North: the International Court of Justice.¹⁶⁷ Although the case was rejected, Ahidjo was able to capitalise on the successful unification with British Southern Cameroon (which was to officially take effect on 1st October 1961) to undermine international support for the U.P.C.

¹⁶³ In the North, the results were 146,296 votes for Nigeria, 97,659 for the Republic of Cameroon. In the South, the results were 233,571 votes for the Republic of Cameroon, 97,741 for Nigeria. Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons*, p. 151-152.

¹⁶⁴ Abel Kingué, 'Appel lancé par le Bureau de Comité Directeur de l'U.P.C. à tous les chefs d'état et à tous les organisations démocratiques du monde entier à la vielle de la réunification du Kamerun', 21/08/1961 ; (261 J7).

¹⁶⁵ Ndeh Ntumazah, *8 Steps to Peace in Kamerun* (Kumba, 1961), pp. 14-17.

¹⁶⁶ David Gardinier, *Cameroon: United Nations Challenge to French Policy* (Oxford University Press: London, 1963), pp. 105-108; Welch, *Dream*, p. 239.

¹⁶⁷ Ambassade de France au Cameroun, 'Bulletin Mensuel d'Information Politique: du 1er au 31 Mai 1961'; (6H 264), p. 9.

In May 1961, Ahidjo attended the Monrovia Conference, at which he used the example of Cameroon's forthcoming unification to appeal for Pan-African co-operation between the Francophone Brazzaville group and the Casablanca states.¹⁶⁸ With unification achieved in October—creating the Federal Republic of Cameroon—Ahidjo began to make further appeals to the Pan-Africanism of the Casablanca states, and particularly Nkrumah. At an international press conference in Yaoundé on 11th November, Ahidjo stated that 'A union between all African states is desirable'.¹⁶⁹

After making this statement, Ahidjo shrewdly used Nkrumah's support for the U.P.C. to question the Ghanaian leader's own Pan-Africanism. He stated that the 'greatest obstacle' to African unity was the 'interference in internal affairs' of African states by other African governments. Ahidjo further appealed to the security concerns of other independent African governments to this effect, concluding that: 'Certain of these countries, however, are beginning to realise the difficulties of armed rebellions and harbouring national rebels.'¹⁷⁰ On February 18th 1962, Ghana finally established diplomatic relations with the new Federal Republic of Cameroon, recognising it 'as a step towards the organic unity of the African continent'.¹⁷¹

Conclusion

Historians have perhaps too readily dismissed neo-colonialism and Pan-Africanism as tools for historical analysis, resigning them to the realm of vague, impractical and abstract ideology.¹⁷² When one studies how these concepts were deployed in specific historical scenarios, however, they are revealed to have had a more practical diplomatic purpose. In the case of Cameroon, this purpose provides a pertinent insight into the possibilities and constraints of exercising statehood in Africa during the immediate post-independence period. Both the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government articulated these ideologies as a means to gain access to vital external support, and to undermine that of their opponents. The comparative failure and success of this strategy, moreover, demonstrates how the

¹⁶⁸ 'Bulletin Mensuel d'Information Politique: du 1er au 31 Mai 1961'; (6H 264), p. 8.

¹⁶⁹ Ahidjo, *Conférence de Presse*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ Ahidjo, *Conférence de Presse*, p. 7.

¹⁷¹ Oyono, *Avec ou Sans la France?*, p. 64.

¹⁷² As regards neo-colonialism, Van Walraven and Abbink denote the term as a 'vague ideological concept', whilst Frederick Cooper criticises it for over-simplifying processes of continuity after independence. Van Walraven and Abbink, 'Rethinking Resistance in African History', p. 9; Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 15. As Robert Young has observed, Pan-Africanism has often been 'criticised and dismissed on the grounds that it was based on a mystical, racialized notion of Africanness rather than any political or practical need'. Robert C. J. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001), p. 243.

conventional institutions of sovereignty were vital to gaining international recognition and resources.

Neo-colonialism and Pan-Africanism, therefore, help to reveal the complex dynamics of African statehood, and how its fundamental function could be effectively exercised. Like this fundamental function, these concepts can also provide valuable nuance and contextualisation to more generalised and Western models of statehood. The idea of 'nominal' vs. 'real' independence, for example, offers a contemporary observation on Jackson's disaggregation of 'juridical' and 'empirical' statehood'. Nkrumah's definition of neo-colonialism even demonstrates an awareness of the fundamental function of African statehood. His 1965 work, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, for example, denotes how African governments could exploit the international benefits of recognised sovereignty to compensate for their lack of domestic authority and resources.¹⁷³

The political project of Pan-Africanism similarly provides a contemporary insight into more recent theories of statehood, and interrogates their Western-centrism in the process. In this instance, Nkrumah's vision of a United States of Africa demonstrates that supranational and horizontal forms of statehood were being imagined long before a post-1990 'globalised era'.¹⁷⁴ Again, this was not evidence of a proto-globalisation, based upon Western standards of sovereignty, but a practical attempt to address the realities of statehood in an African context. As articulated by Nkrumah and Touré, a proposed United States of Africa would, for example, grant African states collective bargaining power in an unequal international environment, through the creation of an African Common Market.¹⁷⁵

Overall, the conflict between the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government presents an image of statehood that is dynamic, contextual, and complex. Rather than representing a proto-

¹⁷³ Nkrumah writes: 'However little real power the government of a neo-colonialist State may possess, it must have, from the very fact of its nominal independence, a certain area of manoeuvre. It may not be able to exist without a neo-colonialist master but it may still have the ability to change masters.' Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London, 1965), p. xiv

¹⁷⁴ A United States of Africa sought to exercise a supranational form of sovereignty, one that by-passed the residual ties between African states and their former colonial rulers. As such, it evokes descriptions by more recent analyses of 'globalisation' and 'post-nationalism'. Hardt and Negri, for example, have articulated an 'immanent' sovereignty of a post-Cold War era, whose logic is marked by open frontiers and invested in supranational institutions, rather than the bounded nation-state and the residual connections of colonial empires. Charles Piot has applied such a concept to Africa in the post-1990s era, claiming that sovereignty is no longer vested in the territory or institutions of the recognised nation-state, nor the vertical ties that link African territories to their former European rulers. Instead, African states are now subject to a more 'flexible' and 'horizontal' form of sovereignty, vested in the international connections of non-governmental and supranational institutions. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), pp. 114-136. Charles Piot, *Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa After the Cold War* (Chicago, 2010), pp. 8-9.

¹⁷⁵ Young, *Postcolonialism*, p. 243.

globalised era of deterritorialised sovereignty, the ability of the U.P.C. to exercise the functions of state represented a fleeting moment of possibility, as various actors sought to negotiate the new realities of independence in Africa. It also represented the U.P.C.'s diplomatic flexibility, and its ability to exploit a brief opening in this complex and dynamic political reality. From 1962, however, this reality began to settle into the forms of statehood commonly observed in post-independence Africa, whereby the international benefits of sovereignty would be monopolised and closely guarded by a single government. A mutual insurance pact of non-interference between African governments would also grow stronger, with the creation of the Organisation of African Unity.

As the next chapter will demonstrate, however, the U.P.C. leadership continued to show its resilience and adaptability. Yet the Ahidjo government also showed a growing efficacy in guarding access to external resources. It deployed a discourse of nation-building to support its own international propaganda campaign, and to justify access to further external aid, aid that was used to set up an extensive surveillance network over the country's borders and populations. Faced with these mounting difficulties, the U.P.C. leadership began to disintegrate, but in doing so, demonstrated a further characteristic of African statehood, as competing factions of the party sought to guard and monopolise access to crucial international resources.

Chapter Four: The Final Battle: Nation-Building and Insurgent Diplomacy, 1962-1971

Although the insurgency had entered into an irredeemable decline by 1962, both the exiled U.P.C. leadership, and the Ahidjo government, had a vested interest in perpetuating the appearance of a security threat in Cameroon. For both groups, the presentation of such a threat was a vital component of a shared strategy, which sought to monopolise and guard access to crucial external resources against rival claimants. Importantly, however, these rival claimants were individuals and groups *within* the U.P.C. leadership and Ahidjo government.

For President Ahidjo, such a threat would justify the use of sweeping emergency powers, enabling the elimination of political opposition within the National Assembly, and thus narrowing access to the state's crucial sources of external revenue. The U.P.C.'s ability to present itself as a viable military force against the Ahidjo regime was vital in justifying continued material and political support from foreign governments, as the last chapter demonstrated. From 1962, however, the U.P.C. executive in Accra was facing a leadership challenge from student members who had recently arrived from Paris. The party became increasingly embroiled in an internecine struggle, a struggle in which each faction sought to lay claim not only to the party's leadership, but also its military capacity, and thus its external aid networks.

This chapter examines this shared strategy, between 1962 and 1967, to demonstrate that both the Ahidjo government, and the U.P.C. leadership, were partaking in a similar process of state consolidation. It is a process defined by an ability to control access to vital sources of external revenue, and their networks of distribution. The purpose of identifying this shared process is two-fold. Firstly, and building upon the previous chapter, it provides an additional standard by which to assess the exercise of statehood in Africa, one that avoids Eurocentric models of state-consolidation by which African states are found to be lacking. Secondly, the chapter seeks to overcome a conceptual state/non-state divide in studies of African history and politics. It is a divide that has ensured a lack of dialogue between, on the one hand, studies of state consolidation in Africa, and, on the other, studies of post-independence insurgencies.

The first section of the chapter examines how, between 1962 and 1963, the Ahidjo government was able to exploit the occasional attack by U.P.C. guerrillas to enforce a continual state of emergency, one whose enforcement was aided by French technical and financial assistance. This state of emergency allowed the President to eliminate parliamentary opposition, and thus control access to, and the distribution of, development aid and trade revenue. Ahidjo used this revenue to lubricate networks of patronage and reinforce his administration's coercive capacities, thereby ensuring its continued domination of the state's external revenue in a self-reinforcing logic of exclusion.

The second part of the chapter will examine this same process amongst the exiled U.P.C. leadership between 1962 and 1964. Although competing U.P.C. factions lacked the coercive and legal apparatus of the Ahidjo government, they nevertheless sought to use the coercive and legal apparatus of the Nkrumah government to eliminate rival claimants to the party's external aid networks. Underlying this strategy was the ability of each faction to demonstrate that it had direct links to an on-going armed insurgency within Cameroon, one that presented a viable security threat to the Cameroonian government.

The third part of the chapter will demonstrate the complex and unstable combination of military, material, and political factors that defined the U.P.C.'s insurgent diplomacy, and eventually led to its collapse. It will initially examine how the U.P.C. and Ahidjo government's attempts to guard access to external resources interacted, by demonstrating how the growing coercive and surveillance capacity of the Cameroonian state effectively ended the Bamileke insurgency, and thus cut off crucial networks of foreign support for the U.P.C. Next, the chapter demonstrates how the political instability of the U.P.C.'s host governments, and the growing diplomatic imperative of non-interference between African states, further diminished the U.P.C.'s external aid networks. Finally, the chapter will examine how competing U.P.C. factions raced to open up a 'second front' on the border with Congo-Brazzaville, and how this enterprise ultimately failed, signalling the simultaneous – and final - collapse of the U.P.C.'s armed action and its diplomatic activities.

State Consolidation Under Ahidjo, 1962-1963

Jeffrey Herbst, in surveying the works of Samuel P. Huntington and Charles Tilly, ascertains that 'War in Europe played an important role in the consolidation of many now-developed states'.¹ He observes that there has been no corresponding study on the relationship between war and 'state consolidation' in Africa, since African governments 'have not faced a security threat since independence'.² Whilst Herbst acknowledges that independent African states have often faced domestic threats, these are not, in his opinion, 'as grave as the type of external threat European states had to confront'. African governments, therefore, have been unable to effect the two most important processes of 'state consolidation' that resulted from the demands of an external threat: i) the creation of centralised and efficient structures to collect taxes from the population; and ii) the forging of a national identity.³

In using a European model of statehood for his comparison, however, Herbst overlooks two important points in the case of Cameroon. Firstly, there was no clear demarcation between 'external' and 'domestic' security threats, due to the U.P.C.'s ability to mobilise foreign military support and to act across Cameroon's borders. Secondly, the criteria of 'state consolidation' are not only problematic to measure (i.e. 'national identity'), but, more importantly, ignore the conjunction of domestic constraints and external opportunities that defined the exercising of statehood in Africa. In terms of domestic constraints, the Cameroonian government could not raise any significant tax revenue from an impecunious population with high rates of unemployment, even if more 'efficient

¹ Jeffrey Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', *International Security*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (1990), pp. 117-139, p. 118. The works to which Herbst was referring are: Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT, 1968); and Charles Tilly, 'Reflections on the History of European State-Making' in Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 3-83. Herbst's arguments in this article, and the sources used to support them, are largely reproduced in a later monograph. See Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, 2000).

² Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', p. 118.

³ Citing works by Richard Bean and Michael Mann, Herbst writes: 'While success in war depends on many factors including technology, tactics, and morale of the troops, raising sufficient revenue was a necessary condition to prevent defeat. States that did not raise sufficient revenue for war perished.' Concerning 'national identity', and citing works by Anthony Giddens and Michael Howard, Herbst writes: 'the presence of a palpable external threat may be the strongest way to generate a common association between the state and the population. External threats have such a powerful effect on nationalism because people realize in a profound manner that they are under threat because of who they are as a nation; they are forced to recognize that it is only as a nation that they can successfully defeat the threat.' Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', pp. 120, 122. See also: Richard Bean, 'War and the Birth of the Nation State', *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (1973), pp. 203-221, p. 220; Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism: Studies in Political Sociology* (Oxford, 1988), p. 109; Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, Vol. 2 of *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley, 1985), p. 235; Michael Howard, *War and the Nation State* (Oxford, 1978), p. 9.

structures' were put in place.⁴ Instead, the most important opportunities of revenue for the Ahidjo government in 1962-1964 were external, comprising of foreign aid, and duties imposed on imports and exports.⁵

Within this context, a more relevant indicator of state consolidation is the ability of political elites to control access to vital external resources, as well as their domestic networks of distribution, against rival claimants. To this effect, the Ahidjo government was able to effectively exploit the U.P.C. security threat. Although the insurgency had entered an irredeemable decline from 1961, the Cameroonian government used the presence of Ouandié in the *maquis*, and occasional guerrilla attacks, to justify an on-going state of emergency. Supported by French technical assistance, this state of emergency gave Ahidjo the legal and coercive resources to eliminate opposition within government, and thus ensure that he and his party, the *Union Camerounaise* (U.C.), maintained a tight control over the access and distribution of the state's key external revenue.

Ahidjo had declared, and renewed, a state of emergency since May 1960, through the presidential power of decree provided by the Republic of Cameroon's constitution. Unification with British Southern Cameroons in October 1961, however, effectively ended this prerogative, as a new constitution was required for the Federal Republic. At the preliminary constitutional conference in Bamenda, moreover, the British Cameroonian delegation had made it clear that they wished to circumscribe the powers of the presidency as they presently existed in the Republic.⁶ The details of the new federal constitution were to be negotiated and decided between Ahidjo and John Foncha - the British Cameroonian premier before unification – at Foumban in July 1961. As had been the case in the drafting

⁴ Mongo Beti gives a detailed account of the colonial government's difficulty in extracting taxes from the local population in 1958, a task that would have been even more difficult for the Ahidjo government which had fewer resources at its disposal. In the decade after Cameroon's independence, tax revenues rose very little as a proportion of G.D.P., and plateaued at about 15%. Johnson further observes that employment rates between 1958 and 1963 actually fell in Cameroon (although no figures are given), further reducing the revenue base for taxation. See: Mongo Beti, 'Cameroun, 1958', *Preuves*, No. 94 (December 1958), pp. 29-32 (Archives de Service Protestant de Mission Défap, Paris: 18.989; 61.981; B.0); Reginald Herbold Green, 'The Political Economy of External Dependence in Cameroon' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 162-178, p. 170; Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation* (Princeton, 1970), p. 323.

⁵ In 1962-1963, the federal government's recurrent revenue was \$60.5 million. Based on the calculations of Richard Joseph and Reginald Herbold Green, between 66% and 90% of this revenue came from import and export related taxes. The Cameroonian government was still running a deficit of \$7.6 million, but this was covered by a French budgetary assistance grant. In addition, \$18 million of development aid was given to the Cameroonian government that year by the U.S. and West German governments. See Richard Joseph 'Economy and Society' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 142-161; p. 154; Green, 'The Political Economy of External Dependence in Cameroon', p. 170; Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 322.

⁶ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, pp. 185-6.

of the Republic's constitution in 1960, Ahidjo was given the support of French legal and political advisors at Foumban; a support that Foncha did not enjoy from the British government.⁷

Being more prepared and better supported than Foncha, Ahidjo was able to negotiate an extremely centralised executive in the federal constitution, which would allow his party to tightly control access to the external resources and distributive networks of the state. Firstly, it was the President's responsibility to establish the institutions that would organise, regulate, hire and fire all administrative officials in the federal state. Although Ahidjo could not conceivably undertake this task alone, it gave the President and his party enormous control over the civil service. The civil service would come to form one of the most important employment sectors in Cameroon, thereby providing the President with an enormous source of patronage through which to control and distribute the state's external revenue.⁸

The President was, moreover, given significant control over the form and origin of this revenue. That is, article 9.4 of the constitution granted the President the power to personally negotiate and ratify agreements and treaties with foreign powers. Although treaties that fell into the normal remit of legislative matters had to be submitted to the

⁷ It is generally agreed in the literature that Ahidjo's support from French experts, and Foncha's lack of such support from the British, was a significant factor in the constitutional negotiations resulting in the former's favour. Anglophone Cameroonians have often explained this lack of legal and political support from the British government as a form of political reprisal; that is, a punitive response to the British Southern Cameroon's decision to join the former French territory over Nigeria. Victor Ngoh, however, has more recently demonstrated that this inequality was due to the over-confidence of Foncha, rather than the unwillingness of the British government to provide such support. Letters and documents in Cameroonian and British government archives show that Milne, the Deputy Commissioner of British Southern Cameroon, had repeatedly offered Foncha advice on the constitutional negotiations. Foncha, however, declared that 'the drawing up of this constitution is a matter for Cameroonians themselves, and it will be foolish to look to anyone else for help.' See Claude E. Welch Jr., *Dream of Unity: Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa* (Ithaca, 1966), pp. 247-249, Victor Julius Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961: A Constitutional History* (Farnham, 2001), pp. 135-136; 161-163.

⁸ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 191. Of course, the formation of patrimonial and clientelist networks to ensure the ascendancy of a narrow political leadership was not unique to Cameroon, and has been a recurrent theme in political and historical analyses of African governance since independence. See for example: Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley, 1982); Richard A. Joseph, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The rise and fall of the Second Republic* (New York, 1987); Michael G. Schatzberg, *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, family, food* (Bloomington, 2001); Nicolas van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999* (Cambridge, 2001). For an overview of how the exercise of patronage developed over a longer period, see Crawford Young, 'The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa? Reflections on Changing African Political Dynamics', *African Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 410 (2004), pp. 23-49.

National Assembly for ratification, this provision was effectively neutralised by article 21, which empowered the President to legislate by way of ordinance.⁹

Finally, the new constitution gave Ahidjo the legal and coercive means to remove any source of political opposition within government, opposition that could seek to take over or widen the distributive networks of state and its external sources of revenue. Specifically, within the constitution, the power to declare a six-month state of emergency resided solely with the President, and there was no limit on the amount of six-month renewals the President could declare. A state of emergency could be declared ‘In the event of serious peril threatening the integrity of the national territory, or of the life, independence, or institutions of the nation’.¹⁰ Importantly, it would endow the President ‘with any and all powers he deemed it necessary to have’.¹¹

The political scientists Lippens and Joseph observed that ‘the occasional report or apprehension of a guerrilla (or bandit), whose actions little disturb the life of the Cameroon people in general, is used by the government to maintain most of southern Cameroon under state of emergency’.¹² Immediately after unification, Ahidjo cited the occasional attacks by the A.L.N.K. to justify an on-going state of emergency in four of the six administrative departments in the Bamileke region.¹³ In 1962, the President used the sweeping powers of the emergency laws to remove the last vestiges of opposition in the National Assembly. Importantly, this included the most viable base of parliamentary opposition to the U.C.: the ‘legal’ wing of the U.P.C., which had been operating – albeit in a very restricted capacity – under the rallied Mayi Matip since 1960.

In June 1962, Matip and the leaders of the three largest remaining opposition parties in East Cameroon published an open letter, protesting Ahidjo’s proposal for a single “Great National Party” and instead demanding a United National Front – a coalition that would allow each party to maintain its independence.¹⁴ Using Emergency Law No. 63/OF/18,

⁹ Ndiva Kofele-Kale, ‘Cameroon and its Foreign Relations’, *African Affairs*, Vol. 80, Issue 319 (1981), pp. 196-217, p. 197.

¹⁰ Charles Manga Fombad, ‘Cameroon’s Emergency Powers: A Recipe for (Un)constitutional Dictatorship?’, *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (2004), pp. 62-81, p. 63.

¹¹ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 192.

¹² Ph. Lippens and R. A. Joseph, ‘The Power and the People’ in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 111-126, p. 113.

¹³ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 192.

¹⁴ These three leaders were André-Marie Mbida of the *Démocrates Camerounais*, Dr. Marcel Bebey-Eyidi of the *Parti des Travailleurs Camerounais* and Charles Okala of the *Parti Socialiste Camerounais*. Willard R. Johnson, ‘The Union des Populations du Cameroun in Rebellion: The Integrative Backlash of Insurgency’ in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui (eds.), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (Oxford, 1970) pp. 671-692, p. 691.

Ahidjo arrested the men for ‘threatening national security and spreading news liable to be harmful to public authority’.¹⁵ The smaller opposition parties were increasingly marginalised, and faced a stark choice between dissolution and arrest, or capitulation and co-option.¹⁶ By the time that Ahidjo’s *Union Camerounaise* party held its fourth congress in July 1962, the President was confident enough to declare the U.C. as ‘the only political party’ in Cameroon ‘with a truly national character’.¹⁷

With parliamentary opposition effectively neutralised, U.C. party members began to profit from trade duties and foreign development assistance; a fact not only noted by the U.P.C. in its publications, but also Cameroonian journalists, and even French government officials. The French embassy in Yaoundé, for example, estimated that \$1.5 million had been misappropriated from the Cameroonian treasury, notably from within the directorate of customs in Yaoundé, and the Douala Port Authority.¹⁸ The U.P.C. often denounced the high salaries of U.C. parliamentary members, which the party claimed constituted a misappropriation of French budgetary assistance.¹⁹ At a press conference in Yaoundé, even a journalist from *L’Effort Camerounais* – a Catholic newspaper that had supported the government’s actions against the U.P.C. – suggested to the President that his plan for development should ‘begin with an example of austerity set by the leadership’.²⁰

Ahidjo was subsequently able to deploy a combination of coercion and patronage to narrow and control the channels of access to external financial resources. To enforce the state of emergency that was vital to this strategy, the President utilised French technical assistance to expand the Republic’s paramilitary secret police and intelligence services: respectively the *Brigade Mixte Mobile* (B.M.M.) and the *Sérvise d’Études et de Documentation* (S.E.D.O.C.). The B.M.M. was created in 1959 by General Le Puloch (who subsequently became the French army’s Chief of Staff in July 1962), and its recruits were trained in intelligence gathering and interrogation. From the end of 1961, the B.M.M.

¹⁵ Joseph Takougang and Milton Krieger, *African State and Society in the 1990s: Cameroon’s Political Crossroads* (Oxford, 1998), p. 44.

¹⁶ By early 1963 opposition in the Assembly was reduced to six *Démocrates* and one U.P.C. member, a relatively unknown figure named Jean Schamba Njitam. According to Johnson, ‘Some were promised houses; other were given government positions; some were simply frightened into their new party affiliations.’ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 254.

¹⁷ Takougang and Krieger, *African State and Society*, p. 44.

¹⁸ Ambassade de France au Cameroun, ‘Bulletin Mensuel d’Information Politique’, 30/06/1962 ; *Bulletins de Renseignements, BEDOC et AMBAFRANCE*, Service Historique de l’Armée de Terre, Vincennes (6H 264), p. 4.

¹⁹ See the U.P.C. pamphlets *La Révolution Kamerunais*, p. 40 and *Un Sursaut de l’Opinion Française*, p. 8.

²⁰ Ahmadou Ahidjo, *Conférence de Presse, Tenue le 11 Novembre 1961 à Yaoundé*, p. 5. Archives de Service Protestant de Mission Défap, Paris (20.966 ; 63.051 ; B.220).

reported directly to S.E.D.O.C., which had been created by presidential decree in December.²¹

Directly attached to the presidency, S.E.D.O.C. was in effect a change of name for the *Bureau d'Études et de Documentation* (B.E.D.O.C.), which had existed since March 1960. B.E.D.O.C. was created with the help of Maurice Robert, who headed the 'African Branch' of the French external intelligence agency, the *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage* (S.D.E.C.E.). Under the instructions of Jacques Foccart, the French President's Chief of Staff for African and Madagascan Affairs, Robert described his objective as:

...to aid the newly independent states to put in place their own intelligence services, and to arrange 'antenna' that will allow us to collect information to ensure the stability of these states and safeguard French interests.²²

The head of S.E.D.O.C. was Jean Fochive, a Cameroonian from the Bamoun region who, after attending the Police Academy in Dakar in 1959, was personally instructed by Robert in Paris.²³ In the government's strategy to guard access to foreign trade and aid revenue, the B.M.M. and S.E.D.O.C. served two important purposes. Empowered by the legislation of the emergency laws, these services were first of all used to harass and imprison not only the supporters of political opposition parties, but also parliamentarians and high-ranking government officials with questionable loyalty to the Ahidjo regime.²⁴ The Cameroonian academic and former U.P.C. student activist in Paris, Abel Eyinga, has described the process by which the President, S.E.D.O.C., and B.M.M. co-operated in this strategy.²⁵

Secondly, due to the growing concentration of financial resources into the apparatus of the presidency and the U.C. party, Ahidjo was able to use these services as a means to perpetuate the threat of U.P.C. 'subversion', and thus the on-going state of emergency.

²¹Thomas Deltombe, Manuel Domergue, and Jacob Tatsitsa, *Kamerun! Une guerre cachée aux origines de la Françafrique 1948-1971* (Paris, 2011), pp. 370-371.

²² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 375.

²³ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 517.

²⁴ Johnson, *The Cameroonian Federation*, pp. 204-206.

²⁵ Eyinga writes: 'Once the Head of State expresses his "profound conviction" that a certain individual is guilty of a crime against the State, it then becomes the task of S.E.D.O.C. to fabricate the plot and assemble the evidence establishing the complicity of the person in question... When, as sometimes occurs, individuals apprehended by S.E.D.O.C. refuse to follow official advice and perform the necessary rite (i.e. confess their errors in a letter to the President and request his pardon), they are then handed over to the B.M.M. to be subjected to "interrogation".' Abel Eyinga, 'Government by State of Emergency' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 100-110, pp. 109-110.

Every few months, Ahidjo would select agents from the B.M.M. and S.E.D.O.C. whose zeal in uncovering ‘subversion’ amongst the population deserved special merit. Those whose names appeared on this list would, in addition to their monthly salaries, receive a bonus of 25,000 CFA (just over \$100). To understand the importance of this sum, it is necessary to point out that the average income for 85% of the population at that time ranged between 1,000 - 30,000 CFA annually.²⁶ By exploiting the concentration of socio-economic opportunity within the ruling U.C. party, Ahidjo was able to create, in the words of Eyinga, ‘an institutionalised body within the state structure, whose overriding interest has become that of preserving the state of emergency’.²⁷

The perpetuation of the state of emergency allowed Ahidjo to push new laws through the National Assembly, laws which streamlined the process of incarceration for political opposition even further. On 25th October 1963, Federal Act No. 63-30 was passed, which enabled the President to transfer the trial of any offence with the slightest political hue to the military courts.²⁸ The judgements of these military tribunals were not open to appeal – even by the Supreme Court – and became an effective means for Ahidjo to eliminate any further opposition within the National Assembly. By the end of October, Pierre Kamdem Ninyim, the Minister of Public Health and a former U.P.C. member in the 1950s, was sentenced to death for the murder of another National Assembly deputy, Simon Oyono Mimboé. Although no evidence was produced by the public prosecutor, Ninyim was accused of on-going complicity with the U.P.C., and the murder was construed as an act of terrorism which sought to undermine state security. He was executed in January, along with 15 others.²⁹

Instead of a failure to replicate a European process of state consolidation – through increased tax revenue and the forging of a ‘national identity’ - the exploitation of the U.P.C. threat reflects a process of state consolidation more relevant to an African context. That is, the ability of a political elite to monopolise access to, and control the distribution of, vital external resources. It is a process that was first observed in Marxist-tinged academic studies during the 1970s, which posited the emergence of a ‘comprador bourgeoisie’ class in independent African states. Over-lapping with more polemical analyses of neo-colonialism, these studies observed how an African political elite was able

²⁶ Eyinga, ‘Government by State of Emergency’, pp. 107-108.

²⁷ Eyinga, ‘Government by State of Emergency’, p. 108.

²⁸ Johnson. *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 207.

²⁹ Eyinga, ‘Government by State of Emergency’, p. 106.

to dominate the economic resources of a state, but was essentially the ‘servants’ of foreign industrialised interests.³⁰

In his 1984 study on Ghana’s political economy, Robert Price critiqued this ‘neo-Marxist’ and ‘neo-colonial’ model of analysis, and sought to provide a more nuanced and case-specific explanation for how African political elites engaged with, and controlled access to, international economic networks. Citing Ghana’s limited domestic economic resources and the lack of a ‘nationalist myth’ compared to industrialised states, Price concluded:

What was left to the political leadership was one very significant means to tie periphery to center and to obtain sufficient political support to maintain its own incumbency. The new state was the sole gatekeeper between the international system and the economic resources obtainable within it (investments, loans, aid, and proceeds from primary product exports) on the one hand, and the domestic society/economy on the other. This gatekeeper position provided an instrumental basis for the consolidation of state power.³¹

It is a process that has more recently found expression in John Lonsdale’s study of ethnicity and globalisation, but perhaps its most detailed articulation has been in Frederick Cooper’s own model of the ‘gatekeeper state’ in Africa.³² Due to the shallow development efforts and externally orientated economies of late colonial regimes, newly independent African governments ‘had trouble collecting taxes, except on imports and exports’, and further ‘had trouble making the nation-state into a symbol that inspired loyalty’.³³ What African governments could do, however, was to collect and distribute the significant external resources that accrued from recognised sovereignty. The apparatus of government subsequently became a vital interface – or gate - to the international environment, one that had to be closely guarded.

³⁰ See for example: Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale*, Vols. 1 and 2, (New York, 1974), pp. 374-375, 384; Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, 1964-1971* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 193-198. Critiques of the ‘comprador’ analysis soon began to emerge, however, particularly regarding the fact that African actors were denied any effective agency, being only ‘servants’ to foreign industrial interests. See Richard L. Sklar, ‘The Nature of Class Domination in Africa’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1979), pp. 531-552.

³¹ Robert M. Price, ‘Neo-Colonialism and Ghana’s Economic Decline: A Critical Assessment’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1984), pp. 163-193, p. 189.

³² John Lonsdale, ‘Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from “the Hopeless Continent”’ in A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002), pp. 194-220, esp. pp. 197, 206. Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002).

³³ Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 157.

As external resources were limited, and because anti-colonial struggles created an acute awareness of competing claims on these resources, African governments used practices of patronage and coercion to narrow the channels of access to them. Importantly, these practices were themselves enabled by controlling and exploiting external resources, both financial and technical.³⁴ Cooper observes that the guarding of the gate also ensured that ‘politics was an either/or phenomenon at the national level’, so that ‘local government was almost everywhere given little autonomy’.³⁵ Accordingly, and as Johnson has observed, the system of territorial administration in Cameroon ensured that local government was closely supervised by the federal executive, and, by extension, the President.³⁶ Due to the limited channels of socio-economic opportunity within the territory, control of the gate became an all-or-nothing struggle, which left little room for seeing opposition as legitimate. This fragility of control was revealed in African governments’ insistence on ‘unity’ and the constant denunciation of opposition as ‘tribalistic’.³⁷ Indeed, it was on the basis of ‘national unity’ and ‘anti-tribalism’ that Ahidjo made his appeal for a single ‘Great National Party’.³⁸

This process of state consolidation in Africa thus adhered to a circular and self-reinforcing logic: control of the state apparatus facilitated the control of external resources, and vice versa. In this respect, the last chapter demonstrated that the external recognition of a government’s executive authority, which was significantly based upon controlling the apparatus of state, provided the most significant channels of access to international resources. Ahidjo’s actions in 1962-1963 further show that these resources were then crucial to reinforce this position of executive authority, by facilitating increased control of the administrative, legal, and coercive apparatus of state. Within this process, the presentation of an on-going security threat was a crucial strategy.

³⁴ Lonsdale, ‘Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy’, p. 200; Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 6.

³⁵ Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 159.

³⁶ After spending significant time in Cameroon studying the political institutions of the new federal republic, Johnson wrote, for example, of how Federal Inspectors of Administration were local representatives of the federal executive, ‘which means, in effect, the President.’ They were not restricted by the decisions of locally-based representatives, and supervised and coordinated the work of all federal officials and departments, establishing their own rules and regulations provided by the emergency laws. In addition, all correspondences of local federal officials and federal ministries had to be copied and sent to the Inspector. In conclusion, Johnson writes: ‘the system provided the capacity to ensure that nothing could happen involving any federal official unbeknownst to the Inspector, and, by extension, to the President’. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 208.

³⁷ Lonsdale, ‘Globalization, Ethnicity and Democracy’, p. 211.

³⁸ Ahidjo, *Conférence de Presse*, pp. 2-3.

An Alternative Gatekeeper: The U.P.C., 1962-1964

Although there has been a recent increase in studies on post-independence insurgencies in Africa, there has been little dialogue between these works and those that have sought to measure processes of state consolidation by independent African governments.³⁹ As Roitman has observed, such conceptual state/non-state divides ‘arise out of binary thinking about power’; that is, an incapacity to ‘think ambivalence’.⁴⁰ As a result, these studies have overlooked how ‘the exercise of power can be detested and yet considered logical’, so that government and opposition actors shared in the same political practices and processes.⁴¹ Importantly, this shared logic becomes particularly evident when one understands that opposition movements – even those in exile – experienced the same combination of internal constraints and external opportunities as the governments which they opposed.

By 1962, the U.P.C. leadership had been working from their headquarters in Accra for three years. As the last chapter demonstrated, during this time the party had been able to form a political infrastructure within the Ghanaian capital. The party’s inability to extract financial and political support within Cameroon was exacerbated by its exiled status, so that it was almost exclusively dependent on foreign assistance. Due to the limited amount of this external aid - especially since the end of 1960 - the leaders of the U.P.C. sought to control and guard access to these crucial resources against competing claims from rival groups. Like the Ahidjo government, this strategy rested upon a combination of coercion and patronage, as well as the image of an on-going U.P.C. security threat. In fact, this strategy became evident amongst the U.P.C. leadership at the same time as it did within the Ahidjo government; 1962. To better understand how and why this alternative gatekeeper became manifest in the exiled U.P.C. leadership, one must briefly return to events of the previous year.

After the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in January 1961, groups of African students studying in France demonstrated their protest at what they perceived to be western

³⁹ For examples of analyses of post-independence insurgencies, see: Meredith Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 51, No. 2, (2010), pp. 189-212; Klaas Van Walraven, *The Yearning for Relief: A History of the Sawaba Movement in Niger* (Leiden, 2013); Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford, 1998). See also Klaas Van Walraven and John Abbink, ‘Rethinking Resistance in African History: An Introduction’ in John Abbink, Mirjam de Bruijn and Klaas Van Walraven (eds.), *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History* (Boston, 2003), pp. 1- 42.

⁴⁰ Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa* (Princeton, 2005), p. 45.

⁴¹ Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience*, p. 45.

complicity. In Paris, this included René Ngouo Woungly-Massaga, the President of the National Union of Kamerunian Students (U.N.E.K.); the *de facto* branch of the U.P.C. in France. For taking part in a protest march on the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Woungly-Massaga and three other Cameroonian students – Michel Ndoh, Jean-Martin Tchaptchet, and Isaac Ndoh – were ordered by the French government to be deported back to Cameroon.⁴²

Fearing for their safety, the four found shelter at the Ghanaian embassy in Paris, and eventually obtained safe passage back to Accra, where they joined the exiled *Bureau du Comité Directeur* (B.C.D.) of the U.P.C., presided over by the remaining party leadership, Vice-Presidents Ernest Ouandié and Abel Kingué. Due to Woungly-Massaga's time spent in France, Ouandié and Kingué placed him in charge of foreign relations within the party's *Secrétariat Administratif* (S.A.); an administrative body that liaised between the B.C.D. and the local central committee in Accra. Just before Ouandié returned to Cameroon in July 1961, it was also decided that Kingué, now as the most highly-ranked U.P.C. member remaining in exile, would head the party's delegations abroad to obtain foreign aid.⁴³

The motivations and events that produced the ensuing acrimony between Kingué and Woungly-Massaga in the second half of 1962 are difficult to clearly discern. This is largely because the contemporary documents that explain the split are polemical pieces by the U.P.C. factions involved, and no doubt explains why the origins of the leadership struggle have been overlooked in academic analyses.⁴⁴ Private correspondences written by Kingué to Ouandié, however, indicate that in the first few months of 1962, Woungly-Massaga and Michel Ndoh had been exchanging letters with U.N.E.K. in Paris. It appears that the student members of the U.P.C., both among the S.A. in Accra and U.N.E.K. in Paris, were becoming increasingly impatient with the party's lack of diplomatic and military progress. They expressed the fear that the B.C.D. had lost its political direction, and was incapable or unwilling to support Ouandié's armed insurgency. The Paris branch, with the acquiescence of Woungly-Massaga, had subsequently taken a vote of no confidence in the

⁴²Daniel Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga alias commandant Kissamba: 'Cameroun, ma part de vérité'* (Paris, 2005), pp. 62-67.

⁴³Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, pp. 65-68.

⁴⁴ Arguments supporting Woungly-Massaga can largely be found across issues of the party's newspaper, *La Voix du Kamerun*, from 1962, as the newspaper was published from Accra and edited by Tchaptchet. Kingué's supporters did not have as great an access to publishing resources, but did manage to produce a pamphlet in December 1963, entitled *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*.

Accra B.C.D., and decided that a 'Revolutionary Committee' (R.C.) be created to reinvigorate the party's political direction, as well as the armed insurgency.⁴⁵

Although the provenance of this explanation still leaves the origins of the split open to debate, two important facts can be more readily asserted. First of all, a leadership vacuum amongst the exiled U.P.C. had been created after the death of President Moumié and the departure of Ouandié. Secondly, the chief protagonists in the ensuing internecine struggle – Kingué and Woungly-Massaga - occupied the party's key positions for negotiating access to international support. As a consequence, the contest to control the party's executive was inextricably bound to controlling its channels of access to external resources.

During the first half of 1962, therefore, Woungly-Massaga sought to gain control of the U.P.C.'s major channels of foreign support. Doing so would increase his political leverage within the exiled party executive in two respects. First of all, it would give him access to coercive and political resources with which he could attempt to exclude Kingué from the leadership. Secondly, these resources could then be used to present an image of an on-going security threat in Cameroon, an image that would enable Woungly-Massaga to access further external aid, and cement his position within the leadership. The subsequent struggle for the U.P.C.'s leadership, therefore, reflected the self-reinforcing and circular logic of gatekeeping in Africa.

Although the Ghanaian government had established diplomatic relations with the Ahidjo government in February 1962, Nkrumah remained the U.P.C.'s most important source of external aid at this time. With Kingué spending much of his time in Eastern Europe seeking foreign sponsors, Woungly-Massaga began to utilise his position within the U.P.C., as the S.A. member in charge of foreign relations, to ingratiate himself with the Ghanaian president. By the time that Kingué had returned from the Moscow Congress of World Peace in July, Woungly-Massaga had become a 'Technical Advisor' to Nkrumah, and secured a substantial amount of aid for the U.P.C. This included a new bureau for the party within the grounds of the presidential palace (Flagstaff House), the construction of a

⁴⁵ Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962, (Precise Dates unknown), *U.P.C. Party Correspondences Concerning 1963*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon, Vb/b 1963/1, pp. 2-10.

military training camp outside Nkrumah's village of Nkroful (near the border with the Côte d'Ivoire), and at least 30,000 Ghanaian pounds.⁴⁶

Whilst in Moscow, Kingué was made aware of Woungly-Massaga's plans to restructure the party leadership. At the Congress, he had been approached by a delegation of Cameroonian students from Paris, who had informed him of their desire to re-organise the Accra B.C.D. into a more inclusive Revolutionary Committee. For his part, Kingué argued that there was no need to re-organise or expand the party executive, stating that 'the People's Republic of China, which consists of 650 million inhabitants, only has four leading members of the political bureau, which has led the Revolution to victory and which remains today.' In his opinion, the students' desire for a Revolutionary Committee was due to the fact that they 'will only work provided that they can be a leader'. The struggle for the party leadership, and its foreign support, was now in the open.⁴⁷

As Kingué had now returned to Accra, and was aware and opposed to the planned Revolutionary Committee, Woungly-Massaga exploited his access to Nkrumah's support for two purposes. The first was to use the Ghanaian President's financial support as a source of patronage, which would allow Woungly-Massaga to control the flow of information between Accra and the *maquis*. In doing so, Woungly-Massaga would be able to obtain Ouandié's consent for the re-structuring of the U.P.C. executive. Secondly, Woungly-Massaga used the coercive and legal resources of the Ghanaian government to remove Kingué as a source of opposition in Accra.

Regarding the first purpose, the most vital link between the U.P.C. leadership in Accra and Ouandié in the *maquis* was a courier named Emmanuel Fankem, alias '*Fermeté*'. Originally from the village of Bandengkap in the Bamileke region, Fankem was a member of the U.P.C.'s central committee in Douala until the party's proscription in 1955. Imprisoned in Dschang between 1957 and May 1960, Fankem returned to Douala after his release. Unable to find employment and homeless, he travelled to Accra in 1961, with the hope of obtaining a U.P.C. scholarship to study abroad. Fankem was told that his educational qualifications were too low for a scholarship, but the U.P.C. leadership were impressed by his demonstrated ability to travel from Cameroon to Ghana undetected. As a result, Fankem was employed as a liaison agent between Accra and the *maquis*. By 1962,

⁴⁶ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 97.

⁴⁷ Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 2.

Fankem had proven himself to be the most adept of the U.P.C. liaison agents, and became the sole trusted courier between the B.C.D. in Accra and Ouandié.⁴⁸

Yet the work was becoming increasingly difficult for Fankem. Ahidjo's security forces were increasing their presence on the borders, and the B.C.D. were unable or unwilling to pay Fankem the money to reflect this fact. A dispute subsequently occurred between Kingué and Fankem in July 1962, one that Woungly-Massaga exploited with Nkrumah's financial resources.⁴⁹ Woungly-Massaga paid Fankem 10,000 Ghanaian pounds to deliver his own messages to Ouandié, and to ensure that Kingué's were not delivered. Any correspondence from Ouandié to Kingué would furthermore be delivered to Woungly-Massaga in the first instance.⁵⁰ Whilst the precise contents of Woungly-Massaga's letters to Ouandié are not known, events in October demonstrate that he was successfully able to argue for the creation of a Revolutionary Committee.

Before detailing the October events, the intervening period of August and September demonstrated how Woungly-Massaga, although lacking the coercive and legal resources of the Ahidjo government, was nonetheless able to exploit these resources as possessed by the Ghanaian government. In doing so, he was able to directly exclude Kingué from the exiled U.P.C.'s executive and distributive infrastructure. On 1st August, Nkrumah narrowly survived a grenade attack at the village of Kulungugu in northern Ghana. After the attack, Nkrumah became increasingly concerned with the amount of weapons that were circulating in Ghana; a result of his own support for various African 'freedom fighter' groups resident in Accra. He consequently ordered that all these groups – which included the U.P.C., the Sawaba party of Niger, the Northern Rhodesia Independence Party, the Sanwi Liberation Movement of Côte d'Ivoire, and the People's Party of Bechuanaland – must hand over their weapons to the Ghanaian authorities, or else face imprisonment.⁵¹

Woungly-Massaga firstly sought to exploit his control of the lines of communication between Nkrumah and the U.P.C. As a member of Nkrumah's Technical Advisory Council, it was Woungly-Massaga's task to transmit the weapons order to the rest of the

⁴⁸ Chief of B.M.M., Kumba, 'Arrest of FANKEM EMMANUEL', 25/02/1964; (Vb/b 1963/1), pp. 98-99.

⁴⁹ Ndeh Ntumazah and Abel Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire* (Accra, 1960), p. 17.

⁵⁰ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 17; Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 4.

⁵¹ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 17; Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 4; Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 111; Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 209.

U.P.C. Events in September, however, reveal that such information was withheld from Kingué. On the 6th September, Kingué held a meeting at the house of Ndeh Ntumazah in Accra.⁵² The meeting was attended by exiled representatives of the U.P.C.'s remaining trade union movement, its youth organisation (the J.D.C.), and its women's organisation (the U.D.F.C.).⁵³

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the news that Kingué had received in Moscow, and the possible expulsion of Woungly-Massaga, Tchaptchet, and the Ndohs from the U.P.C.⁵⁴ As a consequence, these former Parisian students were not invited to attend. Shortly after the meeting was adjourned, a grenade was thrown at Ntumazah's residence, which exploded against an external wall without causing any injury. The Accra police soon arrived, and naturally found a cache of weapons at the residence that had not been handed in to the Ghanaian authorities. The result was that over a hundred U.P.C. members in Accra were rounded up and arrested, including Kingué, Ntumazah, Woungly-Massaga, Tchaptchet, and the Ndohs.⁵⁵

The perpetrator and motivation of this attack were subject to the most fierce debate amongst U.P.C. members, and is further complicated by the fact that both Kingué and Woungly-Massaga were initially arrested. Kingué and his supporters claim that Woungly-Massaga orchestrated the grenade attack so that the Ghanaian police would be called to the meeting, discover the cache of weapons that Kingué and Ntumazah did not know were forbidden, and subsequently be imprisoned.⁵⁶ Woungly-Massaga and his supporters, however, claim that it was Kingué who ordered the grenade attack, which could be used to support accusations that Woungly-Massaga was attempting a leadership coup. The fact that Woungly-Massaga was also imprisoned by the Ghanaian authorities is used to support this interpretation of events.⁵⁷

⁵² Ntumazah, the President of the U.P.C.'s branch in the former British Cameroon, had fled the territory after unification in October 1961.

⁵³ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 17; Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 4.

⁵⁴ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 111; Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Direction du S.E.D.O.C., 'Note de Renseignements, No. 3235', 11/11/1963; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 110.

⁵⁶ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 17; Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 4.

⁵⁷ These arguments are repeated throughout issues of *La Voix du Kamerun* from 1963, and are reproduced in Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, pp. 111-113.

At the very least, it is evident that after the attempt on Nkrumah's life, his security forces were taking no chances with the U.P.C., especially as the grenade used at Ntumazah's was similar to the one thrown at Kulungugu.⁵⁸ What is also clear, however, is that Woungly-Massaga was released from prison after less than a month, through the intervention of Nkrumah. Kingué, however, would remain incarcerated until July 1963. As a result, whether the grenade attack was part of a plot by Kingué or Woungly-Massaga, in both scenarios the latter was able to use Nkrumah's support to his advantage. If the attack was a plan by Kingué that severely misfired, then Woungly-Massaga was able to use his political ties to Nkrumah to obtain his early release. If it was part of a strategy by Woungly-Massaga, then he was able to additionally exploit the coercive and legal resources of the Ghanaian government to remove his most ardent rival.

Either by planned timing or coincidence, at the end of October Fankem returned from a trip to the *maquis*, with a document purportedly written by Ouandié. Its contents were written into a communiqué by Tchaptchet, which was circulated around Accra. It reported that on the 13th September 1962, Ouandié had convened a 'popular assembly' in the *maquis*. It was attended by 600 members of the U.P.C. and its armed organisation, the *Armée de libération Nationale du Kameru* (A.L.N.K.). During the course of the assembly, a new and enlarged leadership was reported to have been elected. Baptised as the 'Revolutionary Committee' (R.C) and citing a 'new direction' for the U.P.C., it consisted of:

Ernest Ouandié (President)

Abel Kingué (Vice-President)

Castor Osende Afana

Réné Woungly-Massaga

Michel Ndoh

Nicanor Njiawue

Ndongo Diye.⁵⁹

Importantly, Woungly-Massaga's uncontested access to Nkrumah's support allowed him to control the U.P.C.'s official mouthpiece, *La Voix du Kamerun*, which had been

⁵⁸ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 17; Letters from Kingué to Ouandié in 1962; (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 4; Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 111

⁵⁹ S.E.D.O.C., 'Note de Renseignements, No. 3235', 11/11/1963; (Vb/b 1963/1), pp. 110-112.

financed by the Ghanaian government, and published from Accra, since 1961.⁶⁰ The birth of the Revolutionary Committee was announced in its November 1962 issue, which was sent out to U.P.C. branches and student groups around the world. In subsequent issues, messages of support for the new executive were published from U.P.C representatives in East Germany, Romania, Czechoslovakia, the U.S.S.R., France, Cairo, and Conakry.⁶¹ The new leadership of the U.P.C. appeared to have further been accepted by other 'revolutionary movements' in Africa, as Woungly-Massaga announced that on November 23rd, he had signed a communal declaration with the Africa Independence Party and the Sawaba movement, in view of a 'coordinated revolutionary struggle in Senegal, Niger, and Kamerun'.⁶²

Whilst still imprisoned, Kingué was not in a position to protest these developments himself, although he did have allies at liberty to do so. Within Accra, this included Marthe Moumié, the widow of Félix Moumié, and Ndeh Ntumazah, who had both been released from prison soon after Woungly-Massaga. Outside of Accra, opposition to the new R.C. was voiced by Osende Afana, the U.P.C.'s representative at the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation, based in Cairo. This group stated that Ouandié had not informed them of any such plan to reorganise the U.P.C. executive, and that Woungly-Massaga had provided no photographic evidence, or written communication signed by Ouandié, to prove that the Popular Assembly had even taken place.⁶³ Fankem was consequently sent back to the *maquis* by Woungly-Massaga, and returned in May 1963 with a new collection of documents.

Re-produced in *La Voix du Kamerun*, these documents announced that a 'Second Popular Assembly' had been held in the *maquis*, which had taken the decision to expel Kingué and Osende Afana from the R.C. Importantly, Fankem had returned with photographic evidence of the assembly, in which Ouandié was clearly visible in the centre. In spite of this, Kingué's supporters maintained their protest, stating that there was no document signed by Ouandié demonstrating that the assembly had agreed to exclude Kingué and Osende Afana from the party executive. These attempts to re-establish Kingué

⁶⁰ Abwa, *Ngouo Woungly-Massaga*, p. 98.

⁶¹ These were collated and reproduced in the May 1963 issue, which can be found in the *Fonds Daniel Guérin* at the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine, Paris (F 721 / 98 / 7 [D29]).

⁶² Jean-Martin Tchaptchet, 'Résolution de la Deuxième Assemblée Populaire', 25/04/1963. *Archives de la Section de Politique Extérieure, Fonds du PCF* in the Archives Départementales de Seine-Saint-Denis (261 J7);

⁶³ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 14.

within the leadership, however, were in vain. By the time Kingué was released from prison in July 1963 – allegedly at the intervention of Nasser, who had been implored by Osende Afana – he was a dying man.⁶⁴ A diabetic, Kingué had not been given any medical attention whilst incarcerated, and went blind during his detention. He was immediately flown to a hospital in Cairo after his release, where his health continued to deteriorate, until his death in April 1964.⁶⁵

With the support of Ouandié, and the ability to publicise such support in the U.P.C.'s official mouthpiece, the Revolutionary Committee in Accra was now recognised as the party's key representative abroad, both by its international branches, and, most importantly, by Nkrumah.⁶⁶ Based in the U.P.C.'s central headquarters, and enjoying close ties with its most important ally – Nkrumah – Woungly-Massaga now found himself in control of the U.P.C.'s gate to international support networks. Yet the external aid that could be channelled through these networks was in decline, for three reasons.

First of all, the internal insurgency continued to suffer increasing losses, with two of Ouandié's key commanders – Noé Tankeu and Théodore Kilama Mpouma – arrested by Cameroonian security forces in the summer of 1963.⁶⁷ As the last chapter demonstrated, the exiled U.P.C.'s access to external aid was significantly dependent upon the perpetuation of a visible armed uprising. Secondly, the internecine struggle that surrounded the birth of the Revolutionary Committee had been replete with accusations of financial mismanagement and the misappropriation of funds by both the Kingué and Woungly-Massaga factions. As a result, the U.P.C.'s external backers were unwilling to channel resources into a group whose chance of military success was increasingly negligible, and which appeared likely to divert these resources for their own personal means.

In 1963, the first indicator of this declining support came in February, at the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation's conference in Moshi, Tanganyika.⁶⁸ In an attempt to further secure control of the U.P.C.'s external support networks, Woungly-Massaga had sent Nicanor Njiawue to the conference. His task was to denigrate Osende Afana and thus

⁶⁴ Linus T. Asong and Simon N. Chi (eds.), *Ndeh Ntumazah: A Conversational Autobiography* (Bamenda 2001), p. 723.

⁶⁵ Asong and Chi, *Ndeh Ntumazah*, p. 723.

⁶⁶ B.M.M. Kumba, 'Arrest and Interrogation of Bah Azah, 19/05/1967', *Activities of U.P.C. 1967*; (Vb/b 1967/2), p. 42.

⁶⁷ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 542.

⁶⁸ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 28.

dislodge him as the party's representative on the A.A.S.O. permanent secretariat. At a meeting of the secretariat, Njiawue accordingly accused Osende Afana of stealing \$5,000 of A.A.S.O. funds that were intended for the *maquis*.⁶⁹ The other A.A.S.O. members, however, had little patience for this internecine squabbling. Noting the continued 'inefficacy' of the U.P.C.'s armed insurgency, the A.A.S.O. rescinded the U.P.C.'s seat on both the secretariat – which it had held since 1957 – and also its seat on the Committee of Solidarity Funds.⁷⁰ The final reason for the Revolutionary Committee's limited access to external aid was Osende Afana himself. During his five years as the U.P.C.'s representative at the A.A.S.O., Osende Afana had built close ties with the Chinese delegation. China had been one of the U.P.C.'s most important sources of military and financial assistance since 1959, but this support now went to Osende Afana, even after his exclusion from the A.A.S.O.⁷¹

After the A.A.S.O. fiasco, and with no sign of a renewed armed insurgency, the Revolutionary Committee's prospects for external aid continued to deteriorate. In September 1963, the U.P.C.'s second most important African ally – Sékou Touré – also came to see the party's cause as a lost one, and established diplomatic relations with the Ahidjo regime.⁷² By November, S.E.D.O.C. reported that even Nkrumah's financial aid for the U.P.C. had decreased, as the Ghanaian President sought to gradually distance himself from a movement that was lacking in both military efficacy and a strong leadership.⁷³ Osende Afana, however, was facing similar pressures from his Chinese sponsors, who made it clear that their support would be withdrawn unless he could rejuvenate the armed insurgency himself.⁷⁴ Due to his open split with Woungly-Massaga and Ouandié, however, Osende Afana was *persona non grata* in both Accra and the Bamileke region. Even if Osende Afana could install himself in the Bamileke region and win over Ouandié's supporters, he would not be able to utilise the supply and communications network that linked the *maquis* to the transnational hub of Accra.

Fortunately for Osende Afana, the overthrow of Fulbert Youlou in Congo-Brazzaville in August 1963 – by Alphonse Massamba-Débat – would provide two important opportunities.

⁶⁹ Tchaptchet, 'Résolution de la Deuxième Assemblée Populaire' (261 J7); pp. 7-8.

⁷⁰ Ntumazah and Kingué, *La Vérité Sur le Comité Révolutionnaire*, p. 28.

⁷¹ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, No. 1,770 ; (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁷² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 597.

⁷³ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, No. 1,770 ; (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁷⁴ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, 05/1967, *Subversive Activities by U.P.C. and Other Political Parties like K.D.M., 1962-1972*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/8) , p. 109.

Firstly, it constituted a friendly government that would allow Osende Afana to set up military training camps on its territory, and provide an infrastructure through which to receive Chinese aid (the Chinese Embassy). Secondly, and most importantly, Congo-Brazzaville shared a border with Cameroon, thereby reducing the logistical difficulties of supplying an insurgency against Ahidjo. Within a few months of Massamba-Débat's coup, therefore, Osende Afana began work on opening a second front in the southeast of Cameroon, to rival the R.C.'s insurgency in the West.⁷⁵ Like the Ahidjo government, therefore, both Osende Afana and the R.C. now had a vested interest in perpetuating the image of a U.P.C. security threat in Cameroon, with the aim of monopolising key channels of foreign assistance.

Whilst in 1963, Ouandié's A.L.N.K. was much larger and more established than Osende Afana's nascent second front, it had lost a significant number of fighters to the actions of the Cameroonian armed forces and security services. To compound this problem, the A.L.N.K. was finding it increasingly difficult to recruit fighters from amongst the population, due to the increasing indiscipline and criminality of certain *maquisards*.⁷⁶ The Revolutionary Committee's solution was for Ouandié to re-open the U.P.C.'s *École des Cadres* within the *maquis*, in order to train a disciplined and educated officer class within the A.L.N.K. The intention of the *École* was to 'reinforce good relations between the army and the people', which would increase the amount of aid and recruits available to the A.L.N.K.⁷⁷ As a result, the A.L.N.K. would be able to 're-launch the armed struggle on a grand scale'. The first 90 graduates of the *École* left its gates in January 1964.⁷⁸

The fact that this re-invigoration of the armed struggle was aimed at increasing the R.C.'s amount of external aid, and channelling it away from Osende Afana, firstly

⁷⁵ Circular from E. Kwayeb, 21/12/1967, *Subversive Activities of the External U.P.C. Rebels at Congo-Brazzaville with an Intent to Overthrow the Cameroonian Government*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon; (Vb/b 1967/2), p. 37.

⁷⁶ Letters written to the U.P.C.'s exiled leadership by militants within the territory disclosed how women were afraid to venture out for fear of being kidnapped by *maquisards*, who would hold them against their will to cook and gather food. It was reported in these letters that bands of guerrillas often demanded money to allow villagers safe passage to their fields, or threatened to attack villages if the inhabitants did not pay rents of money or food. One U.P.C. supporter compared such practices to the bribery and corruption amongst government security services, and went so far as to state that in the Bamileke region, 'the people count two enemies: the men in the forest, and the neo-colonialists'. Ouandié himself acknowledged instances of 'financial mismanagement' by certain militants, who had disappeared after obtaining funds collected within Cameroon or sent from abroad. Letter from Elisabeth Wontcheu 17/04/1964, *Activities of One Kamerun Party Abroad*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/9); Letter from Salefo Galdia, 05/01/1966; *Security Reports on U.P.C., 1966* (Vb/b 1966/8); Letter from Ernest Ouandié to Louis Motto (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁷⁷ Letter from Ouandié to R.C. in Accra (Date Unknown); (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 89.

⁷⁸ Letter from Ouandié to R.C. in Accra (Date Unknown); (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 89.

becomes evident in letters written by Ouandié from the *maquis* at the end of 1963. In a letter written to Woungly-Massaga in Accra, Ouandié expressed his hope that the insurgency could be re-launched during the forthcoming legislative elections of April 1964. These elections would ‘attract a good number of foreign journalists’, who, in witnessing the A.L.N.K.’s armed actions, could then publicise the renewed struggle to foreign governments. As regards channelling foreign aid away from Osende Afana, Ouandié emphasised that ‘although they contrive to maintain a hostile attitude towards the R.C., we cannot lose contacts with our Chinese friends.’⁷⁹

To this effect, Ouandié wrote a letter addressed to the Chinese political bureau, much of which was devoted to requesting material assistance, and denouncing the ‘revolutionary’ credentials of Osende Afana. Importantly, this denigration was based upon Osende Afana’s ability to launch an armed struggle, as Ouandié wrote that he had not set foot on Cameroonian soil since the 1950s, and that his abilities were solely in the realms of intellectual theorising, rather than military strategy.⁸⁰ Ouandié’s aid requests were not limited to the Chinese government, however, revealing the narrowing of the R.C.’s access to external support, and its desire to divert such support away from Osende Afana. Similar letters were thus addressed to the leaders of the Soviet Union, East Germany, the Czech Republic, and indeed Congo-Brazzaville.⁸¹

Whilst awaiting foreign journalists to publicise the renewed strength of the A.L.N.K., the *Voix du Kamerun* in Accra published articles denouncing the ‘lies’ of Osende Afana and extolling the *École des Cadres* throughout 1963.⁸² The newspaper also sought to demonstrate that the A.L.N.K. remained a credible threat to the Ahidjo regime, publishing (unverifiable) statistics on its military successes.⁸³ To this effect, the *Voix* newspaper even reproduced speeches that the Ahidjo administration had made on the continued U.P.C. security threat.⁸⁴ Importantly, these speeches were used by the government to support its own monopolisation of foreign resources, by justifying the on-going state of emergency. As a result, whilst the exiled U.P.C. did not possess the same administrative, political, or

⁷⁹ Letter from Ouandié to R.C. in Accra (Date Unknown); (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 90.

⁸⁰ Letter from Ouandié to Politburo, Peking (Date Unknown); (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 86.

⁸¹ (Vb/b 1963/1), pp. 70-84.

⁸² (F 721 / 98 / 7 [D29]).

⁸³ The May 1963 issue, for example, stated that the A.L.N.K., from October 1962, had killed 520 Africans and 18 Europeans, injured 269, taken 3 prisoners, and captured 146 rifles (F 721 / 98 / 7 [D29]).

⁸⁴ These included a speech made by the Cameroonian army’s Chief of Staff, Sadou Dadou, at Bafia on 19th November 1962, in which he said that ‘Peace in Cameroon will not come tomorrow’, and a speech by Ahidjo at Bamenda on 14th April 1963, who is reported to have said that the conflict had reached ‘worrying proportions’.

coercive institutions as the Ahidjo government to guard access to external resources, it clearly shared the same strategies and logics. From 1964, however, a complex combination of the Ahidjo government's coercive capacity, a growing diplomatic pact of non-interference between African states, and political instability amongst the U.P.C.'s host governments, would narrow the party's channels of external aid even further.

Coups, Borders, and Non-Intervention: The Contingency and Collapse of Insurgent Diplomacy, 1964-1971.

Returning to historical studies of European state consolidation, Charles Tilly's edited volume, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, contains a chapter by Stein Rokkan, entitled 'Dimensions of State Formation and Nation-Building'. Comparing the formation of West European states between the High Middle Ages and French Revolution, Rokkan writes that 'the military-administrative power of any state can best be gauged through an analysis of its success in controlling interaction across its boundaries.'⁸⁵ Against this additional European standard of state-formation, African polities have again conventionally been viewed as wanting. Amongst Africanist historians, this view has notably been expressed by Ted Nugent and A. I. Asiwaju, albeit in a way that attempts to restore a degree of agency to non-state actors in Africa. Nugent and Asiwaju write that 'while the purpose of a border is to corral sets of people...the reality [in Africa] is frequently that it sets up a zone of interaction rather than representing a genuine partition.' In their words, African borders represented 'theatres of opportunity' rather than 'physical barriers'.⁸⁶

If, however, the scope of analysis is narrowed to a more specific historical and geographical context, one finds that African governments could be very successful at controlling certain interactions across certain boundaries; boundaries that were by no means 'theatres of opportunities' for certain groups. By 1964, the Cameroonian government's increasing ability to interrupt the U.P.C.'s cross-border networks around

⁸⁵ Stein Rokkan, 'Dimensions of State Formation and Nation-Building: a Possible Paradigm for Research on Variations within Europe' in Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1975), pp. 562-600, p. 589.

⁸⁶ Paul Nugent and A. I. Asiwaju, 'The Paradox of African Boundaries' in Paul Nugent and A. I. Asiwaju, *African Boundaries: Barriers, Conduits, and Opportunities* (London, 1996), pp. 1-11. For other studies on the 'porosity' of African borders see: Paul Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier: The Life of the Borderlands Since 1914* (Oxford, 2002); K. Bennafla, *Le Commerce Frontalier en Afrique Centrale: Acteurs, Espaces, Pratiques* (Paris, 2002), V. G. Fanso, 'Traditional and Colonial African Boundaries: Concepts and Functions in Inter-group Relations', *Présence Africaine*, Vol. 139, No. 3 (1986), pp. 58-75.

Nigeria effectively ended the insurgency in the Bamileke region, and as a consequence, dealt a fatal blow to the party's ability to justify access to external support. By comparing competing strategies to monopolise access to international resources in a specific context, therefore, a different assessment of state formation in Africa once again emerges.

On 21st February 1964, Emmanuel Fankem, Ouandié's crucial link to the outside world, was arrested by Cameroonian customs officials in the town of Lobe, near the Nigerian border. Interrogated by the B.M.M., Fankem was revealed to have been carrying 'heavy sums of money' to the *maquis* for the purchasing of food and medical equipment, as well as arranging the routes and pick-up points for the smuggling of weapons.⁸⁷ The arrest of Fankem, however, was but one instance of the Cameroonian government's growing ability to interrupt the U.P.C.'s networks of exchange across the Nigerian border. A S.E.D.O.C. report from 1966, for example, confidently asserted that, due to a 'permanent surveillance', no arms had been imported across the Nigerian border since 1964.⁸⁸

This assertion did not, however, appear to be a simple boast by security officials eager to gain a monthly bonus. Correspondences written by Ouandié in June 1965 confirmed the extent of the logistical difficulties now facing the A.L.N.K. In a letter addressed to a certain Louis Motto in Nkongsamba, Ouandié wrote how the arrest of Fankem had presented 'serious difficulties' for his external contacts, and admitted the 'severe weakness of our liaison networks'.⁸⁹ So complete was this rupture with the outside that Ouandié made an urgent appeal for any newspaper or journal detailing current affairs, as he had not read any such material for least six months. 'You may guess', Ouandié wrote, 'how much I am isolated and cut off from the outside world.'⁹⁰

The source of Ouandié's letters – as a set of historical documents – further demonstrates the increasing ability of the Ahidjo government to solidify its territory's borders against U.P.C. 'subversives'. Namely, these letters form part of the government's police archive in Buea, due to their interception by Cameroonian intelligence operatives on the Cameroon-Nigeria border. From 1961, S.E.D.O.C. had been intercepting U.P.C. mails through post-boxes in the Nigerian border region. In 1964 alone, government intelligence forces had

⁸⁷ Chief of B.M.M., Kumba, 'Arrest of FANKEM EMMANUEL', 25/02/1964; (Vb/b 1963/1), pp. 98-99.

⁸⁸ S.E.D.O.C., *Note de Renseignements*, No. 3352, 04/11/1966 (Vb/b 1962/8).

⁸⁹ Letter from Ernest Ouandié to Louis Motto, 06/1965 (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁹⁰ Ouandié, Letter to Louis Motto, (Vb/b 1963/1).

intercepted 1,653 such documents.⁹¹ As Fankem's arrest demonstrated, these increased interceptions pertained to controlling the flow of people as well as information. From 1964-1965, therefore, one finds an upsurge in the number of B.M.M. interrogations in the police archives, many of which pertain to the arrest and interrogation of Cameroonians crossing the Nigerian border; including a number of students returning from U.P.C. scholarships abroad.⁹²

The growing presence of government security forces, and its detrimental effect on the insurgency, was not restricted to the Nigerian border. Local police services were also able to implement an increasing number of successful arrests and raids in the Bamileke region, including an operation in Nkongsamba at the beginning of 1965 which devastated the A.L.N.K.'s local financial base.⁹³ Ouandié confirmed in a letter how government forces were able to 'sniff about everywhere', and had seized important arms caches, funds, and indeed guerrilla fighters.⁹⁴ In fact, such was the success of Ahidjo's monthly bonus system that the chief of the B.M.M. in Kumba – near the border with Nigeria – wrote a letter to Fochive in July 1964, complaining of how security agents were 'inundating the B.M.M. with individuals upon little evidence'.⁹⁵

As a result of these developments, in August 1965 a S.E.D.O.C. report noted that the conflict in the Bamileke region 'continues to evolve in our favour'.⁹⁶ In 1966, another member of the Revolutionary Committee, Nicanor Njiawue, was forced to admit the 'limited character' of the Bamileke insurgency in an aid appeal to the French Communist Party.⁹⁷ Writing in 1971, even Woungly-Massaga confirmed that 1964 was the year in which Cameroonian government forces had 'retaken the majority of territory occupied by the A.L.N.K. in the Bamileke region', and that the U.P.C.'s military wing was being forced into ever more inaccessible areas.⁹⁸

⁹¹ 'Activities of Cameroonians Who Have Studied in Communist Countries (1962-1965)', South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1962/7).

⁹² Letter from Ouandié to Motto, (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁹³ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, No. 1,770, (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁹⁴ Letter from Ouandié to Motto, 1965 (precise date not given); (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁹⁵ Letter from Fochive to Chief of B.M.M., Kumba, 03/08/1964, (Vb/b 1962/9), p. 58.

⁹⁶ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements* No. 1,770, 07/08/1965. *U.P.C. Party Correspondences 1963*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon; (Vb/b 1963/1).

⁹⁷ Nicanor Njiawue, 'Mémoire du Comité Révolutionnaire', 25/12/1966; (261 J 7).

⁹⁸ René Woungly-Massaga, *L'Afrique Bloquée : l'exemple du Kamerun; Problèmes de la Lutte Populaire Après l'Assassinat d'Ernest Ouandié* (Geneva, 1970), p. 50.

A combination of a declining armed struggle and internecine strife amongst the leadership continued to narrow the U.P.C.'s channels of foreign assistance. In March 1964, the U.S.S.R. established diplomatic relations with the Ahidjo government, effectively ending its educational and logistical support to the U.P.C.⁹⁹ Other Eastern Bloc states that had furnished the U.P.C. with financial and political support – namely East Germany and Czechoslovakia – soon expressed similar desires to establish official relations with the recognised government of Cameroon.¹⁰⁰ At the sixth A.A.S.O. conference, held at Algiers in March 1964, the decision was taken to prohibit the U.P.C.'s participation until the party had 'put its house in order', after an argument erupted between representatives loyal to the R.C., and those loyal to the Kingué/ Osende Afana faction.¹⁰¹ During the next A.A.S.O. conference at Accra in May 1965, the warning to the U.P.C. was rather more stark: the party had six months to unite and re-launch the armed insurgency, or else it would be expelled from the organisation permanently.¹⁰² The gravity of the situation was not lost upon Ntumazah, who subsequently wrote in a letter to the various U.P.C. leaders: 'There remains only two options: we unite and become members of this camp, or we do not unite and are expelled from it.'¹⁰³

Yet the decline in the U.P.C.'s external support was also due to the political instability of its host governments, and the growing pact of non-interference between African states. As such, the ability of exiled movements to access foreign support depended on a complex, dynamic, and often unstable combination of political, military, and material factors, on both domestic and international fronts. The first instance of this instability concerned Algeria. Despite Ahidjo's immediate recognition of Algerian independence in 1962, Ben Bella's government had supplied the U.P.C. with arms imported from China and Czechoslovakia, as well as providing training for its militants at camps on the Tunisian border and in the seaport town of Cherchell.¹⁰⁴ This would change in June 1965, as Bella was overthrown in a coup by his defence minister, Houari Boumediene.

Unlike Bella, it appeared that the new regime was willing to participate in the security pact of non-interference between independent African states, lest the means by which Boumediene gained power should re-emerge with foreign support to take it away.

⁹⁹ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 600.

¹⁰⁰ S.E.D.O.C., *Note de Renseignements*, No. 3352, 04/11/1966 (Vb/b 1962/8).

¹⁰¹ Njiawue and Diye, 'Rapport sur la situation à l'intérieur de l'U.P.C.', 18/03/1964; (261 J 7).

¹⁰² Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 604.

¹⁰³ Asong and Chi, *Ndeh Ntumazah*, p. xviii.

¹⁰⁴ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements* No. 1,770, 07/08/1965 (Vb/b 1963/1).

Accordingly, the new Algerian government initiated diplomatic and economic co-operation agreements with Yaoundé and expelled a number of U.P.C. militants.¹⁰⁵ Whilst the Boumediene regime did not expel the entirety of the U.P.C. at this juncture, the remaining members of the party were told in no uncertain terms that they had to attenuate their activities or face immediate deportation back to Cameroon. From this moment, the Cameroonian ambassador in Algiers, Désiré Dibanjo, provided an extension of Yaoundé's anti-subversive gaze, submitting monthly intelligence reports to the Cameroonian Foreign Ministry, and forcing the R.C.'s main representatives in Algiers – Njiawue and Diye – into hiding.¹⁰⁶

Between 1965 and 1966, the growing imperative of non-interference between African governments, combined with on-going political instability, would also loosen and then sever the ties between the U.P.C. and Ghana. Although this relationship had already been experiencing difficulties, Accra had remained the U.P.C.'s most vital logistical and political support base. In October 1965, however, Nkrumah was due to host the next Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.) conference at Accra. In February of that year, following a meeting between Francophone African governments at Nouakchott, Mauritania, a new bloc of thirteen states – including Ahidjo's Cameroon – emerged as the *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malagache* (O.C.A.M.). O.C.A.M. strongly condemned the support that Nkrumah was supplying for insurgent movements in Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Upper Volta, and Cameroon. On behalf of the group, the President of Mauritania wrote a letter to Diallo Telli, the secretary-general of the O.A.U., demanding that Nkrumah expel all insurgents from Accra or else they would boycott the forthcoming October summit in Accra.¹⁰⁷

Nkrumah agreed under pressure from his cabinet, and asked Nasser if Egypt would give refuge to the U.P.C. militants who were to be expelled. This request, however, was refused on the grounds that the Egyptian government did not wish to jeopardise its own diplomatic relations with the Ahidjo regime.¹⁰⁸ As a result, eight francophone states boycotted the O.A.U. summit in Accra, accusing the Ghanaian President of continuing to harbour rebels and encouraging subversive activities against them.¹⁰⁹ These accusations were proven

¹⁰⁵ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements* No. 1,770, 07/08/1965 (Vb/b 1963/1).

¹⁰⁶ S.E.D.O.C., *Note de Renseignements*, No. 3352, 04/11/1966 (Vb/b 1962/8).

¹⁰⁷ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements* No. 1,770, 07/08/1965 (Vb/b 1963/1), and Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 210.

¹⁰⁸ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements* No. 1,770, 07/08/1965 (Vb/b 1963/1).

¹⁰⁹ Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global', p. 210.

correct by an event that would also constitute the definitive termination of Ghanaian support for the U.P.C. – Nkrumah’s overthrow in the military coup of February 1966. After the coup, the Ghanaian army soon discovered training camps at locations such as Azim, where many U.P.C. militants were found, detained, and imprisoned.¹¹⁰

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees soon intervened on behalf of those arrested in these camps, and supervised their relocation to the Bureau of African Affairs in Accra, which was now re-named as a ‘student hostel’.¹¹¹ Of the remaining U.P.C. leadership in Accra, Ntumazah was imprisoned briefly before an intervention by King Mohammed V allowed his deportation to Morocco.¹¹² Of the R.C., Ndoh and Tchaptchet did not benefit from any intervention by the U.N. or sympathetic governments, and were imprisoned in Accra awaiting possible extradition to Cameroon.¹¹³ The two key rivals in the U.P.C.’s on-going leadership struggle – Woungly-Massaga and Osende Afana – were not, however, in Ghana at the time of the coup. They had been involved in a desperate race to open a second front from Congo-Brazzaville, and thus ensure access to the dwindling possibilities of external support.

Osende Afana had been in Congo-Brazzaville since the end of 1963, where, with Chinese assistance, he had been training militants in Gambona, 300km north of the capital.¹¹⁴ Osende Afana only possessed an estimated fifty militants under his command, but was nevertheless determined to establish himself within Cameroonian territory in the hope of demonstrating his military capabilities to his Chinese sponsors.¹¹⁵ In the summer of 1965, Osende Afana and nine rebels made an initial incursion into south-east Cameroon via Ouessou. Due to the lack of manpower, however, this detachment remained inoffensive, and instead sought to prepare the ground for a future invasion through building contacts with local villages.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Report from B.M.M. Kumba, 19/05/1967, *Activities of U.P.C. 1967*, South-West Provincial Archives, Buea, Cameroon (Vb/b 1967/2).

¹¹¹ Report from B.M.M. Kumba, 19/05/1967, (Vb/b 1967/2); Interview with Akenji Tah Musah, Bamenda, April 2011. The desire to expel the U.P.C. for the sake of diplomatic relations between Ghana and Cameroon appeared as much a popular sentiment as it was one of the new Ghanaian political authorities. In this respect, Cameroon intelligence operatives reported that after the discovery of the military training camps, the local population of Azim publicly demonstrated against the Ghanaian government for keeping subversive elements of Cameroonian origin in their country ‘despite the diplomatic relations existing between Cameroon and Ghana’. S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, 24/03/1966, (Vb/b 1966/8).

¹¹² Asong and Chi (eds.), *Ndeh Ntumazah*, p. 688.

¹¹³ S.E.D.O.C., *Bulletin de Renseignements* No. 1681, 15/05/1967, (Vb/b 1962/8).

¹¹⁴ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, No. 1,770, (Vb/b 1963/1).

¹¹⁵ Abel Eyinga, *L’U.P.C.: Une Révolution Manquée?* (Paris, 1991), p. 137.

¹¹⁶ S.E.D.O.C., *Notes de Renseignements*, No. 1,770, (Vb/b 1963/1).

Woungly-Massaga's first visit to Congo-Brazzaville had been in 1964, where he was attempting to promote Nkrumah's recent book, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization*.¹¹⁷ During his visit, Woungly-Massaga made contact with representatives of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.). After the effective closing of the Nigerian border in 1964, and the end of the Bamileke insurgency soon after, this contact would prove vital in the R.C.'s on-going need to establish a military presence in Cameroon.¹¹⁸ At the end of 1965, therefore, Woungly-Massaga travelled to Cabinda with a view to open his own front across the Congolese border. Importantly, Woungly-Massaga's contact with the M.P.L.A. also allowed him to access to a new source of external aid: the Cuban government.¹¹⁹ As a result, although Woungly-Massaga's troops did not number much more than Osende Afana's (around one-hundred), they were immeasurably better-armed and trained, possessing Kalashnikovs and even anti-tank weapons amongst their arsenal.¹²⁰ After several months training, Woungly-Massaga and his troops were ready to make the journey to Congo-Brazzaville, and a possible confrontation with Osende Afana.

Woungly-Massaga did not have the chance to confront Osende Afana in Congo-Brazzaville, however, as the latter was captured whilst undertaking a second incursion into Cameroon in December 1965, and executed the following March.¹²¹ Whilst Osende Afana was now eliminated as a rival claimant to the party's external support – this time through the coercive apparatus of the Ahidjo government – Woungly-Massaga was still denied access to Chinese aid.¹²² The R.C. leadership now understood that the continued support of Cuba – its only real source of external aid by this point – would depend upon the success of the new second front. Such was the importance of maintaining the U.P.C. security threat that a drastic order was subsequently issued to 'all party representatives abroad'. The order stated that they must converge on Congo-Brazzaville if they were to continue to be part of the revolution, and gave permission for foreign governments to expel those militants that

¹¹⁷ Abwa, *Cameroun, ma part de vérité*, p. 130.

¹¹⁸ Abwa, *Cameroun, ma part de vérité*, p. 131.

¹¹⁹ Abwa, *Cameroun, ma part de vérité*, p. 131.

¹²⁰ The new opportunities offered to the R.C. by the second front were consequently expressed in December 1966 by Njiawue: 'After the overthrow of Fulbert Youlou, immense possibilities have presented themselves for the opening of a front from a base situated beyond the national borders, and permitting us to resolve the essential problem of logistics'. Nicanor Njiawue, 'Mémoire du Comité Révolutionnaire', 25/12/1966; (261 J 7).

¹²¹ S.E.D.O.C., *Renseignement de Source Sérieuse*, October 1966 (Vb/b 1966/8)

¹²² Njiawue and Diye, 'Rapport sur la situation à l'intérieur de l'U.P.C.', 18/03/1964; (261 J 7).

did not obey.¹²³ No action more acutely represented the contraction of the U.P.C.'s external support, and the growing importance of controlling territory and localised institutions in exercising strategies of extraversion.

In spite of the party's evident difficulties, the U.P.C.'s convergence upon Congo-Brazzaville and its new Cuban sponsor allowed the Cameroonian government to maintain the image of a security threat. It was demonstrated in the conclusion of an intelligence report on the possibilities of the new second front: 'It will no longer be isolated acts of terrorism against defenceless individuals, but surprise attacks against barracks, pitched battles between government and rebel forces, and acts of sabotage by explosives.'¹²⁴ The government's fears, of course, were largely exaggerated. Whilst intelligence operatives quoted up to 3,000 trained U.P.C. militants waiting to invade,¹²⁵ an internal memorandum within the R.C. stated that there were only 162.¹²⁶

Accordingly, the first – and as it turned out, the only – attack by Woungly-Massaga's forces in December 1967 was a complete failure. Whilst the border in the heavily-forested region around Djoum proved adequately porous in terms of allowing the entry of U.P.C. militants, the difficulties were to be found upon their arrival. Not only did the insurgents face a well-prepared Cameroonian army, but they had little to no support amongst the forest populations in the region, the Baka.¹²⁷ The attack of December 1967 was the last concerted and organised military effort of the U.P.C. in Cameroon.

Before the U.P.C. could prepare another attack on Cameroonian soil, the instability of the host government and the inter-governmental pact of non-interference once again proved fatal to its internal insurgency and its access to international resources. In August 1968 Massamba-Debat was overthrown by Marien Ngouabi, who soon signed an accord with Ahidjo agreeing to cease all 'subversive' activities in the Congo.¹²⁸ Woungly-Massaga managed to remain in Congo-Brazzaville until his final expulsion in 1969. As the failed attack of December 1967 represented the last meaningful military action of the U.P.C. on Cameroonian soil, so too did the expulsion of the party from Congo-Brazzaville

¹²³ M. D. Dibandjo, 'Note de l'Attention de son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Cameroun', Algiers, 05/01/1968, (Vb/b1962/7).

¹²⁴ M. D. Dibandjo, 'Note de l'Attention de son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Cameroun', Algiers, 04/01/1968, (Vb/b1962/7).

¹²⁵ M. D. Dibandjo, 'Note de l'Attention de son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Cameroun', Algiers, 05/01/1958, (Vb/b1962/7).

¹²⁶ Njiawue, 'Mémoire du Comité Révolutionnaire', 25/12/1966, (261 J 7).

¹²⁷ S.E.D.O.C., *Bulletin de Renseignements* No. 1681, 15/05/1967, (Vb/b 1962/8).

¹²⁸ Deltombe, Domergue, and Tatsitsa, *Kamerun!*, p. 608.

represent the loss of its last diplomatic connections to access external political and material resources on any meaningful level. Yet perhaps the most important loss for the U.P.C. was the arrest and execution of Ouandié in 1971. It represented a huge symbolic defeat, as Ouandié was the last remaining original figurehead of the party. The U.P.C. insurgency had ended.

Conclusion

The U.P.C. leadership's loss of material support amongst foreign governments was mirrored by its increasing loss of support amongst the party's branches abroad, which were largely represented by student groups. In this instance, however, it was the socio-economic, rather than coercive, capacity of the Ahidjo government that proved decisive. This was in two respects. First of all, between 1965 and 1970, the proportion of the working population employed by the civil service in Cameroon increased from three to nine percent.¹²⁹ With the U.P.C. leadership increasingly isolated, impoverished, and in disarray, it was the Cameroonian government that appeared as the most important distributor of socio-economic mobility in a country suffering high rates of unemployment.

Ahidjo was thus able to rally U.P.C. students abroad by promising them positions of responsibility within the administration.¹³⁰ Even in foreign universities where a large proportion of the students obtained their scholarships via the U.P.C., many proved willing to return to Cameroon and rally to the government in exchange for a guarantee of employment; a guarantee the U.P.C. could not offer. In April 1963, for example, the Cameroonian government sent a request for students at the Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow to submit their details, so that the government could make provisions for their employment after qualification.¹³¹ Whilst certain students were suspicious of the government's intentions and refused to submit their names, many other students agreed, and even went so far as to write an open letter proclaiming their non-allegiance to the U.P.C.¹³²

Secondly, ever since independence and unification was achieved, the U.P.C. was forced to increasingly rely upon its third founding aim to justify its on-going opposition: the

¹²⁹ J. F. Bayart, 'The Political System' in Richard Joseph (ed.), *Gaullist Africa: Cameroon Under Ahmadu Ahidjo* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 45-81, p. 66.

¹³⁰ J. F. Bayart, 'The Political System', pp. 45-81, p. 67; Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, pp. 306-307.

¹³¹ Letter from Victor Vega, Moscow, 11/05/1963, (Vb/b 1962/7).

¹³² Letter from Chief of District, Federal Security, Buea, 28/08/1963 (Vb/b 1962/7).

‘raising of Cameroonians’ living standards’. Yet with the party’s activities reduced to internecine squabbling abroad, and an increasingly disorganised and undisciplined insurgency within the territory, it was the Ahidjo government, with its publicised development projects, that came to best represent the possibility of raising Cameroonians’ living standards.¹³³ The way in which this affected the loyalty of the U.P.C.’s membership abroad first became clear in 1964. In September, Aloys Ndjock, a member of the U.P.C.’s Cairo bureau since 1960, rallied to the Cameroonian government with the following message:

I very much regret my time spent abroad from the moment the Cameroonian people had seized its national independence in 1960. I recognise that the struggle of the Cameroonian people against foreign domination until 1960 was very positive. This form of struggle forced our people to use all means and all forms of legal and illegal struggle to wrest independence from the hands of our colonial enemies. Now that our nation has won its national independence, the second stage of the struggle of our people is no longer that of weapons in hand, or fleeing to the mountains, but rather that of nation-building.¹³⁴

The government’s ability to project an international image of socio-economic development and nation-building increasingly undermined the U.P.C.’s support amongst Cameroonian students abroad. This process is perhaps best evidenced by a letter addressed to the new Cameroonian embassy in Moscow, written by the East German branch of the National Union of Kamerunian Students (U.N.E.K.) in December 1967. The letter suggested that the Executive Committee (E.C.) for the Union be relocated from Paris to Yaoundé. The reasons for doing were as follows:

Before Cameroon’s accession to independence, it was understandable that the E.C. of U.N.E.K. was located in Paris, due to Cameroon’s colonial status on one hand, and its under-development on the other. But for some years now our country has witnessed qualitative changes and transformations: the accession to independence, its reunification, its progressive development via the creation of a university and institutions of higher education...As a consequence, the maintenance of U.N.E.K.’s

¹³³ To this end, the President himself explained that a key purpose of international media was to ‘publicise the multiple factors of progress and development in Cameroon’. Francis B. Nyamnjoh, *Africa’s Media: Democracy and the Politics of Belonging* (London, 2005), p. 169. Such was the government’s concern of its image abroad that the security services were tasked with analysing foreign publications. In July 1965, for example, S.E.D.O.C. submitted a report on the letters page of *Africa and the World* – published in London – in which British readers of the magazine discussed accusations of human rights abuses by the Cameroonian regime. (Vb/b 1963/1), p. 156.

¹³⁴ Njiawue, ‘Mémoire of the Comité Révolutionnaire’, 25/12/1966, (261 J7).

Executive Committee in Paris has lost all meaning. We are for its transfer to Yaoundé.¹³⁵

The U.P.C. was increasingly seen as an obstacle to the problems of national development, rather than its solution. It was a viewpoint that simultaneously became manifest in the studies of political scientists. From the mid-1960s, political studies of African states focused on the problems of national integration and development, during what was perceived to be such a 'formative' and 'vulnerable' stage in the continent's history.¹³⁶ The question of national integration was perceived as a particularly significant issue for Cameroon, due to its dual colonial heritage. Its subsequent attempt at federalism made it an appealing subject of analysis for political scientists writing in the 1960s and 1970s. Hence Gardinier's observation in 1971 that 'The Cameroon Federal Republic is a microcosm of unusual complexity and promise for the student of political integration in fragmentary societies.'¹³⁷

Within this academic discourse of nation-building, the Ahidjo government's ability to suppress the U.P.C. threat, particularly at a time when many other African governments were suffering military coups, similarly warranted a great deal of praise and attention from political scientists, and a corresponding dismissal of U.P.C. 'terrorism'. It became evident in another major political study of Cameroon, Victor T. Le Vine's 1971 book, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*. Overlooking the complex dynamics and motivations of the U.P.C., Le Vine writes that since 1960, 'the government of the Cameroon Republic was under violent attack from the political dissidents who had been fermenting rebellion in the territory since 1955'. Citing Cameroon's 'political stability' since 1961, Le Vine goes on to state that 'praise for the Ahidjo government is largely merited and the pride and confidence mostly justified.' Dismissing the Ahidjo government's own use of violent coercion, Le Vine concludes that Ahidjo 'treated his opponents firmly, sometimes harshly, but made sure that even his bitterest enemies had the chance of joining his side'.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ S.E.D.O.C., *Note de Renseignements*, No. 3352, 04/11/1966. (Vb/b 1962/8).

¹³⁶ Benjamin Neuberger, *National Self-Determination in Postcolonial Africa* (Colorado, 1986), pp. 93-104.

¹³⁷ David Gardinier, 'Review: The Cameroon Federation' by Willard R. Johnson', *African Historical Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1971), pp. 203-206, p. 203.

¹³⁸ Victor T. Le Vine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic* (London, 1971), p. 181.

From the 1970s, this academic pre-occupation with government projects of nation-building, and Ahidjo's practices of censorship and coercion, would ensure that the history of the U.P.C. insurgency would remain largely hidden from Western audiences. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, however, Woungly-Massaga would continue his own international campaign against the Cameroonian government. Using the support of non-governmental religious and human rights organisations in Europe, he would continue to publish books and pamphlets denouncing the 'crimes' of the Ahidjo regime against the Cameroonian people during the conflict of the 1960s. The media channels that these NGOs gave to Woungly-Massaga, therefore, simultaneously became vectors for the uprising's history, preserving the conflict's limited historical visibility until the 1990s.

Conclusion

In 2002, Stephen Ellis suggested that examinations of the ‘past-in-the-present’, and of the ‘turning-points at which history failed to turn’, are two important contributions that historians can bring to understandings of contemporary Africa.¹ Since the 1980s, such understandings have often centred upon the perception of the deepening economic and political ‘crisis’ of the African state. In this respect, Ellis argues that examinations of the past-in-the-present, which trace the specific historical origins of the African state’s present predicament, can serve to deepen the shallow diagnoses of Western journalists and policy-makers, which view the crisis as resulting from a timeless cultural difference, or the malpractice of incumbent governments.² These ahistorical analyses have, however, also extended into the realm of comparative politics, whereby the African state’s present problems are diagnosed as its failure to penetrate a timeless ‘traditional’ society of ethnic divisions and ‘tribal’ loyalties.³

Both political scientists and policy-makers have, moreover, tended to measure the African state against a model that defines statehood as a government’s ability to exercise authority over, and provide for the welfare and development of, the state’s domestic territory and populations. Based upon an idealised Eurocentric image of the state, this model focuses on the domestic constraints that African governments have been unable to overcome, rather than the international opportunities that they have been able to exploit. The African state is thus analysed as a deviation from an ideal-type, understood only in pathological terms of what it is not, or functionalist terms of what it should be. The overall result is a denial of the specific historical context from which independent African states emerged, its effect on present politics, and the particular dynamic that this has engendered.

This thesis has accordingly identified an aspect of the past-in-the-present, one that is based upon a more contextualised historical reading of the African state. It is defined by

¹ Stephen Ellis, ‘Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 43 (2002), pp. 1-26, p. 4.

² See in particular Robert Kaplan, ‘The Coming Anarchy’, *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (February 1994); Christopher Hitchens, ‘African Gothic’, *Vanity Fair* 57 (November 1994).

³ R. H. Jackson and C. G. Rosberg, ‘Why Africa’s Weak States Persist: The Empirical and Juridical in Statehood’, *World Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1982), pp. 1-24; Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, 1988); Goran Hyden, *No Shortcuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective* (London, 1983); D. Rothchild, ‘Hegemony and State Softness: Some Variations in Elite Responses’ in Z. Ergas (ed.), *The African State in Transition* (London, 1987), pp. 117-148; C. V. Scott, ‘Socialism and the “Soft State” in Africa: An Analysis of Angola and Mozambique’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (1988), pp. 22-36.

the ability of African governments to exploit international opportunities, rather than overcome domestic constraints, and has been articulated as a fundamental function of African statehood: the ability to access vital external resources, through a claim to represent an independent state. By acknowledging the historical roots and persistence of such a function, one can better understand some of the predicaments facing Cameroon today, and why certain policies by international organisations have largely proven ineffective.

From the mid-1980s, for example, Cameroon adhered to the pattern of a deepening political and economic ‘crisis’, with the result that John Nellier listed Cameroon as a ‘collapsing state’ in 1993.⁴ First of all, in 1984 Ahidjo’s (hitherto only) successor, Paul Biya, was faced with an attempted military coup. Secondly, Cameroon’s liberal foreign investment programme, and its export-orientated economy, plunged the country into economic crisis when world commodity prices sharply decreased.⁵ In September 1988, President Biya was consequently forced to accept a stabilisation plan from the I.M.F., and a structural adjustment loan from the World Bank in May 1989.⁶ Finally, between April and October 1991, the Biya government was faced with a mass civil disobedience campaign for democratic reform, which produced numerous violent clashes, and effectively paralysed the country’s economy.⁷ Foreign loans subsequently became predicated upon practices of ‘good governance’, in an attempt to place the Cameroonian back on the ‘right track’ to a universalised standard of statehood.⁸

Despite subsequent political liberalisation in Cameroon, however, and continued I.M.F. loans, civil unrest and economic stagnation continued, whilst political opposition remained nominal. In 2008, Paul Biya amended the constitution to allow his re-election as President for an unlimited number of terms, provoking violent clashes in the main cities. In 2010, the International Crisis Group designated Cameroon as a ‘fragile’ state, due to the

⁴ John Nellier, ‘States in Danger’ (1993) – Mimeo, cited in I. W. Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, 1995), p. 284.

⁵ There were, for example, massive expenditure overruns of CFA 450 billion in 1986-7 – out of a total budget of CFA 800 billion. Piet Konings, ‘The Post-Colonial State and Economic and Political Reforms in Cameroon’ in Alex E. Fernández Jilberto and André Mommen (eds.), *Liberalization in the Developing World* (London 1996), pp. 244-264, p. 253.

⁶ Konings, ‘The Post-Colonial State’, p. 253.

⁷ Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa* (Princeton, 2005), p. 24; Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 381.

⁸ This ‘neoliberal’ approach has been articulated in Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, 1996), p. 285; and Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley, 2001), p. 7.

government's inability to overcome its political and economic problems.⁹ Yet a focus on the domestic constraints that the Biya government has not been able to overcome – and the pathological descriptions that this engenders – provides an unsatisfactory analysis of Cameroon's on-going predicament. Instead, one should focus on the international opportunities that the Biya government has been able to exploit, as the recognised representative of a sovereign state. In this respect, it is important to note that I.M.F. loans came to the Biya government precisely for the fact that it was the recognised representative of Cameroon.¹⁰ This financial aid has subsequently been diverted to reinforce the government's patronage networks, and to fund a number of satellite parties to preclude a unified political opposition. As these loans came to be predicated upon conditions of 'good governance', the Biya government was further able to justify the arrest of political opponents by charging them with corruption.¹¹

In one move, therefore, Biya was able to demonstrate a new transparency within his government, and thus maintain access to the external financial support available only to recognised governments. In turn, this support was used to guard access to the governmental institutions of state, the only means through which such financial aid could be accessed. As such, a fundamental function of African statehood, and its self-reinforcing logic of exclusion, was perpetuated. As Englebert has argued, there still remains a premium to recognised sovereignty for African governments who possess limited domestic resources, and are vulnerable to the fluctuations of the world economy.¹² In this respect, the Cameroonian government has been unable to overcome the narrow export-orientated economy implanted by the colonial state – a fact that became evident in Cameroon when world commodity prices collapsed in the 1980s. As a result, the government has increasingly sought to monopolise the benefits that it could accrue from internationally recognised sovereignty.

Works by Bayart, Chabal, Daloz, Clapham, and Cooper have similarly sought to reveal the past-in-the-present through a historicised approach to the extraverted logic of the African state. In doing so, they have provided valuable insights into how this function

⁹ International Crisis Group, 'Cameroon: Fragile State?', 25/05/10, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2010/africa/cameroon-fragile-state.aspx>. Accessed 15/06/10.

¹⁰ Wouter G. Werner and Jaap H. De Wilde, 'The Endurance of Sovereignty', *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 7, No. 3 (2001), pp.283-313, p. 291.

¹¹ John Mukum Mbaku and Joseph Takougang, *The Leadership Challenge in Africa: Cameroon Under Paul Biya* (Trenton, 2004), pp.398-421.

¹² Pierre Englebert, *Africa: Unity, Sovereignty, and Sorrow* (Boulder, 2009), pp. 2-8.

originated, and continues to operate, in Africa.¹³ A key limitation of these works, however, is that this function has only been identified in the actions of African governments, or of the nationalist leaders who eventually came to occupy Africa's first independent governments. What subsequently becomes lost in this institutionalised and retrospective framework are moments of alternative possibility, in which actors ultimately excluded from the institutions of the African state could nevertheless be located within its emergent logic, and even appropriate its functions.

In this sense, Ellis warns against seeing the past only 'as the embryo of the present'. Instead, one should also see it as a period in its own right, 'replete with unfulfilled ambitions and disappointed hopes'.¹⁴ It is here that an examination of the 'turning-points at which history failed to turn' becomes important. In terms of nationalist groups ultimately excluded from the institutions of state, this thesis has studied one such failed turning-point: the U.P.C. In order to explain how the thesis has consequently extended historicised analyses of the African state, however, it is also necessary to address how it has built upon the existing literature of decolonisation and empire, as these historiographies are connected in important ways.

By locating the U.P.C.'s campaign within the logic of African statehood, the thesis has been able to draw key lines of connection between local, regional, and international histories during the era of decolonisation, in two respects. Firstly, a focus on the U.P.C. enables one to trace how a fundamental function of African statehood was produced by an interaction of local, metropolitan, and international developments. French political reforms and investment during the post-war period – within a longer history of limited colonial development efforts – caused African nationalists to conceive of the local state apparatus as an interface to access and distribute vital foreign assistance. As such, colonial state-building by metropolitan powers was crucial for the extraverted logic of African statehood as, in the words of Lonsdale, it 'offered new institutions of access to the world'.¹⁵

¹³ Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London, 1993); Patrick Chabal and Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford, 1999); Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, (Cambridge, 1996); Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002).

¹⁴ Ellis, 'Writing Histories', p. 3.

¹⁵ John Lonsdale, 'Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from "the Hopeless Continent"' in A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002), pp. 194-220, p. 207.

For the U.P.C., however, international developments outside the colony-metropole axis were similarly crucial for providing such institutions of access. In particular, a post-war international sovereignty regime – centred upon membership in the U.N. – offered not only the possibility of independence, but also of African governments negotiating access to crucial international aid and trade networks, as the recognised representatives of independent states. In this way, the thesis agrees with Bayart and Cooper's historicised understanding of the African state as a hybrid of local and European processes, but expands such hybridity to include extra-metropolitan historical forces that emerged during the post-war period.¹⁶

The second way in which the thesis has connected local, regional, and international historical processes is by deploying this fundamental function of African statehood as a conceptual tool, to understand the relationship between the U.P.C.'s armed and diplomatic activities. In this respect, the U.P.C. leadership used the domestic insurgency to legitimise its claim to represent an independent state before foreign governments and international organisations. The recognition of this claim gave the party access to vital external support networks, support which could in turn be used to reinforce the armed insurgency. People, arms, money, and information subsequently flowed back and forth along these transnational and extra-metropolitan networks, which encompassed Cameroon, the U.S.A., West Africa, North Africa, Europe and the Far East. In order to comprehend these mutually reinforcing exchanges, the thesis has consequently shown how the state – or rather, a historicised understanding of African statehood – is a vital intermediary concept.

By linking these different levels of historical process through a historicised understanding of African statehood, the thesis has contributed to more recent 'transnational' histories of empire and decolonisation. First of all, by demonstrating that a fundamental function of African statehood was produced by an interaction of domestic and international processes, the thesis has built upon works that have examined nation-states as being significantly the product of transnational historical forces.¹⁷ Secondly, by using this function to link the U.P.C.'s armed and diplomatic activities, this thesis has contributed to those works that have analysed how materials, ideas, and people moved across national

¹⁶ Jean-François Bayart, *L'État au Cameroun* (Paris, 1979); Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 160.

¹⁷ See in particular C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford, 2004).

boundaries during the late colonial period.¹⁸ Finally, by examining how these transactions could operate outside the colony-metropole axis, the present study adds to a growing body of work that has complicated the transnational approach of the ‘new imperial history’.¹⁹

Importantly, however, the thesis has also contested a notable tendency amongst transnational histories of empire, one that seeks to trace the origins of post-Cold War processes of ‘globalisation’ in the colonial period.²⁰ In particular, these studies have posited the historical roots of a recently perceived ‘decline of the nation-state’, in which the functions of statehood are increasingly exercised by non-governmental actors outside the state’s territory, rather than government actors within it.²¹ Against these teleological narratives of proto-globalisation, attention to the ‘turning points at which history failed to turn’ once again becomes important.

In certain studies, for example, the anti-colonial projects of the League of Nations and the United Nations are cited as the first instances of a more recent ‘global governance’ regime, whereby international organisations are able to significantly dictate government policy.²² The more recent manifestation of such a regime has notably been identified in policies of ‘neoliberal’ intervention by the I.M.F. and World Bank.²³ Yet as the example of the Biya government demonstrates above, African governments have been perfectly capable of diverting these intervention mechanisms to conversely reinforce their hold on the state apparatus. Perhaps more importantly, the first two chapters of this thesis have demonstrated that the League and U.N.’s anti-colonial intervention mechanisms were significantly limited, and were often superseded by the sovereign and imperial interests of the French government.

¹⁸ See in particular the edited volumes of A.G. Hopkins, *Globalization in World History* (London, 2002); as well as Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, 1997).

¹⁹ For a useful overview see Alan Lester, ‘Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire’, *History Compass*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2006), pp. 124-141, esp. pp. 133-134.

²⁰ See in particular Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine and Frank Trentmann (eds.), *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire, and Transnationalism* (Basingstoke, 2007); Gary Magee and Andrew S. Thompson (eds.), *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods, and Capital in the British World, c. 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 2010); Toyin Falola and Emily Brownwell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honour of A.G. Hopkins* (Durham, 2011).

²¹ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass., 2001), pp. 114-136. Charles Piot, *Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa After the Cold War* (Chicago, 2010), pp. 8-9.

²² See Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge, 2005), esp. pp. 224-268. See also Susan Pedersen, ‘Back to the League of Nations’, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 4 (2007), pp. 1091-1117.

²³ Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 285; Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, p. 7.

There is a second way in which the nation-state's sovereignty is perceived to be increasingly exercised by actors outside of its territory and institutions in the post-Cold War era: the growing ability of exiled political groups to enter into diplomatic relations with the recognised governments of other states.²⁴ Matthew Connelly has observed this ability in the actions of the F.L.N. leadership during the 1950s and 1960s. He consequently argued that this represented emerging challenges to state sovereignty which became more explicit in the post-Cold War era of 'globalisation'.²⁵ This thesis has similarly demonstrated how the U.P.C. was, for a time, able to enter into diplomatic relations with certain African and Asian governments, and thereby exercise a fundamental function of African statehood alongside the Ahidjo government.

Yet the thesis also demonstrated that this was, ultimately, a brief moment of possibility for the party. By showing how and why this moment of possibility closed down, the thesis demonstrated that transnational flows of political and material support were uneven, and increasingly coalesced around the institutions of governments that occupied the territorial institutions of state. This was demonstrated both in the U.P.C.'s need to find host governments to access its international support, and the fact that such support increasingly went to the Ahidjo government. The fact that these developments were also produced by moments of historical contingency – such as military successes and political instability amongst host governments – further interrogates the teleological assumptions of 'proto-globalisation' narratives. In doing so, the study has further nuanced the studies of Bayart *et al.* by demonstrating the complex interaction of domestic and international processes that determined how a fundamental function of African statehood could be successfully exercised by competing groups.

Connelly's work articulates a final aspect of the nation-state's more recent 'decline'. Namely, the erosion of what Krasner calls 'interdependence sovereignty', which pertains to a government's ability to regulate the flow of information, goods, and people across the borders of its state.²⁶ Connelly states that in the era of decolonisation, waves of economic and technological change were already 'eroding the borders that separate states from one

²⁴ Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 225.

²⁵ Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002), p. 5.

²⁶ Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, 1999), p. 4.

another and from the world as a whole'.²⁷ Other transnational histories of empire have similarly observed how imperial 'webs' transcended the borders of nation-states, and identified these processes as even earlier precursors to the erosion of the state's bounded and territorial integrity in a 'globalised' era.²⁸ By examining the simultaneous decline of the U.P.C.'s armed and diplomatic campaigns, however, this thesis has demonstrated how these transnational networks were increasingly interrupted and obstructed by the boundaries of the Cameroonian state – or rather, the increasingly effective border policing of the Cameroonian government.

Returning to the original problematic of the thesis, assumptions of 'globalisation' share the same underlying problem as pathological analyses of the African state. Namely, that both approaches employ a normative and generalised ideal of statehood, by which it is either seen to be 'in decline' in a globalised era, or 'lacking' in African states. Both approaches consequently miss out the specificity, complexity and contingency of political and economic processes across time and space.²⁹ By tracing the successes and failures of the U.P.C.'s campaign, and locating it within an emergent function of African statehood, this thesis has sought to complicate these normative ideals. It has disaggregated the state into its various practices, which included Eurocentric standards of exercising domestic authority, as well as the more extraverted fundamental function of African statehood. These practices were shown to interact, as well as to emerge and recede at different times and in different places. The thesis has demonstrated that transnational networks shaped and transcended these state practices, but also that such practices could interrupt and contain these networks.³⁰ It is only by acknowledging these specific, complex and changing relationships between national and transnational processes that one can begin to establish a universal and comparative framework in which to study the exercise of statehood in Africa and beyond.

There is, however, an additional aspect of Cameroon's history that merits further investigation, and engages with issues of the past-in-the-present, failed historical turning-

²⁷ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 5.

²⁸ See Hopkins, *Globalization in World History*.

²⁹ In this respect, theories of globalisation and proto-globalisation share the same limitation as their intellectual predecessors of dependency theory and world systems theory, which similarly tended to flatten out the complexities of the 'Third World'. See Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford, 1989).

³⁰ For an excellent articulation of this point, see Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, 'Where in the World is America? The History of the United States in the Global Age' in Thomas Bender (ed.), *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, 2002), pp. 63-100.

points, and the changing relationship between the state and broader transnational networks. The failed historical turning-point in this instance was the U.N. plebiscite of 1961, when British Southern Cameroon was denied the option of independence without joining either Nigeria or French Cameroon. British Cameroonian political groups flooded the U.N. with petitions to demand independence without joining, expressing fears that French Cameroonians would monopolise the benefits of independence, and divert vital development assistance away from the 'Anglophones'. These appeals to the U.N. still continue, with some Anglophone groups demanding that the former British territory be placed under a new trusteeship, before being allowed to secede.

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261 J 7

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