

# Securitized State Building? The Camerounian Decolonization in Conflict

Maria Ketzmerick

## 1 Introduction

“Estimons notre devoir attirer l'attention un nations sur préparatifs militaires mis sur pied par autorités françaises destinées forcer aspirations kamerunaises lors élections décembre courant. Voitures cellulaires grillagées contingents militaires provence colonies françaises avec parachutistes engins militaires modernes sillonnent tout Territoire avec ordre tirer sur population jour élections. Si présente assemblée ne prend pas mesures adéquates Kamerun oriental risque d'avenir incendié plus que année précédente contre peuple désarmé demandons conséquence intervention énergique un nations fin conserver paix sécurité”.<sup>1</sup>

In the above quoted telegram to the UN, Felix Moumié, leader of the resistance committee ‘Union des populations du Cameroun’ (U.P.C.) in Cameroun,<sup>2</sup> calls for immediate intervention to preserve peace and security in the trusteeship territory. Even though the U.P.C. wrote more than 10,000 peti-

- 
- 1 Translation by author: “It is our duty to draw attention of the United Nations to military measures developed by French authorities aimed at forcing Kamerunaises aspirations during the December elections. Cell cars, barred military contingents, and Provence French colonies paratroopers engines with modern militaries any territory with orders to shoot people day elections. If the General assembly does not take adequate measures Kamerun oriental risk of a more violent future than previous year, against unarmed people accordingly ask an energetic intervention of the United Nations to maintain peace and security.” (Messmer, Note confidential, 22.1.1957, DPCT // 14). The securizing speech acts were quoted in their original appearance in the sources. Thus, the spelling stems from the text and reflects the way of production, here a telegram.
  - 2 There are many names for the territory of Cameroon which mirror the colonial presence in the country. In this paper, the following expression will be used by following LeVine (1964): for the today's country, “Cameroun Federal Republic“ and “République Fédérale du Cameroun“, furthermore “Kamerun“ for the German Protectorate, “Cameroun“ for the French administered territory, and “the Cameroons“ for the British zone during the trusteeship period. U.P.C. activists often used the German labeling in order to refer to the unified territory.

tions to the UN Trusteeship Council, lobbied on the international and national level on behalf of the organization's claims, travelled, networked and published immensely, the party has not been successful in gaining any influence through its integration in the formal political decision-making process in the country's transition to independence. Instead, the French administering authority banned the organization in 1955; afterwards, the party stayed underground during the transition and was rehabilitated in post-colonial Cameroon only in 1991.<sup>3</sup> In this paper, I focus on the specific dynamics between the anti-colonial resistance movement, U.P.C., and the French administration in Cameroun under the umbrella of the UN trusteeship council. Even though Cameroun was placed under a UN trusteeship mandate in 1946 for the purpose of decolonization, France integrated the territory in the French Union and treated it as an 'Associated Territory', thus as a regular colony. During the French UN-trusteeship in Cameroun that lasted from 1946 until 1960, a violent conflict over the terms of the independence evolved. I argue in the following paper that in this conflict of decolonization discourses on threats to the public order, the peaceful transition and economic interests were created by all actors involved. Furthermore, the threat-countering practices introduced caused resistance, violence and the enactment of harsh measures, but also transformative capacity and agency. In this regard, the quote above points to this paper's historical constellation and the empirical issue of the process of decolonization and state building in Cameroon.

To trace the distinct discourses and practices through which ideas of security and protection were deployed, the analysis is centered on the dissolution of the political party and anti-colonial movement U.P.C. in May 1955, which provides insights into the dynamics of security in the later trusteeship period. By focusing on the events of May 1955, I aim at demonstrating the extent to which the French administration securitized and protected the public order, and its imagination of future statehood for opposing political actors. Even though the anti-colonial resistance movement had no structural power in terms of institutional power during the decolonization—thus no ability to determine the country's future on the political level—a distinct form of agency evolved in the hybrid situation of transition, expressed as the power to act and to define the situation.

---

3 Krieger 1994.

The most useful framework for this endeavour is a securitization approach with a specific consideration for the relations of power. I argue that such investigations should not only focus on who has the power to securitize, but also on the possible reactions of actors to securitization attempts, thus on the power which actors unfold when they are in the center of securitization moves. I aim to show that a relational approach to power is essential to investigate mutual dynamics of power, since there is no clearcut dichotomy of potential aggressor and potential victim. In this regard, a focus on agency appears useful to investigate the shifting ‘figurations of power’<sup>4</sup> during the conflict, as it is shown in the paper. Specifically, Elias’ conceptualization of a balance of power is relevant here, since there is no duality between ruler and ruled, yet also a third instance, which bridges the macro-micro-divide. Elias characterizes the specific dynamic dimensions of relations within social figurations. Power, thus, is an aspect of social relations between actors in their group affiliations, relationships, which in turn by the structure of the total figuration—which in this example includes the state—are embedded and shaped by it.

In the following, it will be argued, firstly, that the international administration that consisted of the French administration supported by the UN trusteeship council initiated securitizing moves to legitimately enact power. Furthermore, by these securitizing moves, the administration aimed at creating a transition towards independence according to French and international imaginations of the state. At the same time that these moves to secure the external rule were being enacted by the international administration, desecuritizing moves simultaneously took place through decolonization by the transfer of power from the external to the local level.

Secondly, I will argue that the conjunction of these discourses and practices constructed a referent object that induced the violent reaction of a countersecuritization, thus securitizing moves by the international administration were publicly questioned, rejected, and vehemently opposed by the anti-colonial resistance movement. The French administration had to acknowledge the resistance movement’s capacity of agency, which shaped the balance of power. It is not my aim to argue that there was no agency before colonization, but that securitization language shaped agency and therewith had an impact on the figuration of power, and the actors’ quest for political influence. I will show to what extent the transition of

---

4 Elias 1983.

power and the monopoly of violence became conflictive; thus, despite the specific situation of external state building, the state, the nation, and the public order appeared as referent objects. The findings are based on primary sources from the Archives D'Outre Mer in Aix-en Provence (France),<sup>5</sup> the UN archives, the UN Photo Archives and the Collection of the League for Human Rights in New York, the National Archives in Buea and Yaoundé, Cameroon, as well as interviews that complemented existing information.

The paper is structured into four sections. I will start with a brief survey on different concepts of security and state building in Africa, security, and power. I will then explore the different strands of securitization theory and locate my empirical interest in ongoing theoretical debates. Then, I will turn to practices of protection by the French administration, while focusing on conflicting themes and power relations in the navigation towards independence. I will conclude my analysis with a brief reflection on possible theoretical accounts for the conceptualization of security power.

## *2 State building, Power, and Security within Historical Approaches*

Since the decolonization processes, the character and capability of states in Africa have been under academic debate. Within the huge body of historical literature on decolonization, scholars have focused, among others, on the transition of power,<sup>6</sup> administrative instruments,<sup>7</sup> dynamics of nation building,<sup>8</sup> and negotiating processes between international actors on the national level.<sup>9</sup> Anti-colonial resistance has also been researched ex-

---

5 Within the research process, the following documents have been retrieved: the weekly security report to the Ministry of Departments D'outre Mer (FM DPCT // 23-50), documents on the administration of the territory (FM DPCT // 3-6), petitions by Cameroonian activists, tracts, press articles, and letters, in order to understand the environment and dynamic of securitization processes (FM DPCT // 26, 17-19). Some of the documents accessed had been confidential until recently. Nevertheless, these documents show the logic behind the external administration, thus providing the potential background of the public discourse.

6 Bayart 2009.

7 Birmingham 1995.

8 J. Darwin 1999; D. J. G. Darwin 1988; Smith 1978.

9 Torrent 2012; Patil 2008.

tensively, for instance by Kaiser,<sup>10</sup> Clifford,<sup>11</sup> and Walraven.<sup>12</sup> The aim of this paper is to bridge contemporary peace and state building discourses, critical security studies, and historical observations, by specifically focusing on French imperialism and state-building approaches.

Since the end of the Cold War, scholarly attention on sub-Saharan Africa has accompanied the increase of interventions and peace-building operations that are often justified by the international community to prevent ‘fragile states’ that are mostly located in the Global South from harming the global order, peace and security.<sup>13</sup> Difficulties marking state-building processes in Afghanistan and Iraq spurred the interest of both academia and policy-makers in state building.<sup>14</sup> Many critical scholars in the state-building debate focus on the taxonomic state creation by external actors in non-OECD contexts.<sup>15</sup> Recently, scholars referred to the concept of state building and observed similarities between historical imperial settings<sup>16</sup>, while also focusing on hybridity and resistance by local actors. The new interventionism has been called “Empire-lite”, “Neo-Trusteeship”,<sup>17</sup> and “postmodern imperialism”.<sup>18</sup> It is within these debates that I locate my research interest in this paper.

The most stringent pattern of intervention appears to be that so-called Western states and Western- dominated development agencies<sup>19</sup> are main-

---

10 Kaiser 2015.

11 Clifford 2005.

12 Walraven 2003.

13 Duffield 2001; Veit 2010.

14 Although the concept of state building is often confused or merged with other concepts, such as democratization or nation building (construction of a national identity), it is mainly understood as being focused on the building of state institutions, such as the bureaucracy, with a view to increasing their integrity and efficiency and shaping them in ways that will have positive effects on the economy, society, and politics. The concept of state building is thus much more narrowly defined than nation building, which denotes a big, complex, and interlinked project, a shaping of economy, polity, and society into a condition of positive sovereignty (Wesley 2008).

15 Booth 1991; Williams 2003; Chandler und Sisk 2013; Bliesemann de Guevara 2009, 2012; Chandler 2006; Richmond 2009; MacGinty 2011.

16 Bellamy and Williams 2004; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Paris 2009. Examples of other scholars who focus on historical settings include Slater (2010) and Marten (2006).

17 Wilde 2010.

18 Wesley 2008.

19 By ‘Western’, I refer to states in the Global North in contrast to the Global South.

ly involved with state building in the Global South. That is why in the center of criticism lies the focus on the domestic situation in peace-building projects, which is perceived to legitimize externally-driven visions of the state.<sup>20</sup> Recently, academia drew attention to violence as a continuous feature of state and peace building. Newman claims that state building has historically been “an inherently violent process,”<sup>21</sup> which shows a clear similarity between policies introduced by state building and colonial instances. Moreover, post-independence wars also show historical patterns in the last century that resulted from a rapid process of state building in transition to independence, which thus reflects the legacy of colonialism. Newman points to several historical cases and draws the connection between historical state building and contemporary peace building by questioning the possibility of external actors promoting peace by coercively rebuilding former structures. Similarly, Veit focuses on comparable patterns of power and authority as indirect rule in the post-independence period and during the UN peace-enforcement project, which began in 2003 in Congo.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, Sabaratnam proves that a long-term perspective on state building practices in Mozambique helps to understand specific patterns of foreign intervention, to “make sense of historical experiences and trajectories of state-society relations”,<sup>23</sup> which leads to more reflexive understanding of current intervention practices. In this context, Charbonneau remarks that comparisons between imperialism and peace building often focus on the British Empire, instead of “the context of Francophone Africa and France-Africa security relations is one that is typically left unexplored.”<sup>24</sup> In light of the above, the specific features of French imperialism and state-building approaches appear to be interesting in order to delineate the construction, negotiation, and transformation which justified imperial violence, and which are still relevant in contemporary peace and development operations.<sup>25</sup>

---

20 Bliesemann de Guevara 2012.

21 Newman 2013, p. 146.

22 Veit 2010.

23 Sabaratnam 2013, p. 106.

24 Charbonneau 2014, p. 607.

25 The interrelation between state building, decolonization, and security is emphasized furthermore by Buzan et al. in depicting decolonization as transforming the emergence of regional security systems near the end of the Cold War. Thus, “the tidal wave of decolonization rolled back imperial power, created dozen new states,

### *3 Theoretical Reflections: Securitization Framework and the Configuration of Power*

The securitization theory framework was introduced by the so-called Copenhagen School.<sup>26</sup> The theoretical framework of securitization studies assumes, first, that security is a social construction that emerges out of communication processes and, second, that it is often, but not exclusively, related to the state. A typical consequence of securitization is the legitimization of extraordinary measures, like the use of force and the suspension of rules that, under normal conditions, are politically or morally binding. In a successful securitizing move, it is assumed that something or someone is portrayed as a threat (for instance, the state, a community, or a group). Thereby, issues, which are normally open for public debate, become part of the security agenda. A successful securitizing move makes it nearly impossible to oppose certain policies conducted in the name of enhancing security.<sup>27</sup> The initial approach was complemented by new perspectives, such as the relevance of practices,<sup>28</sup> and with reference to critical theory and ethical debates about the 'critical security studies' by the so-called 'Welsh School'.<sup>29</sup> Commonly shared by these theoretical approaches is the focus on the performative side of securitization.<sup>30</sup> Important for this paper is the historicity of securitization processes on which Buzan and

---

and allowed regional security dynamics to start operating in these newly independent actors [...]”(Buzan and Wæver 2003, p. 15).

26 Buzan et al. 1997; Buzan/Hansen 2009.

27 “‘Security’ is the move that takes politics beyond the established rule of the game and frames the issue either as a more extreme version of politicization. In theory, any public issue can be located on the spectrum ranging from nonpoliticized (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicized (meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitized (meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure)” (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 23–24).

28 Balzacq 2005; Bigo 2014, 2002.

29 Browning/McDonald 2011; McDonald 2008; Booth 1991.

30 “Securitization works through everyday technologies, through the effects of power that are continuous rather than exceptional, through political struggles, and especially through institutional competition within the professional security field in which the most trivial interests are at stake.” (Bigo 2002, p. 73).

Lawson and Guzzini provide insights.<sup>31</sup> Within these works, the paradigm for security research spans across different historical settings and the authors acknowledge the importance of the historical context for securitization research (theoretically and empirically), which is equally as important for the paper.

According to Wæver, successful securitization processes have three “felicity conditions”: 1) the grammar or plot of security; 2) the social capital of the enunciator; and 3) the conditions related to the threat.<sup>32</sup> Bigo added a fourth condition: 4) the audience.<sup>33</sup> This last add-on reflects interest in the contextual environment that has to be convinced of the existence of a potential threat and the necessity of certain security measures against it. Thus, a focus on power, legitimacy and representation is relevant category within these theoretical assumptions. This is essential in non-OECD contexts for which academic interest developed relatively recently.<sup>34</sup>

Security is constructed not only by discourse, but also by practices;<sup>35</sup> thus, security is a structured field of practices in which some people and collective actors are more privileged to speak and construct security issues than others.<sup>36</sup> Following these assumptions, the analysis focuses on securitizing moves and their links to power and representation in the constellation of trusteeship as *politics of protection*.<sup>37</sup> In this regard, the concept of ‘protection’ as a marker for the constructed threats and field for empirical enquiry in the specific constellation of Cameroun will guide the analysis. Relevant for the following discussion is hence the focus on the figuration of power, the transformative capacity, and the situated agency of the anti-colonial movement through which a state-centric focus on security is avoided. The paper emphasizes that there is a centrality of power positions in securitization processes, and shows how these produce subjects, relations, and transformative agency. In this regard, it appears interesting to

---

31 Lawson (2015), Guzzini (2015).

32 Wæver 2000, pp. 252–253.

33 Vuori 2008, p. 70.

34 For instance Wilkinson 2007; Vuori 2008; Bilgin 2011; Holbraad/Pedersen 2012.

35 Hysmans suggests the following concerning security practices: “One needs to start from particular practices of both state offices (such as police, government, judiciary) and non-state offices (such as charities, environmental pressure groups and private companies) and the relational structure that they enact” (Huysmans 2009, p. 11).

36 Huysmans 2009.

37 Id.



observe which claims of protection are given priority. For example, that even though the oppositional party U.P.C., thus not a legitimate state actor, might have “[...] introduce[d] insecurities that often remain subordinated to securing the State and its citizenry”,<sup>38</sup> their claims were not given priority. The focus on speech acts is important and involves a dimension of power and representation since the speech act is not independent from the societal position of its speaker.<sup>39</sup> In this regard, “situated agency”<sup>40</sup> points to the relational nature of power, since the capacity to protect always exists in relation to other capacities, and is therefore bound to the institutional and regulative contexts in which needs for protection are contested. Foucault conceptualizes agency in different types in his writings, for example: “Agency of any who are able to refuse to objectify power as an object and instead recognize that relations of power that look fixed or stable may become at each moment a changeable strategy of confrontation and ‘the free play of antagonism’ by taking a fragmented and consolidated strategic situation within a long-term confrontation and deciphering it through different types of intelligibility as a general structure of power at the level of the social body that can be seen as free play”.<sup>41</sup> This notion of ‘transformative agency’ will be taken together with the concept of ‘balance of power’<sup>42</sup> to point to the power dynamics involved.

The shift in the balance of power in this case might stand in close connection to dynamics on the macro level, such as global decolonization processes and the Cold War.<sup>43</sup> According to Buzan and Wæver, “The ability to generate a successful macrosecuritisation depends not just on power, but on the construction of higher level referent objects capable of appealing to, and mobilising, the identity politics of a range of actors within the system”.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, individual actors, such as the U.P.C., could utter securitizing speech acts to connect their ideas to global paradigms in that period. By including this argument, this paper’s case explores the dynamics of securitizing speech acts and power positions on different scales.

---

38 Huysmans/Dobson/Prokhovnik 2009, pp. 6–8.

39 Id., p. 8.

40 Huysmans 2009.

41 Foucault 1982, p. 795.

42 Elias 1990; Linklater/Mennell 2010; Elias 1987.

43 Buzan/Wæver 2009.

44 Buzan/Wæver 2009, p. 268.

The marginalized position of the opposing actor, the U.P.C., is important here, since through the speech acts of threat, danger and security, the French administration created an image which conditioned a hierarchical order of power while regulating the claims for representation, thus who is legitimate to represent the future state. As the actors used violence, it is interesting to focus on the turning point at which the oppositional actors turned from non-violent resistance to fighting in the underground (*maquis*). So far, just a few articles reflect processes of resistance, power, and (counter-) securitization,<sup>45</sup> specifically in the situation of foreign intervention.<sup>46</sup> Stritzel and Chang regard counter-securitization as part “of an interactive process of moves and counter-moves that are both linguistically regulated by the grammar and illocutionary logic of securitization speech acts and closely tied to processes of legitimization and delegitimation”.<sup>47</sup> In the following, I build on these reflections and aim at showing that an Elias-inspired approach to power in combination with securitization speech acts might be useful to understand the dynamic in Cameroun. By this, I furthermore nuance the discussion and conceptualization of power concepts within the securitization framework. I will now turn to the historical account of the case study.

## 4 *Securitizing State Building in Cameroun*

### 4.1 *Background*

Following the start of Germany’s colonization of ‘Kamerun’ in 1884,<sup>48</sup> in 1922 Cameroun was put under a League of Nations Mandate split up between France and Britain. After World War II, the mandate was transferred to a Trusteeship Territory administered by France and Britain. The UN Trusteeship System was designed to facilitate the transition to self-government and independent trust territories.<sup>49</sup> Within the Trusteeship Council, the administering body, developments in trusteeship territories were moni-

---

45 Charrett 2009; Watson 2009; Vuori 2008.

46 Stritzel/Chang 2015.

47 Stritzel/Chang 2009, p. 5.

48 Levine/Nye 1974.

49 Hall 1948; UN Charter 1946. According to Article 76 of the UN Charter, the Trusteeship Systems aim is “(a), to further international peace and security; (b), to

tored, visiting missions established, and petitions handled. Thus, the Trusteeship Council provides the frame for emerging securitizing speech acts to have repercussions on the ground. Despite this specific international status, French Cameroun (and French Togo) were incorporated according to the Constitution of the Fourth French Republic and treated like “regular” overseas departments and colonies.<sup>50</sup> Due to this incorporation, Camerounians were represented within the French National Assembly.<sup>51</sup> Even though the British Cameroons and French Cameroun shared many common features, in the former French territory a violent conflict erupted<sup>52</sup> while the development in the British territory saw relative peace.<sup>53</sup>

## 4.2 A Configuration of Securitizing Actors

Rather than presenting the relevant actors—the French administration and the anti-colonial resistance movement—in a clear dichotomy, I will analyze the mediation of power on different scales of action, and focus on the figuration and dynamics of power without claiming that there is a causal relationship between each single security speech act.

Aware of being under the official protection of the UN trusteeship council, a national independence movement emerged. The *Union des populations du Cameroun* (U.P.C.) was founded in 1948 as the first radical nationalist party in Douala. From the beginning, the U.P.C. endeavoured for independence under the terms of the United Nations and reunification with

---

promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, and as may be provided by the terms of each trusteeship agreement; [...] c) to encourage respect for the human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, and to encourage recognition of the interdependence of the people of the world; d) and to ensure equal treatment in social, economic, and commercial matters for all Members of the United Nations and their nationals, and also equal treatment for the latter in administration of justice, without prejudice to the attainments of the foregoing objectives and subject to the provision of Article 80 (Article 76, UN Charter).

50 Atangana 1997; LeVine 1964.

51 UN Year Book 1952, p. 674.

52 Atangana 2010.

53 Anyangwe 2010; LeVine 1964.

the British Cameroons; furthermore, they lobbied against French policy instruments, such as the *loi-cadre* and the law for amnesty. However, in contrast to other anti-colonial movements, such as in Indochina or Algeria, the U.P.C. was not able to transfer their claims into political reality, since the party was brutally suppressed by the French authority in Cameroun. The conflict between the French authorities and the U.P.C. presented one of the major lines of conflict in this period. In this regard, other political parties or organizations were founded along the demarcation line the U.P.C. created, thus either pro-U.P.C. or anti-U.P.C., and automatically orientated towards French political plans.<sup>54</sup> During the 1950s, the U.P.C. was the most popular and most radical political party.<sup>55</sup> Scholars, such as Terretta, Torrent, Atangana, Bayart, Mbembe, and LeVine regard the measures taken by the French administration to protect the public order as a major catalyst for the violent resistance against it.<sup>56</sup> Whereas some scholars, such as Terretta, regard them as the main influential party,<sup>57</sup> others, such as Frederick Cooper, perceive their power, support and influence as being foremost regional.<sup>58</sup> The U.P.C. has also been active outside the country, for instance in France (Les Activités de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun en France, November 1958, ANOM) and at the Trusteeship Council in New York. On a national level, the party was abolished in 1955,<sup>59</sup> and was rehabilitated and allowed to participate in elections only in 1991.<sup>60</sup>

Within the trusteeship period, France made massive economic investments to modernize the country, so political and economic shifts occurred,

---

54 LeVine 1964, p. 153. This can be seen in the first elections for the French National Assembly (June 1951) and Territorial Assembly (March 1952). In the early 1950s emerged politicians and parties that shaped the transition period of the country, such as the Bloc Démocratique Camerounais (BDC), the later Prime Ministers André Mbida and Ahmadou Ahidjo or Soppo Priso (LeVine 1964, p. 150). The U.P.C. did not succeed in these elections, despite being the first and, for many years, the best organized political party in Cameroun.

55 Atangana 2010.

56 Terretta 2013, Torrent 2012, Atangana 2010, Bayart 2013, Mbembe 2014, LeVine 1964.

57 Terretta 2013.

58 Interview, April 30, 2015, New York.

59 After the divide into different wings, one less radical wing led by May Matip was accepted for the elections in 1959.

60 Krieger 1994.

triggered also by the global decolonization processes.<sup>61</sup> In its annual reports and during visiting missions, the French administration emphasized the social and economic progress facilitated by the French presence in Cameroun (UN Report 1952, ANOM 1AFFPOL / 930), but also that the territory was not ready for its full independence. Connected to the French administration's interest group are the French colons, who owned businesses in Cameroun and who formed a group with economic interests in the country. This group's growth during the trusteeship enabled it to exercise pressure on the French government in matters of security and public order.<sup>62</sup>

Another relevant body in this context appears to be the UN Trusteeship Council, which performed as an arena that enunciated legitimacy and needed to be convinced of the legitimation of securitizing moves, and to which many claims of protection were directed. The council monitored the diverging interests for Cameroun's future and sent visiting missions to both parts of Cameroon. Generally, it can be argued that the body had a very ambivalent role and ruling, between taking France to task—for instance in the Yearbook of 1953, which mentions complaints over racial practices and ill-treatment at the hands of police—<sup>63</sup>and accepting the status quo while emphasizing stability.<sup>64</sup>

For the case of Cameroun, three audiences of securitizing speech acts, situated on different scales, appear to be relevant: the UN Trusteeship Council and General Assembly, the French authorities, and the national/local audience. These audiences are not separated but interlinked, yet in order to understand attempts to securitize and the upcoming agency, it is relevant to distinguish between them, since in each audience different strategies tend to be applied. The case of Cameroon's decolonization demonstrates the importance of legitimation, power, and representation in securitizing moves, since the attempts by the French administration were

---

61 Atangana 1997, p. 83. For the purpose of overseeing the development in Cameroun, a profound and far-reaching territorially structure of administration was set up, with the High-Commissioner on top and many administrative units (among which a security service, a policy service, an economic service etc.) in Cameroun. The work of these units was supported by the administration of the *Ministère de Départements d'outre Mer* in France, and overseen by the French special representative to the UN in New York.

62 Atangana 1997, p. 99.

63 UN Yearbook 1953, p. 626.

64 UN Yearbook 1956.

successful where they mattered most: the UN Trusteeship Council as the international community, but also local elites, military and police forces were convinced of the necessity of securing the public order by the French Authority. In the following, I will first show the claims advanced by the authorities, then the denial and mitigation of those, and lastly the agenda-setting by the U.P.C.

#### 4.3 *The Creation of the Referent Object – Protection of Cameroun's Public Order*

As seen in several speeches by High Commissioners, the French administration regarded itself as 'protector' of the Camerounian security and future.<sup>65</sup> In public speeches, newspaper articles and reports, the French administration aimed at acting for the Camerounian society and protecting it from rebellious groups such as the U.P.C., thus formally enacting the political authority and creating a referent object that is typically linked to the performance of security by states. The French administration saw in the Trusteeship agreement the scope and limits of their action, thus connecting the legitimacy of their presence in the country to the treaty. From a structural perspective, the role of the High Commissioner is defined to protect the citizens and their properties. For instance, in the decree number 57501, Article 41 the competences of the High Commissioner are defined as "Le Haut-Commissaire a la responsabilité de l'ordre public et assure la sécurité des personnes et des biens."<sup>66</sup> During the trusteeship, the French administration enforced a specific imagination for and representation of Cameroun's political order with different means and force, as can be seen in

---

65 High Commissioner Xavier Torr  Communiqu  9.7.1958, ANOM DPCT // 43. Furthermore, "Mon devoir est de tout mettre en oeuvre pour ramener le calme dans les esprits et pour assurer la s curit  des citoyens [...] la France vous aidera, comme elle vous a aid s, mais elle ne peut se passer de votre concours, de la collaboration active de toutes les populations camerounaises, d'une prise de conscience par vous-m mes des int r ts sup rieurs du Cameroun." ("My duty is to do everything in my power to calm down the minds and to ensure the security of citizens [...] France will help you as it helped you before, but she cannot do this without your help, the active collaboration of all Cameroonians, your own awareness of the superior interests of Cameroon.")

66 Translation: The High Commissioner has the responsibility to assure the maintenance of the public order and the wellbeing of persons and goods.

speeches, public presentations and performances. In general, the French administration's main goal was the protection of Cameroun's incorporation into the French metropolitan system, later the Franco-Camerounian "interrelation" against the (violent) resistance of different groups in Cameroun (Terretta 2013). Often, High Commissioners referred to a 'Franco-Camerounian' friendship and called for the support of Cameroun's population for the sake of this mutual relationship. In the emerging political scene, the French discourse on the Franco-Camerounian friendship was adopted by many Camerounian politicians.

The French administration primarily constructed the U.P.C., but also political opposition, nationalists, and partly unionists as threats to the public order, and took means to prevent and pacify the territory. By this the French administration presented the Camerounian society, public order, and the peaceful transition to an independent state as threatened, and thus as referent objects linked to the state's performance of security. The administration described the U.P.C. in many reports, press articles, and speeches as a terrorist, rebellious, and violent organization. The connection of the U.P.C. to communist movements, their claims of independence and reunification contrasting French political and economic interests—thus, the French administration of the state to be—were perceived as problematic. After a period of violent homicides and acts of sabotage perpetrated by the U.P.C., the French authorities marked the organization explicitly as a terrorist organization and strengthened their actions against it. This is also reflected in the press declaration by M. Aujoulat, a former minister and parliamentarian in Cameroun, briefly after the incidents: "Depuis la fin avril, l'U.P.C. cherche la bagarre en multipliant les réunions sur la voie publique et en se livrant à toutes sortes de provocations".<sup>67</sup> What was most threatening for the French administration was the geographical network of local committees the U.P.C. created throughout the territory, which were estimated at 450 committees in 1955.<sup>68</sup> The administration reacted to this threat with forced relocation and eviction to other areas, which is also seen as the reason for the widespread support of the U.P.C. in the territory.<sup>69</sup>

---

67 Aujoulat, June 3, 1955, DPCT 28. Translation: "Since late April, U.P.C. has been looking for a fight by multiplying meetings in the public space and by engaging in all sorts of provocations."

68 Joseph 1974, p. 432.

69 Interview Bella, December 7, 2015, Yaoundé.

After May 1955, the discursive connection between the ‘protection’ of Cameroun’s public order and France was strengthened in several speeches by the High Commissioner. Furthermore, the elections of 1956 were marred by violence, homicides, destruction of property and injuries. Already before the actual elections, special security reports counting deaths and injuries were written for every district,<sup>70</sup> becoming one of the main tools for the surveillance of the territory, while keeping the French minister informed. In analogy to these presentations of threats to the public order, the administration introduced measures of control against the “terrorist rebellion”; for instance, the French authorities strengthened their security forces.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, they enhanced their measures against suspects, oppositional and potential members of the U.P.C., and established in the main areas of rebellion, Sanaga Maritime, a pacifying zone, the “Zone de maintien de l’ordre de la Sanaga-Maritime” (ZOE).<sup>72</sup> Next to sidelining politicians that were close to U.P.C. and surveillance of U.P.C. suspects, the French authorities censored the media (radio and press) to gain control over the contribution of opposing political views; this can be seen as another site of securitization in this case.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, the French administration intensely surveilled the relations between Camerounian citizens. French colons, mostly business owners, but also French administrative staff, had a distinct role. The French administration regarded their situation in many security reports as their specific concern, especially during the elections of 1956, when targeted killings of European residents cumulated.<sup>74</sup> Yet, the French administration controlled colons that were politically active, who might be threatened by

---

70 Rapport de Sécurité, ANOM, FM DPCT // 37.

71 Fiche sur les moyens de maintien de l’ordre, ANOM DPCT // 23.

72 Deltombe/Domergue/Tatsitsa 2010. In this zone, maintained for two months, the French army carried out military operations against nationalists in the *maquis*. In the whole territory of Cameroun, many U.P.C. members were arrested or killed, and meetings and assemblies of the U.P.C. were banned.

73 For instance, Bebey Eyidi, the editor of the newspaper *Presse Du Cameroun*, which was close to the U.P.C., was imprisoned several times and prevented from publishing. Several other newspapers were shut down because of their writing against the current prime minister, the French authorities, and support of the U.P.C. and claims for independence (Le Patriote, Arrêté n. 798/PSS, COAM DPCT // 38). Surveillance measures also included scrutiny of the post services, thus many postcards and letters were collected in order to research oppositional connections.

74 Doustin, December 31, 1956, ANOM FM DPCT // 47.



the U.P.C. or others, who, on the contrary, might act against the public order themselves. For instance, during 1956, the election year, the secret service commented on the campaign “Votez Autochtone!” by the U.P.C.,<sup>75</sup> and on the failure of candidate Louis-Paul Aujolat as a threat to peaceful cohabitation of society. This incident reveals the perception of the public order and security by French colons.

Even after the dissolution of the U.P.C., High Commissioner Roland Pré warned the population to stay alert, since the threat of the U.P.C. was presented as still ongoing.<sup>76</sup> In another speech, he declared that the U.P.C. is the only party responsible for the fragile security situation.<sup>77</sup> By this, he emphasized his vision of a stable closeness of France and the future Cameroonian state, which was claimed to be troubled only by the U.P.C. By adopting and emphasizing this mode of communication he publicly denied that the U.P.C. might represent a voice in the navigation towards independence. The high representative ended his speech by saying that more than ever, the French administration aimed at giving all Camerounians the possibility to participate in the evolving political life. This stands in contrast to the fact that the percentage of Camerounian administrative personnel appeared to be rather decreasing than increasing, according to the Annual report of 1956 provided by the French administration. Thus, the actual transfer of power and administration in the state-building process was meant to happen within a very tight frame under control of French administrators.

---

75 Translation: “Vote native!”

76 Pré, Discours de Clôture, 3.6.1955, DPCT // 15: “Oui, le calme revient; mais, après une pareille secousse ce n'est encore qu'une situation mal assurée, car les blessures que laisse l'émeute, l'égarement des hommes que leur folie criminelle a rejetés hors de la légalité, le doute de fausses nouvelles, les ferments de haine que laissent toujours après eux le mensonge et la violence verbale, c'est l'opinion publique camerounaise, la conscience du peuple qui ont à en supporter tout le choc. Translation : “Yes, the calm returns; but after such a shock the situation is still not safe, because the wounds left by the riot, the aberration of some men whose criminal folly rejected on the wrong side of the law, the doubt of false news, the ferments of hatred that lie and verbal violence always leave behind. Of all this, it is the Cameroonian public opinion, the consciousness of the people who have to bear all the shock.”

77 Speech Roland Pré, New Bell, June 2, 1955, ANOM DPCT 28.

#### 4.2 Camerouns' Future as Referent Object: Countersecuritization by the U.P.C.

During the UN Trusteeship period in Cameroun, the French authorities constructed public order and future statehood as referent objects in close connection to the French system. In the following section, the dynamics of securitization moves and countersecuritization attempts by the U.P.C. will be analyzed, with a focus on matters of representation, the perception of threats, and the claim to protect.

##### *Representative for the Will of Camerounians?*

The main discursive line of conflict appeared around the question of representation, since the U.P.C. claimed to represent the Camerounian people's will regarding the future. The main claims of the U.P.C. were the reunification with the territory under British administration and decolonization at large, aims expressed at a very early stage of the trusteeship. By emphasizing these claims in the decolonization process, the U.P.C. questioned the state-centric vision of the French authorities, which claimed that the state is the only legitimate actor to decide over matters of public order. In that sense, it is relevant whose 'transformative agency' is at stake and who can legitimately represent Camerounian future.

In contrast to the French administration's narrative, the U.P.C. depicted Cameroun's independence and reunification with the British Cameroons as threatened by French plans. A myriad of petitions, but also statements and press releases end with the statement "Vive le Cameroun unifié et indépendant, [...], A Bas les Kolons, A Bas Roland Pré-Aujolat".<sup>78</sup> These closing sentences build a strong connection between the U.P.C.'s claims of independence and reunification, and their view that the French administration, personified in the High Commissioner Roland Pré and the French politician Aujolat, represent a colonial power extending the colonial regime in the country. The term 'Kolons' deliberately starts with a K, pointing to the unified *Kamerun* under German colonial rule. The French administration was perceived not only as a colonial power, but as the enemy of the

---

78 Union des Populations Du Cameroun, October 19, 1955, ANOM FM DPCT // 3. Translation: "Long live united and independent Cameroun, [...] down with the Colons, down with Roland Pré-Aujolat."

country, as for instance seen in the speech by Gertrude Onog.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, Tchejltiks Nolac tried to mobilize for the claims of the U.P.C. by depreciating the French administration, “Tous les hommes et toutes les femmes doivent adhérer en masse à l’U.P.C. L’heure est venue où chacun doit être debout pour la lutte générale. La victoire est proche. L’indépendance est sûre et celui qui ne marchera pas avec nous le regrettera. ...Près la victoire, les valets des colonialistes et les agents de la Sûreté paieront de leur vie leur ...”.<sup>80</sup> By this, the representation of the U.P.C. as an ultimate organization to fight for independence is underlined, while constructing a clear-cut enemy-friend distinction. It also shows the polarization brought about by securitizing speech acts: Camerounians were supposed to choose either for the independence of the country by being part of the U.P.C. or to be part of the colonialists’ camp, possibly regretting the latter choice in the near future. Given that this is a political flyer with expressive language, it becomes clear that the U.P.C. envisioned a state without any influence from France, while basing its claims on the widespread support of all Camerounians. Yet, even though the U.P.C. claimed the representation of all Camerounian citizens, the Trusteeship Council also received petitions claiming that the U.P.C. did not represent the will for the Camerounian future.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, as Pierre Messmer shows in his memoirs, certain Camerounian actors questioned the claim for representation by the U.P.C.<sup>82</sup>

Nevertheless, the U.P.C. was able to mobilize support on different levels, nationally but also from the UN Trusteeship Council, in order to discredit the French administration as a legitimate state builder in Cameroon. On the global level, the UN saw the U.P.C. (at least in the beginning) as a legitimate party that represents one of the segments of Camerounian society. Furthermore, on the national level, the U.P.C. acted as a representative for all Camerounian citizens, not only by switching between French, English and local languages, but also despite the fact that the French adminis-

---

79 Laborde, P., Lettre de Renseignement, May 20, 1955, ANOM DPCT 28.

80 Ibid. Translation: “All men and all women should adhere en masse to the U.P.C. The time has come where everyone must be up for the general struggle. Victory is near. Independence is certain and those who will not walk with us will regret it.... After the victory, the lackeys of the colonialists and the agents of the Sûreté will pay with their lives their...”.

81 UNA S-0443-0023.

82 Messmer 1998, p. 121.

tration tried to create divisions by emphasizing ethnic differences (mainly from the area Sanaga Maritime and Bamileke).<sup>83</sup> During the lobbying process, the U.P.C. gained partners such as the International League of the Rights of Man, in the person of Roger Baldwin, who supported their claims and provided infrastructure for their members stays in New York.<sup>84</sup> Over the years, the U.P.C. proved its organizational coherence, even after charismatic leaders such as Ruben Um Nyobé were killed in the underground (*maquis*). It was only in 1991 that the U.P.C. was reinstated from illegality, when a political opening created new political parties.<sup>85</sup> As pointed out above, the French administration perceived the U.P.C. as a real threat, also because of the party's ties to communist and other anti-colonial movements elsewhere, and tried by several means (including violence) to prevent the party from influencing Camerounians. This emphasized the importance the organization had for the authorities, and can also be seen against the background of the global security constellations in that period, namely, the Cold War and anti-communism. The French administration denied the U.P.C. its legitimacy by dissolving the party.

### *The French Administration Presented as Threat in Discourses*

Since the beginning of the trusteeship, the U.P.C. constructed the French administration as harming the political will of the Camerounian citizens. Already in the 1950s, the U.P.C. used the forum of the UN non-violently to direct their claims and perform in front of the Trusteeship Council. By emphasizing their claims—reunification and independence—the U.P.C. also tried to connect their securitizing speech acts with the upcoming universalist claim of the human rights regime.<sup>86</sup> In the course of the 1950s, a myriad of petitions arrived at the Trusteeship Council to protest against measures by the French administration and accused the harsh repressions, aimed at threats to public order and security. For instance, “...depuis la guerre sanguinaire du mai 1955 déclenchée par les colonialistes Français nous vivons qu’au maquis”.<sup>87</sup> This statement is often repeated in a similar

---

83 Atangana 1997, p. 90.

84 NYPL, funds of the ILRM, Boxes 1 and 14, Terretta 2012, p. 332.

85 Krieger 1994, p. 610.

86 Terretta 2012.

87 Petition Nyambé Tonga, January 14, 1957, DPCT // 43. Translation: Since the bloody war in May 1955 triggered by the French colonialists we have been living only in the maquis.

vein by other petitioners.<sup>88</sup> In this regard, it is interesting to note the use of ‘colonialists’, hinting to the specific situation of the French Camerouns. While they were not a colony in legal terms, they were treated as one by the enactment of repressions on the ground. Next to petitions, the U.P.C. used resistance newspapers, for instance ‘Kamerun mon pays’ or ‘L’Etoile’, to criticize the French authorities and to promote political campaigns such as the ‘Vote Autochtone’ campaign for the elections of 1956. It is striking how effective the party was in promoting their messages while being constantly surveilled, censored and prohibited by the authorities.

Many U.P.C. petitions focus on the Trusteeship itself and the wish for independence by directly opposing the French vision for a future state to their own vision. The U.P.C. used securitizing speech acts to point to the destabilization caused by the French authorities that even found entrance to the UN yearbook: “The representatives of these three organizations requested the immediate unification and independence of the Camerouns. They claimed that abstention during recent elections, including those for the Territorial Assembly, showed a lack of support for the policy of the French Government and complained, in varying degrees, that a state of insecurity had existed in the territory since the events of 1955”.<sup>89</sup> Next to the petitions, U.P.C. members made their appearance in front of the Trusteeship Council, for instance in 1951, and denounced explicitly the human rights violations which had taken place. Furthermore, the party created networks for their cause, for instance with the ‘League for the Rights of Man’ in New York (ILRM, NYPL), and travelled extensively, for instance to Ghana, Egypt and even the USSR.

Later, policy instruments introduced by the French administrations were criticized directly; for instance, in 1957 the U.P.C. published the document “L’amitié Franco-Kamerunaise en Danger: Alerte à l’opinion kamerunaise et mondiale”.<sup>90</sup> In this text, the U.P.C. directly mocks the idea of a Franco-Camerounian friendship by using the capital letter K as a provocation. In press releases, the U.P.C. positioned and explained the party’s need for vi-

---

88 Note de Renseignement, Période du 16 au 23 avril 1955, ANOM DPCT 27.

89 UN Yearbook 1956, p. 352.

90 L’opinion au Cameroun, No. 32, September 23, 1957. Translation: The Franco-Kamerun friendship in Danger: Alert to kamerunian and world opinion.

olent actions,<sup>91</sup> since their claims for Cameroun were not given consideration in the slightest.

### *Challenging the French Politics of Protection*

The peaceful means of international diplomacy were quickly expended; also, the invocation, to no avail, of human rights and abuses in front of the Trusteeship Council left the U.P.C. disappointed.<sup>92</sup> Thus, starting from 1955, the U.P.C. used violent resistance in order to gain attention for its cause, but also tried to reinstate its legal status (Joseph 1974: 438) and recognition on the global level. Starting in 1955, the U.P.C. initiated the destruction of properties that were mainly relevant to French economic interests, such as train rails. Furthermore, after their prohibition in May 1955, the party mobilized a partly successful sabotage and boycott campaign for the elections of 1956. The organization also created a climate of fear in the territory by kidnapping members of the French administration, supporters and politicians. By doing so, the U.P.C. tried to destabilize the economic investments by the French authorities and to boycott the idea of a Camerounian-French friendship, and thus the French imagination of future statehood. Later, the U.P.C. was able to organize demonstrations, gatherings and secret meetings to counter the public narrative of the French administration. These acts of boycott and sabotage took place even though the party and high-ranking members were under constant surveillance. After its prohibition, the network hid many resistance fighters in the *maquis*, thus challenging the territorial sovereignty of the French authorities. According to Mongo Beti, the response of the administering authority to the underground activists was harsh violence.<sup>93</sup>

The ongoing violence and turmoil in the territory reported in petitions, but also by the French authorities, prompted the UN Trusteeship Council to send a visiting mission to the territory. Thereby, the U.P.C. showed its ability to mobilize interest and support on a global level. Yet, even though whole districts were not under control by French security forces, such as Sanaga Maritime, the visiting missions did not have the means to demand accountability from France, and thus left the country without any attention

---

91 Déclaration à la presse mondiale, U.P.C., January 30, 1957, DPCT // 3.

92 Joseph 1974, p. 444.

93 Beti 1977, p. 39.

brought to the cause of the U.P.C., which left the party disappointed.<sup>94</sup> Due to the lack of political inclusion, some local U.P.C. groups tried to take initiative by launching a boycott and sabotage the campaign for the elections in 1956, which was only regionally successful.<sup>95</sup>

In 1957, a telegram arrived at the General Assembly calling for international attention: “The Authorities put military pressure on Kamerun population to vote in election under *loi cadre*, contrary to Kamerun wishes. We protest vehemently against this act which infringes dispositions of United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration Human Rights. We call on unations [sic] to send immediately international forces to quell second envisaged attach on Kamerun by French Government”.<sup>96</sup> This shows that in the late 1950s, the U.P.C. started to protest against single policy instruments, such as the *loi cadre*, by linking them to the threat of public order and human rights abuses by the French administration. In this regard, the U.P.C. tried to present itself as a legitimate actor in the navigation process by using the register of securitizing speech acts to refer to their volatile security situation. Furthermore, the telegram displays that the U.P.C. knew the language of the international community and was well versed in its systems, instruments, and discourses, but also how desperately they appealed to the international community to finally perform as a moral authority and to show interest in their struggle for independence. Even while living underground, Um Nyobé, the leader of the U.P.C., tried to connect with the international community with demands such as amnesty, recognition of the fact that the term ‘Cameroun State under Trusteeship’ is self-contradictory, and a declaration by the French Government “regarding the recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Kamerun”.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, he promised his party’s cooperation in maintaining public order after the achievement of a political settlement, and expressed the party’s desire to participate in the political decision-making process.<sup>98</sup> This again shows the effort the U.P.C. made in order to remain in the political discourse and points furthermore to the intensified dynamic of the conflict.

Yet, even though the U.P.C. had hardly any chance to express political ideas in public, resistance against the French administration increased, as

---

94 Deltombe/Domergue/Tatsitsa 2010.

95 Distler/Ketzmerick 2017.

96 Ngimbus, Vice President, December 21, 1956, ARMS S-0443-0026.

97 Joseph 1974, p. 440.

98 Id., p. 440.

observed by the French authorities: “Depuis décembre 1956, directement ou indirectement, l’opposition à la politique française au Cameroun s’est renforcée.”<sup>99</sup> In this regard, the U.P.C. majorly challenged the politics of protection introduced by the French administration. Yet, this knowledge did not prevent the French authorities from introducing, without considering the U.P.C. as a legitimate party, further measures for state building, such as: “élections générales, nouveau Statut, prochain Gouvernement autochtone, perspective de nouveaux progrès politiques, continuation de l’aide financière. ... un fort courant d’opinion s’est constitué, favorable à notre politique”.<sup>100</sup>

Next to using violent means, the U.P.C. still constantly lobbied for their cause using political and peaceful means. Yet, in the later trusteeship period, violent actions in connection with the U.P.C. and their links to communist ideas happened to be the only things international actors (UN trusteeship council and French administration) considered in their judgment, leaving aside other political suggestions proposed by the U.P.C. for Cameroun’s future. This becomes very clear in the way the French administration reacted to policy recommendations and how the Trusteeship Council regarded the organization. It can be said that the moment in which the organization switched from peaceful resistance to violent actions changed their reputation and legitimation globally and locally. This can only be explained by using securitization approaches, since the construction of threats to public order is essential. Thus, the moment the U.P.C. gave examples of their dangerousness for the political sphere, the organization could be legitimately conquered. Before resorting to violence, the U.P.C. resistance to French administrative plans and its links to communism apparently functioned as a threat only for the French administration, since on a global level the U.P.C. enjoyed a good reputation as a local actor and was invited to the Trusteeship Council. Yet, what is striking is that even though the U.P.C. lacked support for their political actions by the French administration and the global community, on the local ground the

---

99 Bilan des Attentats, L’Union des Populations Du Cameroun, 11.4.1957, ANOM DPCT 26. Translation: Since December 1956, directly or indirectly, opposition to the French policy in Cameroon has increased.

100 Id. Translation: “general elections, a new Statute, an indigenous next Government, new perspectives for political progress, the continuation of financial aid.... A strong current of opinion has formed, favorable to our policy.”



support seemed to increase after its ban. This shows that the agency the U.P.C. generated was situated in the context of their action, which means that the organization performed adequately in front of each different audience and used windows of opportunity for the navigation of political influence and power. This can not only be seen in speech acts (letters, telegrams, and speeches in front of the Trusteeship Council), but also in actions (mobilization of a support structure for the underground (*maquis*), mobilization across a geographical divide). The UN Trusteeship Council engaged in a very distinct role in this case, by prioritizing securitizing speech acts in its reactions.

In Cameroun, the U.P.C. appeared to be able to change the discursive frame in the beginning, yet through their violent practices their claims became intolerable for the international audience. This stands in contrast to other resistance movements, such as in Algeria or Ghana. Hence, what is interesting in this case is that the prohibition of a political party, which presents in democratic political systems one of the outmost political means, appeared to be a decisive key situation in which every involved actor could express security speech acts and define limits of action for the unfolding political agency.

## *5 Discussion and Conclusion*

From 1957 onward, the French administration tried to set the stage for the independence to come. Starting in 1958, they introduced instruments such as the *loi-cadre* to smoothly lead the way to independence; yet these developments could also be linked to internal political problems at the end of the French Fourth Republic. Finally, in the conflict over national representation, anti-nationalists and pro-French representatives like Mbida and Ahidjo came into power; they emphasized the union of Cameroun but also closeness to the French political system. During the political transition process, the U.P.C. tried to influence the developments but was sidelined and fiercely combated; furthermore, the party was not able to mobilize much support on the international level. The construction of the U.P.C. as the ultimate threat to the interests of all Camerounians was continued after

independence. The collective memory of the era of independence is still a topic of huge political debate and contestation.<sup>101</sup>

It was not the paper's aim to focus on the causes and dynamics of violence in this case, but to highlight empirical aspects of situated agency in the figuration of power that eventually lead to violent responses. According to the analysis, one could argue that the U.P.C. functioned as a representative for the Camerounian population. Despite the harsh securitizing moves by the French administration, the party developed and mobilized transformative agency in order to counter them, which transformed the conflict. In this regard, the party showed it was capable of adapting its action to different audiences and by taking different means suitable for each audience, thus transforming its agency. This agency was taken seriously, as seen in the reaction by the UN Trusteeship Council, but also in the silencing attempts and other securitizing moves by the French, even though the party's aims were nationalistic and violent. In this regard, the ban on the U.P.C. increased its agency as power to act and to securitize, instead of diminishing it; hence, agency is situated in the balance of power here. In contrast to that, the power to decide (thus the power of de/securitization) on the political decision process could not be harnessed by the U.P.C. Yet, as other active political actors, such as Soppo Priso, Ahidjo and Mbida, tried to shape the future in a moderate way, an alternative way outside French political interests was not developed. Instead, after independence, Ahidjo, a Francophile politician who always emphasized the closeness of Cameroun and France, gained power.

In the case under study, securitization approaches have been used to analyze a distinct conflict dynamic in the security register. Specifically, in the unique constellations of external intervention, the focus on the constructions of threats and securitizing speech acts encourages a more relational approach of the dynamics of power. This might also help to understand current phenomena in state- and peace-building debates, such as the local-global divide<sup>102</sup> and resistance against UN led state building attempts.<sup>103</sup> Specifically, it is important in current research to point to continuities of colonial heritage in power configurations and to authority in a

---

101 Eckert 2000.

102 Björkdahl/Höglund 2013.

103 Chandler 2013; Mac Ginty 2011.

historically informed analysis in order to understand patterns of external rule.<sup>104</sup>

In this regard, it appears necessary to investigate the relationship between power and securitization and to further elaborate on concepts to define different power dynamics, as done in this edited volume. These investigations should not only focus on who has the power to securitize, but also on the possible reactions of actors to securitization attempts, thus on the power actors unfold when they are at the center of securitization moves. In this volume, Langenohl differentiates between the power *of* securitization and the power *to* securitize. Clearly, this mirrors well the two stages of the balance of power in this paper. The French administration and the U.P.C. both had the opportunity to securitize, thus the power to securitize, which was enabled by this specific figuration. Yet, the effect of securitization, thus the power of securitization, was mainly faced by the U.P.C. in terms of being presented as a threat and excluded from political decision-making. In this regard, it became clear in the analysis that securitization processes tend to reduce complex problem situations to a dichotomous dynamic, as in the case of the camps for or against France. Through using the balance of power concept (Elias), the circumstances by which this dichotomization happened were analyzed in a differentiated way. This shows that a relational approach to power is essential to investigate the dynamics of power within securitization processes. Specifically, the focus on agency appears to be useful to investigate the shifting figuration of power.

In the background emerges a conflict of universalist ideas on the macro-level, which were combined by political actors with securitizing speech acts—human rights and decolonization on the one hand, and anti-communism / Cold War on the other. In this regard, security interests concerning the threat of communism were deemed more important than appeals to human rights causes, as U.P.C. activists emphasized in their numerous petitions. The conjunction between the prioritization of securitizing speech acts, macro-level conflicts, and power situations should therefore be investigated. Equally important is the conjunction between audience and the legitimacy of securitizing actors in securitization processes. Each securitization move has a very specific scope for transformative agency since it might convince the respective audience. In Cameroun, the U.P.C. initially appeared to be able to change the discursive frame, yet

---

104 See, for instance, Sabaratnam 2013.

through their turn to violence and underground actions their claims became intolerable for the UN audience. The prohibition of the U.P.C., thus, is one key moment in the dynamics of security. By looking at the empirical research field of security it can be investigated to what extent agency and transformative capacity, thus the ability to securitize in this constellation, unfolded in context. As shown with regard to the elections of 1956,<sup>105</sup> the perception of successful securitization is quite ambivalent. On the one hand, the U.P.C. was successful with its boycott campaign, thus representing a real threat for the French administration; on the other hand, the political campaign led to the exclusion of the party from the decision-making process. An analysis of these kinds of constellations helps to understand the context conditions that must be fulfilled in order for actors to exercise the power to securitize. To grasp these processes, the focus must lie in shifts of the balance of power.

Power relations are complex and depend on the context in which they are situated. Taking a clue from the Foucauldian statement that “[w]here there is power, there is resistance”,<sup>106</sup> one can perspectivize power relations by looking at resistance against securitization attempts and securitizing moves. The appearance of revolutionary movements on the political stage hints to a shift in power relations, pointing to the fact that traditional power figurations are about to be transformed and the monopoly of violence of ruling actors is questioned through the use of counter violence. In this regard, the way in which armed groups and the use of violence can create, stabilize, question and destroy legitimacy, specifically in the context of securitization moves, emerges as a theme of great theoretical and empirical interest. Furthermore, it would be relevant to analyze to what extent repressive measures by ruling authorities and acts of violence determine each other.

## References

### a) Primary sources

Achille Bella, Interview Bella, December 07, 2015, Yaoundé, Cameroun  
Action & Patrie, 12.2.1959, ANOM FM DPCT // 39

---

<sup>105</sup> Distler/Ketzmerick 2016.

<sup>106</sup> Foucault 1990, p. 9.

ANOM 1 AFFPOL / 930

Aujoulat 3.6.1955, DPCT 28

Bilan des Attentats ATCAM, April 11, 1957, ANOM FM DPCT // 26

Bilan des Attentats, L'Union des Populations Du Cameroun, April 11, 1957, ANOM DPCT 26

Déclaration à la presse mondiale, U.P.C., January 30, 1957

Décret nr 57501 in article 40, ANOM DPCT // 3

Doustin, December 31, 1956, ANOM FM DPCT // 47

Fiche sur les moyens de maintien de l'ordre, ANOM DPCT // 23)

Frederick Cooper, Interview, April 30, 2015, New York University, USA

High Commissioner Xavier Torrè Communiqué, July 9, 1958, ANOM DPCT // 43

Laborde, P., Lettre de Renseignement, May 20, 1955, ANOM DPCT 28

La Tribune du Pays, December 25, 1958, ANOM FM DPCT // 39

Le Patriote, Arrêté n. 798/PSS, ANOM DPCT // 38

Les Activités de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun en France, November 1958, ANOM

L'opinion au Cameroun, No. 32, September 23, 1957

Messmer, Note confidentielle, January 22, 1957, ANOM DPCT // 14

Ngimbus, Vice President, December 21, 1956, UNA S-0443-0026

Note de Renseignement, Période du 16 au 23 Avril 1955, ANOM DPCT 27

Note de Renseignement, January 14, 1956, ANOM FM DPCT // 30

Note de Renseignement, May 29, 1956, ANOM DPCT // 30

Note de Renseignement, October 19, 1956, ANOM FM DPCT // 30

Note sur la sécurité, 1956, ANOM FM DPCT // 33

Note sur l'Organisation de la Défense, de la sécurité extérieure et intérieure et du maintien de l'ordre, dans l'état sous Tutelle du Cameroun, April 16, 1957 ANOM FM DPCT // 23

New York Public Library, Collection of the International League for the Rights of Man (ILRM), Boxes 1 and 14

Petition Nyambé Tonga, January 14, 1957, ANOM DPCT // 43

Pré, Discours de Clôture, June 3, 1955, ANOM DPCT // 15

Rapport de Sécurité, ANOM, FM DPCT // 37

Speech Roland Pré, New Bell, June 2, 1955, ANOM DPCT 28

Union des Populations Du Cameroun, October 19, 1955, ANOM FM DPCT // 3)

UN Charter Article 76

UN Report 1952

UN Year Book 1952

UN Yearbook 1953

UN Yearbook 1956

UNA S-0443-0023

*b) Research Literature*

- Anyangwe, Carlson (2010): *The Secrets of an Aborted Decolonisation. The Declassified British Secret Files on the Southern Cameroons*. Bamenda: Langaa RPC.
- Atangana, Martin (1997): French Capitalism and Nationalism in Cameroon. *African Studies Review* 40(1): 83–111. doi:10.2307/525034.
- Atangana, Martin (2010): *The End of French Rule in Cameroon*. Lanham, Md: University Press of America.
- Balzacq, Thierry (2005): The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context. *European Journal of International Relations* 11(2): 171–201.
- Bayart, Jean-Francois (2009): *The State in Africa*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Cambridge/Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bayart, Jean-François (2013): *L'Etat au Cameroun*. Seconde éd. rev. et augm. Presses de Sciences Po.
- Bayart, Jean-Francois/Ellis, Stephen/Hibou, Beatrice (1999): *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*. London: Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. (2004): Introduction: Thinking anew about peace operations. *International Peacekeeping* 11(1): 1–15.
- Beti, Mongo (1977): *Main Basse Sur Le Cameroun: Autopsie D'une Décolonisation*. Paris: Maspéro.
- Bigo, Didier (2002): Security and immigration: Toward a critique of the governmentality of unease. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 27 (1S): 63–92. doi:10.1177/03043754020270S105.
- Bigo, Didier (2014): The (in)securitization practices of the three universes of EU border control: Military/navy – border guards/police – database analysts. *Security Dialogue* 45(3): 209–225. doi:10.1177/0967010614530459.
- Bilgin, Pinar (2011): The politics of studying securitization? The Copenhagen School in Turkey. *Security Dialogue* 42(4-5): 399–412. doi:10.1177/0967010611418711.
- Birmingham, David (1995): *The Decolonization of Africa*. Athens/Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Björkdahl, Annika/Höglund, Kristine (2013): Precarious Peacebuilding: Friction in Global–Local Encounters. *Peacebuilding* 1(3): 289–299.
- Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit (2008): The State in Times of Statebuilding. *Civil Wars* 10(4): 348–368. doi:10.1080/13698240802354466.
- Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit (2009): *Staatlichkeit in Zeiten des Statebuilding: Intervention und Herrschaft in Bosnien und Herzegowina*. Frankfurt a.M. et al: Peter Lang.
- Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit (2012): *Statebuilding and State-Formation: The Political Sociology of Intervention*. London/New York: Routledge Chapman & Hall.
- Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit/Kühn, Florian P. (2010): *Illusion Statebuilding: Warum sich der westliche Staat so schwer exportieren lässt*. Hamburg: Edition Körber-Stiftung.

- Booth, Ken (1991): Security and emancipation. *Review of International Studies* 17(4): 313–26.
- Bourdieu, Pierre/Thompson, John B. (1991): *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Browning, Christopher S./McDonald, Matt (2011): The future of Critical Security Studies: Ethics and the politics of security. *European Journal of International Relations* 19(2): 235–55. doi:10.1177/1354066111419538.
- Burbank, Jane/Cooper, Frederick (2010): *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Buzan, Barry/Lawson, George (2015): *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Buzan, Barry/Hansen, Lene (2009): *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Buzan, Barry/Wæver, Ole (2003): *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Buzan, Barry/Wæver, Ole/De Wilde, Jaap (1997): *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc.
- Chafer, Tony (2002): *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* Oxford: Berg.
- Chandler, David/Sisk, Timothy D. (2013): *Routledge Handbook of International State-building*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon/New York: Routledge Chapman Hall.
- Chandler, David (2013): Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-linearity: Rethinking 'Hidden' Agency and 'Resistance'. *Peacebuilding* 1(1): 17–32.
- Chandler, David C. (2006): *Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-building*. London: Pluto.
- Charbonneau, Bruno (2014): The imperial legacy of international peacebuilding: the case of Francophone Africa. *Review of International Studies* 40(3): 607–630. doi:10.1017/S0260210513000491.
- Charrett, Catherine (2009): A critical application of securitization theory: Overcoming the normative dilemma of writing security. *International Catalan Institute for Peace, Working Paper* 2009/7.
- Clapham, Christopher (1998): Degrees of statehood. *Review of International Studies* 24(2): 143–157.
- Clifford, Bob (2005): *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Darwin, John (1999): What was the late colonial state? *Itinerario* 23(3-4): 73–82.
- Deltombe, Thomas/Domergue, Manuel/Tatsitsa, Jacob (2010): *Kamerun. La guerre cachée de la France en Afrique noire*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Distler, Werner/Ketzmerick, Maria (2016): The 'politics of protection and elections in trusteeship and international administration: The cases of Cameroun and Kosovo. In: Thorsten Bonacker/Werner Distler/Maria Ketzmerick (eds.): *Securitization in Statebuilding and Intervention*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 127-154.

- Doyle, Michael W./Sambanis, Nicholas (2006): *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*. United Nations Peace Operations. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Duffield, Mark (2012): Challenging environments: Danger, resilience and the aid industry. *Security Dialogue* 43(5): 475–492. doi:10.1177/0967010612457975.
- Elias, Norbert (1983): Die Fischer im Mahlstrom. In: *Engagement und Distanzierung. Arbeiten zur Wissenssoziologie I*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, pp. 73–183.
- Engel, Ulf/Rye Olsen, Gorm (2010): *Authority, Sovereignty and Africa's Changing Regimes of Territorialisation*. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitäts-Verlag.
- Foucault, Michel (1982): The subject and power. *Critical inquiry* 8(4): 777–795.
- Ginty, Roger Mac (2011): *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Guzzini, Stefano (2015): A Dual History of Securitization. DIIS Working Paper 02.
- Hall, H. Duncan (1948) *Mandates, Dependencies and Trusteeship*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Hansen, Lene (2000) The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma and the absence of gender in the Copenhagen School. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29(2): 285–306.
- Hargreaves, Alec G. (2005): *Memory, Empire, and Postcolonialism: Legacies of French Colonialism*. Lanham, MD: Lexington.
- Herbst, Jeffrey (2015): *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP.
- Holbraad, Martin/Pedersen, Morten Axel (2012): Revolutionary securitization: An anthropological extension of securitization theory. *International Theory* 4(2): 165–197.
- Huysmans, Jef/Dobson, Andrew/Prokhovnik, Raia (2009): *The Politics of Protection: Sites of Insecurity and Political Agency*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Jackson, Robert H. (1993): *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jackson, Robert H./Rosberg, Carl G. (1982): Why Africa's weak states persist: The empirical and the juridical in statehood. *World Politics* 35(1): 1–24. doi:10.2307/2010277.
- Joseph, Richard A. (1974): Ruben um Nyobé and the 'Kamerun' Rebellion. *African Affairs* 73(293): 428–48.
- Kaiser, Daniel. (2015): Antikolonialer Widerstand als transnationale soziale Praxis. In: Bettina Engels/Melanie Müller/Rainer Öhlschläger (eds.): *Soziale Bewegungen in Afrika*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 57–72.
- Krieger, Milton (1994): Cameroon's democratic crossroads, 1990–4. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 32(4): 605–28.
- James, Leslie/Leake, Elisabeth (2015): *Decolonization and the Cold War: Negotiating Independence*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- LeVine, Victor T./Nye, Roger P. (1974): *Historical Dictionary of Cameroon*. Metuchen, N.J.: Rowman & Littlefield.



- LeVine, Victor T. (1964): *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Marten, Kimberly (2006): Warlordism in comparative perspective. *International Security* 31(3): 41–73.
- Mac Ginty, Roger (2011): *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mbembe, Achille (2014): *La naissance du maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun*. Paris: Karthala.
- McDonald, Matt (2008): Securitization and the construction of security. *European Journal of International Relations* 14(4): 563–587. doi:10.1177/1354066108097553.
- Messmer, Pierre (1998): *LES BLANCS S'EN VONT. Récits de décolonisation*. Paris: Editions Albin Michel.
- Newman, Edward (2013): The violence of statebuilding in historical perspective: Implications for peacebuilding. *Peacebuilding* 1(1): 141–157. doi:10.1080/21647259.2013.756281.
- Paris, Roland/Sisk, Timothy D. (2009): *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Patil, Vrushi (2008): *Negotiating Decolonization in the United Nations: Politics of Space, Identity, and International Community*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Richmond, Oliver/Franks, Jason (2009): *Liberal Peace Transitions: Between Statebuilding and Peacebuilding*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Rotberg, Robert I. (2003): *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Sabaratham, Meera (2013): History repeating? Colonial, socialist and liberal statebuilding in Mozambique. In: David Chandler/Timothy D. Sisk (eds.): *Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding*. London/New York: Routledge, pp. 106–117.
- Slater, Dan (2010): *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, Tony (1978): A Comparative Study of French and British Decolonization. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20(1): 70–102.
- Stritzel, Holger/Chang, Sean C. (2015): Securitization and counter-securitization in Afghanistan. *Security Dialogue* 46(6): 548–567.
- Stoler, Ann Laura (2010): *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Terretta, Meredith (2012): '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* 34(2): 329–60.
- Terretta, Meredith (2013): *Nation of Outlaws, State of Violence: Nationalism, Grassfields Tradition, and State Building in Cameroon*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Tilly, Charles (1993): *Coercion, Capital and European States: AD 990 – 1992*. Hoboken: Wiley.

- Torrent, Mélanie (2012): *Diplomacy and Nation-Building in Africa: Franco-British Relations and Cameroon at the End of Empire*. London: I.B.Tauris.
- UN Charter (1946): *Charter of the United Nations*. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>.
- Vuori, Juha A. (2008): Illocutionary logic and strands of securitization: Applying the theory of securitization to the study of non-democratic political orders. *European Journal of International Relations* 14(1): 65–99. doi:10.1177/1354066107087767.
- Veit, Alex (2010): *Intervention as Indirect Rule: Civil War and Statebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. Frankfurt a.M.: Campus.
- Walraven, Klaas van/Abbink, Jan (2003): *Rethinking Resistance in African History: An Introduction*. Leiden: Brill.
- Watson, Scott D. (2009): *The Securitization of Humanitarian Migration: Digging Moats and Sinking Boats*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Welz, Martin (2013): *Integrating Africa: Decolonization's Legacies, Sovereignty and the African Union*. (= Global Institutions Series, vol 68). London/New York: Routledge.
- Wesley, Michael (2008): The State of the Art on the Art of State Building. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 14(3): 369–385. doi:10.5555/ggov.2008.14.3.369.
- Wilde, Ralph (2010): *International Territorial Administration: How Trusteeship and the Civilizing Mission Never Went Away*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilkinson, Claire (2007): The Copenhagen School on tour in Kyrgyzstan: Is securitization theory useable outside Europe? *Security Dialogue* 38(1): 5–25. doi:10.1177/0967010607075964.
- Williams, Michael C. (2003): Words, images, enemies: Securitization and international politics. *International Studies Quarterly* 47(4): 511–31. doi:10.1046/j.0020-8833.2003.00277.x.
- Young, Crawford (1994): *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press.