



Research Paper

The Politics of German Cultural Heritage in Post-Independence Cameroon: Efforts to Protect and Safeguard in Times of Uncertainty

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Abstract

Colonial cultural heritage and institutions are thought to be an important determinate of post-independence levels of political, economic and social development. German cultural heritage and institutions are more durable, useful and survived more than those of Britain, France or other colonizers. This paper revisits the history of tangible and intangible German cultural heritage in Cameroon. It highlights efforts made by the German Government, UNESCO and Cameroon's Government to restore, preserve, and safeguard German cultural heritage in post-independence Cameroon. The paper argues that, German cultural Heritage in Cameroon is notably rich, and includes artistic creations, built heritage such as buildings and monuments, and other physical or tangible products of human creativity that are invested with cultural significance in Cameroon. Its construction commenced shortly after the Germans annexed Cameroon in 1884. Following the defeat of the Germans in Cameroon, the British and the French inherited the German cultural heritage, as well as replaced some German value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles. However, at independence, Britain and France withdrew, leaving behind their cultural heritage and practices. The paper concludes that, despite British and French might and manoeuvres as colonial masters, the survival of German cultural heritage is due to the renewed efforts by Germany and post-independence Government of Cameroon to protect and safeguard German cultural heritage in times of uncertainty and crisis.

Key Words: Germany, Cultural Heritage, Efforts, Protection, Decolonisation, Post-Independence, Cameroon

Received 04 Apr, 2022; Revised 16 Apr, 2022; Accepted 18 Apr, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.

Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. Introduction

The rich diversity of colonial heritage in Africa contributes a unique wealth to World Heritage. Whether in the form of natural sites, geological features and wilderness preserves, historic monuments, archaeological sites, rural or urban zones, roads or sites of historical significance, interest in the world's heritage is steadily increasing (Korumaz, 2016: 21). The study of heritage makes it possible to better understand today's world and to better prepare for the future (Barillet et al. 2006: 8). But, whether heritage is cultural or natural, it is above all fragile and precious, and great attention needs to be paid in order to maintain its diversity.

Cameroon has a rich colonial history of cultural heritage and that of the Germans in Cameroon is notably rich, versatile, and offers numerous archaeological, architectural, industrial, movable and immovable monuments. However, for various reasons, the value of this heritage has not always been recognized. According to Braungart and McDonough (2008), for a long time, this heritage was deprecated, and its owner and holders were sometimes even encouraged to forsake it. Thus, entire portions of some German cultural heritage were lost, and those which have been jealously safeguarded by the Government of Cameroon are often threatened by the impact of natural forces.

Cameroon was subjected to German colonialism in the late nineteenth century, and evidence of Germany's former occupation of Cameroon can still be seen today in tangible and intangible German cultural heritage that survived British and French colonialism (Sobseh, 2011). These German cultural heritages are being jointly preserved and safeguarded by post-independence government of Cameroon and Germany. In general, monuments, sites, movable artifacts are included in tangible German cultural heritage, while intangible cultural heritage is not visible to the eye such as language, tradition, custom, music, and dance (Zancheti et al., 2009).

When the French and British inherited the German cultural heritage in Cameroon, they were afraid that the Germans who were still interested in the territory would recapture and re-administer it in the nearest future. As such, they mishandled some tangible German cultural heritage like buildings, historic places, monuments, and artifacts, as well as replaced some German value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles (Deschamps, 1971: 18). Despite undeniable qualities, these German cultural and heritage resources are underutilized and facing major challenges linked to human development. Efforts are made to identify, manage, restore, safeguard and valorize these resources by the governments of Cameroon and Germany.

This article, presents the result of an investigation of the following questions: what are the uses of tangible and intangible German cultural heritage in Cameroon; what efforts have been made by Cameroon and German Governments, institutions and stakeholders to protect and safeguard German cultural heritage in post-independence Cameroon? For better understanding, the study starts with conceptualization and a brief historical background of German Kamerun.

Towards Conceptualising Cultural Heritage

For better understanding of German cultural heritage, it would be very imperative to understand the interrelatedness of certain terms and concepts. These terms and concepts include culture, heritage, cultural heritage, tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage.

Culture is defined as all of the factors that represent all material and spiritual values created in the process of historical and social development. It is also all the factors used to convey to the next generation, indicating the extent of the sovereignty of man's natural and social environment. Culture is transferred from generation to generation (Atalan, 2018). Protecting and maintaining these cultures depend on this transfer. This transfer of culture from generations to generations is defined as heritage and that's what makes it important (UNESCO, 2020).

Heritage is of increasing significance to each society. The World Heritage Convention recognizes that heritage can be defined as 'monuments, groups of buildings and sites (UNESCO, 2021).' In practice, a broad set of typologies has developed that includes: urban centres, archaeological sites, industrial heritage, cultural landscapes and heritage routes. This greatly increases the range of places and landscapes that has to be managed by heritage managers and thus widens the range of skills required. It also greatly increases the type and number of threats that can have an adverse impact on heritage places. Apart from direct threats to the fabric or components of the heritage place itself, it is much more common for places to be threatened by adverse developments in their surroundings. In these circumstances, decisions taken for wider economic or social benefits must be compatible with the well-being of the heritage place (UNESCO, 2013).

Cultural Heritage is a reflection of people's ever-changing values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions that have reached today. It covers all tangible and intangible assets and includes all the features of the environment, stemming from the intermingling of people and places over the time (Atalan, 2018).

In the expansion of the concept of Cultural Heritage, important events that took place in history became decisive. The French Revolution of the eighteenth century was a time when both cultural heritages were important and there was debate and practices for protection and restoration. In the nineteenth century, the definition, scope, scale and conservation methods of cultural heritage have developed. For the first time, cultural heritage is being used by international organizations with the 1931 Athens Regulation. *Carta Del Restauero*, prepared in 1931 by the Supreme Council of Antiquities and Fine Arts, is an important documentary in this area (Atalan, 2018). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1945 and the Council of Europe was established in 1954. In the same year, the signing and the ratification of the "Convention on the Protection of Cultural Values in the Case of Armed Conflict" took place in La Haye, the capital of the Netherlands (Atalan, 2018). After the Second World War, where significant reconstructions were made, the cultural legacy became even more important with the 1964 Venice Regulation. Historical and rural settlements have been included in the definition of cultural heritage in the 1970s. At the meetings of the Council of Europe (1985), the 1987 International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and UNESCO (1989), intangible values were included to the notion of cultural heritage (ICOMOS, 2016: 8).

Cultural Heritage can be divided into two main categories: tangible and intangible cultural heritage. As seen above, tangible cultural heritage presents itself in a material form and includes archaeology, art, movable objects, architecture and landscape. Monuments, sites, movable artifacts are included in tangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage is not visible to the eye such as language, tradition, custom, music, dance, etc. It designates the cultural wealth of a given society, which is complex and should be carefully preserved, for it is even more vulnerable than material heritage, as it is in danger of disappearing with its traditional custodians. This category, arouses the interest of the international community and the African people in particular (Barillet et al. 2006: 8).

German tangible cultural heritage, therefore, refers to physical artefacts produced, maintained and transmitted intergenerationally in Cameroon. It includes artistic creations, built heritage such as buildings and

monuments, and other physical or tangible products of human creativity that are invested with cultural significance in Cameroon; while German intangible cultural heritage in Cameroon, is manifested *inter alia* in the following domains: (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (b) performing arts; (c) social practices, rituals and festive events; (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and (e) traditional craftsmanship. The preservation of this German cultural heritage will only be possible through the collaborative efforts of Cameroon and German governments, local communities, and the citizenry, who have the capacity to identify their own heritage.

Background

In order to create the necessary basis of background information, a short historic overview of the colonial past in Cameroon is necessary. The modern nation of Cameroon is an artificial construction with legacies of colonial cultural heritage. It unites four major ecological areas (coastal lowland, tropical highland, tropical plateau, and arid savanna), three major religious traditions (Islam, Christianity and Animism) and hundreds of ethnic and linguistic groups that constitutes tangible and intangible heritage. The original creators of this mixture were the Germans, Cameroon's first colonizers (Lee et als., 2011).

The first German permanent settlement, a trading post, was established in 1868 in the present-day Douala area by a Hamburg based trading company called C. Woermann in its efforts to increase trade efforts with local tribes in the present-day Wouri River delta (Abramson, 1983: 11). This post served as the first major German heritage. In 1872 a second German trade company, Jantzen and Thormählen, established trading posts in Cameroon. Woermann, among other companies, was able to purchase extensive acreage from local chiefs in order to begin to erect systematic plantation operations (Washausen, 1968: 9). Up to five factories and a few smaller processing factories got erected by 1884. When the Germans annexed Cameroon on 12 July 1884, the hitherto strong, well organized and sovereign ethnic groups were bundled together and brought under strict German administration. On 14 July 1884, all of present-day Cameroon and parts of several of its present-day neighbours became a German "colony", with Buea as its capital. In the years that followed several expeditions from the coast into the hinterland of Cameroon were undertaken and posts such as Yaounde, Edea and Balinga were founded (Dze-Ngwa, 2015).

On 26 September 1900, the official foundation of the *KamerunerEisenbahnsyndikat* –the Cameroon Railway foundation was undertaken. Substantial investments were undertaken in the infrastructure of the newly formed colony, such as roads and extensive railways. Those railways included two rail lines from the port city of Douala, with one being 160 kilometres to the Manenguba Mountains in order to bring agricultural products to the markets. This route was officially brought on stream on 25 May 1911. Also, 300 kilometres mainline to Makak on the Nyong River was later extended to the present-day Yaoundé (Lee et als., 2011).

The German Colonial administration in the country lasted for thirty-two years, 1884-1916, after which it was defeated and ousted from the territory following the outbreak of the First World War. Clashing views and bitter rivalries among European powers resulted to the First World War which spread into their colonies. Many of the colonies fought alongside their "masters (Dze-Ngwa, 2015)." This was the case of Cameroonians who either fought for the German army to defend the German colonial masters from invasion or fought alongside the British or French forces to oust the Germans from Cameroon. The War in Cameroon lasted from 1914 to 1916 and the joint Anglo-French forces defeated and ousted the Germans from the territory. Elango (1987) further emphasized that, within this period, the Anglo-French forces attempted a joint administration (condominium) that was not very effective. The result was the Anglo-French Partition of German Kamerun on 4 March 1916.

Through the League of Nations agreements, the British and French spheres of Cameroon were administered separately under British and French colonial legacies respectively. On 1 January 1960, the French sphere achieved independence and became known as the Republic of Cameroon (Kale, 1969). On 1 October 1961, part of the British sphere of Cameroon, the British Southern Cameroons, officially achieved independence by reunifying with the Republic of Cameroon. Re-union of the two Cameroons was renamed, the Federal Republic of Cameroon under the two governments of West and East Cameroon (Dze-Ngwa, 2015). Political evolution moved the name of the country to the United Republic from May 1972 to March 1984. Since March 1984, the country was again renamed, the Republic of Cameroon. These political developments and the renewed interest on the part of Germany and post-independence government of Cameroon has contributed in safeguarding German cultural heritage in postcolonial Cameroon.

Identification and Uses of German Cultural Heritage

Cameroonians have always had the need to refer to their history in order to ensure the continuity of a common identity that evolves over time. As seen above, heritage is a collective property which tells the history of a people, a city, or a territory, and is transmitted from one generation to the next. Heritage makes it possible for the present generations to understand their place in history and to better cope with the constant mutations in

a rapidly changing world. By preserving German cultural heritage, Cameroon has been able to work towards the recovery of a collective memory and identity, and through this collective effort, create social cohesion. Different categories of German cultural heritage exist in Cameroon and are currently used for different purposes in post-independence Cameroon.

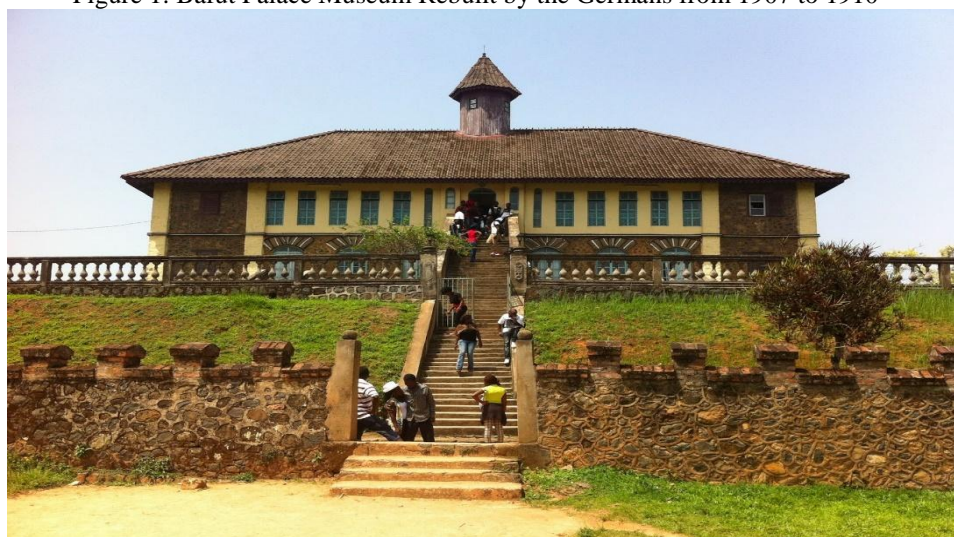
The reflection, based on historiography, sources of various archives and observation, would permit us to identify and present German colonial heritage in Bamenda, Buea and Douala as cultural heritage of experimentation, symbol of the power of colonial domination, tourism, and historical memories. These three towns are epicenters of all German cultural heritage in Cameroon.

a) Bafut Palace Museum

Bafut Palace is located in the heart of the Bafut fiefdom in the North West Region of Cameroon. The Palace has been the fulcrum of political power for over 400 years, and is still a center for religious rites and traditional ceremonies, headed by His Majesty Abumbi II. Included on UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites in 2006, Bafut Palace is one of the most significant cultural heritage sites in Cameroon (Ndi, 2020).

In addition to the Bafut Palace Museum, the Palace comprises over 50 buildings arranged around a shrine, which are used by the *Fon*, his wives, and the royal court. The Achum Shrine is the spiritual core of the palace and houses important fetishes. Built of wood and bamboo, and covered with thatch, the shrine is an impressive example of traditional religious architecture (Ministry of Arts and Culture, 2017). The entire site is surrounded by a sacred forest. From 1895 to 1900, Bafut resisted German colonisation, but after a long period of war, the Germans finally defeated Bafut and burnt down the complex and the central shrine in 1907. The Palace was rebuilt by the Germans between 1907 and 1910, and its buildings represent both colonial influences and indigenous vernacular architectural styles (see figure 1). The guest house built during the German colonial administration is now a museum open to the public, displaying lots of objects representative of the Bafut traditions. The Bafut palace museum is compartmentalized and includes peculiar sections such as the queen's mother room, the German Bafut war room, slave trade room, royal animals, ancient musicians and traditional dance instruments (Kimengsi&Ambe, 2018). The Bafut palace is home to a fascinating array of German and traditional architectural styles.

Figure 1: Bafut Palace Museum Rebuilt by the Germans from 1907 to 1910



Source: Photo by Authors, 24 March 2019.

b) The German Fort at Upstation Bamenda

The building of the historic German Fort at upstation Bamenda started in 1902 under Captain Glauning, but was interrupted by his death in 1908. The construction of the Fort was resumed by Captain Adamez in 1912 and completed in 1913 (Tamajong, 1999). The solid, thick, red brick walls and the small guard windows are reminders of the military conception of German Fort at the time. The German Fort succeeded the German Station established by the Germans at Bali by Dr Eugene Zintgraff in 1889, which was later abandoned in 1893 (Chilver&Kaberry, 1965). Simon C. Tamajong describes the location of the Bamenda Fort. He states that:

Externally to the Fort, on the north side, just on the escarpment was the military command office, now the residence of the Governor of the North West Province. The Presidential Palace now stands on the sites

formerly occupied by the German Officers' Quarters and Mess. The present offices of the Provincial Delegation for National Security now stand on the site of the former Bamenda Post Office. On the north side of the Fort are the very recent house of the Senior Divisional Officer Mezam and the present Military Command Offices. One of the oldest German buildings on the Bamenda Government Station is today called the Bamenda Club 58. It has been modified to the present form. The Bamenda cemetery is located on the spur, on the left side of the road from the Fort to Bamenda Urban Town, containing the grave of Captain Glauning who died on 5 March 1908. This is the former European Cemetery, one of the scheduled monuments of Cameroon (Tamajong,1999).

The German Fort is surrounded by a fascinating array of German architectural styles. This description has undergone modification today. The German Fort now host the offices of the Senior Divisional Officer and the Divisional Officer of Mezam Division inside the second quadrangle of the Fort. The brick-built Fort, was in reality a military camp with very high protective walls of more than three metres surrounding it (see figure 2). In 1909, the clay suitable for brick-making was discovered by two German sergeants (Rickless and Jutersonke) under Captain Adametz predecessor, Captain Menzel. Kilns for baking the clay were set up at the foot of the escarpment. Several changes have been carried out in the Fort so as to give it a modern appearance with German imprints (Fombe, 1983).The Old German Fort is a living monument and must be preserved less from neglect than from the wear and tear of enthusiastic use (Chilver&Kaberry, 1965).

Figure 2: Old German Fort Bamenda Constructed from 1902 to 1913



Source: Photo by Authors, 13 January 2018.

c) The Bismarck Fountain Buea

The Bismarck Fountain was built in 1904. The monument of the German patriarch, Otto von Bismarck, one-time Chancellor, lying at this crossroad, is adequate reminder of German stay in Buea. According to Traces of War (2020), only a partial view of his face is revealed on the coloured edifice (see figure 3). This memorial commemorates Otto von Bismarck (1 April 1815 – 30 July 1898). He was one of the most prominent European statesmen of the nineteenth century. He served as Prime Minister of Prussia from 1862 to 1890 and was involved in three wars including the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). He used the Franco-Prussian War to engineer the Unification of Germany. Thereafter, he served as the first Chancellor of the German Empire from 1871 to 1890. The designer is unknown, but the fountain resembles a similar memorial to Bismarck at Atakpame in Togoland. Bismarck initiated the policy of colonial annexations (including that of Cameroon) in 1884. In 1847 he married Johanne von Puttkamer, a kinswoman of the future Governor of Kamerun.

Figure 3: The Bismarck Fountain Buea Built in 1904



Source: Photo by Authors, 25 March 2020.

The memorial is located in Buea in Cameroon, behind the Cameroon's Reunification Monument at the foot of Mount Cameroon. In 2010, the Cameroon Tribune points to the depreciating nature of the Bismarck Fountain in Buea. It states that:

The Bismarck Fountain, from where water used to flow, served as a popular meeting spot for Buea inhabitants. People, young and old, used to fetch and drink water oozing from a small pipe just below the Chancellor's image. But for a long time now, it is referred to as a 'dry' fountain, because of no water. It had also taken a depreciating look and had moved to an advanced stage of dilapidation due to neglect. Elephant stalks, grasses metres tall, moss plant, litter, etc, had taken advantage of the situation. Apart from the old block fence that serves as barrier, one would hardly even notice anything significant within the areas (Cameroon Tribune, 2015).

d) The Prime Minister's Lodge Buea

The Prime Minister's Lodge is a historical monument built in 1902 by the Bakweri people under forced labour. The house is said to be a copy of one of Kaiser's (a German king) hunting lodge in Germany. Drawn from historical antecedents, the story begins when the German government launched a military expedition to occupy all the areas around Mount Cameroon due to the fertile soil. They invaded the jurisdiction of the then chief of Mount Fako, Chief Kuva Likenye (Chilver & Kaberry, 1965). By 1895, Chief Endeley signed a brutal peace treaty, imposing on, and obliging the Bakweri people to pay war indemnities in land, livestock, and men. These men were then forced to build the palace of the late German Governor, Jesko Von Puttkamer. This building later became the Prime Minister's Lodge and for the first time, hosted the Presidential couple on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of Cameroon's Reunification in Buea (see figure 4). Today, it remains a living symbol of the relentless efforts put in place by the Bakweri to be free from German colonial rule. It is full of history and serves as a great haven for historical tourists and researchers (Abam, 2019).

Figure 4: Prime Minister's Lodge Buea Built in 1902



Source: Photo by Authors, 20 February 2014.

The Gothic architectural style clearly visible on this structure is arguably the most conspicuous aspect of Western ethos imposed by the Germans on built space in Cameroon. This architectural style, as exemplified by the Governor's residence, is rendered conspicuous by steeples or tall towers mounted on roof tops, arched windows of clear and occasionally stained glass, corrugated tile roofs, and thick walls.

e) German Government Headquarters in Douala

The old German government headquarters situated in Douala is a building constructed in 1891 by the Germans in a classical Prussian style. Between 1891 and 1901, the building hosted the first German administrative headquarters in Cameroon (Ousmanou, 2019). The headquarters were then transferred to Buea, and then back to Douala in 1908 following the eruption of Mount Cameroon. During the French Mandate, the capital was moved to Yaounde, with the decree of 1 March 1921 and the High Commissioner Delegate occupied the building. Pasarge (2010) adds that, the building currently hosts Douala 1st district *sous-préfecture* (see figure 5). The building that symbolize the European domination and power is covered with a sheet metal roof. Its structure is similar to most of the buildings of German royalties in its European and African territories. According to J. Houvounsadi, the Germans imported modern building material from Hamburg. He states that:

... la majorité du bâti était constituée de petites maisons en torchis et toitures végétales comme le montrent les photographies anciennes. Soucieux de s'inscrire dans la durée, ils (Germans) élèvent pendant la première quinzaine d'années, des édifices en utilisant des matériaux importés de Hambourg, bois, briques et ciment, structures métalliques pour le gros œuvre, tôles et tuiles pour les toitures (Houvounsadi, 2011).

Figure 5: German Government Headquarters in Douala Built in 1891



Source: Photo by Authors, 7 September 2019.

f) Dr Gustav Nachtigal Monument in Douala

Gustav Nachtigal was a German explorer who arrived Cameroon in July 1884 with the main objective of annexing the coast of Douala. He was born on 23 February at Eichstedt, Landkreis Stendal, Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany and on a return voyage to Germany, he died on 20 April 1885 at the age of 51 at sea aboard the gunboat SMS Mowe off Cape Palmas, Liberia (Britannica, 2020). Before his death, he served as the German Empire's consul-general for Tunisia and Commissioner for West Africa that resulted in Togoland and Kamerun becoming the first colonies of a German colonial empire. Initially interred at Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast, in 1888, his remains were exhumed and reburied in a ceremonial grave at Douala in front of the Cameroon colonial government building (see figure 6). The Gustav-Nachtigal-Medal, awarded by the Berlin Geographical Society, is named after him. A monument to his honor resides in Stendal, Germany (Bjornstad, 2017).

Figure 6: Gustav Nachtigal Ceremonial Grave Built in 1896 at Douala



Source: Photo by Authors, 5 August 2014.

German colonial heritage and remains in Bamenda, Buea and Douala are first and foremost, testimonies of history. It should be emphasized that in the African context, beyond written sources, the restitution of history is relied on oral, iconographic and material evidence among others. Nevertheless, German cultural heritage in Cameroon bear important testimonies of the colonial past, but also symbolize collective memories of German legacy in post-independence Cameroon. These cultural heritage and institutions have survived in post-independence Cameroon due to certain factors mitigating in their favour.

Efforts made to Protect and Safeguard German Cultural Heritage

Protecting and Safeguarding cultural heritage is a core responsibility of our society, with stakeholders having primary responsibility, regardless of whether they are private individuals, institutions or the state. German cultural heritage and resources are considered important not only for what they tell us about the past, but also as a testimony to the continuity of old traditions in present-day culture and for providing implicit evidence of their sustainability. This has mitigated in favour of its survival in post-independence Cameroon. The following measures have been put in place to protect and safeguard German cultural heritage in postcolonial Cameroon.

a) Efforts by Cameroon's Government

The Government of Cameroon has put in place a system and mechanisms for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage through the Ministry of Arts and Culture in accordance with the legal framework, principles and international standards, as well as on the basis of sustainable economic, social and cultural development. However, Cameroon lacks laws or legal framework guiding heritage protection. In the Heritage at Risk report of 2001/2002, ICOMOS Cameroon states that:

This year, we wish to attract the attention of the international community to the lack of a substantial legislative, administrative and institutional frame to protect the cultural heritage of Cameroon. This could lead to the disappearance of the rich heritage that Cameroon currently hosts in abundance. As surprising as it would seem... no law exists to provide a legislative framework that prescribes the protection of cultural heritage. This has immediate consequences: the absence of a definition for the types of cultural heritage to be protected, and

the spread of administrative responsibilities across the Ministries of Culture, Habitat and Urbanism, of the City, of Tourism, of Environment and Forestry, and of Town and Country Planning (Mohaman&Eloundou, 2002). This affirmation is questionable and does not reflect the reality as affirmed by Christophe MbidaMindzie, Director of the Cultural Heritage Department in Cameroon's Ministry of Arts and Culture. He argues that, "just like the Kom people, the majority of villagers protect their heritage assisted by an annual amount of about \$195,000 from the state for rehabilitation, maintenance and preservation purposes." In April 2013, the government enacted laws that would protect cultural heritage from extinction, while the same year, a new program was introduced in Cameroon's annual budget for conservation of cultural heritage (Mbom, 2018). However, Cameroon has ratified several international conventions. These conventions have obliged the Cameroon Government through the Ministry of Arts and Culture to protect German cultural heritage.¹ In 1982 Cameroon ratified the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This legal international instrument and others commit the country to ensure the identification, the protection, the preservation, the development for future generations of the cultural and natural heritage.

b) Efforts by the Ministry of Arts and Culture

The Ministry of Arts and Culture has demonstrated the national will to create real conditions to prevent the degradation of colonial heritage, and to avoid the disappearance of the principal cultural and natural heritage properties in Cameroon. In July 2003, Cameroon's Directorate of Cultural Heritage launched a Cultural Heritage pre-inventory project, with the financial and technical assistance of the Africa 2009 Programme partners (Barillet et als. 2006). During the pilot phase, inventory related activities were undertaken in some regions on German and other heritage, as a result of which a first version of the inventory form was created. In July 2004, a National seminar organized for the representatives of the ten Regional Delegations of Culture took place. This seminar transformed the Inventory project into a National venture. Based on the work undertaken by the Regional Delegations who were in charge of identifying and locating the Immovable Cultural Heritage, a mission covering the National territory was organised, and as a result a preliminary-inventory was produced, containing basic information for all major colonial Cultural Heritage sites and monuments in the country. The Ministry of Arts and Culture has also produced a register of 368 cultural festivals in Cameroon. These are characterized by indigenous and colonial music and dance that are integral parts of intangible cultural heritage in Cameroon (Mbom, 2018).

c) Efforts by the German Government

The preservation and restoration of cultural heritage has always been a priority for the German Government. In Germany, cultural heritage conservation is primarily the task of the states (*Länder*). The sixteen states are responsible for enacting and enforcing the cultural heritage laws and thus for the key legal basis for preserving the architectural and archaeological cultural heritage in Germany (Heritage European Network, 2010). At the federal and international levels, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media represents the interests of cultural heritage wherever matters of national significance are concerned. In addition, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, which is responsible for urban design issues and energy efficiency of buildings, for example, also represents the interests of cultural heritage. The relevant bodies of the standing conference of state ministers responsible for cultural affairs in the Federal Republic of Germany also perform coordinating functions, despite challenges.² Efforts by the German Government to cooperate with its former colonial territories to restore its former colonial heritage has been influenced by its engagement with UNESCO and the Council of Europe standards for cultural heritage.³

¹ UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 2012; Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris, 17 October 2003; Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Paris, 16 November 1972; Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris, 14 November 1970; Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 14 May 1954; Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention, The Hague, 14 May 1954.

² Dealing with post-war architecture; protecting world cultural heritage sites in Germany; preserving and protecting archaeological sites against clandestine excavation and commercial use; finding appropriate new uses for religious buildings no longer needed for worship; finding appropriate new uses for witnesses to industrial culture; managing the growing number of protected buildings which are vacant due to demographic change; especially in regions where the population is shrinking; and retrofitting protected buildings to improve their energy efficiency.

³ Germany has ratified the Granada Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 3 October 1985). Many of the goals of this convention have had a decisive impact on cultural

The Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media in Germany has set up institutions in its former colonies to finance and manage its former cultural heritage in collaboration with the government of the host countries. The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institution, operational worldwide. In Cameroon, it promotes the study of Germany abroad, encourages international cultural exchange, fosters knowledge about Germany by providing information on its culture, society, and politics, and above all, protects and safeguards German cultural tangible and intangible heritage (Goethe-Institut, 2019).

In addition to German tangible heritage preserved, restored, conserved and safeguarded by the German Government during and after the colonial period, there is renewed interest by the Federal Republic of Germany to revamp intangible German cultural heritage in Cameroon. In 2019, the Director of Goethe-Institut Kamerun, Fabian Mühlthaler states that:

With a considerable delay, Germany finally increases its efforts to confront its role as a former colonial power. For a long time, it was as if a certain form of amnesia had come over the German society ... it is only now that the debates on how artefacts from colonial contexts can be restituted from German museums make it to the front pages of newspapers, artists reflect on German colonial history and the German public is being made aware of how deep the cultural legacy of the German colonial period is until today as well as in Germany as in the formerly colonized countries. From 9 to 16 November 2019 in Yaounde, we appreciated remnants of German intangible heritage artworks from Burundi, Cameroon, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo and from the African diaspora in Germany (Goethe-Institut, 2019).

This portrays Germany's effort to protect its intangible cultural heritage. Recently, many artworks show have been organised, sponsored by the Goethe-Institut Kamerun to portray how varied the reflections of artists are on colonialism in general and on German colonialism in particular. With an ambitious programme of theatre, music, poetry, visual arts, performance, films and literature, more than 100 artists from former German African countries participated to remember, mourn, resist, reclaim and reinvent German intangible heritage.

In addition, the German Development Bank has funded several projects in Cameroon on UNESCO listed World Heritage. For example, on Thursday 8 October 2015, Samuel Eben Ebai, the Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife for the South West Region drilled seventeen German nationals who are all Country Directors for West and Central Africa of the German Development Bank on the sustainable effort to conserve the Mount Cameroon Park and other parks in the Region. The projects, funded by the German Development Bank, were closely coordinated by the Programme for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the South West Region (Efande, 2020).

d) Efforts by UNESCO

Cameroon has ratified several UNESCO conventions. This has enabled the country to benefit from UNESCO funding on heritage sites in Cameroon. UNESCO Center⁴ works to achieve this objective by strengthening the ability of Cameroon to prevent, mitigate and recover the loss of cultural heritage and diversity in emergencies and by advocating for the incorporation of the protection of culture into humanitarian action, security strategies and peace-building processes, by harnessing the potential of culture to strengthen resilience and support recovery.

The UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund (UNESCO, 2020) is a multi-donor and non-earmarked funding mechanism established in 2015, to enable the Organization to respond quickly and effectively to crises resulting from armed conflicts and disasters caused by natural and human-made hazards all over the world. Recently, A joint team from the Ministry of Arts and Culture in Cameroon and the UNESCO Regional Office in Central Africa carried out an emergency assessment in Cameroon in view of urgent interventions at cultural

heritage policy in Germany; Germany ratified the *La Valetta Convention* for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (Malta, 16 January 1992) in 2003. The Federal Act on the Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe of 16 January 1992 (Convention of La Valetta) requires the German authorities and courts to abide by the provisions of this convention as binding international and federal law; and Germany has not ratified the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 20 October 2000).

⁴Established in 1992, the World Heritage Centre is the focal point and coordinator within UNESCO for all matters relating to World Heritage. Ensuring the day-to-day management of the Convention, the Centre organizes the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee, provides advice to States Parties in the preparation of site nominations, organizes international assistance from the World Heritage Fund upon request, and coordinates both the reporting on the condition of sites and the emergency action undertaken when a site is threatened. The Centre also organizes technical seminars and workshops, updates the World Heritage List and database, develops teaching materials to raise awareness among young people of the need for heritage preservation, and keeps the public informed of World Heritage issues.

heritage sites, museums, architectures, buildings and collections at risk.⁵In addition to enhancing understanding of cultural and natural heritage, the Cameroon-UNESCO Cooperation agreement encourages the integration of the preservation of heritage in urban and territorial development projects, and ensures the inclusion of a social element to heritage conservation. Today, there exist several UNESCO cultural sites in Cameroon, including the Bafut Palace Museum reconstructed by the Germans in Cameroon.

II. Conclusion

From the above analyses, it can be concluded that German cultural Heritage in Cameroon is notably rich and classified into two main categories. The first category, tangible German cultural heritage, presents itself in a material form and includes archaeology, art, movable objects, architecture and landscape. The study has highlighted the uses and importance of German tangible cultural heritage in Bamenda, Buea and Douala in Cameroon, with emphasis on the Bafut Palace Museum, the German Fort at Upstation Bamenda, the Bismarck Fountain Buea, the Prime Minister's Lodge Buea, the German government Headquarters in Douala, and Gustav Nachtigal Monument in Douala. The second category, which is intangible German cultural heritage is not visible to the eye such as language, tradition, custom, music, dance, etc. This category designates the cultural wealth of Cameroon, which is complex and should be carefully preserved, for it is even more vulnerable than material heritage, as it is in danger of disappearing with its traditional custodians. Efforts by the Governments of Cameroon and Germany, UNESCO, the Ministry of Arts and Culture and other institutions and stakeholders have mitigated in favour of its survival in post-independence Cameroon. However, the study recommends that, post-independence government of Cameroon should improve its effort of restoring and protecting German cultural heritage by enacting laws guiding cultural heritage in Cameroon, implementing UNESCO Acts and other international conventions on cultural heritage, creating a department of German Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Arts and Culture, strengthening innovative partnerships with Germany, and raising awareness at the local and national levels through workshop and training activities on efficient techniques for safeguarding and preserving cultural heritage resources in Cameroon.

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⁵This field assessment falls within the pilot project "Emergency assessment and urgent interventions at cultural heritage sites, museums and collections at risk in the North-West, South-West and Far North regions of Cameroon", funded by the UNESCO's Heritage Emergency Fund.

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