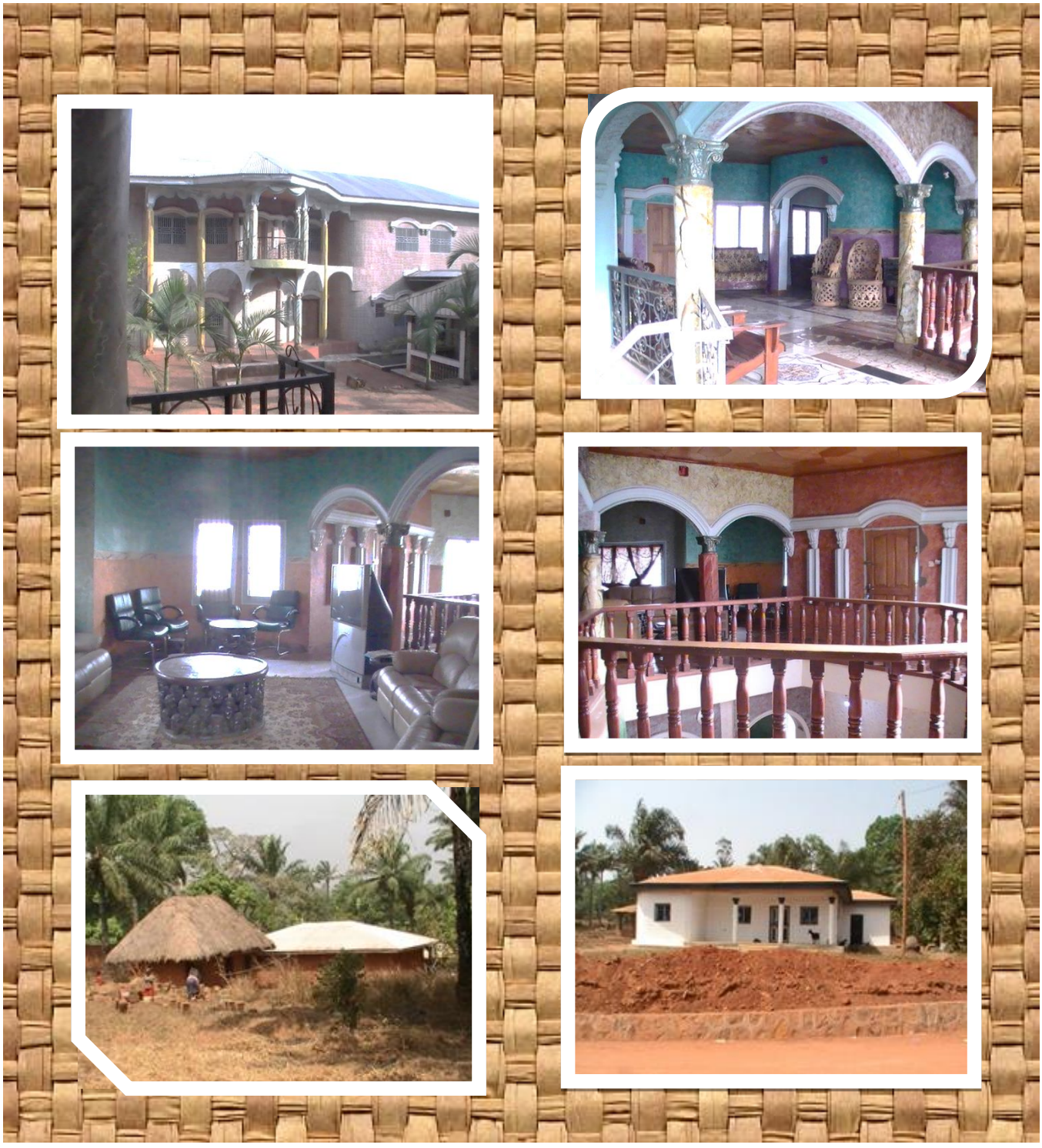
The story of houses in the grassfields: mobility, belonging and hierarchies in urbanising North-West Cameroon

Tegomoh Ngwaelung, E.

Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

The Story of Houses in the Grassfields:
Mobility, Belonging and Hierarchies in urbanising North-West Cameroon

Evelyne N. Tegomoh



The Story of Houses in the Grassfields:

Mobility, belonging and Hierarchies in urbanizing North-West Cameroon

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van de rector magnificus prof. dr. ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op woensdag 11 mei 2022
klokke 09.15 uur

door

Tegomoh N. Evelyne

geboren te Mankon
op 13 september 1972

Promotor: Prof. dr. Mirjam E. de Bruijn
Copromotor: Dr. Walter Gam Nkwi

Promotiecommissie:
Prof. dr. Paul Hebinck (Wageningen University)

Prof. dr. Marlou M.L.J.C. Schrover

Prof. dr. Maarten Mous

Dr. Annachiara Raia

Table of Contents

List of Figures ..... **IX-XI**

Acknowledgments ..... **XII**

Abstract ..... **XIII-XV**

Short Summary of the Thesis ..... **XVI-XVII**

List of Abbreviations ..... **XVIII**

Figure 1.1: Moh Tanghongho's Compound 1

Figure 1.2: A compound with traditional thatched roofs and mud bricks 1

1. General Introduction **2-13**

1.1 Yoyo's House 2

1.2 Research Problem: The Story of Houses in the Grassfields 3

1.3 Relating the concepts of material culture, mobility, and (r)urbanisation 3

1.3.1 Material Culture – The Visual System 3-5

1.3.2 Mobility 5-7

1.3.3 Bushfalling and Mobility: confronting the discourses 7-8

1.4 (R)urbanisation 8-11

1.5 Structure of Thesis 11-13

2. Methodologies **14-23**

2.1 Introduction 14

2.2 Multi-Sited and Connectivity Methods 14-16

2.3 Visual Research Method 16-18

2.3.1Photography 18-20

2.3.2 Documentary Film Videography 20-21

2.4 Biographies/Life Histories and Social Change 21

2.5 Ethnography of the Present: Interviews, Participation and Observation 21-23

2.6 Conclusion 23

3. The Papiakum People in the Bamenda Grassfields Connections **24-41**

3.1 Introduction 24

3.2 Location and History of the Papiakum People 24-29

3.3 The Socio-Political Economy of the Papiakum People 29-31

3.4 Pulling the Tikar Strings 31-33

3.5 Succession Process 34-35

3.6 Papiakum in Trade and Trade Routes in the Grassfields 35-37

3.7 Education 37-38

3.7.1 University/Professional Training 38

3.8 'Greener Pastures' 38-39

3.9 Conclusion 39-41
Figure 3.7: Mami Magdalene Fanwi's home at Mbanka Quarter Baba I.……40

4. Access to Land and Conflicts..... 42-65
4.1 Introduction 42-43
4.2 The Land Tenure System in Cameroon 43-45
4.3 Land Tenure System in Baba I 45-46
4.4 The Dynamics of Accessing Land in Baba I 46-47
4.5 Structural and Relational Access Mechanisms 47-50
4.6 Access to Labour and Labour Opportunities 50-52
4.7 Right-Based Access 52-53
4.8 Land Conflicts in Baba I..... 53-54
4.8.1 The Sale of Land by Unlawful Owners..... 54-57
4.8.2 Conflicts over Commonly Owned Land 57-58
4.8.3 Dispossession of Widows by In-Laws 58-59
4.8.4 Conflicts over Grazing Land 59-61
4.8.5 Multiple Sale of Land.....61
4.8.6 Public Infrastructure Conflicts 61-62
4.8.7 Contested Administrative Procedures 62-63
4.8.8 Inter Community Disputes..... 63-64
4.9 Conclusion..... 64-65
5. Mobility as Vector in Attesting Belonging 66-93
5.1 Introduction 66-68
5.2 Mobility From and in Baba I..... 68-75
5.3 'Sons and Daughters' of Baba I 75-77
5.4 Connections in Belonging 77-79
5.5 Merging Rural and Urban Social Categories: Neo-Traditional Titles 79-82
5.6 Urban Papia: The Formation of an Elite Association, BADECA 82-85
5.7 Gaining and/or Maintaining Identity..... 85-90
5.8 Losing and/or Loss of Identity..... 90-92
5.9 Conclusion..... 92-93
6. Architectural Landscape and Infrastructure: Biographies of Material Culture94-139
6.1 Introduction 94
6.2 Things and their Relation to People 94-99

6.3 Meaning of Ndap (House) Amongst the Papiakum People 99-101
6.4 Migrants and the Changing Architectural Landscape 102-119
6.5 Community and Public Infrastructure 119-125
6.6 Home Investments and 'Ram', Witchcraft 125-130
6.7 Getting into one of the Houses 130-133
6.8 Investments and Power 133-138
6.9 Conclusion 138-139
7. The Film **140-149**
7.1 Introduction 140
7.2 Methodology cum Film Production 140-143
7.3 Narrative of the Film 144-145
7.4 Discussion 145-147
7.4.1 Significance 148-149
8. Conclusion: Material Culture as a Lens to Socio-Political Change **150-159**
References 160-174
Appendix 175-181

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Moh Tanghongho's Compound 1

Figure 1.2: A compound with traditional thatched roofs and mud bricks 1

Figure 2.1: Pictures of some structures from different quarters 16-17

Figure 3.1: Map of Cameroon situating the region, the division and subdivision within which Baba I is located 25

Figure 3.4: Different farmlands located on the landscape 26

Figure 3.5: Cattle in paddock at Mbaghangha, one of the most busy farm areas 27

Figure 3.6: Showing off of guns while dancing, an attestation of belonging to a social class, during Fue Kemshi's 25th anniversary of ascension to the throne 33

Figure 3.7: Mami Magdalene Fanwi's home at Mbanka Quarter Baba I 40

Figure 4.1: The lone fenced house before 2014 in Baba I while this is a common sight in the urban centres as one of the visible signs of secured environment. 48

Figure 4.2: Farm to Market roads 49

Figure 4.3: Granary at Meya Quarter 49

Figure 4.4: Farmland in Meya and Mbaghangha 51

Figure 4.5: Sales signpost at Mile 2 Nkwen 54

Figure 4.6: Sales signpost at Veterinary Junction, Bamenda 55

Figure 4.7: Christian's project at Mechacha Quarter 56

Figure 4.8: Graveside on a disputed piece of land 58

Figure 4.9: Sabiatou's home at Mbakwa Quarter Babe I, (from Thatch to Zinc Roof a sign of great achievement) 59

Figure 4.10: Animals in Farmland, Mbaghangha Quarter 60

Figure 4.11: Houses and Farms affected by road construction works 61

Figure 4.12: A Cross Section of the grounds of government High School, Vemngang, that witnessed resistance from some of its former occupants during the acquisition process 62

Figure 4.13: St. Mark's Primary School, Church and Presbytery, Kengang Quarter 63

Figure 5.1: Conferment of Traditional Titles 81

Figure 5.2: An example of a grave beside the house that serves a symbolic art space and a symbolic signifier of attestation of belonging 88

Figure 6.1: Pictures of some storey buildings from different quarters 95

Figure 6.2: Gradual process of changing architectural landscape in a compound, Mbakwat Quarter 96

Figure 6.3: Yakubu & Wife on his rice field harvesting at Mbaghangha Quarter 97

Figure 6.4: Yakubu's House at Mbaghangha Quarter 98

Figure 6.5: 'Big Mami' Mallama at her residence in Quabessi Quarter 100-101

Figure 6.6: Illustration of how Compounds with several units eventually run out of space for all the offspring.....103

Figure 6.7: A view of settlement units in different quarters.....103

Figure 6.8: An illustration of how most of these houses are constructed now and then plastered with cement before painting or tiling 105-106

Figure 6.9: Herdsman would bring the animals to Trueyeh, the palace arena, for the Fon to inspect and give them salt especially if he had not gone to check on them for a while 106

Figure 6.10: Thatched houses besides houses roofed with aluminium sheets.....107

Figure 6.11: Nda Tarsah or Nda Who (Stone House) at the palace 108

Figure 6.12: New Guest House replacing demolished Nda Tarsah.....108

Figure 6.13: Last standing Stone building at the Market Square, Meya Quarter 109

Figure 6.14: Collage of pictures from author's collection showing the evolvement of houses 111-112

Figure 6.15: Cross view of the Dinning and Sitting Places in Tamfok (Fon's resting quarter at the Ntoh).....114

Figure 6.16: Cross view of the upper parlour in the Guest House at the Ntoh.....114

Figure 6.17: Cross view of Yoyo's residence under construction showing built in decorative water fonts and his former resident adjacent to the storey building, Mbanka.....115

Figure 6.18: Cross view of Yoyo's residence showing a paved walk way lined with decorative tree plants brought in from the South West Region of the country, Mbanka 115

Figure 6.19: One of the awards from the urbanites in form of a portrait painting hanging as a decorative piece in Nda Tarsah.....117

Figure 6.20: The entrance to Moh Tanghongho's compound apparently busy as they are home celebrating Christmas with the rest of the family.....118

Figure 6.21: Moh Tanghongho's house adjacent to David's (his younger brother) in their Compound at Mboghombam.....118

Figure 6.22: Water Tank at Fessame, Vemngang Quarter 121

Figure 6.23: St. Monica's Catholic Health Centre Baba I, Meya 122

Figure 6.24: Catholic Primary School, Kengang.....123

Figure 6.25: Building Hosting GSS Kunweh in Kengang when it was created until 2012 when the school moved to its site.....123

Figure 6.26: Palace Farm House now hosting the Government Primary School at Mbaghangha 124

Figure 6.27: The Holy City Hostel for students lodging at Meya 124

Figure 6.28: Apartments for rent along the Ring Road at Meya 125

Figure 6.29: Thaddeus' house at Mechachaa far cry from his residences in Bamenda and Douala 129

Figure 6.30: Yoyo's residence at Mbanka Quarter.....130

Figure 6.31: Rear view of Yoyo's residence showing externa facilitiesat Mbanka Quarter131

Figure 6.32: Piles of dug up and cracked stones at Mbanka during the construction of Yoyo's new residence tapped as an available natural resource..... 131-132

Figure 6.33: Setting up a foundation with stones and mud bricks at Mbanka by one of the builders from Bamenda who has finally gained residence in Baba I 132

Figure 6.34: MTN antennae at Mboghombam from which Orange and Nexttel telecom networks have been able to make their connections 133

Figure 6.35: The Fon's private quarters in the palace at Vemngang.....134

Figure 6.36: Palace Guest House having six rooms each with its toilet facilities and two sitting rooms (ground and first floor) 135

Figure 6.37: Front view of the Palace at Vemngang 135

Figure 6.38: The Fon (middle first role) with some Urbanites at the Fon's private quarters in the palace at Vemngang. Access to this space was very limited before but now opens to visitors 136

Figure 6.39a-h: Fue kemshi IV conferring traditional titles during Mei'nyi, the most celebrated festival that pulls into the village most of the urbanites with some of their friends 137-138

Figure 8.1: Yoyo's well tailored compound..... 151-152

Acknowledgements

To complete this thesis, I benefitted from many research institutions and individuals who I want to thank here. There are so many others who encouraged me along the way but I cannot mention them all here because of lack of space. This study was carried out within the framework of the project Human Mobility, Networks and Institutions in the Management of Natural Resources funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Without this sponsorship I could not have done this study. I was part of the institutional collaboration between the University of Koln, Germany and the Afrika-Studiecentrum, (ASC) Leiden, The Netherland. These institutions provided me with the necessary logistics needed to facilitate my stay and pursue my research both in Europe and Cameroon.

I also acknowledge the research and modernisation grant given by the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP), Cameroon, which went a long way in the realisation of this thesis. I acknowledge the Director of Higher Teachers Technical Training College (HTTTC) and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Buea with collaborators who gave me leave of absence from time to time to complete this work.

The data collected for this thesis came mainly from interviews, library resources and archives. The ASC library was very resourceful, as were the archives of the National Archive in Buea. I could not have worked there without the assistance of the archivists and librarians who really facilitated my search.One of the most dynamic persons in the archives, Primus Forgwe passed on before the completion of this work. To him and his other colleagues I remain grateful. The most interesting groups of people to work with were the house-owners, who have been so kind to give me insight into their lives. Thanks for your permission to use your stories in this book! I also thank and appreciate all my research partners for the rich data collected and their hospitality. Here, I would wish to mention, especially, Fuekemshi IV for the warm welcome into the royal family. I am richer today because you gave me so much. Thanks ever so much for handing over Nathan and Bathsheba Melo Forchu from the day they were born to me as my children. By God's grace I will offer them the best gift ever, which is their education.

In a very special way, I would like to salute the efforts of my supervisors, Professors Mirjam De Bruijn and Walter Gam Nkwi. Thanks for believing in me that I could bring this through after my blackout experience in Leiden 2012 as I was struggling to pull the last strings together. Professor Cornelius Lambi, took time off his busy schedule to review the manuscript, Professor Fancis Nyamnjoh, sharpened some of my views in this work and Drs. Fonchingong and Akoko gave some insightful views at the initial stage of the work. All these were very instrumental. Thank you all.

To my colleagues of the Departments of Sociology and Anthropology/Tourism and Hospitality Management, family, parents, siblings and friends, especially Ita Nawom (who transcribed some the interviews and read through the manuscript), Clotilde Sirri, Valentine Niba, Jill Alpes and Christina Atekmangoh, who stood by me, I want to let you know I am very grateful.

For all the facts of interpretation and errors which would have eluded vigilance, I take personal responsibility.

Abstract

The central argument of this thesis is to establish the link between mobility, material culture and urbanisation in Africa with special focus on the urban elite of Baba I in the North West Region of Cameroon. The study lies within an intricate political system and topography. The thesis questions the effects of material culture on landscape transformation of the society through mobility. Over the past decades, the use and acquisition of land have changed greatly with increased geographical and social mobility. This has caused tremendous effects on the lives of people be it politically, economically and socially and above all in the dynamics of land acquisition and development. The changes on the landscapes are not only physically visible but also socio-culturally with the way people carry themselves around through their daily interactions. Thus, the thesis attempts to study these transformation processes in the form of an ethnography of mobility and belonging of the Papiakum people of Baba I. An extra contribution of this thesis is that it is the first to tell the story of the Papiakum who have been glossed over by the early colonial ethnographers and anthropologists of the North Western Grassfields of Cameroon. The research focused on a specific group: the urban dwellers of Baba I who are constructing at home. I tried to understand the meaning and importance of land and houses (home) within the Baba community in which these elites invest. The study of these changing infrastructural landscapes gave an insight into the socio-political and cultural settings and challenges as well as the role of the elite in development.. The construction of these houses and other infrastructure are an expression of this elite's belonging as required by Papiakum cultural tenets. Methods: Data were obtained mainly through the life histories of some research partners. Interviews were also used in addition to field observations. In order to enhance the understanding of this study, the use of photos served as ice breakers while the Participatory Learning Action (PLA) enabled the researcher to immerse herself into the community.

This thesis has been structured into seven chapters. Chapter One focuses on the general introduction of the conceptual framework of the study. Material Culture and Migration/Mobility are the main concepts that stand as the guide post through which the development of proceeding chapters will ensue to attain the objectives of the study. Chapter Two examines how I gained entry and went about collecting data and what I know about Baba I. It will further examine the methodology of data collection that were used as well as the photographs and films, other media through which societies are presented and represented; a deeper reflection on the film involving the process of production will be handled in chapter seven. The methodology chapter will be an independent and integral part of the thesis elaborating more on the reflexivity and subjectivity of the central problem. Chapter Three goes to situate and trace the history of the Papiakum people. This will unfold the basic ethnography of Baba I paving way to go into the materiality and changing socio-political landscape of the people. It also delves into the basic land tenure system of the Cameroon in general and Baba I in particular in Chapter Four. Houses are constructed and before you construct land is imperative. Land acquisition has not been static therefore the demand has been changing as migrants return to acquire it. Above all the chapter contributes to the relationship between the chapter and urbanisation thesis.

Chapter Five handles the core questions on mobility focusing on the literature on migration and mobility. History of mobility from and in Papiakum; relation to literatures on the Grassfields; elaborate on the dire need of most migrants to remain connected with those left behind in their various mobilities. By expanding on the meaning and use of material

culture, it illustrates how belonging is gained, maintained or lost amongst the Papiakum as identities are questioned to attest belonging especially by those living and working in various urban centres. Following the discussions in chapters three and four, Chapter Six examines the transformation process of the architectural landscape and infrastructure which is the crux of this study. Our discussions here bring out the meaning and significance of Nda (house) among the Papiakum and how the development of these Nda through mobility are changing the landscape thus ushering in the process of urbanisation. It further explores the central discussion of the thesis on material culture which is both tangible and intangible. The pith of the discussion here is on how through material culture we will gain insight into character and community structure which reveals emotional qualities. This involves examining utilitarian constructions, houses, to determine the values they embody among the Papiakum. Delving into these houses will inherently expose drives and aspirations in this class structured community bringing about transformations on the landscape through textual and visual forms.

Chapter Seven dwells on the summary and significance of the film; how it contributes in answering the central question of the thesis. The process of the production of the film will be elaborated which binds the visual systems of the Papiakum people. Chapter Eight serves as the concluding unit of this study. It is the synthesis of the conclusions of the various chapters showing how mobility in all its forms stands out as a key vector in the process of transforming landscape in the communities. This thesis has established that through mobility the actions/activities of those migrants who left for greener pastures are having implications on their lives and those of the others in the community. This is so because whatever project they are carrying out does not just look at the nuclear family but opens up to the whole community as their participation cannot be ignored be it in kind, cash or moral. The constructions (houses) do not only attest the maturity and belonging of its members but also creates new social classes with the type of houses built by the Papiakum people. Social hierarchies are created, reinforced or even lost with the coming of these changes brought in as a result of mobility. It has therefore made it very difficult for one not to participate or be involved in the rural community developmental projects as it is an expectation of the community. Participation forms the kernel of acceptance and belonging in the community which is visibly displayed during socio-cultural and political gatherings as portrayed in the film “THE PAPIAKUM PEOPLE”.

The cultural/material culture in Papiakum is not just housing. Through the house one shows his, her position in society. In that sense the Palace, where the Fon (king) lives with his wives and children is exemplary. It is the cultural seat of traditional government.The palace has been quite central in setting the pace for most of the things that happen in Papiakum. It has always stood out as the focal point for innovations and development. The expectation is that every new thing is brought in, made known and validated by the palace. The Fons have been the main drivers of this transformation and validity process. This is corroborated by Yoyo, one of my main informants, as he talks about the first stone and corrugated roof house in the palace as he grew up and the validation of the construction of houses by Moh Tanghongho, the Fon. The story of Moh Tanghongho father’s house being knocked down mysteriously because it was thought of being in competition with the palace demonstrates the importance of the approval for construction from the palace as they say ‘fog lah mbue nthi’ meaning wealth is not power. By this there is a constant reminder for the respect of socio-political hierarchy in the society.

The urban elites who built the houses are mainly businessmen and civil servants, who are the two main categories of persons found whose activities in the village helped shape the changing architectural landscape. The Fons, close collaborators and their carrier boys have been seen to have spearheaded the evolution of houses through their different trading routes and activities that exposed them to the consumption of foreign object (ostentatious goods).

On the Other hand with the coming of formal education, a new social category was created as Papiakum people interested in furthering their education were obliged to travel out of the village to places where these institutions were found. It should be noted that the first primary school came into being in 1947 and secondary school in 1982. Schooling brought in the next category of persons who aspired to be civil servants. Through their travels these persons experienced and brought back home new ideas for the enhancement of themselves and the society at large. A new class of people came out from these groups whom I will refer to here as 'bushfallers' or 'urbanites'. These are people who had or are resident in the urban centres of the country. They have not only concentrated in the construction of their private houses at home but have contributed a great deal in bringing urban amenities to the village which is seen as the urbanisation process of the rural area. These modern infrastructures are changing daily in the mobile urbanising world as people and ideas are constantly on the move leaving its impact on society.

Related to the building of houses, or changes in infrastructure is the access to land. Land apparently plays an important role in belonging, identity construction. Chapter four dwelled on the different access mechanisms, gender relations and conflicts calling to question the identity of persons. My study shows that identity is fluid as it is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated to bring forth complex gender relations. The construction of these infrastructure are ordered through the land tenure system which is experiencing some changes as new social classes are formed as well as the coming of urban amenities that need land. The access and acquisition process has moved from being handed down from father to son on family plots to the re-appropriation and purchase depending on the vision of the community or the entrepreneur's project. The concept of land being attributed to the male is being challenged with the increasing gender awareness and is called to question when it comes to access and acquisition. Women are a force to reckon with when it comes to land acquisition and construction of houses for their sons or as widows or lone child of the family.

This thesis challenges the notion that the quest for greener pastures, bushfalling, for personal enhancement can only be abroad. This research has gone contrary to this believe by exposing the fact that urbanites within the national territorial boundaries are championing the development of their communities. Baba I is a glaring example that remittances from abroad are not the driving force behind development and that people have used their home based networks within the state to urbanise the rural area. Through the evolvement of architectural landscape I had the opportunity to open up the writing of the basic ethnography of the Papiakum people. By tracing their migratory route I am contributing towards the development of more studies have added my voice in showing how mobility, material culture and urbanisation are intrinsically linked serving as a crucial vector in the development of any society. Touristic potential of the area has been brought to light for more studies and entrepreneurial activities to be established in the tourism and hospitality industry given its location on the ring road. Second home tourism broadens issues of access, mobility and regulation.

Short Summary of the Thesis

Migration either vertically or horizontally; rural or urban; national or transnational; internal or international, is undertaken for diverse reasons. In this book we meet people who migrated from their homes to find better opportunities elsewhere. We focus on a specific area in Africa, North west province of Cameroon that is especially known for the mobility of its people. The history of this part of Africa is coloured by the plantation economies in the Southwest that were developed by the Germans and later other colonial powers and the elites of the post-colonial period, attracting labour from the North West Region. But then also people became mobile from this are to work in urban areas, and even to join the European and USA diaspora's. Part of this story as I will show in this book is the relationship that these migrants, or mobile people have with their Home. By investing in their home villages they have become part of the urbanisation history of this part of Cameroon. Especially the mobile people who do not per se leave to go to Europe but who are diasporic in Cameroon are the people who invest most in their home villages.

Before choosing Baba I on the Ndop plain as my case study for this research project, a recognisance trip was undertaken. This village found along the ring road of Cameroon looked always quiet whenever we drove by as students going to boarding school in Nso. The visit into the village turned out to be intriguing as the village laid on an undulating topography with connecting network of roads. These roads linked families and quarters through landed infrastructures (houses and farms) on the landscape. Visiting some of these structures expanded my fields of study to various urban centres in Cameroon where the owners were resident. Thus, the methods below acted as guiding steps in the process of data collection for this research. This chapter will be structured as follows: Multi-Sited and Connectivity; Visuals (photographs and videos); Life Histories and Interviews and Observations. The film involving the process of production will be handled in chapter seven.

Crucial to this book is the new houses constructed by the migrants. From the corrugated and houses of stone to storey buildings there is a history and a story to tell. Position within the material culture and belonging literature this book is walking down the lane to appreciate these houses, land and the mobility of the people. The book questions the effects of material culture on landscape transformation of the society through textual and visual forms. Over the past decades, the use and acquisition of land have greatly changed with increased geographical and social mobility. This has caused tremendous effects on the lives of people politically, economically and socially and above all in the dynamics of land acquisition and development. The changes on the landscapes are not only physically visible but also socio-culturally with the way people carry themselves around through their daily interactions. Thus, the book attempts to study these transformation processes in the form of an ethnography of mobility and belonging of the Papiakum people of Baba I. An extra contribution of this book is that it is the first to tell the story of the Papiakum who have not received adequate attention either by the early colonial ethnographers or the anthropologists of the North Western Grassfields of Cameroon. This is the gap which this book attempts to fill.

My research interest was predicated on the fact that, although much work has been done on mobility in Anglophone Cameroon. These studies have recently focused on the movement of people from this region to Europe, America and recently China. In this book I diverted from this conventional narrative to research on those who never went to Europe, America and China as portrayed in studies and their effects on their home societies. In my

research which has resulted in this book I focused on those who have left the Papiakum but did not go out to Europe. They went to other cities in Cameroon and while back they have changed the landscape of Baba 1 through the type of houses they have been constructing. What lies beneath these houses is a long story that can only be narrated through the lenses of belonging and land. The very big houses have changed the landscape remarkably

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BADECA	Baba I Development and Cultural Association
ENAM	L'École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature
ENS	Ecole Normale Superieure
GHS	Government High School
GSS	Government Secondary School
ICT	Information Communication Technology
NADA	Njinkom Area Development Association
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VA	Visual Anthropology
VRM	Visual Research Method

Figure 1.1: Moh Tanghongho's Compound

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 1.2: A compound with traditional thatched roofs and mud bricks.

Source: Photo by Author

1. General Introduction

Mobility and Material Culture and Processes of Belonging

'… If you do not have a house in the village, you will find it difficult to long to go back to the village because you do not have where to go and stay comfortably. You feel uncomfortable that people in the village have their houses to stay and you who are working in the city have no house. You have to go and beg to live with them and the standard might not be what you are already used to. When you are working you build in the village so that when you go home, you have where to stay and your family can go there even in your absence. There are certain things you do to show that you are mature in the village. You must possess a house, a wife and you buy a gun. When you have a gun it means you are a man. You can defend yourself, your family and village. Your age group at home, your parents and everyone look at it as a sign of responsibility, that you have a house of yours. (...) It is now that people are building nice houses. The building pattern in those days did not encourage this. ... There is already scarcity of land. The population is increasing and people are more conscious of the importance of land meaning that those who own the land are not ready to part with the land. Before you could, with 50.000 FRS (76 Euros) buy a very big piece of land but today the people know the importance of farmland. With the ring road and the consciousness of the people about the importance of land and the projects that each and every one is thinking of carrying out whether it is construction or whatever thing, it makes it that land becomes really very scarcer than before.' (E. M. Yoyo, personal communication, March 24, 2011).

1.1 Yoyo's House

This discussion with Yoyo, a 69 year old man who lived almost all his life outside of Papiakum and did construct a big house in the village, is central to this thesis. His house, as the one in figure 1, is much better than the house he lives in in the city: a complex, structure of wood, masonry, concrete or other material, outfitted with plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. This is a big contrast with most houses of the villagers. In this opening citation he refers to the central themes of this thesis. The most important is the way Yoyo defines his being part of the community, where he refers to central cultural values of belonging. He sees the building of a house as a central link to realise his 'belonging' to the village and its people in a decent way that also relates to his status as a mobile urbanite. He also refers to the crucial vector today: the scarcity of land. This scarcity increases conflicts over land, and also the difficulties to access land. It also indicates as I will argue in this thesis that also these villages need to undergo a process of urbanisation. The rich urbanites now claim their belonging by showing their power through the construction of houses on the scarce land of the village. What then is the benefit for the village of these investments in the end? Or are these courses of history that cannot be countered? And that in the end turn the village into a space in between the rural and the urban, where the poor villagers become dependent on these rich in/outsiders? This thesis links the processes that we observed in Baaba I, i.e. the construction of huge 'modern' houses, to the general phenomenon of mobility in the region, where indeed many young people leave and left to search for 'greener pastures', and their (emotional) struggle to 'belong', and the wider tendency that this is part of: increasing competition of land and processes of urbanisation. Baaba I is part of the Papiakum, a people who have their own

social and political organisation. As we will see the general processes have their cultural and social specificities that colour the case study.

1.2 Research Problem: The Story of Houses in the Grassfields

In reference to Figures 1.1 and 1.2 and Yoyo's interview, the central problem of this thesis rotates on what these houses tell us about the political and social changes that are going on in Anglophone Cameroon. During the past years in this part of the country, we have seen a steady urbanisation, an increase in hierarchies also in wealth and a steady continuing but increasing migration of people both outside of Cameroon and inside. What do these houses tell us about these changes, and what are the deeper underlying factors that we can read through the houses? These houses are a symbol of these changes and the socio-political stories of the houses, as a 'social life of the object' (Appadurai, 1986) is central to this thesis to tell the story of socio-political change in Anglophone Cameroon.

When I went to the field I was first interested in ascertaining the impact of mobility on the management of natural resources, mainly land. Apart from farming, land, I realised, land is crucial in the building of houses and other infrastructure. The thesis seeks to understand the reasons for such landed investments at home. Home here has dual meaning; a building or domicile, living space used as a permanent or semi-permanent residence for an individual, family, household or several families where you are comfortable or location that a person thinks of as the place where he/she lives and belongs as part of a community as long as your heart is there. This is related then to the feelings of belonging (Nyamnjoh, 2002) to a place.

This thesis questions the relationship between material culture, mobility, access to land and the ways it affects the hierarchies (political, social) that structure social relations in the villages (ethnic communities) of the Grassfields in Cameroon. It tells this story through the story of the houses built by the mobile urbanites; putting at the centre of the thesis the visual system, i.e. the process that results in humans producing visible objects, reflexively constructing their visual environment and communicating by visual means (Murphy and Banks 1997:21).

1.3: Relating the concepts of material culture, mobility, and (r)urbanisation

In this thesis I will be expanding and connecting the salient themes of material culture, access to land, social hierarchy and mobility bringing forth the visual elements using my case study, Papiakum which is also known in this thesis as Baba I. This section focuses on the concepts and their relationship as they are understood in the literature and that I link to studies of the Grassfields. These discussions set the frame for the study of Houses in Baba I.

1.3.1 Material Culture – The Visual System

In this thesis I follow the idea that material objects embody complex intentionalities and mediate social agency. They can be used to both reveal and conceal secret histories. I follow here the study of Marianne Ferme (2001) who looked at the connections between cola nut, cloth, palm oil, clay, houses and hair styles where she found a hidden history of slavery and oppression leaving a mark on gender relations. This also follows Zittoun (2015) who posits that a cultural psychology invites us to examine the cultural elements which mediate human relationships. These, which usually have a material and a semiotic dimension, have both an existence in the present i.e. the here and now of an interaction, and also a more virtual one, opening memories or worlds of possibilities.

The interview of Yoyo at the beginning of this section gives us a glimpse into the materiality of the community but also opens up discussions on the 'ways of seeing' as propounded by Banks and Morphy (1997:21). They argue, 'visual system is the process that result in humans producing visible objects, reflexively constructing their visual environment and communicating by visual means; visual worlds reflect different ways of seeing'. Ways of seeing, therefore refers to how the world is seen by people and how people learn to use the visual systems within a given context.

Objects form the integral part of the social fabric of everyday life. As such persons and objects are said to be in constant dialogue. Hence, 'the absence of material culture makes it virtually impossible for humans to present themselves and to symbolize, achieved and desired statuses. Objects are a cause, a medium, and a consequence of social relationships'(Nuessel 1997:282). Material objects are open to multiple interpretations just as language (immaterial object). There are at least four sources from which meaning of objects could be derived: its 'inherent physical properties; information conveyed by objects which surround an artefact; the observer's life-long experience with same artefacts; and texts about artefacts (museum labels, advertisements, newspaper articles, amongst others). Ultimately, objects are inter-textual because of their multiple significations derived from linguistic statements about them'' (Nuessel 1997:282-283).

Nuessel refers to objects and artefacts that Miller (2012) extend to 'stuff' and their relationship with people. All these bring out in very visible terms the tangibility of material culture. Its 'meanings appear to be relatively simple, straightforward, essentially timeless and largely identical for any observer' (Miller, 2012) when placed within a specific cultural context. Therefore people often gloss over stuff rather than get into 'the complexities of deciphering the rich symbolic meanings inherent in or imposed upon objects' (Riggins 1994:2). Appadurai (1986) demonstrated how things have a social life because they are in constant relation with people and context. Baba I will serve as a case study through which the social life of stuff will be elucidated.

I also found the ideas of Grassby (2005) useful for the understanding of material culture among the Papiakum. He states that material life of a people is partly shaped by its cultural imperatives which are structured in a way that has to be perceived and understood. When looking at 'stuff' as such, they cease to be mere things, but rather they have multiple meanings and are culturally and socially interpreted. Contextualisation becomes very crucial as social interactions within specific spaces call for specific/different interpretations.

Focusing on houses and infrastructure that are changing the face of Baba 1 brings to light as Olsen (2003:88) puts it that 'things, objects and landscapes, possess 'real' qualities that affect and shape both our perception of them and our cohabitation with them'. Attempting an understanding into their place and symbol meaning, bringing along the process of change as these have evolved over time will be illuminating an ongoing process experienced within this society. According to Grassby (2005:593), 'visual images and tactile objects help to recapture choses vecues, physical conditions of everyday life and the options for action of different groups. The exteriors and interiors of homes reveal how people met the basic needs of food, shelter and warmth and whether levels of comfort, privacy, personal security, improved'. By following the construction and furnishing activities going on in Baba I, 'a more profound appreciation of things will lead to a more profound appreciation of persons' Miller (2010:6). Through the 'fundamental materiality' of these urbanites, we will come 'to understand, convey and appreciate our humanity' Miller, (2010: 4). Rowlands (1989 &1992) and Nkwi (2011) on their studies in the Western

Grassfields of Cameroon give concrete examples of how consumption of material stuff is appreciated by the people of this region.

By using six case studies from the urban environment of Bamenda, the capital of the North West Region of Cameroon, Rowlands (1989) illustrates how the cultural language of development and progress and its material appropriation in terms of the consumption of the products of Western technologies, has become the ultimate touchstone for confirming and evaluating the nature of personal and group success. These western consumables are displayed in their modern houses which form an integral part of their life histories. This success however is called to question as Rowlands (1992) is concerned with understanding why the Bamenda people do not believe that a person catches success, but that success catches a person. After a description of Bamenda notions of subjects and objects, he concentrates on traditional notions of power and achievement in two Grassfields societies, Nso' and Laga Bum. The study pays attention to the Bum term 'ifinti' and the Nso' term 'sem'. Both notions refer to the capacity to transform, for example into a strong wind or a lion. These, 'strong wind and lion' are not ordinary descriptions given to a person. Certain categories of people are cross examined as they exhibit their material cultures through stuff they have accumulated as they got successful. Nkwi (2011) studied the connection between communication technology and mobility among the Kom between 1928 and 1998. Crucial to Nkwi's thesis and relationship with this thesis is/are the objects in which migrants introduced to Kom in terms of conspicuous consumption like the houses and the motor car. He provides the biography of these objects and the people who acquire it. Godelier (2002) expatiates on this as he tries to understand why there are some things one sells, others one gives, and yet others that can be neither sold nor given, but that must be kept and transmitted. It is clear that the reasons do not reside in the things themselves. The same object may successively be bought as a commodity, circulated in gift exchange, and ultimately hoarded in a clan treasure as a sacred object and, as such, withheld for a time from any form of circulation, market or non-market.

So at each turn, objects should be contextualised for a proper interpretation as they are part of visual systems in which they are found. The materiality of our environment cannot be taken for granted and that is why through the architectural infrastructure, the thesis strives to understand these Baba I urbanites. These houses can be said to be an embodiment of the story of each urban migrant as well as the changes brought in by the social and mental processes orchestrated by the rural urban rural mobility.

1.3.2 Mobility

At the beginning of the introduction Yoyo's reflection called our attention to mobility. Mobility in its myriad forms and ubiquitous nature 'is engrained in the history and daily life experiences of people', (De Bruijn, van Dijk and Foeken, 2001). At face value, the physical mobility/migration is simply the movement of people from one place to another. Human mobility has always been linked to natural resources and material culture that has led to the transformation process of communities. This is an ongoing process in Baba 1 as well as Anglophone Cameroon. When people move, they bring with them their cultural values which influence the way they adapt and adopt to their new environment.

It is interesting to link processes of mobility to also the possibilities to move, either physically or virtually. The studies of De Bruijn, Nyamnjoh and Brinkman (2009), De Bruijn, Angwafo, Nyamnjoh (2010) have brought our attention to the ways ICTs have reshaped the mobility in the grassfields. But then we should also take the earlier transformation, such as the introduction of roads, the car, that have reshaped mobility

patterns (Nkwi 2011). It is important to notice that the grassfield's history is coloured by these periods of technologies of mobility, when they were transferred to work in the coastal plantations, or later working in urban environments and again later were able to move to other continents and far away destinations in Africa (Nyamnjoh H, 2014). In all this we can consider the Grassfields as being 'mobile communities' as of old. De Bruijn (2014) explains this concept of mobile community when she sketches the history of a family from the Grassfields in their mobilities from the 1960s to the present. The essence is that mobile people whatever their mobility is will always be in contact with their kin at home, or elsewhere in the world. Such mobile communities have become more intense with the introduction of ICTs who have diminished space and time, but the working of these social fabrics has been there ever since mobility started. The houses I discuss in this thesis are also to be seen as being part of this construction of mobile communities in Baba I.

Migration is playing an important role in the livelihoods of many African people but also that movement patterns have indeed changed in the last few decades. While links between rural and urban areas and populations tend to remain strong, transformations in economic and non-economic factors underpin the sometimes important variations in the migration decisions of different groups; gender, generation and access to assets are critical in determining who goes, who stays and who returns. Examples abound. For instance, Findley, (1997) shows how migration is causing spatial redistribution which is transforming the lives of families in both rural and urban areas in Africa as migrants strive to maintain ties in their different migrations. Dike (1982) takes two specific examples amongst the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria to show how urbanites use their connections with the state and private investments to construct private houses and also public infrastructure to ameliorate the living standards of their communities. Barten (2008) talks about the need and dreams of migrants out and in Mali aspiring to construct big mansions at home to stay connected to their roots/families even if they might not live there. These empirical examples are going to guide my quest of understanding the process taking place in Baba I.

Englund (2002) examines how migrants in Chinsapo township of Malawi work hard to construct permanent and better settlements (investing in human and land resources) in their communities rather than in the township where they reside. Returning home for them is a given factor making those with the intent to stay, shy away from making public pronouncements. Tacoli (2001) looks at the increase in urban poverty in the 1980s in most African countries and how likely it must have affected the directions of population movement and subsequent regional and national urbanisation trends. This is thought of to have slowed, sometimes significantly, the growth rates of urban centres. Black, King &Tiemoko (2003) in their study on return migrants to Ghana elucidate how the processes of migration and return have contributed to development and poverty alleviation through the promotion of small businesses. They argue migration and return can be seen as a mechanism for providing capital for the development of small enterprises, particularly among poorer and less-skilled migrants. These studies pave the way also for me to appreciate the Papiakum urbanites from this perspective to assess the impact of their investments at home.

From the above literature I would hold that mobility in its encompassing nature and varied forms is seen as a means through which barriers have been broken and/or erected and access gained into new social fields where people were generally excluded. This has thus opened up fields for new negotiations and re-negotiations within local, national and international socio- political hierarchies in the process of ploughing back profits and in a bid of making the home a better place in concurrence of migration studies across Africa as

indicated by the cases cited above. Mobility has therefore become ‘a vital force for economic development and social change, including job creation – a spur to entrepreneurs and their innovations, to trading and small industries’, as noted in Gavrilova (1971:291).

Nyamnjoh's (2005) study on the mobility of the Grassfielders to the coastal plantations and then to Europe illustrate how mobility has shaped and redefined relations between relatives in the home communities of the Grassfields and those of the Diaspora communities. They, the able-bodied youths, refer to themselves as being in Nyongo (a kind of zombification of humanity) abroad where they have to slave away to send remittances back home to relatives and friends claiming their dues. Ndjio (2009) from the High Plateau of the Western Grassfields gives an insight into the importance of the interwoven nature of migration and ‘rootedness’, belonging, and ethnic identity through the architectural transformation of the landscape by les nouveaux riches and or Bushfallers showing how their actions challenge and question the socio-political institutions.

For a vast majority of migrants who came singly to these urban centres leaving behind their families, they tried as much as possible to maintain their ties with those in their areas of origin which Gugler (1971, 1997) describes as spending their lives in a dual system as the home front had to acknowledge their success through the migrants landed and human investments. As a matter of fact this is a mobile community. Smart and Smart (2003: 276) quoting Schiller et al., (1992:1) puts this ‘as the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement’. Urban centres became more or less hunting grounds for these urbanites that despite their 'good life' and investments out there, they still aspire to return home for retirement or to be buried. Due to these aspirations, investments were therefore made at the home front in order to make life comfortable when they finally return or when visiting (as pointed out by Yoyo) which had other implications like 'dampening out-migrations'. Rural-Urban connection is not new to scholars who have been working in Africa. Gugler (2002), Englund (2002) and Nyamnjoh (2002) while writing on rural-urban connections contend that migrants will always strive to return home from their hunting expeditions, a place of primary social security.

1.3.3 Bushfalling and Mobility: confronting the discourses

Bushfalling in Cameroon implicitly means migration and this type of migration as found in discourses denotes Cameroonians who have migrated to Europe, America and recently China. However in this thesis I use bushfallers to mean those who have migrated out of the village to the city and not out of the country. The thesis therefore focuses on internal bushfallers. This is relevant as it helps to build the theoretical framework of the study. Migrants who took their hunting expeditions abroad for greener pastures are referred to in Cameroon as Bushfallers. This notion here will open up further discussions on mobility and its repercussion on the home community by the activities of migrants. Bringing home these notions of hunting grounds and social security, Nyamnjoh (2009: 42-43) reiterated by Alpes (2012) and Atekmangoh (2017) points that hunting is a metaphor of choice among Cameroonians. For the mobile amongst them, the city and the ‘world out there’ are perceived as hunting grounds; the home community is the place to return at the end of the day, with a smile on the face or with sadness. Investing in one's home community materially and through relationships is generally seen as the best insurance policy and a sign of ultimate success, for it guarantees survival even when one has lost everything in the city and abroad, and secures and makes manifest an achievement of success through satisfying obligations and fulfilling requests. This quest of bushfalling whether as an individual or

collective initiative and fulfilling family obligations and expectations is elucidated in Atekmangoh (2011 & 2017) showing that remittances to the family at home remains a strong barbwire for these young Bushfallers from Cameroon in staying in touch with their kindred. Thus, although successful urbanites or diasporic Cameroonians may not permanently return or retire to the rural area as such from their hunting grounds, most remain in constant interaction with their home communities in various ways – including active participation in development initiatives, and some leave express instructions with kin to be buried or re-buried in their home communities.

As also shown by Dike, Nkwi and Gugler, this is true of first generation migrants to the city and beyond, as it is of second and third generation migrants, as keeping in touch and relating with the home community is measured more through relationships, attitudes and behaviours over time, than only through physical presence or the short term. This means that individual achievements could be seen as meaningless if not appreciated and endorsed as collective success by the group (Nyamnjoh 2002:115-116). Relationships, attitudes and behaviours are not frozen in time and space, a reality which calls for flexibility and understanding especially in a context of local and global vicissitudes such as economic downturns, globalisation and changing indicators of value.

This migration process actually commenced from farmlands and farmhouses, then people started moving gradually into the first cosmopolitan cities before getting to hear the wonders of the plantations and the sea with large sea going vessels. In most African countries, the coast was the second bush or hunting ground before outward migration due to its colonial history which created urban centres, a process referred to by Gugler and Flanagan (1978) as a colonial syndrome. Bushfaller/Bushfalling is not an entirely new process especially in line with mobility patterns of the different peoples of our mobile world.

This case study brings to question whether most investments in Baba are done by those who are in Europe as the literature on Bushfalling seems to suggest or those in urban areas in Cameroon.Thus this thesis will divert from the conventional understandings of bushfaller to maintain that internal mobility in Cameroon has complex stories and also that this notion of bushfalling as a general idea for the Bamenda grassfields has specific outcomes for the different societies who make their own mobile communities bounded in cultural values and social hierarchies. The study of Gheasi, Nijkamp & Rietveld (2011) posits the common perception that most migrants are moving from poor countries to rich countries, while in reality half of the migrations take place within the developing countries. Gheasi, Nijkamp & Rietveld reflections are going to lead me into a deeper understanding of the process taking place in Baba I. One cause of this growth is the globalization process that enhanced mobility and improved accessibility to different places. The bushfallers being tackled here are not necessarily those who have crossed the Atlantic Ocean or national boundaries but focus will be on those who have left their home communities for bushes in the urban centres or big cities within the country for better economic outcomes or living standards.

1.4 (R)urbanisation

This section is going to focus on how migrants are urbanising the rural areas and ruralising the urban areas. I draw inspiration from Cottyn (2020) who opines that urbanisation is crucial in changing rural landscape in Rwanda. This process is also ongoing in Baba I. This is going to throw more light on the connection between material culture, mobility and landscape transformation. Landscape transformation is simply the change in land use from

agriculture to the construction of ‘mega’ houses (Ndjio, 2009). Bhandari (2010:2) asserts that ‘urbanisation is important from the socio-cultural evolution point of view. A rural setting gradually loses its rural features as they evolve into or are replaced by the urban ones and hence becomes more developed and civilised’. According to Champion (2001:144), urbanisation is viewed as a social process of people adopting the attitudes and behaviour traditionally associated with life in the cities and towns, irrespective of where they might be living’. These views of Bhandari and Champion takes us back to the perspective which Little had started advocating in 1960 but which got sparing attention. However, Little (1974:7) reiterates the point that urbanisation is a social process ‘whereby people acquire material and non-material elements of culture, behaviour patterns and ideas that originate in or are distinctive of the city’. According to Little, this social process did not break up but strives to maintain its rural ties later visited by Gugler and Flanagan (1978), Gugler and Geschiere (1998) and Gugler (2002) on rural urban connections.

This study will therefore focus on the changing social and mental process of these urbanites and how it is affecting those left behind as pointed out in Yoyo’s interview. Using different case studies to show how urban elite are actively urbanising the rural area, thus, transforming the landscape which is affecting the local socio-political hierarchies. This is not very new in the literature as this process has been described already by many scholars. For instance, Gugler (2002) maintains that, most rural–urban migrants maintain significant ties with their communities of origin in Africa south of the Sahara. Contrary to “modernist” assumptions that these ties would fade away, they often continue to be strong. This urban–rural connection has important consequences for rural–urban migration, for urban–rural return migration, for the rural economy, and for the political process. Depending on their migration strategies, urban residents connect with a range of actors at the rural end: more or less closely related kin, kinship groups, non-kin groups, communities, and larger political entities. These connections play out differently for men and women.

Dike (1982) studied two Igbo communities in Eastern Nigeria on how the urbanites were involved in urbanising these rural areas through their landed investments (modern houses) and public infrastructure like schools, roads, health centres and water supply amongst others provided for in theory by the government. Dike saw this process taking place as rural development but paid little attention to the fact that by bringing these urban amenities and facilities into the rural area, it is also changing the social and mental processes of the rural population. Visibly or invisibly, rural populations are therefore brought face to face with urban realities.

Fisiy and Goheen (1998) delve into the nature and structure of linkages between the urban elite and local institutions in their home communities in the Nso’ area in the Grassfields of the North West Region of Cameroon. They argue that indigenous institutions provide a frame of reference for the negotiation of identity and the provision of security in a context where state institutions seem to have lost their "raison d'être". They further demonstrate how the home community has become a defining factor in the urban-rural nexus which allows the elite to acquire resources from external sources which they in turn invest in the production of social and symbolic capital. The materialisation of this capital is manifested in the acquisition of neo-traditional titles. Under conditions of dire financial and material hardship some local traditional authorities have started to 'commodify' what was previously earned through merit and service to the group.

Nyamnjoh and Rowlands (1998), illustrate how the development of elite associations has been a consequence of the growth of multi-partism and the weakening of authoritarian state control in Cameroon in the 1990s. The attachment of electoral votes and

rights of citizenship to belonging to ethnicised regions has encouraged the formal distinction between 'natives' and 'strangers' in the creation of a politics of belonging. They further argue that this development has also led to the replacement of political parties at the local level by ethnicised elite associations as prime movers in regional and national politics. Geschiere and Gugler (1998) point to the emphasis on the continuing importance of rural urban connections as a special aspect of urbanisation in Africa since the 1960s.They state that since in many parts of Africa, the involvement of urbanites with their 'home' community has increased rather than decreased the content of the exchanges and the moral involvement of city people and members of the home community in such relations vary greatly. The variations have important implications for regional differences in, for instance, the development of new modes of accumulation or the cementing of ethnic networks. Geschiere and Gugler argue further that in many parts of Africa, democratisation seems to evoke an obsession with 'autochthony', origin and belonging. The increasing role of elite associations, as an alternative to multi-party politics, makes the rural connection of vital importance to urban politicians. Hence 'the community', and more generally the region of origin, acquire new importance as a power base in national politics.

Jua (2002) in the study of the Njinikom Area Development Association (NADA) examines the truth claims of this adage that, ‘small is beautiful and seeks to make connections between the local, national and global developments’, revealing not only their dynamics but uncovering how these mediate the defining of selfhood among NADA members. NADA, he argues is also a space for violence (symbolic) engendered by the conflict of two rationalities and the penchant for politicizing even economic issues. Outcomes of struggles are skewed in favour of the elite who are empowered with symbolic capital and money. Differential empowerment gives them an advantage that is used in promoting the birth of a new consciousness. Its effects are far reaching as they breach all accepted and acceptable protocol. Furthermore, it shows that the elite are willing to invest in the development of the community only if it is a win-win game. Present development strategies seem to gloss over most of these considerations, thus impairing their effectiveness.

Evans (2010) through people's participation in hometown associations reveals a deep sense of belonging to their home place. It has been argued that promotion of this ‘primary patriotism’ by associations is potentially divisive as it may engender parochialism, increase the focus on autochthony, and enhance ethnicisation of the political landscape. Evans in contrasting views, however, does not see hometown associations as necessarily inimical to wider social and political cohesion, but as potential sites for civic engagement and citizenship formation at different levels, reflecting the shifting identity that individuals hold. His article explores these issues among the two main tiers of association in Manyu Division, South-West Region, Cameroon. It briefly describes their history and activities, and considers how the identities mobilizing them are constructed in three interlinked ways: geo-historical and genealogical; neo-traditional; and national political. Evans concludes that while these associations occasionally engage in divisive politics in different spheres, analysis needs to balance this against their other activities and relationships. Most hometown associations continue in their original, social role of mutual support among rural–urban migrants, although their expansion into development at home has had more mixed results. Furthermore, concerns about parochialism are often hard to reconcile with the multiple levels of associational life observed.

Based on their assessment of hometown association in Cameroon, Page, Evans and Mercer (2010) argue that notions of autochthony remain central in understanding Cameroonian politics. However, the three articles presented here as a group go on to argue that some of the claims about home, belonging and politics are difficult to reconcile with the hazier reality observed on the ground. The articles aim to disturb any universal, inevitable or overly tidy segue between questions of belonging and claims of political segmentation. Too often the existing literature moves too quickly to an analysis that foregrounds only the worrisome dimensions of a politics of belonging, thus leaving little space for other interpretations. To explore this dilemma, Page, Evans and Mercer continue by exploring a land dispute in Bali Nyonga, North West Region of Cameroon. They find three salient points showing how: ideas of belonging remain central to the practice of politics; how politics of belonging has changed over time; and how it is possible to foreground an alternative 'politics of conviviality', which would otherwise be shaded out by the dominance of the politics of belonging within the literature.

How are these urbanites organised in their various urban centres? These activities which Dike (1982) noted also bring to mind Nkwi (1997) and Jua (2002) on the formation, rule and activities of the Njinikom Area Development Association, (NADA) of the Western Grassfields. This is a vivid example of how the urban elite especially those in high governmental positions lobby and navigate to bring back urban amenities and facilities to their home communities. With the lobby system in place for contracts with hardly any clear cut formula, interpersonal connections of these urbanites become essential as they are able to follow the tides, negotiate and navigate their way through the system to bring and/or carryout projects in their home communities. As such, major local roads, schools, health centres and others linking people have been constructed as well as water and electricity provided even though Evans (2010) points out that this is not all positive. During the process of bringing these urban amenities and facilities to the community's, one can experience different modes of mobility such as physical, psychological and mental which take various forms.

Baba I have tentacles spread throughout the national territory and abroad but the community is the pivot. The houses served as my connecting point because the researcher found them embedded with knowledge. This fell squarely in the line of thought of Hoskins, that 'objects can be given a gender, name, history and ritual function. Some objects can be so closely associated with persons as to seem inalienable (Weiner 1992), and some persons – slaves, dependants – can have their own humanity depreciated so as to approach the status of simple possessions. Within this framework, things can be said to have biographies' as they go through a series of transformations from gift to commodity to inalienable possessions, and persons can also be said to invest aspects of their own biographies in things' (Hoskins 2006:74). In concordance with Hoskins, my focus definitely stayed with these houses.

1.5: The Research Questions

In this section based on the above discussion of the literatures and the topics that are mentioned will define the research questions. These are taken up chapter per chapter; Therefore this will keep track of my main themes, amongst which are the following: material culture and the visual system; the social life of stuff; mobility and mobile communities, bushfalling as a sub discussion; (r)urbanisation as a consequence of these including the changes in land access and demography as an issue.

The thesis is pegged on four crucial points. First, migration and mobility have changed over the past decades; it would be interesting to know how this relates to older forms. Finding out the difference would help to further understand the process within the community. What can we say about changes, also in hierarchies? In the newer forms of mobility investing at home has become very important because of the prestige which goes with this type of investments on houses. Second, what is behind material culture? What can we read in it; what have others said about this phenomenon in Cameroon and through which eyes do they analyse it? Third, belonging and emotional ties: how is this related to material culture and what have others said about this phenomenan in this region of the country? Finally, hierarchical relations: how these are linked to old rules of access to land; how this is related to the houses; the way these are now put in place. The land issue also brings in historical patterns of ownership of houses and land. Here I will also delve into that explanation that in the past land and houses were together, and ownership was not always in the hand of the user. The process of bushfalling which is intrinsically and extrinsically linked with mobility, urbanisation and material culture will be the guide post of my discussion. A bushfaller denotes mobility and tangible and intangible changes within the communities as an attestation of achievement and belonging. In this study, Bushfallers, Urbanites and elite will be used interchangeably to mean the category of persons living in the urban centres but who through their physical and social investments at home are causing transforming changes in the landscape. This will go a long way in answering the question on the category of persons building in Baba I.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

This thesis has been structured into seven chapters. Chapter One focuses on the general introduction of the conceptual framework of the study. Material Culture and Migration/Mobility are the main concepts that stand as the guide post through which the development of proceeding chapters will ensue to attain the objectives of the study. Chapter Two examines how I gained entry and went about collecting data and what I know about Baba I. It will further examine the methodology of data collection that were used as well as the photographs and films, other media through which societies are presented and represented; a deeper reflection on the film involving the process of production will be handled in chapter seven. The methodology chapter will be an independent and integral part of the thesis elaborating more on the reflexivity and subjectivity of the central problem. Chapter Three goes to situate and trace the history of the Papiakum people. This will unfold the basic ethnography of Baba I paving way to go into the materiality and changing socio-political landscape of the people. …. and delves into the basic land tenure system of the Cameroon in general and Baba I in particular in Chapter Four. Houses are constructed and before you construct land is imperative. Land acquisition has not been static therefore the demand has been changing as migrants return to acquire it. Above all the chapter contributes to the relationship between the chapter and urbanisation thesis.

Chapter Five handles the core questions on mobility focusing on the literature on migration and mobility. History of mobility from and in Papiakum; relation to literatures on the Grassfields; elaborate on the dire need of most migrants to remain connected with those left behind in their various mobilities. By expanding on the meaning and use of material culture, it illustrates how belonging is gained, maintained or lost amongst the Papiakum as identities are questioned to attest belonging especially by those living and working in various urban centres. Following the discussions in chapters three and four, Chapter Six examines the transformation process of the architectural landscape and infrastructure which

is the crux of this study. Our discussions here bring out the meaning and significance of Nda (house) among the Papiakum and how the development of these Nda through mobility are changing the landscape thus ushering in the process of urbanisation. It further explores the central discussion of the thesis on material culture which is both tangible and intangible. The pith of the discussion here is on how through material culture we will gain insight into character and community structure which reveals emotional qualities. This involves examining utilitarian constructions, houses, to determine the values they embody among the Papiakum. Delving into these houses will inherently expose drives and aspirations in this class structured community bringing about transformations on the landscape through textual and visual forms.

Chapter Seven dwells on the summary and significance of the film; how it contributes in answering the central question of the thesis. The process of the production of the film will be elaborated which binds the visual systems of the Papiakum people. Chapter Eight serves as the concluding unit of this study. It is the synthesis of the conclusions of the various chapters showing how mobility in all its forms stands out as a key vector in the process of transforming landscape in the communities. This thesis has established that through mobility the actions/activities of those migrants who left for greener pastures are having implications on their lives and those of the others in the community. This is so because whatever project they are carrying out does not just look at the nuclear family but opens up to the whole community as their participation cannot be ignored be it in kind, cash or moral. The constructions (houses) do not only attest the maturity and belonging of its members but also creates new social classes with the type of houses built by the Papiakum people. Social hierarchies are created, reinforced or even lost with the coming of these changes brought in as a result of mobility. It has therefore made it very difficult for one not to participate or be involved in the rural community developmental projects as it is an expectation of the community. Participation forms the kernel of acceptance and belonging in the community which is visibly displayed during socio-cultural and political gatherings as portrayed in the film “THE PAPIAKUM PEOPLE”.

2. Methodologies

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on different research methods that were employed to gather data for this thesis. Since my subject matter dwelled on mobility and the materiality of the society, I used several methods to achieve my objectives. It structured as follows: Multi-Sited and Connectivity; Visuals (photographs and videos); Life Histories and Interviews and Observations. The film involving the process of production will be handled in chapter seven. Working with the visual system of the Papiakum people, this chapter on methodology would be an independent but integral part of the thesis elaborating more on the reflexivity and subjectivity of the central problem. De Bruijn, Nyamnjoh and Angwafo (2010) demonstrate how communities in the western Cameroonian Grassfields have always been mobile and migratory and this has been facilitated over the years by innovations in information and communication technologies (ICT). The authors bring to light how rural areas have become gradually more linked to mobile phone networks and the costs of telephony have decreased. Their article explores the appropriation of the phone by different social groups related to age and status in rural and urban settings. The directions of social change linked to the mobile phone show a wide variety of forms of social connectivity. Of particular significance is the creativity brought to bear in social relations by those with and without mobile phones, which is making power relations simultaneously hierarchical and horizontal, concentrated and diffused, in ways that challenge conventional theories of social sciences and differentiation in structural terms. Similarly, the populations of the Grassfields can simultaneously shape as well as be shaped by the mobile phone, and can recognize and capitalize on its possibilities while being critical of its inconveniences.

Before choosing Baba I on the Ndop plain as my case study for this research project, a recognisance trip was undertaken. This village found along the ring road of Cameroon looked always quiet whenever we drove by as students going to boarding school in Nso. The visit into the village turned out to be intriguing as the village laid on an undulating topography with connecting network of roads. These roads linked families and quarters through landed infrastructures (houses and farms) on the landscape. Visiting some of these structures expanded my fields of study to various urban centres in Cameroon where the owners were resident. Thus, the methods below acted as guiding steps in the process of data collection for this research.

2.2 Multi-Sited and Connectivity Methods

Though my case study is Baba I, I employed the multi-sited ethnography approach which is free to track the movement of, or connections between, people, stories, objects, conflicts, and cultural meanings across multiple sites and potentially across historical periods as I travelled to various urban centres to meet my research partners. Multi-sited ethnography is a methodological approach first described by anthropologist Marcus (1995) that has become widely used and invoked in studies of geographically dispersed phenomena such as capital and labour market flows, commodity chains, international institutions, migration, and communications media. Although the term multi-sited ethnography usually refers to the practice of an ethnographer undertaking research in, and between, several physical locations

as part of a single study, it is also sometimes used to describe investigation of a single location that is explicitly conceived of as part of a larger context that exceeds the boundaries of the field site. By expatiating on this approach, Marcus portrayed multi-sited ethnography as an emergent strand of anthropological research that challenged the conventional ethnographic focus on a single field. Most critics of multi-sited ethnography Alloatti (2019) have focused on its ontological premise, risks of holism and, most importantly, methodological applications (Hage, 2005). These topics have been further developed by adherents to a multi-sited approach, mostly through empirical examples (Falzon, 2009; Colermand and Hellerman, 2011).

Working with Papiakum people of Baba I, fieldwork had to deal with connectivity (De Bruijn, 2014), because of the informed category or choice of informants. Getting engaged with bushfallers who had invested in the village but were living in the urban centres of Cameroon, travelling around the country became imperative. Though cumbersome and expensive given the transport network system in Cameroon, it was an interesting, rich and exciting experience. Thus, from the village where the houses are located, to the urbanites (resident Ndop, Bamenda, Bafoussam, Foumban, Douala, Limbe, Buea, Kumba and Yaounde) following their different mobility trajectories, one became a mobile person and a bushfaller with many specific hunting grounds but no fixed residence or home seeking knowledge and making notes wherever. Connections became a life wire for this work to progress as it made it possible also for me to gain access to varied resources. This would fall in line with what De Bruijn and van Dijk (2012) elucidate that the rapid increase in adoption of modern 'connective' technologies like the mobile phone, has reshaped the social landscape of Africa. Their book examines the myriad possibilities that the post-global moment offers African societies to develop and to relate, offering profound new insights into the networking of people.

This little anecdote will illustrate this on a personal level (researcher) how this work also opened up access to get other things done. As I was struggling in Yaounde with my documents for the payment of my salary, it dawned on me that I could use the powers of one of the directors in the Ministry of Finance who happens to be one of my research partners after so many frustrating days in Yaounde trying to trace the papers needed. After hours of persistence on phone, I finally got through to him. I explained my situation and got an appointment. With an appointment, access to his office which was made easy with a note from him to a subordinate, I saw things falling into place rapidly as my salary was re-instated. My access to authority spared me the agony of a long wait and frustrations but landed someone in trouble who had manipulated the file with the hope of getting tips. Just as I had benefited from privileged access in Yaounde, so too did I witness several cases how persons in high authority in Baba I ‘strongly influence who benefits from the resource in question’. Mobile Telephones became an imperative research tool used to set up appointments, plan activities/visits, communicate and share findings and carried out/review interviews.

We experienced a lot of virtual mobility through networking with urbanites in the various urban centres. This takes us to a concrete example by De Bruijn (2014) who worked with a Papiakum family illustrating how African family histories and personal lives are full of connecting with those who have left. Her article explores how the development of connecting technology has changed the social dynamics of African mobile communities and focuses on the changes in (old and new) social hierarchies that are related to possibilities of accessing mobility and connecting technologies. Through the use of these new ICTs we (my research partners, families and I) stayed connected between the various centres where we

worked and the village. Connectivity was thus facilitated via ICTs which also made it possible to collect life histories of members of the community. Using these connecting technologies (email, mobile telephone) during data collection, I stayed interlinked with those in Baba I and in the various urban centres of Cameroon. I was therefore intrinsically interwoven especially through mobile phone as I strived to appreciate the changes unfolding within this landscape.

2.3 Visual Research Method

Having always had a fascination with things and their complex interwoven relations with persons owning or using them, there was therefore no doubt that visuals of these houses and infrastructure would serve as my entry point into the village and link with my research partners. Like a fly on the wall with camera in hand I went across and over hills, valleys and streams to absorb in my mind's eye the architectural landscape of the village. Having mapped out the landscape with hundreds of pictures and regrouped the pictures into the different quarters, these were then brought along to the different urban centres in which their owners are currently living and working. With these pictures and camera in hand the various urban centres of Ndop, Bamenda, Bafoussam, Yaounde, Douala, Mutegene, Limbe, Buea, Muyuka and Kumba were visited to meet and hear the stories of these Bushfallers. These pictures serve as facilitators as they helped open up conversations easily. Some of these encounters through these pictures were very emotional to say the least. For some of these Bushfallers, they were seeing the development and/or current state of their houses after a long time through these pictures. While for some others they were seeing their investments at home for the first time as their presence and contributions during the construction process had been only through virtual means like telephones and wireless money transfers.

> "Images are 'everywhere'. They permeate our academic work, everyday lives, conversations and dreams (…). They are inextricably interwoven with our personal identities, narratives, lifestyles, cultures and societies, as well as with definitions of history, space and truth. Ethnographic research is likewise intertwined with visual images and metaphors. When ethnographers produce photographs or video, these visual texts, as well as the experience of producing and discussing them, become part of their ethnographic knowledge" (Pink 2001:17).

Figure 2.1: Pictures of some structures from different quarters

Source: Photo by Author

We cannot talk of visual supports as a research method within delving into our understanding of visual anthropology and its place in this work. Visual Anthropology (VA) is a sub-discipline within anthropology which is a representational process, engaged in an activity of cultural translation and interpretation involving the use of still and moving images/motion pictures. VA is also regarded as being multi disciplinary as it includes 'the production and analysis of still and moving photos, the study of art and material culture, and the investigation of gestures, facial expressions and spatial aspects of behavior and interaction (Jacknins 1994:33).

Just as Murphy and Banks (1997:21) would argue, it is focused however on the whole process of anthropology, from the recording of data, through its analysis to the dissemination of the results of research. Visual Anthropology is central to anthropology because of its reflexive nature. In other words, it helps us appreciate the positioning of all actors (anthropologists, informants, and media people).

VA therefore dwell on the place of the 'visual' and visual systems from a cross-cultural point of view looking into how anthropology through the Analysis of art and material culture can contribute to gain insight into cultural forms and values (the analysis of visual forms of representations). VA explore how images, forms or art, maps, pictures, ethnographic film, the body, gender, adornments to name a few, are constructed in societies across the globe. By linking visual systems to wider economic and socio-political processes, the understanding of the different social categories and meanings of 'seeing' more is achieved. Seeing here must be contextualised through the eyes of people for better comprehension. This is so because our vision is culturally and socially constructed. Thus people see the world through a combination of systems such as perspective, illusion and distortion. Visual anthropology therefore collects two kinds of data: visual recordings and material culture which are core elements of this thesis. This includes: rituals, performances, photography, painting, sculpture, film, sign and body language, aesthetics, maps, body modifications, wrapping, written language, objects and artifacts, architecture, landscape.

The use of Visual Research Method (VRM) as coined by Rose (2016) was therefore chosen as one of the methods for data collection. VRM can use already made images from mass media, by the researcher and those under study (2016:15-16). The film produced uses both still and moving images. Images here are approached as representation (2016:24-26) as Rose argues all images do have four potential sites of analysis: (i) the site of production, where images are made in relation to other objects (ii) the site of the image itself, visual content (iii) the site of circulation, where images travelled to and (iv) the site of the

audience, encountering its spectators and users. These sites each have three different aspects that can critically contribute in the understanding of images (i) technology, how the image was made (ii) composition, its materiality and (iii) social, ways of seeing – its socio-economical and political relations. The sites of analysis were crucial since most of the research partners were living in various urban towns. Various methods and techniques were used; Photo-Essay; Photo-Elicitation; Reflective Photography and Photo-Voice to analysis still images and videography for moving or dynamic images. The video analysis will be handled in-depth in Chapter Seven devoted to the film which is a complementary part of this thesis.

2.3.1 Photography

> '..Ethnographic photography can potentially construct continuities between the visual culture of an academic discipline and that of the subjects or collaborators in the research. Thus ethnographers can hope to create photographic representations that refer to 'local' visual cultures and simultaneously respond to the interest of academic disciplines. To do so involves a certain amount of research into uses and understandings of photography in the culture and society of the fieldwork location. … However, researchers may often find that the photographic dimension of the culture they are working in has been virtually undocumented,' (Pink 2001:5).

In concordance with Rodrigues (2018:58), Photo-Essay, is considered as a participatory technique or visual strategy to obtain opinions, ways of thinking or feelings of the participant, based on a set of photographs collected, analyzed and commented on by the participant in conjunction with the researcher. This technique was used to analyze and understand phenomena in depth, mainly as a complement to the other methods of collecting information, textual or visual, depending on the research objectives. This method is also very much associated to Visual Anthropology because of the use of classic photographic essays (Lyon, 1971). This method helped in creating a convivial atmosphere for discussion with my researcher partners as it was more relaxing and free flowing as contributions were taken without restrictions.

The main contributors towards the recognition of Photo-Elicitation as a visual method are Banks (2001) and Harper (2002). The technique as explained is based on the simple idea of applying and conducting an interview using photographs as a stimulus or as icebreakers. In fact, photographs (more than words) evoke deeper elements of human consciousness. Harper (2002) attempts a definition of photo elicitation and a history of its development in anthropology and sociology based on a number of studies that have taken place. He demonstrates how photo elicitation enlarges the possibilities of conventional empirical research. He also argues that photo elicitation produces a different kind of information. It evokes information, feelings, and memories that are due to the photograph's particular form of representation. This was really of essence in the process of data collection as it gradually paved way for discussions with those informants who were reluctant and reticent to participate. As observed on the field, photo elicitation stimulated life histories from research partner very easily.

Reflexive-Photography, which is considered also as a participatory and self-reflexive visual method or strategy to obtain participants' opinions, ways of thinking and feelings could be done based a set of photographs done by the participants themselves or the researcher (Cahyanto, Pennington-Gray& Thapa, 2009; Rodrigues (2018). A case in point by participants themselves is the study carried out with a sample of college freshmen at the University of Southern Indiana by Harrington & Lindy (1999). They were given a 27-

exposure disposable camera to take pictures that would illustrate their impression of the university or help to describe their impressions. The participants were also asked to record their thoughts while taking the pictures, participate in a structured photo elicitation interview, and participate in a focus-group interview. Some primary themes emerged during the exercise and discussions that included their perceptions on the university's physical environment, interactions with faculty/other students, student support services, and career counselling which portrayed both positive and negative aspects of the university experience cited. The other technique based on a set of photographs collected, analysed and commented on by the participant in conjunction with the researcher. Brand & Mcmurray (2009) study on a group of first-year Nursing students' exposure to clinical placements with older adults is instrumental in helping them adopt positive attitudes toward care of that population is an illustration of the use of this technique. Their qualitative pilot study analysed perceptions and expectations of these students made use of the photo-elicitation technique that engaged in viewing of realistic photographs of older adults being cared for, to help students clarify expectations. Involving them with images of older adults encouraged students to anticipate their clinical placement in an aged care setting in a more meaningful, reflective way than they may have done without prior exposure. This technique worked beautifully for me when I used it at the urban centres where the Papiakum elites were during their regular get together on Sundays. It provoked lively discussions on how they viewed their community as well as their future goals.

Finally, Photo-Voice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique, based on the production of knowledge that has three main goals: (i) to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, (ii) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and (iii) to reach policymakers (Wang & Burris 1997). Just like Wang (2006) who used Photo-voice with a group of youths on mobilization for community change, the implementation of this technique was effective as a participatory action research strategy during BACUDA meetings where the urbanites discussed their on-going developmental projects. It served as an opportunity for those who had not been home for long to see and appreciate the projects to which they are contributors. It was interesting to see how my collection of photographs on the various projects spurred up discussions which bind with the assertion of Sutton-Brown (2014) that using ethnographic techniques that combine photography, critical dialogue, and experiential knowledge, participants reflect on and communicate their community's concerns to represent their culture, to expose social problems, and to ignite social change. Photo-voice has been successfully used in the fields of education, disability studies, public health, and refugees, indicating its vast applicability. This methodology provides a culturally grounded and contextually situated site for reflection on visual images, associated meanings, and social action.

Photographic practice is complex, that is, built in a series of perceptions about memory (recalls past images), about time (capturing fleeting moments), about science (it is an accurate reflection of reality) and accuracy (it captures details). Ethnographic Photography is different from other types of photography because it is determined by discourse (anthropological discourses e.g. reflexivity, context) and content. Anthropologists use ethnographic photography to gain useful and meaningful information through the various techniques above. The viewer of ethnographic photography determines and defines its content. A photograph appears ethnographic to the viewer because the viewer already

has classifications of what is an 'anthropological reality', or how this reality should look like.

Photographs therefore can have different meanings, sometimes even contradictory meanings. One photograph can invest different context with a meaning that is implied by the viewer. Ethnographers need to negotiate the meaning people invest pictures with, and maintain a sense that ethnographic photography is a continuous dialogue –rather than just a 'take-and-go-and-present' with the viewer, the discipline and its subjects. As such photographs can move in and out of anthropology and acquire different meanings, intended or not. As Pink points out: 'a photograph [taken during fieldwork] had no single meaning, but it was re-appropriated and given new significance and uses in each context' (2001:51).

2.3.2 Documentary Film - Videography

> 'Since all films are cultural artefacts, many can tell us as much about the societies that produced them as about these they purport to describe'. (David McDougall, 1978:405)

Film here represents an alternative method of gathering and presenting data that opens up discussion for everyone to read/interpret and appreciate. MacDougall has suggested that scholars look for a 'greater parity amongst modes of expression' by turning to 'the visual, auditory and textual modes of expression found in film' (2005: 60). This offers a way of thinking about written and other texts in relation to each other. Thus ethnographers need to account for the role of written narratives in making crucial connections between, on the one hand, alternative representations of knowing and arguments based on emplaced experience and, on the other, existing strands in scholarly and applied disciplines, (Pink 2009:132-154) (Accessed 09 June 2018).

As Knoblauch, Tuma and Schnettler (2014) will argue one of the major cultural changes with long-lasting effects on our way of life that can be witnessed in recent years is, indisputably, the massive visualization of our culture. Still and moving images are literally pervading our everyday and our professional life worlds; they are increasingly employed to operate in much of our communicative exchange and our knowledge production. They have invaded educational processes, and are even reshaping our self-representation. They continue that while visual studies have been focusing mainly on the role of 'images', the cultural dynamics of video are still widely neglected. Video is a technology that allows the recording, storage and repeated viewing of visual and acoustic data. Videography constitutes a fundamental technique for constituting die corpora of data for analysis, as well as an important mean of rendering research results, such as in documentary films or multimedia presentations.

This thesis is accompanied with a documentary film on the subject matter of changing landscape in Baba1on the Ndop Plain. This documentary film will be complementary to the thesis but both will stand out as independent entities. In reflexive anthropology the ethnographer makes visible the dialogue, improvisations, learning processes, negotiations from which the work emerges and how is dealt with as part of the ethnographic information. McDougall reiterates, 'no ethnographic film is merely a record of another society: it is always a record of a meeting between a film maker and that society. Illustrative ethnographic films make use of images either as data to be elucidated by means of a spoken commentary or as visual support for verbal statements', (1978:413). The process of anthropological filmmaking therefore binds the dimensions of time and space where the actors (subject of research) are portrayed in their temporality. Hence, the contingencies for the subjects' actions can be visualised. It is my hope that through this film

I will be able to share and disseminate knowledge gained and learned through lived experiences to a wider audience especially the non-literate Papiakum people. They offered me enormous support as they watched and wondered what I was really going around doing on foot and motor bike with cameras and bag holding my recorder, note pad/pen/pencils amongst others draped around the neck and back. It will be very important to bring this end product of changing landscape to the populace through this documentary that will serve as a new reservoir of knowledge.

2.4 Biographies/Life Histories and Social Change

This study employed the use of life histories to get in-depth information of the various processes taking place in Baba I. As field work, data analysis and reflections evolved, I came to the conclusion that there was a better way to get in the time dimension which will better explain the different processes. Life histories are therefore one of the methodologies chosen to give answers to core questions of this study that had been phrased and rephrased. The 'narrative' element of the stories refers to the subjective. The focus is not on the factual accuracy of the story constructed, but on the meaning it has for the respondent. In this regard, the approach is also 'constructivistic' since the story is a composition of construed meanings and self-representations. The self-concept is not a monolithic entity but rather collection of different types of self-representations. Since one never has access to the complete set of representations of oneself because it is ''a continually shifting array of accessible self-knowledge''. There is no formula for representing the configuration in a particular life, only the interests and point of view of the researcher. Researchers achieve this configuration by crossing disciplinary boundaries, allowing a number of disciplines to converge, while each discipline maintains its own integrity Dhunpath, (2000:545).

By so doing I came closer to my research partners. Listening to peoples life histories served as an icebreaker creating a certain level of conviviality, trust, empathy and confidence needed for the success of this study. In order to achieve this I had to spend quite some time building relations that made research partners comfortable to talk about their personal story. In building these relationships I had to join them in good and bad times when it came to events, I contributed my own quota. Through these social interactions, a lot of barriers were broken. It should be noted as Dhunpath would emphasise that in a narrative discourse, events are always presented in their context. Context that refers to the physical, institutional environment as well as the social, cultural, and interpersonal environment includes significant others such as parents, mentors, colleagues, and peers, (2000:546). Dwelling within the different context with my research partners made the bonds stronger and communication better. Trust had been ascertained and confidence gained that their stories were important and thus would not be handled in a trivial and disrespectful manner. Audio/video recordings became crucial element that permitted me to work through the stories to generate more discussions especially as video is focused on the material world.

2.5 Ethnography of the Present: Interviews, Participation and Observation

According to Qu and Dumay (2019), research interview, is one of the most important qualitative data collection methods that have been widely used in conducting field studies and ethnographic research. Given the wide application of interviews in research, there has been an extensive literature on the interview method focusing on a range of topics and issues, including different types of interviews (Goldman and McDonald, 1987; McCracken, 1988), strengths and limitations of the method, and various techniques and general advice in conducting "effective" interviews (Douglas, 1985; Fontana and Frey, 1998; Kvale, 2007).

I am not here to attempt a literature review but illustrate how I used the interview method to collect data and analysis them. Adhering to Qu and Dumay (2011) the qualitative research interview as a "construction site of knowledge" must be understood in terms of five features of post-modern knowledge: as conversation, as narrative, as language, as context and as inter-relational, existing in the relationship between people and the world. The interviewer seeks to understand central themes in the life of the interviewee that will open accounts of specific experiences in the subject's life world.

'Interview as conversation characterizes everyday life by developing a methodological awareness of forms of questioning, focusing on what is said during the dyadic interplay between interviewer and interviewee', Qu and Dumay (2011:242). Therefore interviews did not only serve as a methodological tool. They were an essential necessity to gain access into the community, enlighten an understanding of the processes being observed. Interviews usually started off as casual conversations done mainly in English or pidgin with some interfaces in French. For those in the village pidgin, the lingua franca was mostly used while English was the norm in the urban centres. All were fully recorded semi-structured interviews with field notes which served as follow up questions and topics. Interviews were mainly carried out in various homes, job and business sites depending on what worked best for the interviewee.

Prior to the interview dates a lot of negotiations were made via phone to fix appointments and agree on any other modality. After a transcription of the interviews, for the informants that were difficult to meet again, the interviews continued through the telephone. Bernard (2017:261-264) opines that telephone is an important research tool as telephone interviews are becoming common place. Through this tool, interviewers and interviewees stay connected virtually as work progressed.

During the interviews, focus was on the collection of the various life histories. I started off by being intrigued and wanting to understand the complexities around the various land investments of these bushfallers. Thus far, I discovered these urbanites are brokers and entrepreneurs who really change the world back home. Choosing to work through life histories therefore brought in the time dimension that would facilitate the discussion of the various processes taking place in the village. That is, not only changing the architectural landscape but also influencing and affecting the everyday interactions of the people through creating new webs of negotiations and re-negotiations. Delving into the past became crucial to understanding the various social processes in the society thereby facilitating the choice of the main theoretical perspectives; material culture; mobility and urbanisation as they are all time based.

Joining workers and family members in mud pits to mix mortar for bricks and plastering, collecting stones for foundation, chipping a little amount of money for the purchase of bags of cement, sand and tiles and organising food also during the decking of houses which was a community activity were the various methods used in participating in the construction processes of some of the houses and public infrastructure. By so doing not only was the traditional anthropological method of participatory observation was employed but also participatory learning and action (PLA) to gain the perspectives of local people.

Bernard (2017:343-44) pointed out that participant observation is one of those strategic methods that puts the researcher where the action is and make it possible to collect any kind of data. This method was very valuable as it permitted me to take field notes about things seen and heard in natural settings; photographs of landscapes, houses and of the content of people's houses; audio recordings of people telling folktales; videotapes of

people in varied social interactions of everyday life. Going out and staying out and experiencing the lives of the Papiakum people, as opines by Bernard, I got in the door so as to collect life histories, attend rituals, celebrations and talk to people about sensitive topics. Participant observation therefore paved the path for me to establishing rapport and learning to act so that people go about their business as usual thus immersing myself in a new culture.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is another type of qualitative research, which can be used to gain an in-depth understanding of a community or situation. It is widely used in work involving local communities. PLA is a participatory methodology, and should always be conducted with the full and active participation of community members. The main purpose of PLA is to support people within communities to analyse their own situation, rather than have it analysed by outsiders, and to ensure that any learning is then translated into action (Gosling and Edwards 2003). PLA is located within a broader field of participatory approaches, which can be described as a "family of approaches, methods, attitudes and behaviours to enable and empower people to share, analyse and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect" (Chambers 2008:88). Napier and Simister (2017) says in its pure form, PLA is a philosophy which emphasises the need for outsiders to learn about situations from insiders. This philosophy seeks to reverse power relations between communities and outsiders.

Using PLA on the field therefore enabled people to communicate their experiences in ways they felt comfortable through exercises such as mapping and the use of pictures for example to draw attention and make people listen to others. This method was also important for its four main characteristic guideposts: It is Contractile, (ensuring informants to take part), Consultative (taking opinions from the locals), Collaborative (getting into the processes with the locals concerning the project), and Collegiate (working as colleagues with different skills). This method ensured that the control of information and knowledge was not in the hands of a group or person but served as a means of promoting shared knowledge. Thus participating in various everyday activities and celebrations/festivals I gradually immersed myself in the community and could easily connect with the urbanites whose investments at home were changing the landscape.

2.6 Conclusion

In the process of acquiring more knowledge about the Papiakum people, the various methods of data collection were brought to light. Priority was not given only to written text but the use of other mediums was employed to be better informed. The encompassing qualitative research method made it possible to use various interconnecting methods to delve into the Papiakum community. The above methods employed illustrated how interwoven they are making it possible to engage in in-depth discussion. Photography had the possibilities to open up interviews that led to the recounting of life histories and by so doing connecting research partners to different places with varied emotions attached. The above choices of data collection methods were the essential wires in the provision for material to use for the discussions and analysis in the upcoming chapters of this study. Exploring the different key concepts with the aid of these methods and empirical examples will illuminate my analysis on investing in material culture at home by mobile people in Anglophone Cameroon. The next chapter will take us home to ethnographic history of Papiakum people of Baba I and their changing socio-economic and political landscape in their mobility.

3. The Papiakum People in the Bamenda Grassfields Connections

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the ethnography of the Papiakum people in order to understand their material culture. The lack of basic ethnography made field experience both exciting and challenging going into the society without any pre-knowledge about the socio-political organisation of the Papiakum people. This oversight by previous researchers became a source of inspiration and gave the zeal to start the process of writing a basic ethnography of the Papiakum people as one of the goals of this thesis. It will act as a gateway into the materiality and changing socio-political landscape of the people and the society. The history of origin of Papiakum and the presentation of the village and the different hierarchies; and also an introduction of what material culture mean in the village and for the people in relation to material culture; what is home, emotions tied to it will be discussed. This rotates on the fabric of social relation amongst the Papiakum when they did settle in their present site.

The chapter does not only give us just a basic ethnography of the people but also connects us to the other peoples of the Grassfields. This connection goes to establish the links with other people as well as attest to the fact that they have been a mobile people. Through their mobility also light will be thrown into their sense of attachment/belonging. Although some writers have not given Africa and Africans, the agency it deserves as far as her role in global connections was concerned, it remains undisputed that African societies were part of these world currents especially as far as trade was concern. Writers such as Ferguson (2006); Thornton (1992); Eltis (1993); Wallerstein (1986; 2002); Cooper (2001) have shown how Africa had been part of the global processes with people and goods moving in both directions. Following that argument the chapter examines how Baba 1 was part of the global processes which included the mobility of people and goods. Connectivity here in terms of social change and relations is crucial for the development of the other chapters. The chapter is structured into the following sections: first, the location and migratory route of the people; and second, their socio-political and economical structure (link between their mobility, economy and trade) to bring out the emotions tied to home.

3.2 Location and History of the Papiakum People

Baba I is one of the thirteen villages that make up the Ndop plain of Ngoketunjia Division of the Bamenda Grassfields of the North West Region of Cameroon. The people here refer to themselves as the Papiakum people. Their settlement in this present area is recent as compared to the other ethnic groups of the Ndop plain (Chilver and Kaberry, 1967:20). Like most of the peoples of the Bamenda Grassfields, they claim a Tikar origin from Rifum (Nkwi, 2015; Chilver and Kaberry, 1967:2; Nkwi(1986:15; Nyamnjoh 2007:2). Fig 3.1 shows the situational map and a sketch of the different quarters of Baba I. Although the area has “modern state structures”, it has kept its traditional socio-political organisation centred on their chiefdoms with the Fons as paramount rulers. Today, the Fons are auxiliaries of state administration and still command authority among the people.

The topography of Baba 1 is rugged. It is made up of undulating hills, valleys and

plains. As one drives in on the Bamenda ring road towards Kumbo, the capital of Bui Division, the ring road splits the Baba I village into two parts (upper and lower). The upper parts to the North cover about 60% of its surface area where the palace, which is the seat of traditional authority, is situated. The lower section takes 40% and holds majority of its rice fields on the plain.

Cash crops were introduced in this region during the British colonial administration in the 1930s. Coffee was one of them and it became the main cash crop. Farmers cultivated and sold to the United African Company and used the money to pay their children's school fees, health bills and above all improved their standards of living. The introduction of coffee can be justified on the mobility of Papiakum people out of Baba I. Generally coffee was introduced introduced in the Bamenda Grassfields by traders who trekked to NKongsamba. It was in the trading activities that they brought in coffee. During the Britsih colonial administration, the cultivation was encouraged and companies like the UAC with its head quarters in Bamenda specialised in the buying of the coffee.

Situational Map of Baba I

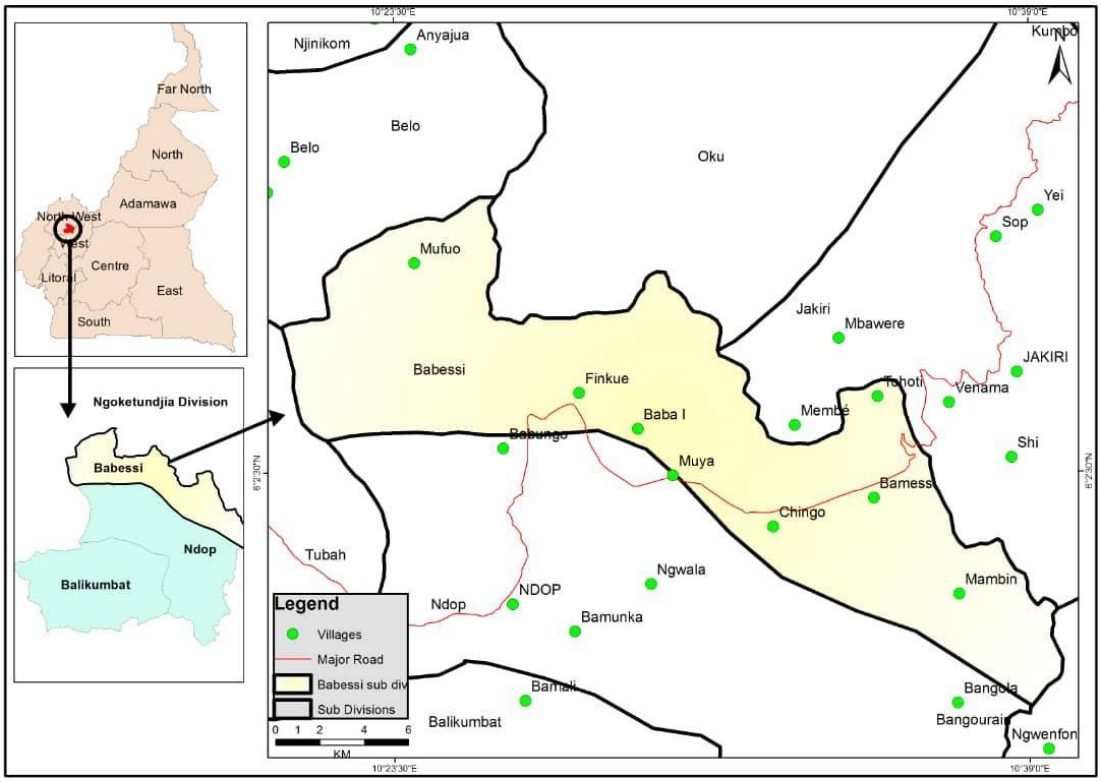


Figure 3.1: Map of Cameroon situating the region, the division

and subdivision within which Baba I is located.

Source: By Author

In the early 1980s, world prices for coffee soured and consequently the price of coffee dropped drastically and forced the people to turn to rice farming. Very few shrugs of coffee trees can still be seen around some compounds today. Apart from rice which is today the main cash crop and cultivated mostly by men, there are hectares of corn farms, groundnut

and beans fields interspaced with cocoyam and sweet potatoes mostly carried out by women. Figure 3.4 depicts some of these farms.

In lower the section of the village, there is also a royal fish pond as well as the palace farm house where the Fon used to stay during farming and harvesting seasons (see Figure 3.2 a & b). This royal complex has a built in facility for smoking fish and drying of grains. When I got to the field, it stood as an abandoned ruin but months after, it was offered up to be used as a primary school building recently created for the village.

Figure 3.3: Old Palace farm house (a) above & Royal Fish pond below (b)

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 3.4: Different farmlands located on the landscape.

Source: Photo by Author

Most of the grazing activities also take place here (Figure 3.5). The limited arable land as well as grazing land always led to the grazier-farmers conflict. I was privileged to witnessed the resolution of the farmer-grazier conflicts. It is worth noting that one of such conflicts even resulted to loss of life as fire arms were used. This obliged the relocation of one of the family heads on the plain to Douala, the economic capital of the Littoral Region of Cameroon.

Figure 3.5: Cattle in paddock at Mbaghangha, one of the most busy farm areas.

Source: Photo by Author

Much ethnographic research has taken place in the Bamenda Grassfields (Chilver and Kabrry, 1965, 1967, 1968 and 1970; Chilver, 1961 and 1963; Rowlands,1979; Dillon 1973) Although with this volume of research done on Baba I in-depth studies detailing the stories around the houses and the mobility of Baba 1 people is missing. Mope Simo (1991:3) in commenting on the general ethnography of the Ndop Plain notes that despite its artistic endowment and material culture, Ndop Plain got less attention from international social scientists, maybe because of its language plurality. Nonetheless, the other villages have at least some basic ethnography written about them.

According to oral traditions collected during the fieldwork (in the various urban centres and Baba I), through interviews and participation in socio-cultural events, the Papiakum people consider themselves as Tikars, who migrated from Bankim in the Adamawa Region of Cameroon. Due to some chieftaincy struggle, they moved and settled peacefully alongside the Bamum in Koupa for a long time. This area is today known as Foumban, the capital of the Noun Division of the West Region of Cameroon. During that time, famine was a common phenomenon and strategies had to be developed to cope with the situation. Thus, there was a regular procedure every week that the Nchenterh or Nchindas (royal court servants) would go to the market and take a bit of every food item on sale from whosoever was selling.

On one fateful day, they took the food item that a renowned notable wanted to sell because his wife had put to birth. Knowing all about the procedure and also aware that as a notable he could go back to the palace and collect it, he let it go like every other person rather than argue with the Nchindas. This is an indication that where they were settled food shortage was an occurrence that they had to device means to keep the palace alive and sustainable. The practice of taking foodstuff, big catch from hunting expeditions and prized

food from the harvest, to the palace still continues till date as I experienced while on the field.

However, when he later got to the palace, he sent one Nchinda, to the Fon who did not transmit his message. He rather came back and told him to go away and that the Fon said he should do what so ever he feels that he could do. Since this notable was the person leading the people in times of war, he got angry about the situation and decided he would no longer stay with them. This shows that access to the Fon is limited and there is the possibility of breakage in the transmission of information to and from the Fon. At times the Nchenterh would take advantage of this situation for their personal gratification. I experienced that some of the gifts (especially money) meant for the Fon never got to him in their entirety. This scenario is possible because according to traditional customs of the people of the grassfields, one cannot give anything to the Fon directly. It goes always through Nchenterh and because of the control mechanism to keep his divine nature lots of misunderstanding occurs which could lead to grave consequences.

This renowned notable therefore left the Papiakum people to settle among the Bamum where he was given a big farm and seven wives with houses and plenty of food. All these were in return for the Baba war strategy which the Bamum people had been trying to acquire for a long time in order to capture and dominate the Papiakum people or send them away to occupy more land for themselves. He later on sold out their secret by advising them that the only way to attack and defeat the Papiakum people was when the men had gone down to the farms leaving only nursing mothers and children at home. The Bamums therefore planned their attack accordingly and on this fateful day when the Papiakum people went to their farms as they would usually do, the Bamum warriors entered their settlement area at Koupa killing the women and children, burning down houses and taking some of the women and children captives to the Bamum settlement area.

Some of the men went back in search of their women and children while others took the Fon and moved westwards looking for where to settle without success. They then continued towards the Bamboutous Highlands and settled for a period of time in the Mbouda area at Mbapih and its environs. When they lost a number of people there, they left with the belief that the place was not conducive for them. So from there, they moved towards the Bamenda Highlands and tried settling around Bambili which was not easy because they had to fight for space with BaliKumbat. As a result of this, they lost a lot of Papiakum people and decided to migrate to Bafanji. At Bafanji, a Papia Prince, Moh Ndzeran, was killed after a conflict which made them to leave for Bamunka.

While in Bamunka, they prepared themselves and went back to Bafanji to revenge the killing of the prince but telling the Bamunka people they were going to take a forgotten bag in Bafanji. When the Papiakum warriors got to Bafanji, before dawn they had taken bunches of palm nuts and tied them on dead-palms. On the following morning which was a market day; the Bafanji people gathered looking at the palms nuts on dead palm trees wondering about what could be happening that dead-palms were suddenly bearing palm nuts. The Papiakum warriors then took advantage of this situation and launched a surprising attack killing more than half of the population. They beheaded some important notables and took their heads and other palace belongings to Bamunka.

Back in Bamunka, when the Fon saw the number of heads they brought from Bafanji, he realised that the Papiakum people could be troublesome. He asked if these heads represented the bag that they had forgotten in Bafanji. Thereafter, he started negotiating with them in order to live in peaceful co-existence. The Fon of Bamunka decided that they

should make a peace agreement never to go to war taking an oath which they buried in the river bed of Bamunka. This meant that they became brothers and no one could attack each other and between them there was no boundary. Space soon became an issue again and since they had a peace agreement, the Papiakum people decided to go out of the area in search of a conducive and an unoccupied territory.

Led by Fue Shanghamangieh, they left and went towards Babungo and started war with the Babungo people in quest for land. They killed a lot of Babungo people in this struggle. The Babungo people however, killed an important Nchinda called Nyamamegah. The fighting pushed them up to Ngwingong where they thought they could settle but soon found out that it was very exposed to wind, neighbouring peoples like Babungo, Bamunka, Babessi and Bangolan. Taking all these into consideration, the Papiakum people returned once more to Bamunka after having located at the current site Vemngang which was hidden, beside water and protected from wind as it was surrounded by hills where a few of those who were in the quest for a new settlement were left. When the Papiakum people lost Fue Shanghamangieh (their Fon/leader) in a raffia bush upon their return to Bamunka, they took it as a bad omen and decided to leave and join the others left behind in Vemngang.

When Fue Nkanggaper was then enthroned as his successor (Fon), after some time the Papiakum people migrated to their present site taking along with them just the skull of Fue Shanghamangieh. They buried their Fon around Mbanka quarter. It was only after their settlement here that a group led by Moh Mbanka that had separated and gone towards Nso' when they left Rifum was sort after and brought back because he had one of the palace bags in his keeping. Always eager to expand their land further after having set up their socio-political unit, the palace and its court, they started off by stealing at the homes of Babessi people closed and forcing them to move away abandoning the land. At the farmland below where a palace farm house was built so that the Fon could live comfortably and cultivate the land, they fought away the Bangolan and Bambalang people who left for their various present villages giving the Baba people more land. They also pushed Babungo to where they are now thus creating new boundaries with the different neighbouring peoples. All these villages pushed out have quarters named after them, which are areas where their respective village borders had once been. Fue Shangamagia and Nkanggaper are hailed in oral traditions for their relentless spirits in the quest for independence as well as acclaimed and acknowledged as the founding fathers of the Papiakum people.

This oral tradition brings to light the workings of the community. I realised that this society is hierarchical and access to the Fon is limited and controlled to uphold the fact that he is not ordinary but divine. Due to this control, there is bound to be misunderstanding and misinterpretation if care is not taken that could cause enormous tension if not handled properly and on time. The story also reveals that the people at some point in time experienced some sort of famine and had to device ways to keep the palace running. It further goes to show that there were tensions all the time amongst the different ethnic groups wherever they settled and the stronger group would always want to usurp powers from the weaker group. Thus developing defence mechanisms to keep the 'others' at arm's length was very crucial to maintain control over people and land. Land was and still remains one of the highly sort after natural resources in most Grassfield areas. It is also the most disputed commodity among the Grasslanders. Its quest has led to many farmer-grazer conflicts, interethnic skirmishes and the migration histories of the different peoples, some of which were peaceful and others brutal as lives were lost.

3.3 The Socio-Political Economy of the Papiakum People

Indigenous African knowledge systems have, for a very long time, suffered from Eurocentric biases. The Papiakum people have an eight day week calendar. Menteh, is a 'small country Sunday', a day of obligation dedicated for cleaning around the house and was also a market day before, that is no more the case now. No burial or death celebration takes place on this day. However, on this day, the Tindafue (Senior Nchenterh), Ngwifue (Fon's wives) and Princesses meet parallel. The Tindafue, are those working closely with the Fue, Fon, taking care of the royal insignias, serving as palace regulators and they are the ones to settle disputes among the Ngwifue. That's why they work simultaneously with them so that if there is any case they can trash it at once or look further to resolve in consequent meetings. The Tindafue meeting place is in Nda Nterh Pie (meeting house of royal page) while the women meet at any chosen spot within their quarters, either at Feumendzem, to the north or Mbandze, to the south of the Nda Mo'o, meeting house/hall to discuss on their general wellbeing; Funteh is the main market day. At the market square, all and sundry meet within this symbolic performing art space where lots of other social activities apart from buying and selling take place like courting, exchange of information and gifts amongst others.

Mbeh is the day the traditional council, Junior Nchenterh and Manjong, age groups, hold their meetings. The traditional council hold their meeting in Nda Mo'o while the Nchenterh in Nda Nterh Pie (house of royal servants) and Manjong in their different meeting places at the quarters. The traditional council handles all cases except those linked to witchcraft and poisoning. The Nchenterh which has limited access to the Ntoh are schooled on this day by a Tindafue; Sap is the main country Sunday where no use of either hoes/cutlasses is allowed. This is the day all the different Mwarngang or Ngomba meet at Ntoh Mwarngang. The highlight at this meeting is the handling of the cases concerning witch craft and poisoning and the Fon must be present for any verdict to be given. It was observed that during this day in the village, places are generally quiet even though most people are at home. No burial or any form of celebration takes place on this day; Ntetie another Mwarngang, Menyiyah (meeting of the Big Men or main decision makers) at Ntoh Mwarngang. They are usually seven members with the Fue and a junior Nchenterh who stay outside but are only called in if there is an errand to be run; Kemleh meeting day at Ngirri, of the esoteric society of the royal family made of Pier (Princes); Ntengieh another Mwarngang, Mensueshi meet at Ntoh Mwarngang. This group of able bodied young men take care of the difficult missions and their activities are nocturnal, which could be violent and Gham is the meeting of Pier, princes who have moved and settled out of the palace as heads of compounds. These however, do not include the brothers of the current Fue, on the throne, because their main libation ground is at the palace, Ntoh. Most of these meetings take place from 3-6pm after other activities of the day with the exception of Ntengieh whose meeting time is much later.

This is a demonstration of how structured this society is with different organs put in place for management and control. Though the Fons are auxiliaries to the state, they are given their due respect as they are the managers of the people at the grass root level. For instance, the land constitutional board is made of the Divisional Officer (DO), Fon, Surveyors and two other members from the community. Therefore, though the Fon is answerable to the DO as per state hierarchy, the DO cannot unilaterally take decisions about the people without consulting the Fon. This oversight could lead to great tensions as I experienced in a case where the DO went ahead to plant pillars on a piece of land without consulting the Fon. As my research partners will reiterate, the state is the state and tradition is tradition. The different structures work hand in glove for the enhancement of the society.

If the main market day is Tuesday the next will be on Wednesday. I noticed that when these fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the activities were more vibrant and the turn out of the populace bigger. Traders also came in from neighbouring villages and some as far off as Bamenda. The market square which lies below the ring road serves an arena for health and political campaigns. There two health centres, one owned by the state and the other by the Catholic mission who were the first to open a primary school in Baba I in 1947. Today the numbers of schools have increased significantly. My research partners who went to school in the village, and were mostly aged over 40, hold the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) School, Kengang with fond memories. The population form a religious web with Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion (ATR).

3.4 Pulling the Tikar Strings

In making corrections and adding comments to Koelle's Polyglotta Africana on the Cameroons Highland, Chilver and Kaberry (1965:118) made references to Tessmann (1932) who had identified 'Koelle's Papiah with Baba, the Munggaka term for Papiakum. This is a small chiefdom fairly recently settled in the hills on the northern side of the Ndop Plain in the Bamenda Prefecture. It derives its dynasty from Papia, a submerged but once important chiefdom conquered by the Bamum'. From these sentences in reference to the Papiakum people there was definitely a contact point in their migratory history with the Bali Nyonga people. According to Chilver and Kaberry (1970:251) when Gawolbe was killed and his army defeated near Dschang, there was a split in the army. The section under the leadership of Nyongpasi, settled in western Bamum at Kuti also known as Kupare, establishing relations with the remaining independent chiefdoms of Bamum before being chased out by Mbwombwo of Bamum.

According to the above Papiakum oral tradition, Koupa where they settled could be the same place as Kupare which will therefore mean they came in contact with Nyongpasi's group who then referred to them as Papiah in Munggaka as noted by Chilver and Kaberry (1965:118). If this is the case, then there is no doubt that these people crossed paths or came in contact with each other. This had always been a point of curiosity for me since the first day I stepped my feet into Baba I listening to their language. When asked how and if they were related to Bali Nyonga, there was no clear answer apart from the fact that both palaces had had close relations that later turned sour. Interestingly, as informed, there is a quarter in Bali Nyonga called Papia. Getting into the naming of this quarter might give more information on their previous contact and relations.

According to Chilver and Kaberry (1967:23) 'Mbwembwe's attack on the substantial Bamum chiefdom of Papia led to the crossing of the River Nun by its unconquered portion, under the leadership of Shangamagia. From a vantage point across the Nun, near Bagam, his son Nkanggaper, after depositing his treasure in Nso launched a counter-attack against Bamum and failed. His following must have been considerable since part of it remained in Bali-Kumbat whereas the other after seeking refuge with Bamunka finally moved off to establish an independent chiefdom on a spur in the northern part of the Ndop Plain to the east of Babungo. From here in the face of severe Fulani raid c. 1850, a refugee group found its way to Kom where it founded the Mbeba clan. Despite its small size, its identity as a Bamum-speaking successor state with a military reputation gave it greater influence than its size would seem to warrant. With its neighbour, the kingdom of Nso, it had traditions of friendship dating from its period in Bamum when its chief Shangamagia had given refuge to Sembum I of Nso following the second sack of Kovifem'.

Intrigued by the unannounced visit of Fon Mbinglo I of Nso to Baba I while on the field in 2011 before the onset of the rains to the Nikwa shrine, more questions were asked. Nikwa is the main shrine in Baba I where major sacrifices are made like praying for fertility, good harvest and protection of the land during Mei'nyi, the major cultural festival. Going to Nikwa during Mei'nyi is one of the high points during this festival. The Fon of Nso had also come to make sacrifices before the rain to bless his land in this same shrine. The strings could not be pulled together then why Baba I though previously informed that both palaces had close ties and these two fondoms were brotherly princes from Rifum. Also among the wives of the Fons in the palace of Baba I, those from Bamum and Nso formed the highest number from other ethnic groups. Moh Mbanka, the chief priest of this shrine, had left the main group to settle somewhere close to Nso before being brought back to the fold when the Baba I people finally settled at their current site. The above text more clearly brings to light the type of relationship both groups entertained for Sembum I of Nso who had sought refuge with Mbwombwo of Bamum from mounted raiders from the north and was refused. 'He subsequently received assistance from the ruler of Papia who was himself later driven out by Mbwombwo. This ruler was Shanghamagia, the father of Nkanggaper, who became the founder of the successor state of Papiakum in the Ndop Plain, south of Nso', Chilver and Kaberry (1970: 254-255). This relationship between the Chiefdoms brings to mind Nkwi (1986:41-63) who maintains that there was in precolonial times a network of peaceful alliances and diplomatic ties among chiefdoms in the Grassfields. He elaborated on how the peoples of the western Grassfields were in daily communion with each other in the 19th century. They traded mutually, exchanged women, gifts and visits. These peaceful activities he explained were carried out against a background of competition, mutual distrust and open warfare. No Chief could therefore guarantee peace, harmony and protection to his subjects unless peace pacts with neighbours were signed.

According to Papiakum tradition, there had apparently been threats from Bamum to attack, conquer or chase them away due to the treatment given their warring lord. Maybe the Papiakum people were simply becoming a threat to the Bamums and they wanted them out. To have given assistance to Sembum I of Nso said much about the importance and military might of Shanghamagia's chiefdom of Papiakum, Chilver and Kaberry (1965:118 and 1967:21). Their need to remain an independent chiefdom explains to an extent why they rather moved away and eventually settled in the Ndop Plain instead of staying captives of Bamum.

This show of might is also brought out in their oral tradition through the wars and skirmishes in which the Papiakum people were involved in within the plain before settling at their present site. These wars and skirmishes also show that Papiakum was a late-comer in the plain and had to find the means of imposing itself amongst other groups that had long been settled. Chilver and Kaberry term Papiakum and Bali-Kumbad as 'intrusive groups' of the Ndop Plain. Njoya's Histoire et coutÛmes de Bamum, Nso and Bali Nyonga traditions is an excellent missive in the understanding of events prior to their current settlement. In a salient way, this display of military might is today done during major traditional festivals like Mei'nyi and Samba which brings all and sundry related to Papiakum home. Having and owning a gun is also seen as an essential element into the process of manhood amongst the Papiakum people. Guns in reference here are largely known as Dane guns whose origin is from Denmark. It must be noted here that Denmark has not been studied in Cameroon history as a European power that had influence in Cameroon before the Germans. Nkwi (1986) and Warnier (1980) narrated how these guns reached the heart of the Grassfields.The guns arrived in the Grassfields through the Bight of Biafra as a result of the slave trade and

legitimate trade. Nkwi (1986:117-118) sketches out the routes which these guns passed through to enter this region. Figure 3.6 shows guns on display during a celebration.

Figure 3.6: Showing off of guns while dancing, an attestation of belonging to a social class, during Fue Kemshi's 25th anniversary of ascension to the throne.

Source: Photo by Author

Information on the exact number of rulers the Papiakum people have had before Shangamagia is lacking. However, from Shanghamagia, the genealogy is recounted according to the Papiakum tradition though without dates. There are a few hints as to the chronology of when some of these events might have taken place acknowledging though the limitation of her sources. Some of these events tie with the Papiakum traditions while others do not either by deliberate omission or due to a lack of emphasis that have gradually eroded them. Nonetheless, Chilver (1981:464-472) brings us closer in time frame to follow some key events. In the 18thCentury, Papiakum and Pati were in central Bamum. Mbwembwe of Bamum ascended the throne c. 1820-1825. Shangamagia granted refuge to Sembum I of Nso c. 1825-1830. Mbwembwe raided the surrounding chiefdoms like Papia c. 1830-1835. An unsuccessful revenge attack was launched by Nkanggaper. Nkemshi succeeded Nkanggaper and Papia was raided forcing Kemshi to take refuge in Nso before settling on Nso-Oku foothills c.1850-1880. During Zintgraff's passage through the Ndop Plain in 1889, Kemshi III was still on the throne. Menkaki who was very unpopular ascended the throne after Kemshi. Thereafter, it has been Nkanggaper III, Shanghamagia IV and presently Kemshi IV who was enthroned in 1989, Muafue-Mbarem (2012:69).

This list if established might go a long way to also indicate clearly where there are pockets of Papiakum people which the oral tradition leaves out and maybe reasons why they are where they are. Those in Bamum, Bali-Kumbad and Kom for instance, could bring us closer to a concise ethno-history of Papiakum. Kaberry (1962:288) and Chilver and Kaberry (1967:23) mentioned some treaties of friendship held by some of these groups. A critical look into long established friendship treaties could be another important source of information as some are today maintained while others have turned sour. There is an umbrella association of the North West Fons, NOWEFO which meet annually rotationally in the various palaces. Also there is that of the thirteen Fons of Ngoketunjia. They meet monthly rotationally in the various palaces. It was also observed that during conflict situations arising from misunderstanding between two Fons, a meeting is called up and the current chair is the Fon of Bamunka.

3.5 Succession Process

Baba I is not very different from the other Grassfield fondoms as mentioned earlier with 'a sacred kingship, a distinction between royals, commoners, tributaries and slaves, certain titles reserved for princes and princesses, constituted privy councils, a closed regulatory society, and , lastly, princes' fraternities – only indirectly political. The Ntoh remains the focal point of religious and ceremonial life and the headquarters of the principal association', (Kaberry 1962:286).

Succession to the throne is patrilineal with all the sons of the Fon gotten after succeeding the throne eligible. The mother however must be of Papiakum parentage. This has been the case though the palace has a history of marrying wives from friendly fondoms as well as elsewhere. At the family level, sons will mostly succeed their fathers. There is no strict rule on how the successor is chosen amongst a man's son. Where they are no sons, a daughter takes charge and will eventually be inherited by her son. This daughter is not married off whether a lone child or chosen amongst the daughters but expected to bear children who will be considered as her siblings.

This brings to mind the story of Anastasia, a lone child of her parent. She is a mother of seven (five girls and two boys) and had this to say about her peculiar situation. 'I'm a lone child of my parents. I did not get married. According to Baba tradition if your father marries a wife and you are an only child, a girl, you will not be given out for marriage. To clear this according to tradition, they have to go back and pay the dowry where they were supposed to. According to traditional customs, being an only girl child, dowry had to be given to my mother's compound because it is their first food' (Anastasia, personal communication, April 15, 2011).

Following the Papiakum customs she was married off to her father in a sense as he paid her bride price to the mother's family. In her case her mother actually did make provision for this symbolic marriage to take place as her father had passed away. This is to ensure the continuity of her father's name since all her children will be considered her siblings and the man who fathered them can lay no claim on them. Taking about her current situation she said, 'I am the only one managing with them (her children) because the man I begged the children from died in a motor accident. For me I don't know how to be jumping around and not especially now that there is illness outside'. Since she has this status of a female lone child, she controls and manages all her father's land and these properties are seen and considered as hers. Eventually, all these properties will be handed over to her two sons (brothers) and one of them will become the successor of her father. For the time being everyone knows they are her properties and she has no problem thus far concerning land. In a way the society sees her as a man as the circumstances of her life condition has positioned her within men's sphere of dominance and control (Anastasia, personal communication, April 15, 2011).

While on the field, I witnessed a number of family feuds caused by succession process. For some families the member even broke away from their main family settlement area to an entirely new site. Others, siblings barely tolerated each other and could be very casual in their relations as if they were not related at all. There were a few cases of women who either returned to their father's compound or negotiated and got land to construct on a neutral land where they settled with or without their children. These contestations were not reserved only for polygamous homes/families but for all.

The above historical background goes to confirm that the Papiakum are a mobile people. This mobility did not however stop when they gained a permanent settlement on the

Ndop Plain. After the Papiakum adopted a site for their final settlement, Baba I, after wandering, the people continue to witness waves of migration to different parts of Cameroon and beyond for various reasons amongst which were: Trade and Education. Through these different means their migration and mobilities with materiality would connect them to the other peoples of the Grassfields of Cameroon. This will elucidate how these different modes of migration/mobility influence the material culture of the people.

3.6 Papiakum in Trade and Trade Routes in the Grassfields

Nkwi (1986:112) outlined the different types of trade that characterised the West African markets and sited the two that took place in the western Grassfields as the relay and network trade. The relay trade was made up of several traders who passed on their goods through a chain of person till it reached its final destination or a single merchant exchanging his goods along a designated trade route. The relay trade consisted of a number of traders who worked as middlemen in the distribution of a specific scarce commodity such as salt, cloths and guns from the northern markets or Hausa traders. The network trade on the other hand was operated by merchants who controlled the supply chain of goods from its acquisition to its final deposition. Here the patrons had keen interest and monopoly over certain goods. Both relay and network trade covered long distances and demands at terminal units.

Trading took the Papiakum people to Nigeria. The people of Baba I like other peoples of the Grassfields were not spared of the trading activities that were taking place in the middle of the 19th Century where there were already specialised production and trade centres linking various peoples. Citing Warnier 1975, Nkwi continued to elaborate on the different trade routes and alliances formed in the Grassfields between chiefdoms to maintain their hegemony over smaller or weaker chiefdoms. These trade routes were usually means through 'which commercial, religious and cultural contacts were established.

Trade networks were formed with the Fon and notables acting as patrons who had young bodily able men who either served as carriers or distributors in the supply chain. From Baba I, carrier boys moved their merchandise to Nigeria via Nso or Oku which was and established trade centre or from Nigeria via Nso to Baba I. These traders and their carrier boys eventually created connections and friendships in the trade centres or terminal points were some Papiakum people would finally settle. These persons on their part will develop networks which will serve their people during their trade activities. For these migrants, their new found home would serve as new terminals or stopovers for those coming from home. Those who had settled outside depended on the mobile traders to maintain their communication and connection between those left behind and at home. Special friendship bonds were therefore created, nurtured and sustained through various means to maintain connection with those at home as Nkwi (2011) recounts among the Kom people of the grassfield.

Women like Rose Namanyi 'Big Mami' were used for example to maintain these friendship ties as they were ferried away to marry men who had settled in far away land. Big Mami, as she is fondly called, was one of the privileged princesses of the Baba 1 palace to have had the opportunity to attend the Native Authority School in Ndop in the 1940s. She was actually the first grandchild of Fue Kanghapere, the grandfather to the current Fon, Fue Kemshi II. As she narrated, she had come home from Ndop to ask for Empire Day uniform but was instead whisked off for marriage to a man the Fon had promised a wife. After spending just 2years at the Native Authority school she was ferried to an unknown land, Mamfe, at the tender age of 14 on board a council lorry that was on its way to Lagos for the

Chiefs meeting to a man she hardly knew anything about. Entering a lorry for the first time to embark on this life changing journey, she never even knew she was actually being escorted to marriage by her uncle, Moh Fessame until they got to their destination in November 1947 as she was just following the instruction from the Fon. In Mamfe, a neighbouring town on the Cameroonian Nigerian borders, Big Mami was sent off by Peter Mallama, her prospective husband, to stay at the mission in Okonyong with Reverend Sisters to learn the Catholic doctrine for baptism and later on marriage in 1948. After much resistance in a foreign land she knew not she finally caved in to the consummation of their marriage and had to learn to be an officer's wife. Their first child, Joakim was born in 1950.

According to Fue Kemshi IV, Moh Fessame and Moh Kong the different trading activities saw the coming of new goods: cigarettes, Dane guns, gun powder, cloth (ndop cloth, loin cloth and fairly used clothes or second hand clothes), shoes, cars, zinc, nails and household utensils) and services (labourers like builders and carpenters) that will gradually change the landscape of the place. The above research partners (Fue Kemshi IV, Moh Fessame and Moh Kong) are successors of their fathers who were key persons or patrons in the Baba I trade routes. Unfortunately it was noted during field work that all the lead persons within the Papiakum trade routes had passed on. Fue Kemshi IV noted that the first car (lorry) into the village was bought by Moh Nisome and the second by Moh Fessame. This lorry was called 'nzebomeiyni' (this world is for God). In concordance with Fue Kemshi IV, Moh Fessame will proudly inform me in his Kumba residence how his father was the first person in Baba I to construct a stone house roofed with zinc. Moh Kong will emphasise how he is jealously keeping the set of wooden chairs on display in the sitting room in the village. One of my informants (Yoyo) would even be named after one of these material objects brought back. Yoyo narrated how in the late 1940s when the fabric which later became known as Yoyo was in vogue amongst the women in Baba I from Nigeria, a princess (his mother) gave birth and declared her son to be her Yoyo as she could not afford this piece of cloth. This go to indicate that people either got nicknames from the goods they were supplying or children were actually named after ostentatious goods just like Yoyo.

It is worth noting that these patrons refused their children to part take in the trade activities as carriers but recruited and employed other young able men. Fue Kemshi IV talked of how he went on an adventure with a group of carriers without prior knowledge of his father. There was an embargo on young princes not to follow the trade caravan. Two of his friends joined him for the expedition to Nigeria through Oku following a group of young carriers at the age of 17. As they set out for the journey they just their food (garri and koli-koli-dried groundnut paste shaped and baked in forms of little sticks) and depended on wild fruits spring water as well. He says, 'we had to use our 'Dschang (rubber) shoes' as bowls to soak our garri to eat with our fingers'. He describes how after two days of trekking they started regretting their decision as they realised it was a journey of over a 1000km. Since the trio could not return either they were encouraged by the senior carriers to preserve. On the return lag they were each given a load to carry which they could not manage midway. These were taken and they had only their personal stuff they had bought (biscuit, red savon (tablets of washing soap) and 7/60, a popular antibiotic medication).Though he could not carry much he was glad for the opportunity which has remained a great source of inspiration for him as he ascended the throne and continued trading.

Upon return, he had to face the wrath of his father who had warned that none of them should participate in the treacherous journey. He made sure he stayed away from the gaze of his father for a long time after he returned. By staying from his father whom he had

disobeyed goes to confirm what Nkwi (2011:47) noted among the Kom people that it was 'certain merchants do not take their children own for short or long distance trade'. During this period he stayed with one of his elder brothers down towards the market square and only returned to the palace when he deemed it was safe. He continues that amongst their peers they treated as little heroes for braving the hazardous trip. Not long this he moved entirely out of the palace and got a room around the market where he stayed until he was rounded up and brought back into the palace as successor to the throne.

However, from the carriers who undertook these trip they eventually recruited young boys who learnt the trade by following along. This likely gave rise to the boy-boy relationship still being practiced among patrons and their apprentices. This practice is not limited only to the traders but also to other spheres of life in the society where young boys went into training like Nchindas in the palace. Interestingly this is not unique to the Grassfields nor to Africa as Vickerstaff (2007) pointed out in her article as she looked on apprenticeships and youth transitions more widely by reflecting back upon the historical experience of the apprenticeship model in Great Britain between1944–1982. Her discussion focused upon the socialisation aspects of apprenticeship and concluded that a key feature of good apprenticeships in the post- war period was that they offered a sheltered and extended period in which the young person was able to grow up and become job-ready.

3.7 Education

Trading also provoked another wave of migration, this time geared towards education. Before 1950, there was hardly any school in this area. The nearest place where people could go to school was to the coastal region of Cameroon or neighbouring Nigeria. Due to established connections the later was preferred as the choice place to pursuit education. Nkwi (2011) states how the first school to standard six was created by 1928 making Kom an educational centre for the region. He will show how the people from Kom got their education from Nigeria and returned as professionals in fields like photography, secretaries, Nurses, Teachers etc. By this time schools were being opened by the colonial administrators and missionaries in the Grassfields region. The location of these schools also caused another wave of internal migration of a certain class of people. This would continue until after independent when the distances covered by young men especially interested in formal education was reduced.

However as most of my informants (Mama, Ma Rose, Magdalene, Sylvester, Victor and Yoyo) would recount, it was only in the 70s that Baba I got its first primary school established by the Catholic missionaries. This implies that before this time, the Papiakum people who had been exposed to schools through trade could only go or send their children to distant villages like Kumbo and Bamuka, Ndop for 'whiteman education'. Nso and Ndop represented the centres of formal education closest where both primary and secondary schools had been created. In this part of the Grassfields the creation of mission schools preceded that of the colonial administration.

Education pursuit therefore kept this population mobile because most of my informants who had attempted secondary education and above had to go to other centres. There, they either stayed with relatives or friends of their parents depending on the established connection previously made especially through trade routes. As the number of young men especially in pursuit of education increased as well as the creation of more schools by the government after independent, other means of accommodation had to be sorted. Kumbo, Ndop, Bambui, Bamenda and Mbengwi were the major educational centres for most of my informants. In these areas there were also possibilities of renting in private

home as few of the schools had hostel facilities which were even limited in number.

For the women, migration for education purpose was a very slow process. Ma Rose recounts how very few of them were permitted to attend the Native Authority (NA) school in Ndop which was the closest. She insisted marriage was the primordial thing that took young girls away from home. Their education most often than not ended at the elementary stage, primary school, if they were lucky to finished. Most often than not as was with her case, she was ferried off to the border town of Ekok for an arranged marriage between her father and his friend.

3.7.1 University/Professional Training

For those who wanted to continue with their university studies or other professional training after Secondary or High School were obliged to travel to other parts of the country. Before 1992, there was just one state owned university in the country and was also the lone university situated in the political capital of Cameroon, Yaounde. So the young people from Baba I who could not travel out of the country migrated to Yaounde to continue with their studies as well as other professional schools that was mostly located in this part of the country. After these training and courses, there was the gradual development of another social class of people known as civil servants like service men and teachers. These persons were posted to work in different parts of the country where they settled and started their families. For most of these families they had other relatives coming to stay with them either to seek for petite jobs or continue their education. For most of these Papiakum people like the other peoples of the Grassfields, their houses or homes became like some sort of centres of recruitment or served as springboards for others to establish themselves out there.

These families who settled outside also gave birth to another class of migrants. Their children were exposed to other opportunities different from those born at home. De Bruijn (2014) deals with one of the concrete examples from Baba I. She tracks the activities of one of such families from Baba I showing how their tentacles eventually spread at home and abroad but they stayed connected virtually mostly through mobile phones. Most of my research partners had similar experiences with their family members spread out across the country and abroad. There is hardly any family that is not affected as such.

3.8 ‘Greener Pastures’

Stories of those who had settled or working out and were doing well fairly well in their new occupations filtered back to the village. These feedbacks came from those who had visited them or from the material objects they themselves brought home or sent. These therefore made these new places attractive for the young people who wanted to travel. These places apparently were greener pastures as they believed where they could search for better and brighter future. This migration tendency gave rise to the bushfalling metaphor propagated by Nyamnjoh (2009) and later followed up by Alpes (2012) and Atekmangoh (2017). These authors actually placed their focus on Bushfallers outside the country. A concept which I have however here expanded to include urban centres in Cameroon based on empirical evidences from the field. The drive remained same whether at home or abroad for these Papiakum young people leaving home in search of greener pastures. Two motives stood out distinctively, education and trade, which cumulated into seeking for greener pastures. As Nyamnjoh (2009), Alpes (2012) and Atekmangoh (2017) would argue the home village remain the place to return at the end of the day, with a smile on the face or with sadness. This wish or action illustrate the emotional attachment these persons have with home. To ensure and insure means investing in one's home village materially and through

relationships. Landed investments standout as the strongest physical evidence which have gone a long way to affect assess to land of the Papiakum.

3.9 Conclusion

The Tikar origin of the Papiakum people who had a late entry onto the Ndop plain has been established through the various writers of the Grassfields. Through their migratory history they came in contact with the Bamum, Nso and Bamunka groups before their final settlement. This however did not stop their mobility for like most of the other ethnic groups in the Grassfields; they actively participated in the trading activities that were taking place in this part of the country. By their participation in these trading routes, the community started experiencing social changes brought about the traders. In concordance with Nkwi (2011) these traders returned home with new ideas and things that will gradually usher changes which were accelerated with the coming of church and schools.

Mami Magdalene Fanwi Dzefemewoh's story will be used to connect the discussion of this chapter to the key themes of this study: the relation between mobility, material culture and access to land. As De Bruijn and Van Dijk (2003) posits, in mobility people go along and around with different baggage, known and unknown. This baggage is seen here as the material culture which is tangible and intangible which are valued and revaluated during the course of their journey in relation in connection with people. Their actions which have visual dimensions will illustrate how people are engaged in producing visible objects, reflexively constructing their visual environment and communicating by visual means. These visual worlds reflect different ways of seeing and appreciating persons within their community. As Zittoun (2015) notes that social relations unfold between people, in specific societies yet these social relations are never immediate, or naked and they appear as always mediated. In effect, people's relationships are made through exchanges of words and objects, filtered by beliefs and expectations. Objects are therefore rarely inert; not only do most objects experience peripatetic lives before arriving at a destination, many kinds of objects continue to be moved, repositioned, or displaced throughout their existence. One might go so far as to say that mobility is an inherent property, or even a defining element, of material culture.

Mami Magdalene Fanwi Dzefemewoh (chairperson of Parish Council, St Mark Quasi Parish) was born in Baba I opposite the catholic school. At the age of seven she went across the street to the lone school in 1955. By then Catholic Primary School ended at Standard 4. She had to leave home to stay with her father's Godfather at Babanki Tungo where she completed her primary studies in 1962 successfully earning a standard six certificate. Her father's follower, Pa Patrick Meto, who had done his study in Nigeria, took her to Onitsha. Her educational path therefore took her away from home through the following itinerary; Babanki Tungo for two years to complete her primary school, Onitsha – Nigerian for the first year of her Secondary School and Okoyong – Mamfe the last four years at secondary school. Unlike Mami Rose Mallam whose education was abruptly ended, she was the only female in Baba I above 55 whose education was not interrupted for marriage until the end and actually started working. As Martin (2004) posits the mobility of women affects the roles of both female and male migrants, families left behind in the migration process, and source and destination communities and countries of migrants. This could explain the reaction from her family members against her going to school and her role in sponsoring her siblings.

Through her educational path, one experienced physical and social mobility. The fact that she schooled outside meant also her perspective of how she viewed things were different. She insisted to her husband for instance that they should build a house after they got married to avoid any inconveniences. For her, her husband and she were in a social class given their education that they had to leave their imprints within their community. Even though this couple had spent a good number of years out of the village for educational purpose, Magdalene did not forget about the material indicator of one's' belonging on the Papiakum landscape. By convincing her husband for them to construct a big house, she was sort of sparing him from the ridicule he might have received from his peers and society at large. It is interesting to note the type of house she wanted, a big house (Figure 3.7). I will argue due to her travel and education, her mentality of what a house should be was different. She did not just want them to have just a roof over their, 'a kitchen not a house' as proposed by her husband but a spacious house at a time that it was not a common sight.

Figure 3.7: Mami Magdalene Fanwi's home at Mbanka Quarter Baba I

Source: Photo by Author

Her story takes us back to the Papiakum trading route to Nigeria. By being recognized by traders at the Onitsha market confirms that this community being a mobile society had a lot of movement of people and goods. This means that the society was introduced to new goods at various points in time by these traders. This goes to corroborate the story of Yoyo's being named after a trending cloth at the time. The movement of these things into the society is reassessed. As they are being reassessed so too does it affect the socio- cultural and political hierarchy of the community. This brings to mind Kopytoff (1986) on how objects go through different phases of valuations as they change context. Through these traders, building materials and other household equipment started slipping into the community and thus gradually changing their perspective on houses. The type of building material used in these houses created a sort of social class. Looking at the objects as such connectivity is established as the consequences of contact is reflected in the society. As Hahn and Weiss (2013) will point out 'it is not always use value, but in some moments of an object's life also a mnemonic value or a personal value, which is attached to the object. Whereas the new object may appear on someone's horizon as a commodity with a fixed or negotiable price, in later stages of the biography there may be moments when the very same object becomes an unalienable personal object'.

As a career woman she did not lost touch with home as she travelled to her different posts. She started off with the council in Ndop, Bamenda and then to Kumba after marriage.

While in Kumba she joined the Department of Agriculture working with the community development section. Then back to Bamenda from Kumba, to Ndop and Bamenda where she went on retirement. During this period she was a pillar for her siblings and parents as she assisted in their education and upkeep. She pointed out that it is very important for a girl child to go to school 'before even getting married because they will help the husband, and help the family and the children more than any other person'. This is seen clearly in the way she managed her family after the dead of her husband after barely 12years of marriage. Through her career she experienced physical mobility by her different posting as well as social mobility via marriage and her obligations towards her family. The community also held her in high esteem and I met her as the chair person of the parish council. From her dressing and the way she carried herself it could be immediately observed that she had been career woman who worked and lived outside the village for a long time.

Building at home was something she was very conscious of when she got married. She was aware of its social implication for her husband who had lived most of his life abroad. Without a house of theirs in the village the husband would have lost respect among his kin and friends. His time abroad and professional career would have been considered useless without a roof over their head. The act of encouraging her husband to construct something at home qualifies her as a good woman within the Papiakum philosophy. This would be re-emphasised when she built this new house and moved in after her retirement. Though she is the brain behind it, the house will always be termed her husband's.

Looking closely at Mami Magdalene's story within the Papiakum context the fact that objects are not static, neither are their users and viewers is reiterated. According to Edwards (2010: 153).The three-dimensionality of objects enhances this effect. Objects have different sides and may have multiple parts and interiors as well as exteriors. Even when an object is stationary in a museum, a visitor may walk around it and perceive it from different perspectives, and it may change its meaning in juxtaposition with nearby objects that slide in and out of view. Mobile viewers and users thus have access to different interpretations of a single object, challenging the tendency to privilege a particular viewpoint. The manner in which she engaged in the construction of her house brought out the different views of the society on persons and things. She was especially scrutinized for being a woman and widower. Having lived outside due to her educational and career she definitely had different perspective of viewing and appreciating things.

Mami Magdalene's story goes further to show that making a home often involves large amounts of 'symbolic labour' expended on the house over a lengthy period of time. Thus investing in a home is not just an idea or a space but an active cultural process in which home-making practices are all those by means of which dwellers ground personal and social meanings in the new residence Ariztia (2012). She like most of the researchers took pride in their houses. Investing in these infrastructures could not be made possibility without the access to land. Land therefore becomes a crucial element that will be delved into in the next chapter. This will go to elucidate further how the mobility and investments of these urbanites are constantly affecting the socio-cultural fabrics and hierarchies of their community.

4. Access to Land and Conflicts

4.1 Introduction

Understanding mobility and the need to demonstrate its achievement through the use of the highly disputed natural resource, land for building of mansions and the opening up of large scale farms by urban elite is a subject that has been going on amongst Africanists for some time now. Importantly, these large and modern houses are contested by the indigenous people as well. It will be pivotal here to find out how these actions affecting the social fabrics of the community that they are constantly seeking to enact their belonging and identity through material culture. Access to land generally speaking especially in rural Africa is tied to one's membership and status, labour and investment of capital within various social units in the community making it almost impossible to take out issues of belonging and/or identity when questions on land arise. Scholars such as Berry (1989), Shipton and Goheen (1992), Goheen (1996) and Ribot and Peluso (2003) have done some excellent work on land and according to them land is seen as a means of personal and social identification. These notions on land, belonging and/or identity are delicately interwoven within a web of social connections making 'land an important social asset in Africa' as it is a means through which local and descent group affiliations are maintained (Haugerud, 1989:61-62 and Berry, 1989:42). It is therefore only through this resource that we will get to understand to an extent why these urbanites are returning home, acquiring land and building these houses which are the main sources of attraction in this thesis. In order to construct a house, we need land and in order to gain access you must go through various processes of negotiation that would permit you to acquire land.

The pith of this chapter lies on the access of land. Accessibility from the perspective of the Papiakum people is crucial in understanding their materiality. Through cultivation, houses, schools, health centres etc people are able to access land in multiple ways. Without land the infrastructural changes on the landscape becomes impossible. This chapter delves therefore not only answer the question of access to land but it is also on the aspect of land conflict and how it is managed within this community. This will not only deepen our knowledge of the ethnography of the people but expand discussions on the changes brought by these urbanites through their landed and social investments. Fundamentally, this chapter rotates on the fabric of social relation amongst the Papiakum when they did settle in their present site. It questions how land was distributed so as to accommodate each other and to enable the people to live in harmony. Due to how people relate with it, land is said to be gendered. However, having, owning or using land does not make it safe and free because no matter how one relates with land, there are always conflicts especially when it comes to the question of access. These conflicts stem mainly from the fact that land has a social life through people's relations to and with it. Land here will not be taken simply as a place or thing but will be regarded as a mobile and immobile material and immaterial culture which people use for varied 'purposes: not just to produce the material conditions of survival and enrichment, but also to gain control over others, and to define personal and social identities' and to a larger extent, power (Shipton and Goheen, 1992:307).

The negotiations within these processes will be a vital point as they no doubt affect people's everyday relations. It also discusses how gender relations played out in terms of access and usage with regards also to competition and conflicts. Ribot and Peluso (2003:153-156), opines that 'access as the ability to benefit from things-including material objects, persons, institutions and symbols … helps us understand why some people or

institutions benefit from resources, whether or not they have the right to them.' It is this constant striving for the benefits from this resource that makes societies tick as power game comes to play in the process to gain, control and maintain access.

This chapter is structured in three parts: the land tenure system, various mechanisms to gain access to land and different types of land conflicts existing. These processes of gaining access to land amongst the Papiakum is quite relevant to the understanding of mobility, landscapes and general infrastructure because it is only through these processes therefore that we can understand and appreciate how and why some urbanites could access land within certain location for their investments. Theirs may not be very different to that of most of the other peoples of the Grassfields areas. With the use of empirical cases, I will be able to critically appreciate what is happening in Baba I. Also in this process, I will show how the mobility of people and ideas are influencing the land tenure systems, thus, affecting the socio-cultural and political connections amongst the Papiakum people.

4.2 The Land Tenure System in Cameroon

During the pre-colonial period in the Western Highlands of Cameroon, people were administered under Fondoms (Kingdoms) and these Fondoms were ruled as independent states that later became auxiliaries to the colonial administration and the present state of Cameroon. Under the traditional hierarchical systems, the Fons, usually imbued with quasi-religious functions manage the affairs of their states with the assistance of the big notables. Notables were in charge of different quarters, and constituted the council assisting the Fon to govern the village. Each notable had an area of land under his control and the land was allocated to him and his families. Land was/is collectively owned by the village under the leadership of the Fon as he was/is the custodian of the land according to customary law still in place. Men were in charge of land and as an obligation to allocate land to each of their wives for cultivation and to their sons for building as the need arises as land was considered the lifeblood of the community. If a man died without a son, his land became communal property again. Land was community property, inalienable and even sacred that was handed down from one generation to another. Talks about single ownership were far-fetched as individuals could only have a right of enjoyment to satisfy their food and housing needs. It is relevant to note that the allocation of land to members and possession varied from one region to another and from one ethnic group to another. This type of land management was and is generally known as "customary" or "traditional" land tenure (Chilver and Kaberry, 1967; Goheen, 1996).

Colonialism came with the introduction of individual land titling through fulfilling certain administrative procedures; land became private property that could be disposed of at will. The German colonial administration (1884-1914), though short-lived, extended its influence throughout Cameroon. Cameroonian territory was delimited under the Germans introducing registration in the Grundbuch as a principle of land securitization. This was mainly in their favour as they occupied vast expanses of land along the coastal regions of Cameroon for banana, palms, rubber and tea plantations.

After World War 1, Cameroon came under the French and British rule. In French speaking Cameroon prior to independence, three land tenure systems were attainable. The transcription system, under which each real property owned, had to be recorded in a special register reserved only to French 'expatriates'. The customary land rights recognition system for indigenous peoples that required them to prove effective occupancy to the administrative authorities for rights over the land to be recognised and a land registration book issued which was lower in status to land certificate. The registration system was for all

Cameroonians to have their customary rights established following a procedure that led to the issuance of the land registration book with a probative value (African Development Bank (ADB) Report, 2009).

In the northern and southern parts of Cameroon placed under the British, the Land and Native Rights Ordinance was issued to enable all and sundry to use and occupy land with two types of right of occupancy: the Statutory Right of Occupancy for non- indigenes and the Customary Right of Occupancy to indigenes. The Governor by an article added later on to the ordinance could revoke the customary right of occupancy at any time. Freehold land or leasehold land was introduced afterwards to guarantee access to full ownership of land. Outside these two land categories, all occupied or unoccupied land was declared as customary land. All these measures emanated due to the importance of traditional forms of access to land and the complexity of the land issue which every survey including those to modernize the lands and surveys sectors, must take into account (ADB, 2009).

The reunification of Cameroon in 1972 provided a platform for harmonization reforms of the different land tenure systems according to Ordinance No. 74-1 and 74-2 of 6 July 1974 which classified land as Private, owned by individuals and corporate entities, groups or the state and must be titled and registered. By Public land this referred to highways, parks, waterways as examples held by the state for all and sundry in Cameroon while National land referred to most unoccupied land and land held by communities under customary law, informal settlements and grazing land with the state having the power to allocate use rights to individuals or groups or convert such land into the state's private or public property.

The following tenure types are recognized by formal law; Ownership where landowners have rights to exclusive possession and use of their land, the right to mortgage the land, and the right to transfer the land and all these must be registered; The state can grant Usufruct rights to occupants of national land especially to unregistered community land; Leaseholds can be granted by private parties or the state under terms agreed to by the parties. Leasing, rental arrangements and share cropping are some common deals made on the ground; Profit or license right for customary communities to benefit products from unoccupied national land until assigned to a particular use by the state (GOC Land Law No. 74-1, 1974 and ADB, 2009).

However, most land in Cameroon has been obtained through purchase, leasing, borrowing, inheritance, or allocation by traditional leaders. The process of obtaining a land certificate has three phases: Administrative for assessing the land occupation and development taken care of by the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Technical for its physical description done by the Department of Surveys and Legal for analysing the conditions of access to property right by the Department of State Property and the Department of Land Tenure. The above mentioned departments are under the Ministry of State Property and Land Tenure. The registration procedure formally will take 93 days and costs 18% of its value which requires a copy of the property deed at the Land Registry, drafts and final versions notarized, and registration with the Tax Authorities and Land Registry. However, the registration process is generally considered cumbersome, expensive and time-consuming (GOC Land Law No. 74-1, 1974; Halle, 2006; ADB, 2009; USAID, 2011).

Though the authority for registration was decentralized to local levels in 2005, with the prefect-level Land Consultation Boards assuming responsibility for demarcating land and adjudicating rights, the Land Consultation Boards and local government offices systems, equipment, financial support and training for the process to function as intended.

This has made the vast majority of the population to continuously depend on the customary law with its insecurities and limitations.

In addition to costs associated with registration, gaps in the land administration processes and infrastructure have contributed to slowing the transition from customary property rights to private ownership of property. Land tenure insecurity has grown rather than diminished. Reports of multiple sales of the same land, false land certificates, and inaccuracies in boundary definitions are commonplace, and conflicts and disputes are frequent. In general, the registration process does not improve tenure security, and banks, landholders or buyers do not rely on the system. As part of the state's efforts to modernize agriculture, land has been made available to politically and economically powerful individuals and entities (GOC Land Law No. 74-1, 1974; Halle, 2006; ADB, 2009; USAID, 2011).

4.3 Land Tenure System in Baba I

The Papiakum people rely more on customary laws for the acquisition of land and their procedures varies amongst the different peoples of the Grassfield. Land's mobility as a cultural resource could be seen through its social history because land in itself has its own life. Traditionally, land was partitioned according to the different compounds (a large unit of several families), that formed various quarters under a quarter head and all these quarter heads were/and/or, answerable to the Fon who was/is the custodian as well as the auxiliary of the government of the entire land surface under his jurisdiction. The different compounds further distributed the land accordingly to various heads of households and heads of households to their wives and children (temporarily to the daughters and permanently for the sons). Migrants are settled by families that they have had close ties with or given land by the Fon depending on their reasons for migrating. This in fact is not different from what was attained during the pre-colonial times but of course this has been undergoing some changes.

However, men are generally regarded as guidance of the land as per their customs and conventions which are still being upheld. Immediately a man marries, though his/their family might surrender part of his/their land to his wife/wives, it is still considered his/their property. When a woman is granted access to land through marriage by the husband or his family, this becomes hers as she is the one farming on it and maintaining the borders. Once a piece of land is to be given her, the wife becomes its manager and controller till she dies or she starts sharing the land to her children or daughters in-law. However, the land remains the property of the husband though management and control is in the hands the wife/wives.

When it comes to the sale of the land, it becomes problematic and gender roles are evoked. It was a taboo for a woman to sell land while the husband was alive or dead likewise the husband without the consent of the wife. The sale of land can only be done by the husband in consultation with the wife. He must consent with the wife if he thinks of doing something on or about it. A sale of land especially family property was a taboo. A transfer of ownership with a token was just what was required. Monetary value was not so much attached to it as it is today as it was considered a shameful act. This is still the case to a certain extent these days as a good number of research partners pointed out. Land is mostly sold as a last resort to handle some family financial crisis where there is no option left like in the case of ill health.

In Baba I, there are reserved areas that are closed sacred places and others open like the hills, swamps and some forests that are considered community land. These open places

especially are mostly used for grazing activities but for the swamps which are used for rice cultivation with access strictly under the control of the Fon. With the closed and sacred places, access is very limited and only members of specific social groupings do have access into them. When it comes to the practicalities of ownership, there is a traditional process that one must follow for recognition and legitimacy. This process involves the use of five basic items; a branch of fig tree or peace plant, red oil, salt, cam wood and chicken. Those present during the occasion will depend on who and how you are acquiring the land. If it is the Fon giving you the land, it is the traditional council that will be witness to the scene and perform the ritual of handing over as delegated by the Fon. If land is bought from an individual, it is the person selling that will perform the rite which means handing over his piece of land to the buyer. When it comes to women acquiring land from her family, the father or head of the family will be in charge. Women can also negotiate and buy land elsewhere which was not a common practice but it is gradually gaining grounds. Note that sons begotten out of wedlock are considered the mother's sibling by her family. In all cases, the neighbours around the land must be present so that boundaries are properly defined and your witnesses will be your friends or whoever was invited to the scene.

On the designated day, all persons concerned go to the site with symbolic items; a fig tree branch or peace plant, red oil, salt, cam wood and chicken to enact the handing over rite. Whether it is the representative of the traditional council or an individual, the branch of the fig tree is pegged into the ground, rubbed with red oil, the fowl's throat cut and the blood poured over the branch; cam wood and salt are then sprinkled over. Some soil is then taken from the place and given to the person acquiring the land. This is a symbolic action meaning that the land has been handed over to the buyer. When this ritual is performed, the buyer could now lay claim on it as from that day. Symbolically, the blood from the chicken is a binding pact, the cam wood and salt for peace and fertility on the land (these items are essential during marriage ceremony as well) and the branch and oil for fruitful production. If anything goes wrong or is going wrong, the buyer could declare him or herself innocent by taking some soil in his/her hands from the land to swear or curse. The Papiakum people believe that if the buyer genuinely acquired a piece of land according to the traditional norms, whatever happens to the land, the buyer will be vindicated and the curse will fall on the culprit and vice versa (Traditional Council, 2009).

4.4 The Dynamics of Accessing Land in Baba I

Land like any other natural resources that embody value, has undergone a process that has made it a cultural resource. This is so because land has been adopted and imbued with symbolic cultural insignias and values that give it its meaning and place within the community. This cultural resource has been defined and redefined within specific contexts. This depends on the community and who is negotiating to acquire, use or own the land. The social life of things which is tied to personal, family and community comes as a binding force making it difficult to separate the social history and cultural biography of objects. Though land is fixed, it is highly mobile when looked at from the perspective of its socialness, 'for it is the social history of things, over large periods of time and at large social levels, that constrain the forms, meaning and structure of more short-term, specific and intimate trajectories' and also, shifts in the cultural biography of things may in the long run lead to shifts in their social history (Appadurai, 1996:36).

Berry (1989) and Ribot and Peluso (2003),carried out some work on access analysis which is the process of identification and the mapping out the different mechanisms, by which access is gained, controlled and maintained. Their work resonates with the findings

in Baba I. This is cognizance of the fact that access patterns have changed over time and they could be understood as processes. These mechanisms of access are placed under two broad categories. Firstly, the structural and relational access mechanisms which take care of technology, capital, markets, labour, knowledge, authority, identities and social relations. Secondly, right-based which include illegal access. These categories operate parallel to shape how benefits are gained, controlled and maintained. As stated by Ribot and Peluso (2003:155) ‘benefits are important because people, institutions and societies live on and for them and clash and cooperate over them. These actions prompted by the socialness of land will further be expanded using concrete cases from the field.

4.5 Structural and Relational Access Mechanisms

The hierarchical structure of the Papiakum people have over the years created and recreated different ways by which benefits from land can be gotten. In order to illustrate this properly as postulated by Ribot and Peluso (2003: 160-164), we have to get into the structural and relational access mechanisms, 'exploring how technology, capital, market, knowledge, authority, social identities and social relations can shape or influence access. 'Benefits can be redistributed and captured in the course of changing social relations' and 'the ability to benefit from resources is mediated by constraints established by the specific political-economic and cultural frames within which access to resource is sought'. Through concrete examples I am going to illustrate how these different access mechanisms stated by Ribot and Peluso play out amongst the Papiakum people.

Access to Technology facilitates access to benefit from resources which otherwise could be impossible to gain, control or maintain. After countless, frustrating and costly trespasses by animals and people on one of his plots where he had planted over 2000 palms, Moh Tanghongho decided it was time to put a fence around the land. This restricted and controlled the movement of people and animals into the farm. This fence also made it possible for him to reinvest in the tree plants and giving breathing space for the other plants to survive, thus, regaining control over his investments. While he used barbwire fencing, others in the village simply demarcated their land by planting hedges, food crop trees or simply with stones collected around the area as these symbolised or communicated the intent to restrict access. Interestingly, there was just a house enclosed with concrete walls around it in Baba I (see Fig 4.1) unlike in the urban centres where these bushfallers reside.

Figure 4.1: The lone fenced house before 2014 in Baba I while this is a common sight in the urban centres as one of the visible signs of secured environment.

Source: Photo by Author

Still in line with Ribot's and Peluso's discussions, roads 'facilitate the ability to physically reach a resource', as well as weapons also 'facilitate the upholding of right-based and illicit access. In themselves, roads and weapons are less direct technologies to aid and/or deny access but the case of the roads in Mbaghangha quarter is a sure example of how roads have facilitated access into the swampy areas for rice cultivation and to the market. The grading of the road from the market square via the palace to Mbanka has also facilitated all the construction work taking place along this stretch as building materials now get to these sites with relative ease and at a reduced cost. There are also cases where weapons were used in order to exercise control, for instance, two brothers pulling out knives at each other over a particular piece of land.

Access to Market roads also made it possible for more farmers to be open for negotiation of prices and the transportation of their produce. During the harvesting season down at this major farming area, Mbaghangha, there are 50/100kgs bags of corn heaped at various pick-up points pending transportation to either the markets or farmer's houses. During this period also, most of the urban elite drive in with pick-up vans to transport their harvest to their stores or granaries. Also, during this period, a lot of buying and selling takes place on the farms between farmers and dealers who would preferably buy directly from the farms thus gaining the benefits of direct access to the resources. Through the weekly market which is an open space for people to sell and buy as they want except for the Fon's wives who are not allowed customarily to go around freely in the market but are well informed about market prices, lots of negotiations and social interactions do take place. Markets also served as meeting points for the exchange and dissemination of information as lots of

campaigns, health and politics do take place in this space. Though Fig 4.2 is indicating the directions to major rice farms, it also shows how the opening of the roads to these farms have led to access to the main farming belt of the village.

Figure 4.2: Farm to Market roads

Source: Photo by Author

Fig 4.3 shows the biggest built up granary, situated along the main axis into Baba I and quite close to the market square, where maize especially was kept after harvesting to dry off properly.

Figure 4.3: Granary at Meya Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

Having Access to Capital gives one an upper hand in the negotiation and purchase of land. This asset made it possible for Christian to renegotiate and buy the land (for his dream house in the village) from the rightful owner after having bought from an unlawful owner. In these negotiations which he had to navigate various institutions, he spent much more money than what he had envisaged as he also had to pay-off someone who had previously bought part of the land. This gesture of paying off this person was very important to him as he said 'I would not want to settle here when everything is not at peace'. This land/house is situated along the Bamenda Ring Road meaning accessibility is very good and the value of land is very high as it lies in the most expensive stretch of land in the village.

Ribot and Peluso (2003:165) have noted that, 'access to capital can be used for resource access control through the purchase of rights. It can also be used to maintain resource access when used to pay rents, formal access fees, or to buy influence over people who control resources'. Christian's access to capital made it possible for him to benefit from this resource. These urban elite also have an upper hand over negotiations in deals to

get the limited number of construction workers unto their projects. Some of them actually sponsor workers from urban centres to come to their project sites for specific jobs within a given time frame. In so doing, these in-coming workers also win for themselves new contracts when job opportunities are available especially during the dry season which is the peak period for construction in the village. Christian's case is just an example of what many bushfaller partners and land holders from the urban centres as well as in the village is doing with their new found wealth to gain, control and maintain resource access.

4.6 Access to Labour and Labour Opportunities

In the Western Highlands (Baba I inclusive) of Cameroon, men showed off their wealth and riches through the number of wives and children they had who constituted their source of labour force. These persons under their control supplied the labour needed for their cash crop farms. Like Berry (1989:42), I ascertained that 'control over productive resources also depend on one's ability to dominate or influence others and could be claimed by all incumbents of a particular group or status category, irrespective of individual wealth. This makes everyday interactions a continuous process of negotiation which, in turn, paves the way for gaining, controlling and maintaining or blocking/denying access to land. This also goes to resonate the point raised with the Nso' people that the control of women's 'productive and reproductive labour … has always been central to maintaining the hierarchies of male power and status', Goheen, (1996:8). This brings to mind Shipton and Goheen's three forms of social affiliations and distinctions that affect land use and control: 'groups (bounded units whose members are aware of common membership and may act collectively, networks (unbounded series of links between persons), and categories (unbounded sets of people with a common characteristic or interest) (1992:309).

A case in point is Lesley who controls job opportunities for the many projects he is supervising, thus, gaining for himself patronage relations as well as power to bargain wages. He became a major broker between workers and the bushfallers as he uses other access mechanisms like technology (mobile phones) to maintain contacts with the urban elite in order to keep his control over job/labour opportunities. There are however some of these workers who have gradually gained access to land through established friendships as workers per their own right on projects. These patronage relations have made it possible for some of these workers to gain residence in the village and started a family with access to farmland amongst others. Still through social affiliations and distinction as with the case of the rice fields in Mbaghangha, the Fon as custodian of the land does facilitate the procedure for others to benefit from the resource that normally would not have been via the quarter heads. In reference to Ribot and Peluso (2003:167-168) this simply illustrates that 'those who control physical access to resources may influence those who get there to work in the extraction or production'.

Access to Knowledge gives added advantage and it is crucial in the decision about who can benefit from resources. Through many examples I saw also with landholders in Baba I that 'access might be driven by more than economic or moral claims to subsistence rights, it serves the social, political and ritualistic purposes as well as representing kinship, power relations, or ritual harmony'. Most often than not, these landholders carry along its social history that could be used to their advantage when granting access to benefit to the resources under their control. When it came to information about what land was available for sale, the women had the advantage. Most of the bushfallers (especially those whose mothers are alive) reiterated this point that their mothers looked for land for them to buy through their various networks. Some of these urban elite also pointed out that where they

wanted to build their houses at the onset was rejected by their mothers saying that the land was either cursed or unsafe for habitation raising the issue of witchcraft and witch hunting. This goes to confirm and affirm that the centrality of questions about and around the identity and social relations are crucial for gaining access to resources as elucidated in several studies (Cf. Berry, 1989 and 1993, Shipton and Goheen, 1992, Goheen, 1996 and Ribot and Peluso, 2003) on land issues.

'Access to Authority' is an important juncture in the web of powers that enable people benefit from things' (Ribot and Peluso, 2003:170). The above mentioned access mechanisms give vivid illustrations of how the Fon intervenes for some villagers to gain access on the rice fields as well as other farmlands and even land for construction.

Figure 4.4: Farmland in Meya and Mbaghangha

Source: Photo by Author

While on the field, a conflict that had apparently been simmering erupted between the Division Officer, Ali Anogu, Parish Priest (PP) of the Catholic Church, Fr. Frans Meulemans and the Fon, Fuekemshi IV, over the planting of pillars on a disputed piece of land owned by a widow, which the Fon objected. Through this conflict, it became visible how 'legal, customary and conventional authorities may also compete or conflict in the sense of having overlapping jurisdictions of authority' and how 'such overlaps allow individuals to take advantage of different social identities to acquire or accumulate resources using different notions of legitimate or authoritative access' (Ribot and Peluso, 2003:170).

'Access through Social Identity' is often mediated by social identity or membership in a community or group, including groupings by age, gender, ethnicity, religion, status, profession, place of birth, common education, or other attributes that constitute to social identity' (Ribot and Peluso, 2003:170-171). Its centrality in access mechanism is encompassing making it the spring board for the discussion. It is through our social identity and relations that land loses its face as a mere thing. Through this mechanism, we bring to life the socialness of land which in turn unfolds its cultural biography. As mentioned earlier, women were mainly granted access to land through marriage and this was solely for the purpose of food production for the sustenance of the family. This access eventually passes from mother to children and/or daughters in-law. In most cases and as it is expected in Baba I, the daughter maintains access until she is married. This is so because upon marriage her husband and in-laws are supposed to grant her access to one of their pieces of land.

However, there are many cases where the daughters have continuously tapped from these resources though being married. Anyhow, no matter how long she uses this resource, she cannot claim ownership or total control over it nor pass it down to her offspring except

she is a lone child like the case a single mother with seven kids (5 girls and 2 boys). According to Papiakum customs, she was married off to her father in a sense as he paid her bride price to the mother's family. In her case, her mother actually did make provision for this symbolic marriage to take place as her father had passed away. This is to ensure the continuity of her father's name since all her children will be considered her siblings and the man who fathered them can lay no claim. Taking her current situation, she said, 'I am the only one managing with them (her children) because the man I begged the children from died in a motor accident'. Since she has this status of a female lone child, she controls and manages all her father's land and they are seen and considered as hers. In a way, the society sees her as a man due to the fact that her life condition has positioned her within men's sphere of dominance and control.

On the other hand, the male child does not only gain access but would eventually claim ownership and control over the land that the mother has been farming. Looking at some identity-based within Papiakum social groupings, some people were treated differently given their social status. When princes came of age and had to move out of the palace, they were handed to any family in the village. This family had the responsibility to settle this prince on a piece of land and support him to start his own family. These receiving families became connected to the palace and won favour through the hosting of these princes. Apparently, with rapid population increase, this practice is fast dying out as people are using other channels to access this authority to benefit from resources. According to the Babessi Council Development Plan: Draft Report (2011:22-23), the population of Baba I was at 24,268 from the 2005 census and projection from 2005-2011. Looking at population statistics of St. Monica's Catholic Health Centre 2016, the population stood at 33,450.

'Access through Negotiation of other Social Relations form critical strands in access webs and like identity, social relations are central to virtually all elements of access' (Ribot and Peluso, 2003:172). Every human society is stratified and in this stratification, social status maybe either achieved or ascribed. Through their ranks and files, they may become 'objects as well as instruments of accumulation,' thus reinforcing the fact and idea that access depends solely on one's social identity and relations. Friendship bonds, trust, reciprocity, patronage, dependence, and obligation are those critical strands. Through years of assisting and travelling with the Fon for business trips to Nigeria, Jungle earned for himself the title of 'Suifue' (friend of the Fon) to join the ranks of big notables in the village. His access to authority also made it easier for him to have an extensive piece of land where he is engaged in mixed farming and horticulture.

'People sought access to new sources of wealth and power through existing institutional channels and used their newfound wealth and influence in ways which served to restructure old institutions and social relations rather than to destroy them' (Berry, 1989:44). This is a vivid description of what these bushfallers are actively engaged in whether their social status are ascribed or achieved as they are returning home to gain access to resources. Berry (1989 and 1993), Shipton and Goheen (1992), Goheen (1996) and Ribot and Peluso (2003), have noted that, staying and keeping in touch with one's kith and kin are social investments which depend a lot on close-netted social ties cultivated and nurtured over time. It is the spring board of most of the changes taking place in Africa whether it is in its political, economic and social activities.

4.7 Right-Based Access

Ribot and Peluso (2003:162) help us to understand that there are different means or 'mechanisms of access' through which a person can gain, control and maintain access to

land whether they have a right to them or not. ‘Rights-based means of access imply the involvement of a community (in the broadest sense of this term), state and government that will enforce a claim. Law-based property rights include access via the holding of titles or deeds of real property as well as permits and licences … Customary or conventional access occurs via social acceptance of a given circumstance or practice by which people gain benefits. Customs and conventions do not depend on coercive enforcement mechanism though sometimes coercion is used for enforcement. This is true per the Cameroonian text as it is the right of every citizen to gain access to land in so far as the proper procedures are followed. This must be cognizant of the community's customs and conventions and the state via the holding of title deeds in any part of the country.

At the rural level, the customary laws are fully in place giving the populace a sense of being through their customs and norms. It is only through this that the right-based mechanism can be fully comprehended. For instance, among the Papiakum people, it is the right of the son to claim access to his father’s piece of land especially that which is or was under the control of his mother. Likewise it is the right of the woman to be granted access over the husband’s land whether he is dead or alive if properly married according to the norms and traditions. Women in general cannot sell land or lay ownership claim on it especially from their father or can a son begotten out of wedlock claim rights over land in his biological father’s compound. It is considered a huge taboo if a woman does so or even plants trees on the land. Trees are considered as markers of permanency.

During one of the traditional council sessions to handle local disputes was the case of 'a daring' woman against her husband who had sold her farmland without her consent. When the man was questioned, he said it was his property and he had the right to do with it as he wanted but was gently reminded that he knew nothing of the land which had been under the management of his wife for over two decades. The man who bought the land was simply asked if it was a man or woman farming the land to which he responded, a woman. They were reminded of the rule of consent and that proper procedures were not followed. The woman was therefore asked to resume her farming activities and the husband to make a refund of what he had gotten from his negotiations.

The right of access to the land for the buyer was revoked as it was considered illegal as per their customs and norms. Illegal access therefore ‘is a form of direct access defined against those based on the sanctions and custom, convention or law’. Through coercion and stealth though as I recorded in many cases and as pointed out in Ribot and Peluso (2003:164), access can be controlled illegally making it possible for people to illegally maintain access through relations cultivated or pose a threat to those controlling access. Most of these kinds of cases registered were amongst widows and wives who dared not challenge the authorities of their in-laws and husbands as the above case. When these women were asked, they simply responded with a sign of resignation that they were running away with their children's heads as well as theirs. These are some of the ambiguities that come into play with in-laws, customs and conventions. This will also cover the aspect of illegal access gained which is also right-based.

4.8 Land Conflicts in Baba I

One of the things that put pressure on land is population growth. When a population naturally increases, it pushes up the demand in land resource which, in a short while, will affect the supply which is inelastic. Due to the inelastic nature of land and the rising demand as a result of rapid population growth, scarcity sets in provoking all sorts of conflicts as people look for alternative and illicit ways to acquire or gain access to the

resource. This also affects the social norms of the society in the process of acquisition. A simple example is the allocation of family plots which become limited in the long run for the sons especially from big and polygamous homes. This has caused family conflicts with untold pains and sufferings. Brothers are forced to relocate by buying plots in other places, thus, becoming strangers to the other family members. Population growth also causes congestion on land due to the desire to acquire more space. This has made some people to move out of their native land in order to negotiate for new plots outside family designated areas.

The demand for land also increases when those born outside or who had migrated out are returning home to acquire land for one reason or the other. These persons might actually stir up conflicts at the family, quarter and community level as the lay claims or acquire access to land. They may not fully grasp the dynamics around and about the functioning of land related issues if not well informed. Mobility of persons and ideas are also contributing a factor which cannot be ignored and which is not limited to return migrants. These conflicts which are visible and invisible can manifest in different manners and if not properly handled, can even result to loss of livelihood, disposition or eviction.

4.8.1 The Sale of Land by Unlawful Owners

As one walks the streets of urban centres in the country, the signposts in Fig 4.5 and Fig 4.6 (Land/House for sale) is a common post on busy street corners and other strategic positions in town. This phenomenon is not yet in Baba I as they use different strategies to get information on the sales. The lived experience of one of my research partners will enlighten us on some of the complications that arise if not properly informed on a facet of land.

Figure 4.5: Sales signpost at Mile 2 Nkwen

Junction, Bamenda

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 4.6: Sales signpost at Veterinary

Junction, Bamenda

Source: Photo by Author

Christian is a young enterprising businessman based in Yaoundé where he deals mostly in men's wear and accessories. He was born in 1976 in Baba I where he did his primary education from 1990 to 1997 and obtained his General Certificate Examination Ordinary Level and General Certificate Examination Advanced Level from Government Bilingual High School, Ndop. He joined one of his elder brothers in Douala thereafter working and learning in his printing company. He got a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Business Management in 2000 and 2002 had a short trip to Holland where he intended to continue with his education but things did not work out due to the lack of sufficient funds. Back in Douala from 2002 to 2004, he continued with his brother but decided to get into this business of men's wear and accessories and went away to try to establish independently in Yaounde.

After many years of struggling and acquiring some money, he decided to get for himself a piece of land in the village after having bought two others in Ndop; the administrative headquarters of Ngoketunjia Division. Born into a big family and being a younger person, their father's land was already experiencing pressure as the senior brothers had already acquired land from the family property. Not wanting to get into conflict with any of his siblings because he did not see an unoccupied place suitable for his dream house on the family property, he got a facet of land from a neutral source. With the help of his mother who had been pestering him over the years to build a house at home, he acquired land along the main road running through Baba I market square to Kumbo. This was to be the third piece of land he had acquired between 2005 and 2009. This is the part of the village where land is most expensive as it is along the Bamenda-Kumbo Ring Road.

After buying his land in Baba I, work started on the site two months after the purchase. Shortly after this project began, an injunction order from the palace was placed on the site for work to discontinue, an indication that there was a problem with the land. He explains the problem in the following words: "it was a land that was given out to a princess who settled in Mechacha. The Fon then, Fue Shangha gave the land to one of the daughters whom he gave out to somebody for marriage in Mechacha. So the woman settled there and brought forth children and grand children too and later she died. According to the custom of my place, this piece of land cannot be given out without going back to the palace to say, I have had problems of this nature that has pushed me into selling the land. So the son of the

princess sold the land to me without the consent of the palace. This information got to the palace and I was informed that all my workers had left the site and nobody was allowed to pass there because the place was owned by the Fon'.

From its history, the Fon had handed it over to his daughter to use as a farm land. The Fon died but his successor Fue Kemshi IV ordered that an injunction should be put on the land because it was still his property. This was done and I was called up. I went and spoke with the Fon like a brother and father. He understood me quite well and we negotiated and he was satisfied and gave me the go ahead. This time around he added a small piece of land that was in front of mine and that had been sold to another person too by the same person, the son of the late princess. So the boy now came up, took the matter to the police. Since I did not want to settle there when everything was not at peace, I proposed to hand him what he had paid for the place. I tried to arrange it in my own way because he had also spent money to acquire that land from the same person from whom I got mine. When the Fon came into the matter, he got the whole place as it was his. This time around he told me he had been there 4/5yrs before me and needed to make some profit from it. So after discussions with him we agreed that I was going to make it up to him even though the Fon said I should not give anything to him.

Figure 4.7: Christian's project at Mechacha Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

He later on understood that the guy had spent money on it as well and asked that I should refund the money for things to go in peace. I accepted and did," (Christian, personal communication, 20th January, 2010). Figure 4.7 illustrates the stage at which I saw Christian's project in Mechacha in January 2010. This story brings to mind the issue of scarcity and congestion on family land, the lack of knowledge about the social history of land and the potential economic viability in the process of negotiation which are mechanisms of access that more often than not work parallel to each other. It is a taboo amongst Papiakum people for the children to sell any piece of land that belongs to their maternal family no matter how long their mothers have been farming on it. If this is done without the consent of the woman's family by her children, it is believed to be a big curse on them and many of them can die because of that piece of land.

Daughters do not have ownership rights over land because it is believed that she will take it to another family which at the end will be creating a lot of problems. Since it was given her just for farming to feed her family, another generation will come and seize it

because they know that it is not right for her to take the family property to another family. Looking at this from the stand point of right-based access, her children did not have any right to sell the property even if there was a pertinent problem. They had to go back to the source and take permission before selling if there was no other option. The apparent lack of knowledge of the social history of the land made the sale illicit as it went against the customary norms. Though considered a prince begotten by a princess, this did not give him any right to land bequeath by his maternal family. It was therefore illegal for him to grant Christian access to his maternal grandfather's property. On the other hand, due to Christian's other social relations and viability, he was able to re-negotiate and gain back access to the land.

4.8.2 Conflicts over Commonly Owned Land

Boundary conflicts are said to be amongst one of the oldest conflicts in the world. Just looking at the aspect of demarcation and mapping of surface area gives one an idea of an inherent problem that human society at a point in time is trying to handle either socially or legally. All territorial boundaries of nation states had to be carved out and some, under serious conflicting situations. The Bakassi Peninsular is a case in point between Nigeria and Cameroon that ended up being resolved by the United Nations through the Green Tree Accord and handed over to Cameroon in 2005. The Grassfield region of Cameroon, Ngoketunjia Division has had its fair share of such conflicts. The focus here is land conflicts between siblings, relatives, families and neighbouring villages, some of which have ended up in court.

Between Siblings; when disagreement broke out between John and Peter who were apparently not the best of friends about boundary lines on the family property, daggers were drawn when the debate got heated. The matter was reported to the traditional council which summoned both parties. Some elders and women of this family had to be brought in since it is believed that women who know the in and out of the land on which they farm daily and so can accurately define the boundaries. These elders and women were questioned by the members of the Traditional Council to know who was encroaching into the other persons land. Council members including the quarter head had to visit the place to ascertain the border lines. Both parties were then summoned by the Traditional Council and the verdict given. Since they both had pulled out weapons (knives) to uphold their right-based access, the brother who was found guilty was asked to pay a fine of a goat and some drinks to the Traditional Council. He was reprimanded again of his action and asked to respect their boundaries as indicated by the family members. The penalty was to send the message that the live of any individual should never be put at risk by another person.

Between Families; Having seen no family member capable of managing his land before his death, Moh handed over the management of his property to the palace including his daughter with the instruction that when his young son came of age he should take over. Few years after his passing away, the Fon allocated part of this land to one of the princes. Yari being a prince thought he could move into the land, do as he pleases given his social identity and his economical viability without seeking anyone's opinion. When Moh's son came of age and asked for their property from Yari, it resulted in a conflict and litigation in court. The matter was reviewed by the court in Ndop and sent back to the village for the Traditional Council to resolve it. Yari who had over ridden this authority had to be reprimanded and told the truth about the ownership of the property. He was asked to vacate the place but he threw caution to the wind and both families kept going back and forth to the court spending time and money. When Moh's successor died and his children buried

him on the disputed land, Yari did not protest or contest their action thus bringing the matter to a close. Since he would respect neither the state nor the Traditional Council the burial custom prevailed. This case is a failed attempt of a situation where one uses his social identity, capital and access to authority to forcefully gain or benefit from land by undermining the less privileged. Though a prince, the verdict from the Traditional Council did not favour him as he must have thought would be the case. The grave, Figure 4.8, on this facet of land is a clear signifier of its ownership to the family concerned.

Figure 4.8: Graveside on a disputed piece of land.

Source: Photo by Author

4.8.3 Dispossession of Widows by In-Laws

There are quite a number of cases in Baba I of widows dispossessed of their farmland by their in-laws. Most of these women have quietly moved on to buy land from somewhere else or left the village to stay with their children in the urban centres in the name of protecting the 'heads' (saving the lives) of their children and themselves. For those who have dared to protest as mentioned above, their rights were given them by the Traditional Council so they could control and manage these farmlands. Successors also trying to redefine borders and take over property especially from widows are an old story as with the case of Sabiatou. Sabiatou is a widow with four kids who lost her husband in April 2002 after a brief illness. She had dropped out of school, married and followed her husband to Foumbot in 1991. At Foumbot, they were involved in the cultivation of tomatoes and other food stuff like corn, plantains, vegetables and coco yams for sale and subsistence. To generate her own income, she was frying and selling puff-puff as well. Due to jealousy and threats to their lives as they were striving well, they decided to return home to Baba I where they were given land for both farming and building by her father in-law as expected traditionally.

The land was not good enough for the cultivation of tomatoes. So they diverted into corn, groundnut and cassava. Though not as profitable as the tomatoes business they had been involved in, they were able to break even with it as they could take proper care of themselves and their three daughters until the cruel hands of death took her husband away. Sabiatou's in-laws decided to take the husband's corpse back to their main compound for burial beside the father though they had a place of theirs.

Figure 4.9: Sabiatou's home at Mbakwa Quarter Baba I,

(from Thatch to Zinc Roof a sign of great achievement).

Source: Photo by Author

She was then asked to move closer to the family compound into another thatched roof apartment with her kids. The husband's brother, the successor to their father, later sold off their place without her consent which created a serious family rift. She did not follow this up as it was her right and place to do so but instead got a place of her own and successfully raised a structure in which she is staying with her kids as illustrated by Figure 4.9.

It was in this corrugated zinc structure above that her interview was conducted. I saw that she definitely did not want to dwell on the issue of land with her in-laws as her jovial mode became down cast. All she said about this issue of land with her in-laws is that she did not want more troubles for her children and herself. Conscious of the fact that she is basically the sole bread winner of the family and the third girl went to secondary school, she focuses her energy on raising money for their upkeep and education.

4.8.4 Conflicts over Grazing Land

This problem is becoming more frequent as more and more people are investing in animal rearing especially cattle. When graziers and their animals enter into a farmer's farm and destroy his/her crops, the farmer reports to the council for it to constitute a commission. The agriculture technician is a crucial member to evaluate the amount of destruction caused by the animals. The grazier (the owner of the herd) pays the farmer based on the evaluation made by the commission. Such has been the case with the Fon and the chairman of the Traditional Council because the Traditional Council had to handle the matter judiciously and fine the persons concerned irrespective of their positions. In the case where the animals were still in the farm, the council or Ngumba formed a commission of young men to go to the field to catch whatever animals they find there. In some cases, the angry farmers wounded the animals as was the case with Yoyo's animals. When there was resistance in paying the fine levied, the matter went to the Divisional Officer (DO) where the amount is doubled. The idea was that people should respect hierarchical structures especially within the traditional set up and villages should resolve matters at their level rather than always running to the civil administrators.

Generally, people were advised to constrain their animals and have the number of animals they can control. When you have many animals that you cannot control, it meant that you will not be the owner. The Ngumba or the council will move in and take many away when found destroying people's crops and you will not be the beneficiary of your animal any more. If this year your animals are caught and the next year again, your punishment will have to be increased despite the fact that you are being punished already by the seizure of your animals. You might even be banned from rearing animals in the village. Figure 4.10 illustrate the movement of animals within the farmland. There one sees a herd of cattle and they are usually closely followed by a herd of sheep.

Figure 4.10: Animals in Farmland, Mbaghangha Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

When Yoyo came into the communal grazing land where Mallam Djembare and his family had settled, they gave him a portion of land for his cattle. Since the cattle were not properly restrained, they destroyed Mallam Djembare's farm and the family took it upon themselves to cut a few of the animals. When the herdsman reported this to his boss he came down to the grazing land to see the extent of the destruction. Despite the wounds on his animals Yoyo was willing to settle the matter amicably by paying off the farmers' crops. The family was not satisfied with the settlement and wanted the animals out of the area completely. The presence of this herd of cattle had already started causing conflicts due to its number and the lack of proper control by its herdsmen.

Being a communal land, their wish was turned down which flared tensions that turned into violence. Mallam Djembare's son left Bamenda with a loaded gun to the disputed area and got into a scuffle with Yoyo's herdsman. In their struggles, the gun went off and took the young man's life. The case had to be handled now by the state administrator, the DO. After all the evaluations they were asked to make a fence demarcating or separating the farm land and the grazing land but Mallam Djembare still turned it down and eventually quit the area. He is now in Douala with part of his family and the other still on the disputed land. With an erected fence and more supervision, the animals are grazing there with no complaints.

George's cattle are in a grazing area which has been his father's since 1972. This used to be a passage for transhumance and cattle from Oku and other places used the area until it was recently blocked by a farmer who settled there with his family. When he blocked this passage, the palace and not the Traditional Council was informed. Orders were given for it to be opened so that animals could pass with no disturbances. But he still continued farming and blocking the place. An injunction order was finally placed in the area and he was summoned to the palace but did not show up. Just like Mallam Djembare,

he left the area but leaving part of his family behind. It should be noted that an individual can take his/her problem directly to the Fon to be handled. The case is either handled by him or taken to the traditional council where he, the Fon is a member. For the moment the case is suspended and the area is free for grazing.

4.8.5 Multiple Sale of Land

This is a situation where a piece of land is sold to several people putting the various buyers at loggerheads. Selling land to many people is a crime punishable by the local and state laws. When you sell as such in Baba I, the land is seized from you and then you refund the money collected to all people who bought the land from you since you are using the land to crook people. The case of a place at Vemgang Quarter close to where the palace is situated drives home the point. This is the site of the most popular drinking spot towards the palace called 'No Shecking'. When Doda, one of the buyers of the place, found out that the land had been sold to almost twenty people with everyone claiming ownership, he decided to delve into the matter. For some strange reason, these persons had not discovered what was happening or were just reluctant to report the matter to the village Traditional Council.

When Doda came in and uncovered the scheme, he reported the matter to the palace and to the Traditional Council. They went into the matter and found out that the guy had really sold it to many people and was still trying to dupe Doda. The land was seized from the family since no family member had raised an eyebrow as one of theirs had been using this land to dupe people. When this happened, Doda went back to the Council stating his interest as he was anxious to set up his business. After due negotiations with the Traditional Council, the piece of land was handed over to him after the installation ritual as required. His dynamism and social relations won for him easy access to authority. This made it possible for him to present his case which finally facilitated things for him to gain access to the land.

4.8.6 Public Infrastructure Conflicts

Bringing public amenities through places where people have settled most often than not poses problems. There is a glaring example now with the construction of the ring road running through Baba I. The road has been expanded on both sides that have touched people's private properties as houses and farms have been torn down or infringed into as indicated in Figure 4.11.

Figure 4.11: Houses and Farms affected by road construction works.

Source: Photo by Author

There was very little compensation made to those who lost property because people had no land titles to lay claims from the government. This is another case where customary norms clash with state laws. To a certain degree, what families have now is theirs until there is the need of land for some developmental purposes. The only safe means through which somebody can own a piece of land which the village cannot still tamper with is by acquiring a land certificate.

Through the government, the village has the right to interfere into facets of land at any time for schools, hospitals, roads, community development centres and churches. Since it is known that land with no land certificate is owned by the village, any piece of land could be chosen at any time when the need arises for a developmental purpose. At times when the commission chooses a place, some families are hesitant to hand over the land like the current location of the Government High School, Vemngang, (Figure 4.12) situated below the palace on a facet of land that belonged to a prince.

Figure 4.12: A Cross Section of the grounds of Government High School, Vemngang, that witnessed resistance from some of its former occupants during the acquisition process.

Source: Photo by Author

If the resistance drags on, the commission will have to talk with the concerned families further explaining the need of this piece of land for the specific project. Most often, it is pointed out to the family concerned that it is for an amenity or facility which they have used on land taken from other people, for example, to locate a school or health centre or whatever. In few occasions, families have opposed by disturbing the work at hand. What the Council does is to call the family to order. If they persist the Council arranges for a fine to be paid by the family for obstructing development. On the other hand, if their resistance is due to dire need for a farmland, then the Traditional Council will make provision for that in another location.

4.8.7 Contested Administrative Procedures

There are a few of such examples in Baba I where the Divisional Officer (DO) of Babessi did not follow the procedure of planting pillars on the land as required by the law. One of the cases in point is that of the Parish Priest (PP) of the Catholic Church who thought the boundaries of the Church ground could be extended forcefully without the consent of the owner. Before carrying out such an action, he should have received an authorisation from

the Fon to attest that there was no bone of contention on the said piece of land. Furthermore, on the day of the planting of the pillar, the Fon and two notables are supposed to be present as well as the neighbours of the land and the owner being bought but this was not the case. The PP's activities on the land were reported to the quarter head and then to the Fon. So when the Fon was informed of the planting of the pillar, he intervened personally to stop the process. This caused a public scene, pulling a crowd as people were ready to take on the PP and DO for openly raising their voices to the Fon. This incident was reported to the Church hierarchy who came in to calm down the tension. These illegal administrative procedures normally cause clashes between the customary and state laws. It also shows the possibility of persons using their access to authority, social relations and capital to benefit from what they have no right over. In this particular case, the land was returned to the family concerned but the relationship between the PP and the Fon stayed restrained until he was transferred from Baba I. Figure 4.13 show direct views/angles of the Catholic mission grounds surrounded by barbwire fencing to demarcate their boundary as well as restrict movement.

Figure 4.13: St. Mark's Primary School, Church and Presbytery, Kengang Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

4.8.8 Inter Community Disputes

Moh Mbue's family and some Bamunka neighbours for some time have been fighting over their boundaries and this has ended up in court. When I asked the Fon about this dispute, he said, he did not know of any boundary issues between Bamunka and Baba I. This was considered as a dispute between individuals which would be settled among them to know who actually the first person who started farming there was. It is not something which should plunge the whole village into a problem with their neighbour, Bamunka. If it were to be a Baba and Bamunka matter, it should have been the Fons of Baba I and Bamunka talking not the people farming around that area as I was made to understand.

There is a case currently going on between Mr. Ngeng of Baba I and Bamunka tenants over a vast terrain of unused land that he had been given access to set up an agro industrial plant. Mr. Ngeng made quite an investment on the land and acquired heavy machineries for the farm. Unfortunately, this collapsed after a short while and the farm and the equipment were abandoned. This place has been laying fallow for some years now and Mr. Ngeng had authorised a Bamunka man to farm on it. This man later on brought in more Bamunka people to the place and sold some part of the land to another Bamunka man. This brought tension between him and the Bamunka people along boundary as they claimed that the land belonged to them. Mr. Ngeng has been asked to stay off the place as talks are going

on between the Fons of Bamunka and Baba I. Unlike the previous case above, this one attracted more attention because the sale of land in Baba I had been effected by a Bamunka man. Both parties had their Fons involved through the sale of land.

These cases above go to confirm what the Divisional Officer (DO) of Babessi said during discussions with him on this issue in 2011. 'Unfortunately there are areas where individuals have distorted the boundaries or have forcefully changed the boundary lines or are forcing to change the boundary lines and this is where conflicts always come in. They start between two individuals from the two villages and then it becomes a problem between two quarters, then two villages and it always results in skirmishes, bloodshed and all what not', (DO of Babessi, personal communication, 26th August, 2011). To manage this crisis if it escalates into a quarter or village issue, a Land Consultative Board Commission will be formed made up of the DO of the area concerned as the chairman, Divisional Chief of Land Tenure as the secretary, Divisional Chief of Surveys as member, the Fons of the two villages concerned and four notables, two from each village, to examine the matter determine the boundaries between the two villages. The Fons are the auxiliaries of the civil administration and custodians of the land so whatever thing that is being done with the land must be done with their consent. According to the DO, natural boundaries between villages have been in place before now. They are documented and the civil administration has always called for the respect of these boundaries.

When I asked the DO of Babessi to comment about land disputes between villages under his jurisdiction, he said: 'that one is the most frequent and very delicate issue especially here, in the case of Babessi Sub-Division boundary in particular and in Ngoketunjia Division in general. Inter village boundary disputes are the order of the day and that is where we have many complains coming'. During fieldwork, the villages around this area were and are almost always on news because of inter-village conflicts. I was even opportune to attend one of the conflict resolution meetings at the DO's office in Babessi between Babungo and Baba I. This was a dispute over a piece of land where Baba I farmers were chased away by the Babungo people who took over their farmland. During the meeting, it was basically the Fons and the DO talking and the exchanges were not very pleasant. One could feel there were some underground currents. Both communities were requested to get the colonial maps from the archives in Buea as the one available during the meeting was rejected by the Fon of Baba I.

This meeting called up by the DO was a plea for the Fon of Babungo to withdraw the case from the court so that it could be handled at the local level. . The external elite had also gone into the case trying to bring both Fons on a common platform in order to withdraw the matter and resolve it out of court. However, after over a year in court Baba I won the case against the people of Babungo who in turn threatened to go in for an appeal. Before this researcher left the area, no court hearing had been programmed. It is worth noting that this case has caused an uneasy relation between both palaces. For some time now their reciprocal exchanges through visits or 'palace bags' have ceased. There is however a certain degree of cordiality exercised between them when they do meet as auxiliaries of the government during public functions.

4.9 Conclusion

There is an enormous pressure on land and this is due to population growth and the rising need and competition for the construction of houses, opening of large farms and urban facilities. This has pushed up the monetary value of land bringing into play various mechanisms of access. This chapter has also illustrated how the quest for land can lead to

the ‘proliferation of channels of access which promotes and is reinforced by diversification, investment in social relations and a preference for rapid turnover and liquid assets; and that perpetuation of access via social identity leads to further investment in institutions as potential channels of access’ (Berry, 1989:51). These social webs have led to new phenomena in gender relations as more and more women are becoming silent brokers in the negotiations and sales of land. This is because they want their sons to come back home and build. When their sons are constructing, they become the general supervisors of the building projects or they farm the land until when their sons are ready for the construction work. In their struggle to acquire land, the politics of belonging becomes heightened as people's identities are put into question to give and gain validity to access land. The materiality and immateriality of land as a natural resource that visually and virtually bind people together to a place becomes a crucial element in the discussion on the politics of belonging. The next chapter will further delve into how mobility from and in Baba I of these urbanites intrinsically remain connected to home to attest their belonging as members of the community through investments.

5. Mobility as Vector in Atesting Belonging at Home Community

5.1 Introduction

The culture and philosophy of a people are sometimes better understood through an examination of their existing mindset. There is, indeed, abundant literature to show that one thing may be perceived much differently based on differences in the philosophical underpinnings of various societies. Here, I examine what it takes to imprint into the mindset of the ordinary people what should be done that will serve as a sign post to be counted as belonging to the home soil or the village. How membership in this community is gained, maintained or lost in their mobility is the kernel of this chapter. Through their itinerary of mobility I will elucidate how the urbanites strive to enact their sense of belonging. This chapter therefore also handles the core questions on mobility focusing on the ligature on migration and mobility. The history of mobility from and in Papiakum in relation to literatures on the Grassfields will be further delved into. Through this I will elaborate on the dire need of most migrants to remain connected with those left behind in their various mobilities.

Mobility and belonging which are intrinsically interwoven will be seen in relation to investments and changes in the socio-cultural and political sphere. This will open up the vein on the discussion on sons and daughters of Baba I, their connections in belonging and how they merge rural-urban knowledge. At the urban centre what they do to stay connected will be brought to light through the formation of elite association. How these urbanites engage in the process of gaining and/or maintaining identity and losing and/or loss identity in their mobilities will be elucidated through empirical examples. By so doing I will be answering the questions on the necessity for migration and mobility and what new mobility patterns from and to the Grassfields in Cameroon as well as looking into the impacts of mobility on the community in relation to the hierarchies.

This is studied through case studies of certain individuals whose activities, achievements or contributions have stood out as important landmarks that personify the prevailing philosophy of the Papiakum people. This chapter has been structured into seven parts to deal with the mobilities of persons in the process of attesting one's belonging and to the rejection of a person as not belonging to the community. Mbare's life history opens up the veins of our discussions. Excerpts from a very long and engaging interview with him will be used expressively for his voice to be heard and appreciated in the course of this chapter. The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: Mobility from and in Baba I; Sons and Daughters of Baba I; Connections in Belonging; Merging Rural-Urban Knowledge; The Formation of an Elite Association; Gaining and/or Maintaining Identity and Losing and/or Loss Identity.

> Mbare
>
> 'It is advisable that before anyone leaves town for the village, he should prepare himself very well, especially at retirement, because in this way, you will know how to manage your farms and home when you are back in the village. As such, you would not have to be a parasite on other people' (I. Mbare, personal communication, June 23, 2011).

Mbare was born and bred partly in Nkongsamba in the Littoral Region of Cameroon in 1965 where his father, Yokyuh Awudou, had moved to settle after retiring from his business trips to Nigeria with his brothers. His father after some years got into misfortune with his

businesses and life became very difficult for the family. He had to return home with his family but for Mbare who stayed behind to continue with his education in the French system that was drawing to an end at the primary level. His father relied so much on his brothers who were managing his investments in the village. Upon his return, he realised that his brothers had misappropriated all he had. This meant that as a mature man with two wives, he had to return to his father's compound. Coping in the village was very difficult for his family and Mbare's father had been turned into a laughing stock. After losing one of his daughters blamed on witchcraft organized by Mbare's uncle and aunt, his father started contemplating on returning to Nkongsamba to start life afresh. Through Mbare mother's persuasion, the family moved to Bamali and settled with a maternal aunt who was married there.

While in Bamali, Mbare joined them. He narrates his experiences: 'Out of loneliness. I was not feeling fine and I had to leave Nkongsamba where I lived with strangers back to my roots, and where I could find out what to do with my life. It is unfortunate that when we came back, we did not settle in the village, but I learnt a lot, even from the neighbouring village'(Mbare, 2011). He successfully completed his primary education in Bamali which was not easy as he had to switch over from the French to the English system of education. As any young boy then, he had the dream to continue his education and had made mental selection of the college he would like to attend but as he said,

> 'my family was poor and I did not see any possibility of continuing with my education as I had no helper. The housing issue too was a burden on me. I also tried to set up some two little huts. The first one had a mistake being my first attempt. However, I did not destroy it. I simply looked for another space and set up a bigger structure which now had a larger parlour. In my life, I have always hated being challenged. If there is anything I see that I like, I always struggle to own mine rather than going about begging. So after the construction of the other hut, some friends came around congratulating me, saying I had done well and that pleased me that someone could appreciate what I had done' (I. Mbare, personal communication, June 23, 2011).

As a young man who had witnessed his father scorned and turned into a laughing stock, he was determined to turn things around for his family. His determination was fuelled by the fact that his family was not even settled in Baba I but was 'parasiting' in Bamali. He left home for the unknown 'in search of greener pastures' and his intention was that, when he makes some money, he would come back and set up a structure for Papa and Mami in the village. He had once met someone, Moh Nyifemebock, from Kumba in Ndop market and told him he will be visiting him and the man agreed not knowing he meant it. Kumba was going to be a completely new adventure for him as he did not know the man's full names, what he was doing and where he was staying. In Kumba, however, he successfully tracked him and he was lodged by this new family. He immediately went into hawking with interest into male accessories depending on the season and what was in vogue. Sun shades and watches have remained his main area of focus while other items come and go.

He was relentless in his efforts and worked hard to acquire the necessary funds to achieve his dream for his parents. He says,

> 'when I was finally ready, I asked them to go back and get a building land ready where I could eventually also build my house. Pa was not happy with the piece of land that was shown him, but I advised him to get any piece of land that will be shown him from the big compound and set up there as we were going to get a bigger and better land later. I'd told them that when the project gets to a certain level, I will come up myself as I was saving

> some money. I knew that the most important challenge was the roofing of the house, and when they told me it was time, I went up and bought the sticks and the zinc for the house and they moved into it. You know, when your own child does anything, you're the one who has done it. Now when people come to visit him and I'm there, he tells them: that is the man who built the house, and they turn and congratulate me. Even some of Pa's classmates who used to come and talk carelessly to him are beginning to adjust in the way they talk. You know that they used to talk that way because they did not know us as we were not often in the village, until the building project' (I. Mbare, personal communication, June 23, 2011).

He talked so passionately about this experience that impacted so much on his life and when I mentioned that I was surprised he wanted so much to go to Baba I, a place he did not know much about he continued. When asked how he intended to integrate his family back in the village, he was quick to respond:

> 'My wife is from Baba I. I speak the dialect with them (children), especially the bigger ones. But now that we are in a place where there are too many strangers and where children interact a lot, I have decided that during all holidays, they will be sent to the village so that they can learn to use the vernacular. Meanwhile, I also try to speak with them, and was also planning to talk about it in the meeting house so that the dialect would be the only means of communication in the meeting house. There are some children born of Baba I fathers but mothers of different villages and such children are more inclined to their mother's side. When these come here, we give them the opportunity to express themselves in English. They are even making an effort to speak. If we take it as our mode of communication in the meeting house, then many will be forced to follow. If I say something and you do not understand, you will be forced to ask your neighbour. When we draw the agenda for the meeting, I read it partially in English though I talk in the dialect. So, that is it... So I really respect the traditions and the values' (I. Mbare, personal communication, June 23, 2011).

Mbare story brings to light the different types of mobility (physical or geographical, social and virtual) of the Papiakum people. Their history and migratory route in the previous chapter clearly tells us the Papiakum are a mobile people being in concordance with the above life history. His family is one of those families where the parents had long settled out and they were all born out of the village but apparently never lost connection with home. As he narrates it, the father is an example of those traders mentioned in the previous chapter who finally settled out of the village, Nkongsamba but stayed connected with his family. Geographical mobility is a common practice as illustrated through life histories and their migratory route which De Bruijn (2014) pointed out in her study on the Cameroon Grassfields. Migration and mobility scholars in Africa and especially the Cameroon Grassfields have shown that trade/business, education, civil service are the push factors. Social and virtual mobility therefore explodes in the community through these urbanites who strive to stay in touch with their families and also through the material things they bring which inspires those at home to work hard to acquire them.

5.2 Mobility From and in Baba I

Little (1971) first pointed out how Africans in the urban centres live in a dual system whereby they strive through various ways to stay connected to home. This notion has since been expanded on by many African scholars on rural urban connections. From these studies was coined the concept of Bushfalling in Cameroon by Nyamnjoh (2002 and 2011) and propagated by others like Alpes (2012) and Atekmangoh (2017). Nkwi (2017) demonstrates how migrations in the Grassfields have rather stayed within the continent rather than the focus on north-south migration by IOM. Going back to the history and migratory route of

the Papiakum handled in the previous chapter, there are clear indications for the push-pull factors of migration/mobility from and within Papiakum group: quest for an autonomous chiefdom, agricultural land, trade, marriage, education, work itineraries and job opportunities. These are indexes to illustrating how mobility was part and parcel of this community. Mobility and belonging therefore are intrinsically interwoven within the Papiakum community of the Western Grassfields.

The quest for autonomy provoked their movement out of Rifum in the Tikar country in search land where they could settle and setup their own chiefdom as noted by Chilver and Kaberry (1967). Along their migratory route they engaged in cohabiting in several places with different people still they finally got to their current site. At their current site, they chose the upper part of the village to settle as a security strategy because skirmishes were still going on the Ndop plain as the different groups tried to expand and define their borders. When they finally settled on the plain in a place called their own, Baba I, the population engaged themselves fully in agriculture. This was done primary around the settlement area at the beginning before they started venturing further away for bigger farms. Farming was actually the first activity that pushed the people further afield. When subsistence farming led to cash crop, the people became even more mobile as they search for more land to expand on their farms. These farm lands had to be distributed following their tenure system as elaborated in the previous chapter. Farm houses were gradually built on the plain which constitutes the lower part of their village. An example of which was that of the Fon as seen on Fig 3.3. This was the primary factor for internal mobility and has stayed thus with large scale farms and the introduction of new cash crops and grazing activities. One interesting thing that I noticed was that almost all big celebrations took place in the upper part of the village. When I inquired, my research partners pointer to the fact that their 'big compounds' were all up and the farm area was just developing as new settlement areas. These were for family members who wanted or desired to move away from the main family cluster in search for more space. The upper part of the village where the palace is situated is considered the main settlement area of the village as people still have to move down to the plain on daily bases to their main farms. Agriculture also provokes seasonal mobility for workers, in and around, who come looking for jobs as well as social networks when groups go out to lend a hand on the farms of other persons. The produce from the farms were sold at the village market or on the farms especially when by land scale producers in the village or urbanites involved in agriculture at home.

At the market square, all and sundry meet within this symbolic performing art space where lots of other social activities apart from buying and selling take place like courting, exchange of information and gifts amongst others. Note should be taken that not all traders came to the market as some of the trading activities like moneylenders that took place at private homes. I also observed that a specific junction points in the various quarters in the evenings one could buy freshly harvested vegetables and other food stuff. This market arena later on expanded as the Papiakum people joined the other peoples of the Grassfields involved in long distant trade as elaborated by Nkwi and Warnier in Chapter Three. Like Nkwi (2011) who showed how Kom people created and recreated connection through their active or passive participation within trade routes so too it was among the Papiakum. Trading thus promoted and enhanced the physical/geographical and social mobility in the society. These methods of mobility were basically through messengers and carrier boys who represented their masters and thus ran errands for them. These errands carried out for their patrons eventually created another social class of persons within the community as concretely illustrated by Nkwi (2011) on the Kom people.

With the development of technologies and roads as detailed by Nkwi (2011) among the Kom people, many more Papiakum followed the trend and expanded their routes to other urban centres in the country. Their route to Nigeria still remains active though now there are other possibilities like through the Ekok road or via the sea from Tiko, Limbe or Ekondo Titi (all these routes in the coastal area of the South West region). Boy-boy concept still very much active today as young boys are still leaving the village for the urban centres to learn trade before engaging in theirs. As Moh Nkong will tell me hawking was the favourite holiday activity that made them leave the village for urban centres. He narrated how they started by going to Ndop to sell during the main market day and moved gradually to Bamenda where they depended on relatives and friends for lodging. He explained that their father, one of the renowned traders in the village was already tired and so they had to fend for themselves to pay their fees especially for those who were interested in schooling. Moh Fessame adds that some of them followed their elder brothers to Douala and did hawking there before eventually ending up there. Mbare's story above is also an explicit example of how young men moved away from home and gradually established themselves in the various urban centres but always with a permanent gaze towards home. Trading thus caused mobility from and within Baba I depending on the level of engagement.

Though the womenfolk is very much involve in agriculture and petite trade, marriage remains the strongest vector in their mobility. Marriage saw the physical moment of young girls to their new families as lay down by the norms of the Papiakum people. These marriages might have been via consent of the couple or through pre-arrangement of the parents to maintain their socio-political ties. No matter how these marriages were contracted it was and still to a great extent remains the single factor that propels the movement of the Papiakum womenfolk as well as those coming in from outside. This physical mobility is higher within the group and in the village than those going out or coming in from other ethnic groups. From Mbare's story we see that it was very important for him to point out that his wife came from Baba I and how they try to bring up their children according to their norms. Marriage nonetheless causes a spiral of social mobility as it primary binds families creating new socio-political statues. Though married, the women maintain a strong connection with their family through social and virtual mobility. The new families have to shift and move their resources to accommodate the new member coming in as they would do when it comes to the birth of new child into the family. Marriage alliances are some of the important vectors with the Papiakum to proof one's maturity that calls for a sense of respect and responsibility as my informants pointed out. It is a socio-cultural aspect that also stands out as a crucial index in attesting a person's belonging.

Education is one of those factors that have push migrants out of their countries to specific destinations due to the opportunities offered by those places. Using myself, the researcher, as an example who have travelled abroad severally, many of my research partners who now find themselves in different offices or have gone on retirement, the quest for better education and specific training to enhance career made people leave home for other places. When I look closely at the educational path of all my informant above forty I realised they moved around quite a bit since the first secondary school only got to Baba I in the early 80s. Yenwoh, Delegue, as he is popularly called explained how after his primary education sponsored mainly by his elder who was then a teacher at the Presbyterian primary school, he moved to Ndop and then continued to Bambili for high school. He then proceeded to Ecole Normale Superieure (ENS) in Yaounde after having completed the first cycle of teachers' training course at Ecole Normale Superieure (ENS) in Bambili. Yenwoh later pursued a degree at the lone University in Yaounde where he did the bilingual series

(French and English). Upon completion of his university degree, he travelled to France where he obtained a diploma in teaching French as a foreign language from the University of Besancon. After successful completion of his training as a teacher, he was first posted to Fontem in the South West Region which is about 203km from home, Baba I. This is however, the educational path of one of my civil servant research partners who like the others he told stayed connected to home 'if not how will I eat, pay my rents and fees or cloth myself'. Returning home to assist his parents with farm work on the rice fields and do holiday jobs on peoples farms was a normal practice for him and many others. He explains the situation further as follows; 'from secondary school the payment of fees was almost indirectly my responsibility because of the farming that one used to carry out in order to get money for the payment of the fees since my elder brothers salary was nothing to go by too at that stage'. This goes to proof that coming from a low income background most of them who were interested in pursuing their education for a career had to engage in raising funds. Before becoming the workers they dreamt of, they participated in various activities such as farming and trading.

By workers here I am referring to the civil servants. These categories of persons either came into or left Baba I for work. I observed that among civil servants, service men and teachers, top the chart of career path with the Papiakum people. Those within these professions are very mobile during their work itinerary as elucidated by De Bruijn (2014) study following one of such families in Baba I. In this article she illustrates how the family travelled around the country with the father who was a service man until his retirement when he returned home. I also observed a similar situation with Yoyo who was a civil service employee and travelled to several places around the country. He later retired to his home in Ndop as he joined politics to become a parliamentarian for Ngoketunjia. He visits the village very often as has a house there. For Yenwoh, when he completed his training as teacher he was first posted to Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Fontem. He continues that 'From Fontem I was transferred to Government High School (GHS) Batibo, where I was later on appointed as Senior Discipline Master in the very school. After four years in Batibo as Senior Discipline Master, I was now appointed as principal in Government Secondary School (GSS) Baba I then later appointed principal of Government High School (GHS) Baba1. From Baba I, I was appointed Divisional Delegate for Secondary Education for Ngoketunjia'. From Ndop, Divisional headquarters of Ngoketunjia, he ended up in Bamenda as the Regional Delegate for Secondary Education for the North West Region. He was one of those urbanites whose work itinerary brought him home for some time before going off again. There were a number of Papiakum teachers in the different schools around the village but a majority of teachers came from outside. He noted that though challenging, he was very happy to be made the pioneer principal for GHS Baba I. He had the opportunity to set up the place at a certain standard giving his gained experiences from the other places and to campaign for more Papiakum students to continue with their education though it was not easy. His appointment back home was very important period for him to give back to his own people and improve their lot. It was a period of service back to his community though he continued to pull resources in as delegate at both the divisional and regional levels. What I observed was that almost all the civil servants had constructed houses and their homes in the varied places of work served as spring boards for relatives who came to live with them.

The search for job opportunities took many young people out of the village to the urban centres to try their luck as a few of them told me. These either dropped out of school for lack of sponsorship or did not see the prospect for a job if they continued schooling.

Most of them followed their friends or went to join relatives or siblings who had earlier gone to the urban centres like the case of Moh Fessame and Lassa. In Douala, like in Yaounde and the other places they were involved in hawking in various items depending on the season. For instance, towards school reopening time they would get into accessories for pupils and students. What actually caught my attention in Douala was that many of them were involved in selling medication as ambulance pharmacies. Like Mbare many ended up with a line of trade on which they focused and could pull up resources to fulfil their dream of constructing in the village. Lesley is another example young person, who after completing his technical high school in Bamenda, had to work with a number of engineers and architects to gain some practical hands on experience. Then 'I left for Yaounde struggling to get myself into one of the higher institutions, like Public Works or National Polytechnic. Then it came to a moment when things could not go through and Mr Moh Charles took me as one of his general foremen in 2001'. He worked with him in different construction projects around Yaounde as well as undertook personal projects.

Along the way, Moh Charles decided to build something for himself in the village. When they came to the village for this project in 2007 and finished the project within two months he stayed on. His original idea was to return to Yaounde where he was living after the completion of the project that brought him home. However, this changed due to the demands he started getting from different urbanites who wanted him to manage their own projects in the village. I observed he was very busy with his construction projects. As a skilled worker, he became a major broker in the transformation process of architectural landscape in Baba I. Lesley exposed the varied forms of mobility as he was constantly on the phone, moving around to get his building material on site or discussing with community members of high social statues including the Fon as he carried out their projects. The different job opportunities he had coming home moved him up the social ladder. Mbare, Lesley and others cited here who had left home highlight the intricacy of mobility and belonging among the Papiakum.

Being known and seen as a Papiakum man is crucial for Mbare and he worked hard to stay associated with the Baba I urbanites in Kumba while his family and himself were implanting their roots back in the village especially as he has constructed a second home for the family in the village. Second home ownership according to Jaakson,(1986); Williams & Kaltenborn, (1999), can also be interpreted as a step 'back to nature' with some people adapting the surrounding of the second home to the nature of their imagination, while others move towards an idealised simple rustic lifestyle in which rurality becomes extremely important (Jaakson,1986; Geipel, 1989; Löfgren, 1999; Müller, 2002 d; Hall & Page, 2002). Mbare took a bold step 'back to nature' by working very hard to construct a house in the village of his roots to relocate his parents. He was living in a dual system as propagated by rural urban migration studies. This step back was also a great signifier for his process of belonging.

Just as (Jansson & Müller, 2003) the majority of households owning a second home are older than 35 years, this is a vibrant age group and one will naturally expect competition amongst them. However, Robertson (1977), Buller & Hoggart, (1994a) and Müller (1999) in their studies showed that after becoming established on the housing and the labour market and often having teenage children, households identify second homes as objects for investment and creative focus. Evidence also suggests that a substantial proportion of second home owners actually purchase a property for later retirement, even if it is never used as such. Though this is not entirely the case in Baba I as many of the youths are trying to belong and make developmental strides through the construction of modern houses in the

village as their second homes.

The case of Mbare is quite different because he actually wanted to settle his retired parents who had been away from the village for a very long time. All the hard work, negotiations and the construction of the house for his father and his entire family was to relocate them home where memory and practice pulls them. Hence, second home ownership may sometimes represent a precursor to permanent domestic or international migration. However, in many cases, permanent migration is not registered, because households choose to keep a link with their formerly permanent home (Müller, 1999; King et al., 2000; Williams et al., 2004). Therefore, it is almost impossible to pinpoint the households that retire into their second homes. Nevertheless, second home retirement is clearly emerging as a significant planning issue from both domestic and international perspectives (Williams et al., 2004), particularly given the aging of the demographic profile in many developed countries and the demands that such aging places on infrastructure and services (Müller &Hall, 2004)

In the Papiakum meeting in Kumba, Mbare Ibrahim rose to the rank of financial secretary and later held the position of the Vice-President of the BADECA Kumba branch created in 1993. This meeting had started off in the 70s as a regular Sunday meeting hosted at Moh Nketeh's. His compound served as a stopover for Papiakum as Nkwi (2011:143) pointed out with Kubou's compound in Bamenda for the Kom. As Nkwi (2017:141) opines and reiterate, the home of the eldest member of the Grassfields community using the Kom example in the South West Region, was considered as the peoples palace in the diasporic space. Mbare's story opens up the salient nature of a home village and investments therein amongst urban elite and how houses have become crucial in the politics of belonging. When discussing the various access mechanisms through which one could benefit from land as a crucial resource, it becomes clear that identity and social relations are paramount in these negotiations. These negotiations highlight how, when and who can and/or cannot benefit from specific resources. As such, identity is always questioned or revisited through one's social connections and relations within the community as illustrated in the previous chapter.

Although land in this context is about power, access and livelihood, it is also about belonging. That is why I talked of it as having its own social life as it ceases to be a mere thing. If owning a facet of land means I am part of this society or I claim land because I belong, then land is a cultural resource with a different kind of meaning. Through the ritual of handing over land, it is clearly demonstrated how land is culturally adopted as significant and symbolic objects within the community are used for this appropriation process. Looking at belonging per acceptance and rejection as there is a lot of power playing and unequal belonging is critical here. This kind of analysis throws more light with concrete examples to the debate which shows that it is not only access to land that matters but belonging as well.

The history of the Papiakum people as presented above illuminate this element through their migratory route. This 'act of appropriation' as hinted by Page, Evans and Mercer (2010:355) is another peril in the politics of belonging in Cameroon which is not discussed as such. Through lived and shared experiences, I concord with Lentz 'that land and land rights play an important role in the politics of belonging in Africa due to the fact that rights to land are intimately tied to membership in specific communities (Lentz, 2007:37). These rights to access of land which has been elaborated above will stand as lamppost for my discussion.

Others like Geschiere (2009), Lentz (2007) and Page, Evans and Mercer (2010) look at belonging as tied to land and land usage with claims and counter claims to access

made by the ‘sons of the soil’ living in various urban centres of the country. Power is very important in position to hierarchy in Baba I. How the elite are inscribed into the Baba I roles and how it relates to a modernising world is an interesting aspect. This links to the shifting power base and the ongoing urbanisation process that Baba I is going through. Therefore, the considerations made amongst the Papiakum people before one is seen and considered as a member of the community; and the expectations of members to gain, maintain or lose their membership are the core questions delved into here as my research partners, an example being Mbare above, kept reiterating that the village or home place continues to be the most salient.

For these urbanites who are resident and have investments in the various urban centres in the country but remain attached to their home village, ‘the local is both situated in specific places and dispersed across space; people are involved in local institutions while being widely spread out in different locales’ as articulated by Trager (1998:379). This shows that people are living in a mobile world engaged in various mobilities where different spaces represent different things. The present configuration of the Cameroonian state sort of obliges these urbanites to live in ‘a dual system’ elucidated by Jua (2002) and Page, Evans and Mercer (2010) in order to gain access to resources for their enhancement and advancement as well as for those left behind in their home village.

Being born and raised within the norms and traditions of the Grassfields and living in multiple sites since 1993, I (researcher) was opportune to be questioned several times why I was travelling around as someone whose navel (umbilical cord/stump) was carried away by a dog’ The umbilical cord/stump of a person in this part of the world is of great value and is handled and preserved with a lot of caution as I grew up to know. It was therefore not surprising for me to learn while on the field amongst the Papiakum people that the umbilical cords/stumps of children born in the urban centres were sent or taken home for the appropriate burial in the father’s or paternal grandfather’s compound except in cases where the child is born out of wedlock. Even when it is to be buried out of the village specific rituals had to be performed in the presence of one of the grandparents of the child or an elder of the family or community. The umbilical cords were never dumped in a refuse bin but rather served as ligature in mobility with home.

Similarly in 2010, I (researcher) transported one umbilical stump from Norway for proper disposition in Bafut. A young couple had their first child and decided that the umbilical cord would be sent as required as per the customs and traditions of the Bafut people of the grassfields. This raised eye brows in the hospital when the couple requested that the umbilical cord be preserved and not dumped at the hospital's incinerator. After having been handed over to them at the hospital, it was therefore kept frozen until my date of departure. It was handed over in a cool box for easy transportation to their homestead as the man's parents were there to receive it. This also served as a physical confirmation and connectivity of the presence of a new born grandchild into their family.

Through this symbolic act of where and how to bury one’s umbilical cord/stump we come in touch with an example which makes it possible for us to see how people use different practices and language as an attestation for their belonging. Where one's umbilical cord/stump is buried by implication, it is a very significant and symbolic act which ties or brings a child back to his/her place of origin. The umbilical cord/stump is therefore a signifier indicating situations/rootedness in a specific place as proof of one’s identity/belonging. It is believed that a child whose umbilical cord/stump is thrown away or discarded inappropriately cannot settle down or will be lost as there is nothing binding him/her to their home. This goes to explain the meaning of a dog carrying away one’s navel

as was once asked. To some people, they still see me as unsettled and 'disconnected' as I travel around for research and work purposes.

All this explains why Africans in general continuously have a link with the village or their roots. For instance, Busia (1950:12) in a social survey of Secodi-Takoradi, showed that 'a person's membership of a lineage binds him forever to his village, its locality and that wherever he may go; however long he/she may be away, he/she belongs to his lineage town or village…' Gugler (1961) studied Eastern Nigerians in towns and concluded that they lived in a dual system in which they were responsible to village development associations while trying to cope with city life. Geschiere and Gugler (1998: 309-319) show how an urbanite might choose to remain in the city but also always remain tied in some way with his or her home. Gugler (2002: 21-41) maintains that research on the urban-rural connection needs to be conducted elsewhere on the continent because of the 'wrenching changes its people have experienced over the last generation'. Geschiere (2009), Busia (1950) and Gugler (1961) here were only setting the agenda for scholars to study rural-urban migrations in Africa. The experience of the Papiakum people is just one contribution to this ongoing works and an explanation to the customary treatment given to umbilical cords.

Staying in touch with the village could be crucial for these urbanites through which many services are given. Investing in the home village is a kind of social investment which Mbare did not want his family to be left out. This is because generally upon retirement or death, one's corpse is brought back to the village which is the ultimate as illustrated by De Bruijn (2014). If the urbanite retired back to his village with the meaningful investment in symbolic and human capital he/she will be respected. This goes to show how the society has created and recreated structures that go to highlight the debate on the politics of belonging as attached to land but at same time being exclusionary and unpredictable as it is 'subject to constant redefinition against new "others" and at ever-closer range' as expressed in (Ceuppens and Geschiere, 2005:385) pointed out earlier by Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (1998, 2000); Konings (2001), Nyamnjoh and Rowlands,(1998) and reiterated by Ndjio (2006) and Geschiere (2009).

5.3 'Sons and Daughters' of Baba I

From birth, through the symbolic and significant act of burying the umbilical cord/stump, the child is rooted within a specific lineage. This is his/her first home under normal circumstances where you will be nurtured to maturity per the norms and customs of the Papiakum people regardless of your sex. While the female breaks away from her lineage into another for marriage as expected by the norms, the male folk of the community stay on to inherit, acquire and expand on the family property. Just like the female folk that that will be brought in through marriage, the female child leaving her family will have to be provided access to different resources for the upkeep of her new family especially that of her children and husband. For the livelihood of these persons, land becomes the most crucial of all the resources. Since it is inelastic in supply, granting access to benefit from it becomes a fundamental issue for concern. Who, when and where can someone gain access to land is constantly negotiated. The socialness of the land therefore cannot be ignored in this process as it is its social history that paves the way for someone belonging to be ascertained.

Amongst the Papiakum people as articulated by my research partners, there are certain 'stuff' Miller (2010) that communicate the maturity of a man: building a house, marrying a woman and owning a gun. These commands respect and elevate a man's social

standing amongst his peers, family and community at large. These spare you of all the derogative comments and far from the sphere of committing the 'unthinkable' (which is taking up residence at your parent's) as noted by Yoyo or being considered as 'inconsequential' by Yenwoh my research partners. Therefore having a house, being married and owning a gun are straight forward expectations of this society for men as also pointed out by Malaquais (1994) amongst the Bamileke people of Banjou. Being able to put up a house first of all means having access to land without which you cannot construct. What is intriguing is how one negotiates access to resources that permit one to attain this level of maturity as prescribed. The most straight forward means by which one could access land in Baba I is through inheritance from one's father. Sons are expected to be given land by their fathers and husbands provided land for the livelihood of their families to the women. Marriages stood out as sign posts for social mobility among the people which extended and connected families within the society.

'Big compounds' are an index through which a person's roots and connections in the society were situated and contextualised within the Papiakum genealogical frame. This was especially so if you did not follow the usual format of introducing yourself which was for instance, 'I am Pepila Arahimi son of Moh Fesame of Fesame'. This was later realised as an index used to situate a person before questioning one's identity in order to gain access into resources. This was a way to confirm if that person truly belonged to that lineage and in the Papiakum family at large. Interestingly, everyone apparently was/is related in the village. Nosing around to find out more about these complicated interwoven relations, one of my research partners said,

> 'In those days in Baba I, when you serve as a Nchinda (Tchindafue) in the palace and you are going out, they give you a princess to go and start your family. When the Fon sits and sees that a family is dwindling, the Fon sends a princess for marriage to that compound. She goes to build back with authority and they will be respecting her. There will be some order in the compound. Even if you had many wives, it is obvious that your successor will be a child of the princess in order that your family will subsequently have a bit of command or a bit of authority in the village. We already know that the royal family alone had a majority of the male and female children in the village. This made it difficult for you to go through three families without seeing a royal blood. Before the late Fon 'disappeared', he proclaimed that people can now be closing ranks a bit without which some people will never ever get married in the village. He declared it officially and that is why you see some people can be getting married to some relations of third and fourth generations that are not too close and there is no problem. If most of those things were to be respected then just know that it will be difficult for farming to even take place in the village because, this one dies here, if you want to calculate almost all families are involved then nobody will go to the farm and the next week another one will die then for three, four days nobody will go to the farm just like that then the whole place will just be in stagnation (Victor Yenwoh, personal communication, August 13, 2011).

For the Fon to have declared publicly that people should be closing ranks in marriage to 3rd and 4thgenerations, meant that things were becoming indeed complicated as hinted above by Yenwoh. This also explained that the identity of a Papiakum man was always traced back to the 3rd generation to ascertain one's rootedness or belonging in this patriarchal society. It was only after the questioning of one's identity that considerations/decisions were arrived at whether one is qualified to have access to land and/or its benefits. This goes to fulfil if one qualified for access to construction land as one of the prime roles of maturity

amongst the Papiakum people. This was no problem before at the family level when land was allocated to the male child except for the princes. As Big Mami will explain:

> 'At first in the palace, the Chief will call a man and give him the bamboo or say take this palace bamboo. At the time you do not know the boy you will be given. If they gave you a boy like this and said it was your son, you will give him a plot to build a house. But now Baba people refuse to take the bamboo. They say that the 'palace boy' will come and start controlling them. When they give a Muontoh (Prince), it means he will eventually become a big Moh (an inherited title of a prince and accredited to heads of compounds) in his compound, so they refuse because of land and such related issues. Now these princes have to go and buy their plots' (Rose Mallama, April 8, 2011).

Identity here is not fixed but fluid due to mobility and its contestations. According to the Papiakum norms as noted in the excerpt above, princes are not given land for settlement directly by the Fon. Before the 1980s, it was seen as an honour to be given a prince. This practice of giving a 'palace bamboo', Kemndrang, started changing due partly to pressure on land and the monetary value now attached to land acquisition. Kemndrang is a piece of bamboo stick that was given to notables by the Fon as a symbol of providing land for the settlement a prince. Princes who wanted to leave the palace got into lobbying the head of the compound where he was vying to settle. This required creating special social ties with community members that involved gifts. This was to pave the way and make it easier for the prince's acceptance into this new family. The last of the ceremonies of giving Kemndrang took place in 2011. The allocation of plots in a way was to ensure that the male off-springs who come of age should have a standing in the village through the structures they would put up. This was in order to free their families and themselves from ridicule and abuse from age mates, friends and the village at large. Houses therefore are said to be the visible/physical attestation of one's rootedness and belonging in the Papiakum society.

5.4 Connections in Belonging

Social relations are constantly negotiated in everyday life and these negotiations most often than not take cognizance of the different resources that these people have access to in order to tap off some benefits. As a social institution that binds families, marriages were/are negotiated in terms of benefits of the union for both families. From Yenwoh's narration noted above, marriage is not seen only as a means to represent maturity amongst the Papiakum people but also as a negotiation process through which access to resources are gained, maintained and controlled. Who and how someone was/is married off were crucial for both families. The access to power/authority, wealth and social relations here goes to show how people from different ranks of the society could benefit through these unions to gain and maintain control over various resources.

The Fon for instance, by giving princesses out for marriage to a Nchinda or some 'dwindling family' as Yenwoh puts it or princes to be settled by other families as per Mallama's narration, was on the one hand for the Fon to maintain his control over his people and to ensure that his family stays rooted in the village. Princes and princesses, Muontoh, were expected to and are able to assert royal influence over the families where they are incorporated as new members. This partly goes to explain the resistance put up now by the villagers as pointed out by Mallama. On the other hand, due to their social standings, these Muontoh were treated with a certain amount of caution and respect. Through the newly created socio-political bonds formed via these royals, these families and

persons could negotiate to gain benefits from different resources as they now had access to royal privileges, thus, planting their roots further in the land.

Marriages for both the royals and the commoners were and/or are used as a means of consolidating relationships between friends; in recognition of some service offered like the case of Mallama who was whisked off from school to Mamfe by the Fon's emissary (Mohfesame) to honour a promise made; in compensation of a negotiation gone wrong or simply as a means to attain some social status in the village as seen by parents offering their daughters to the Fon and princes. Though things are changing with more and more Papia youths working and living in the urban centres, negotiations are still rife amongst mothers especially to see to it that their children are 'well married off' within the confines of the Papiakum society. When it comes to marriages that symbolise the union between two families for ever, inter background checks are made on both families by its members to ensure that there are no negative straits medically, socially or spiritually.

Given the number of Muontoh, the form of settlement of the princes and the marriages contracted explains why almost everybody in the village seems related. On the other hand, because persons would also claim relations to gain access to resources through these marriage bonds made it even more difficult to comprehend how widespread the royal roots have gone. While in the field, it was also noted that marrying women from outside the Papiakum group is gradually gaining grounds as more and more young people are spending most of their time out of the village as well as their interwoven relations. Through the active participation of parents in making this decision, it became clear that preference is still given to girls from Baba I or of Papiakum parentage. This has caused an untold amount of tension and frictions within families as some of these women from outside are out rightly rejected.

Marrying from outside Baba I also meant limiting one's chances of gaining access and benefits from resources in the village. However, marrying from outside was commonplace and somehow limited to the royal family and wealthy notables as an exchange from other friendly Fondoms or friends to solidify relations and maintain good diplomatic ties. In the Baba I palace, there are wives from Bamum, Nso', Bangolan and Bambalang. Bamum and Nso' have historic ties as advanced in the Baba I history while Bangolan and Bambalang have very cordial relations. The current Fon of Bangolan, Isaac Chafa, is actually a brother to Fue Kemshi of Baba I because his mother was a princess of Baba I, thus a royal wedding. Nkwi (1986) probed into the royal weddings in the grassfield and how important they were in creating lasting bonds between Fondoms. In most of the Western Grassfields with 'marriage systems that were exogamous and patrilocal … women generally remained relatively outsiders in the communities where they lived and often lacked the means to political participation, while unmarried women were even more marginal,' van den Bersselaar (2005:56). This is one of the realities that these women have to confront and accommodate especially when they have to compete for access to resources. It is particularly hard on those women from outside who have not borne children as well as for those without a son. The birth of a son within the Papiakum community gives the mother legitimacy to access resources and ownership unlike the daughters/female children.

Over the years, the Papiakum people have been experiencing some changes. In the Ngoketunjia area, the Papiakum people are known for their business aptitude and are commonly referred to as smugglers. Amongst the Bamenda Grassfield, people's trade was principally to the Muslim north and southwards to the Atlantic coast with the primary commodity being slaves in exchange for European manufactured goods such as guns, gun

powder, cloths, Toby jugs amongst others Warnier, (2006:94). The Papiakum people formed part of this trade circuit; their biggest trade route was to Nigeria which continues till date though many more persons have taken it to other urban centres especially Douala. This activity carried out by notables in association with the Fons prompted the mobility of young men and women who either were taken away as head carriers or slaves for the traders involved. It has been taken over today by all who are interested and the Fon is still very much into it as one of his main trading routes.

Having a mentor in business was very essential for the new comers into town known as Johnny Just Cams (JJCs) in local parlance. These mentors could be relatives, friends or neighbours and might be responsible or be the brain behind the person's travel. Of course, there were always others who left their home villages with vague or some imaginary knowledge to the place they were migrating to for whatever adventure like Mbare. Eventually, they would link up to a mentor, known or unknown. As postulated by (van den Bersselaar, 2005:60) these mentors 'helped new arrivals to adjust to the urban way of life, and offered a network through which to find employment or business opportunities'. These movements of persons from the hinterlands that started in the late 1700s according to Warnier (2006), have continued with the growth and the development of many more cities/urban centres in Cameroon offering glamorous employment opportunities, new technologies and better living conditions. Eventually, the rural-urban mobility led to the permanent settlement/investments of some of these migrants and the village became just a notion of a place especially for their offspring borne 'out there' as the example of Mbare. However for a majority of them, they strove to maintain their links/ties at home through landed, social and human investments which serve as social security back home. It is very important for those who want to maintain these ties at home to try to marry a Papiakum man or woman. Parents on their part do put pressure on their children so that they do not 'get missing', dislocated or disconnected from their roots by getting married to people from other villages.

It is commonly said and taken for granted that this rural-urban mobility's was provoked by the escape from poverty. Given that the Western Grassfield is hierarchical in its organisational structure, there were societal constraints limiting the growth of younger people, thus, the search for greener pastures or an 'open and free society'. However, I will push this discussion further as there are salient elements that have been most often than not glossed over. Some of the migrants were kids as noted in the Moh Tanghongho's story below. According to Warnier (2006), kids were coaxed and taken away as slaves while others were sent to stay with relatives that could not bear children and for others urban centres became a refuge against witch-hunting in the village. Depending from which society you were coming from, witch-hunting remains a living phenomenon in rural communities. These kids were therefore exposed to urban life earlier and developed coping strategies to make life easier and better. Other elements like formal/informal education, job hunting and trade still prompted others to leave because through this means they could aspire to get a better and brighter future.

5.5 Merging Rural and Urban Social Categories: Neo-Traditional Titles

The creation of regents in the urban centres is also a growing phenomenon as these persons are seen and treated as special representatives of the Fon. Regents of the Fon are chosen by him or in some cases by the people but must be installed by the Fon to oversee his kinsmen in the urban centres. In concordance with Fisiy and Goheen (1998:390), 'in many ways, life in these urban settings has become the prolongation of the social arena of the home area. It

is based on the combination of urban and rural issues that the new ethnic projects are constructed and identities are revised and redefined'. New hierarchical systems are therefore created within these urban centres that open and challenge access into the newly created social fields answerable to the Fon.

Through their new acquired knowledge via the migrant's educational pursuit which was limited then in this region, these urbanites could easily get into the competitive job market, gain employment and/or enhance their careers. Gaining the appropriate education became a new opportunity to acquire and accumulate wealth without tilling the fields; the only opportunity apart from trading that young people had grown up to know. Through their education and employment, the migrants were also exposed to different and bigger networks from which they could tap on social resources for the enhancement and betterment of their lives in the urban as well as in the rural areas. Those who used their opportunities smartly became successful but those who wasted theirs or were unfortunate became unsuccessful in the risky adventures out in the unknown. Risks of urban life can be divided into successful and unsuccessful urbanites. By successful, I am referring to those who have gotten access into the urban infrastructure and employment, be it public or private and on the other hand, the unsuccessful are those who have been unable to build a house for themselves in the village or do some significant investment in the village.

However, being successful does not essentially depend on one's achievements in the urban centres to the Papiakum people.

> 'Generally, the people will judge you by what you are in the village and not so much on what you are outside. They will want to imagine that others outside are benefiting more from you and they are not benefiting in one way or the other either by their village looking beautiful, because of the one house that you have constructed or by some contribution that you come and make for the general progress of the village. If you are not part of it, then they will just consider you as inconsequential. It is only when you will come and build something in the village that you know that you are standing in the village' (Victor Yenwoh, personal communication, August 13, 2011).

This brings in the notion of the 'second home' whereby urbanites working outside the village come back home to construct houses to maintain their identities. They visit these homes as tourists during the holidays with their children, weekends or during celebrations. This connection is in concordance with Hall and Muller's (2004:11-14) discussion on the motives behind owning second homes where they postulate that 'second home ownership may be strongly related to personal identity (Jaakson, 1986). This is particularly true in cases where second homes represent emotional connections with places of childhood, family or ancestry (Kaltenborn, 1997a, 1997b; Löfgren, 1999). Such familial connections may also positively influence the extent to which second home owners may be integrated into the local community (Pacione, 1979). Jaakson (1986) even argued that a major reason for second home ownership is as a perceived means of keeping a family together. Many second home owners inherit their properties, which thus represent a significant place of family heritage. This point by Jaakson resonates among the peoples of the Western Grassfields and Papiakum in particular when it comes to successors taking over their family compounds and improving on them. In fact, some second home owners state that they invest in a second home so that they can pass it onto the next generation as insinuated by Jansson & Müller (2003). This is situated in the heart of many of the interviews conducted why these urbanites are going back home to modify the old houses and build these big houses that are sparingly used. Thus in their mobilities, they strive to remain connected to

home to have a sense of security and belonging.

The success of an urbanite therefore depends a lot on the type of urban rural connection sought out for, nurtured, cultivated and maintained. This is mostly achieved through social, human and landed investments in the village, Baba I, which the community has to acknowledge and appreciate as the village was the point of validation of one's successful hunt. This is linked very much to their identities as 'true son' of the soil as postulated by Geschiere (2009), Nyamnjoh (2002 and 2005), Gugler (2002), Fisiy and Goheen (1998), Gugler and Geschiere (1998). Having to manage to keep these relations in the right balance, these urbanites are living their lives in a dual system as they have to commute between the urban and rural areas all the time as noted by Gugler (1971 and2002). With better road networks and ICTs gaining grounds in the country, commuting to the village and communicating with the people back is more frequent and not only physically but virtual as well.

In the urban centres, these successful urbanites have become icons that are looked up to as mentors with all its accreditations as mentioned above. Some of these successful urbanites through their new found wealth and connections have acquired a new social or political status within the village in circles where they were formally. In the village, they are given titles (see Figure 5.1) in recognition of their active participation in developmental issues and beyond in landed, social and human investment as these nouveaux riches strive always to maintain their ties and commitment to the Papiakum people. I also observed that 'while some have refused to take either honorary or traditional titles, others feel honoured to be recognised in this way', as indicates by Trager (1998:367). There is the proliferation of these neo-traditional titles in Cameroon today as it has become a commodity for sale to urbanites in particular longing for traditional socio-political recognition, thus, the invention of all sorts of titles. 'It is possible to buy more than one title, each new title being more exclusive and carrying more prestige' as van den Bersselaar (2005:56) eloquently express. Though working amongst the Igbos in Nigeria, Trager and Van den Bersselaar represent the true examples of the realities lived on the field among the Papiakum people of Baba I in the Ngokentungia Division of the North West Region of Cameroon.

Figure 5.1: Conferment of Traditional Titles

Source: Photo by Author

The justification of the endowment of the non-hereditary titles amongst the Nso' people, who have a historical link with the Papiakum people as per their origin, (Fisiy and Goheen, 1998:388) shows a mechanism through which these urbanites get into the governance of

their villages. This is from the perspective 'that the Fon of Nso rules/reigns the land not only with his regulatory society, the Ngwerong, but also with the new elite. Some of these elite command substantial powers within the Nso' Fondom as stated by Fisiy and Goheen. This claim of stewardship by the ruling organs of Nso' captured by the metaphor that the Ngwerong has 800 eyes with which to see the limits of the Nso' land' can be said to be a common belief in the Grassfields. This shows that his divine authority transcends the Nso' land and controls all Nso' people all over the world. The Ngwerong can execute the Fon's orders, but not equal to the Fon in terms of visual ability (800 eyes).This is in concurrence with what I lived amongst the Papiakum people and the type of authority they attribute to their own Fon. The Fon had regents in almost all the urban centres and some of them acted as satellites to other centres where the Papiakum population was small.

This does not in any way mean that meritorious titles are out of place. Though few in number, these titles do exist and for those bestowed upon in recognition of their meritorious activities and inter personal relations by the Traditional Council, it always comes as a surprise. The reaction from the laureates most often than not is to shy away and turn the title down but this resistance is often over-come as the Fon can be very persuasive and insistent. There are successful urbanites whose social ties to their villages have been reinforced through traditional social network by means of succession, traditional titles and acquisition of land for farming and construction. Succession comes with its own responsibility as part of it is taking over and assuming the place of the person succeeded within the traditional social setup. At the political level depending on your title, you might have to be with the traditional council when key decisions are taken as well as be present at the socio-cultural levels in happy and sad celebrations not forgetting education and health care of the family members. With this social network though far off in the city, the landed properties are taken care of as well as recognition upheld through investments not only at family levels but at the community level through participation in developmental projects as well as the construction of houses and engaging in farming. Being a successor as a simple family head, your duties are limited to your family only and you must be physical present at home for important family issues.

It has been realised that the quest for money and position has watered down the meaning and significance of these traditional titles. Interestingly as observed during some core traditional performances in the village, clear distinctions were made in such a way that different categories came out clearly. If one mastered the socio-political hierarchy of the village, then these categories were visible and if one asked, the political hierarchy would be explained in the manner in which the title holders presented themselves in public. Within the category of title holders knowing when to be at the front stage or back stage in Goffman's term is very crucial in performing functions within the socio-political structure. Thus, 'the genuine traditional title holders (those who had inherited their titles) knew themselves and were still playing their customary functions in the society' (Fisiy and Goheen, 1998:389). Going back to one's village to find their roots as Mbare said before made the village an essential element in the development of one's career be it in the formal or the informal sector. The question that remains to be answered in this work is how they organise themselves out there in the various urban centres.

5.6 Urban Papia: The Formation of an Elite Association, BADECA

Stepping back in time to contextualise this discussion is necessary at this juncture. "In earlier days when 'nation building' was the over-riding factor in national politics under President Ahmadou Ahidjo, the nation's founding president, who ruled from independence

(1960) until 1982, it was bad taste to mention someone's ethnic affiliation, let alone to qualify someone openly as an allogène" Geschiere (2009). There was a lot of prudence in the use or inference of such words as the unity of Cameroonians was ingrained in Ahidjo's ideology. After President Paul Biya come to power in 1982, this ideology and prudence started crumbling. With the coming of multiparty politics in 1990, Geschiere states 'autochthony became the all-over-ridding issue in Cameroonian politics'. This phenomenal change led to the creation and escalation of all sorts of ethnic elite associations claiming rights to belong in specific places. Nkwi (2017) however pointed out the underlining fact that amongst the Grassfielders in Diasporic spaces there have always been as many development associations as there were ethnic groups even after 1972 when they were banned as a drive to promote unity. Elite associations were supported and its members were encouraged to take their ties to their home regions seriously. The new deal regime of Paul Biya 'had realised that regional elite associations offered special possibilities in the new political configurations' and have since used them in political manipulations to stay in power as vividly portrayed in Geschiere (2009:39-65). As hinted by Mbare above like Geschiere amongst others, these changes in ideology caused a lot of agitations and tensions as well as a wave of movement of urbanites between urban centres and villages to ascertain their identity and belonging. 'Place-based politics' to use the words of Page, Evans and Mercer (2010:358) became the order of the day as different ethnic groups in urban centres rallied to form home town associations referred to here as Cultural and Development Associations (CDAs) as known in Cameroon (Page, Evans and Mercer, 2010:348 and Evans, 2010 and Nkwi 2017).

It is therefore in this light that in 1993, Fue Kemchi IV of Baba I visited, Kumba, in the South West Region of Cameroon, to install the first executive members of the Baba I Cultural and Development Union (BACDU) which was later on changed to Baba I Development and Cultural Association (BADECA) that covered the whole coastal region including main urban centres like Buea, Mutengene, Limbe, Tiko and Douala. From Mbare's story, one can figure out that Kumba was one of the political hot beds before, during and after the 1992 presidential elections in the country. By this time also there was a vibrant Papiakum community with their village meeting taking place at Moh Nketeh's residence (a very popular/renowned traditional herbalist). He had a very big compound in Kosala where BADECA meetings took place every Sunday which I visited in 2011 as I travelled to meet research partners. I noted that many persons were still hosted in this compound. Kumba had become a hub for their business activities as they could easily move to Nigeria from here and back to Douala and other parts of the country. It is not surprising therefore that the formation of the Baba I elite association was launched in Kumba. Like many other structures that had to be recognised at home by their Fon, these urbanites had him travel all the way to Kumba out of his area of jurisdiction to install the executive of BADECA. To have the Fon travel out of the village requires a lot of logistics as befitting to his personality. This means that even being far away from home; these people still continue to pay their respect to the hierarchy left behind as they need an attestation from the Fon. The creation of BADECA also suggested that the number of the Papiakum people in these urban centres had grown to a point that they could form an association following the current trend of the new political era in Cameroon.

It was only after this that the creation of the various branches of BADECA took place in other major centres of the country and the original one had long grown into several branches in the coastal region. The Papiakum people like other peoples of Cameroon out of their villages had to rally together and be their brother's keepers. This phenomenon though

'new' to Cameroonians had gained grounds in other African countries. They were part and parcel 'to the process of economic development in Africa by providing needed infrastructure, as well as an array of social welfare services which the state is unwilling or unable to deliver, especially to small towns and rural areas' as elucidated by Barkan, McNulty, and Ayeni (1991:458). Being born and bred in the Bamenda urban centre, we grew up knowing that every Sunday afternoon our house hosted the meeting of 'my village people' but making this official by legalising it by the traditional administration gave these 'voluntary hometown associations' a new meaning and prospective.

Concurring with Barkan et al through my interactions and observations, the CDAs now represent and/or can be seen as 'Civic Virtue … citizens of a nation are viewed as a vast reservoir of untapped energy, eager to participate in national and local development, creating a 'Local Growth Machine… that seek to develop communities for their own interests, where actors are involved in political bargaining, resource mobilisation and communication which link central institutions to local communities and Attachment to Place … to elicit deep and lasting commitments from their members. They are communities of memory which affirm people's sense of place and attachment to their hometowns or origin' as Barkan, McNulty, and Ayeni, (1991:459-460) ascertain in their study in western Nigeria.

In these varied characteristics of CDA, I can identify the different strands of growth in Baba I spearheaded by urbanites. They serve under various categories for the development of their community given their socio political attainment within the government cum urban centre. Since these CDAs have many coats on, that could be used in varied contexts, being a member entails full participation and contribution towards developmental projects related to the village which contribute in firmly establishing one's rootedness and belonging to the group.

Membership is acquired automatically through descent, marriage, honorary/affiliation through friends or previous stay in the village. One's participation also determines one's level of connection and commitment towards developmental goals as their preoccupation is to make available needed facilities and amenities in the village. Recognition is not solely given based on how much one can contribute financially but also on the socio-cultural and political abilities of persons. CDA 'becomes a forum for the meshing of local and national interest which enables them to play an effective intermediary role' (Barkan, McNulty, and Ayeni 1991:463). This is so because the association functions as an external unit of the village whose legislation and proper functioning depends a lot on its recognition from the village, thus, enhancing the rural-urban connection as well as reinforcing dual life styles. One's participation further gives accreditation to its members vying for public position as the village has become the centre of gravity in modern-day politics (Fisiy and Goheen 1998, Monga 2002 and Nyamnjoh, 2009). Political aspirations as well as the village focus developmental programmes of these associations make it that circular migration is very much in vogue. There is an increased number of returned migrants especially for those retiring from public service. This return home is easier for those who had constructed a house and/or had acquired farmland/cattle to keep them busy. The repercussions created by this phenomenon back at home by the urbanites are encapsulated actively by bringing in urban amenities and facilities.

However, there are others who decided to disassociate themselves from the group and concentrated mainly on their nuclear families most especially in the urban centres. How successful these urbanites can be when they depend on the social networks back home for one thing or the other is debatable. Most often than not, they are treated as outsiders

since they do not want any social bonding with the groups in the various centre. These urbanites therefore get limited participation and assistance from members when something happens at the family front. No matter their position and status in the urban centre, back at home they are generally considered as failures and seriously mocked at by their age groups. They are regarded as 'inconsequential' as stated by Yenwoh above when he talks about the importance of owning a house and participating in social activities at home no matter how successful you might be in the urban centres. If home, the village is considered as one's final resting place as propagated by the Cameroonian government since there is a provision to take the corpse of a civil servant to the place of origin,(Fisiy and Goheen 1998 and Geschiere 2009), where then will these people will be buried. Apart from Muslims in Cameroon who could be buried wherever they die, usually for the others, there are always discussions and negotiations of taking the corpse home. Burial, especially in Africa marks the place where you were born and thus ultimate belonging but exactly where burial could be done has recently become a much debated issue. The next unit will focus on the geography of burial.

A man without a home will be buried in the bush or in the wild which will be a big blow (an untold embarrassment) to his family and friends. 'However, through mechanisms of social pressure including ostracism, these associations have proven to be very effective in ensuring compliance' (Barkan, McNulty, and Ayeni 1991:462) as these CDAs send reports back home so that they work in harmony. In Baba I, injunction orders (a mechanism of social pressure) have been placed in compounds during burials and funeral celebrations because of the waywardness or non-participation of individuals or family members in village development associations. Having an injunction order from the palace placed in the compound where an occasion is supposed to take place is always a big issue that must be immediately ironed out. When this is done all is suspended and the cases where recalcitrant and/or defaulting individuals have tried to minimise or overlook it, they have been properly lynched. The family would have to recognise and acknowledge the problem, and then negotiate to pay some fine to the Traditional Council to have a corpse buried or for a celebration to go on. Though a very embarrassing situation in front of their friends especially from outside and the family, this has turned out to be very effective as witnessed during two burials in the village (one being a cousin to the Fon who had returned from South Africa, died in Kumba and the corpse brought home for burial).

5.7 Gaining and/or Maintaining Identity

At a very general level, as shown by many writers, for all urbanites the formation and participation in these CDAs generally and BADECA in particular has been a significant way for them to maintain their links with the village. The association represents the bridge of rural urban continuum as per their objectives geared towards the development of their village. It therefore became an obligation of each member to put in their quota towards the achievement of projects at home. By doing so individuals were assessed and approved as per their participation/contributions. Using their personal and interpersonal networks, urbanites would work relentlessly to gain access through available resources within their networks in order to bring benefits to the village. Most often, people were encouraged from all walks of life to participate as it was also a venue where urbanites could gain new and better perspective on enhancing employment or jobs.

Each person with their strengths and weaknesses was considered a reservoir from which specific talents and abilities could be tapped to enhance livelihood for all at home. The impacts of their activities were visible and felt in different strata of the communities.

Those based at home could be seen energetically renovating and building better living structures. The number of houses that still had kitchens and bedrooms in a single room was fast dying out. The sanitation conditions were better as well as the improvement on their nutrition though corn fufu remains the staple food. The health service and educational facilities greatly improved with access roads opened for all to have easy circulation. The enhancement and distribution of utility services was a constant drive. All these visible and invisible changes are the driving force behind the main advocates amongst the urbanites.

For those who abstained from meetings and contributions, sanctions were meted on them. This will be elaborated further within the discussions on losing one's identity. As Fisiy and Goheen (1998:386) aptly put it 'belonging to a group is much more than being physically present in a given community. It is the state of attachment to a given place that sustains images of the home village which is the social centre of gravity and the primary anchor or source of security. The home village provides the framework or reference within which individuals make judgements and articulate linkages between the different cultural and political worlds in which they operate'. At the individual and concrete levels and falling back on the stories of Mbare and that of Moh Tanghongho, gives two exemplary persons amongst other research partners.

Moh Tanghongho Sylvester

Moh Tanghongho was born in Ndop after his mother had lost six previous pregnancies and was named Perndap, meaning war in the house. His mother left him under the care of her sister when he was four and went back to Baba I. No one from his family was permitted to visit him as a sort of protection against witch-craft. His mother's sister nurtured him till he completed his primary education. Only then did he go to the village for the first time in his life before leaving for Kumba for two years and then back to Bamenda for the continuation and completion of his secondary and high school education. He then proceeded to Yaoundé in 1982 for the lone university to read Economics. While in Yaoundé, he worked with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as an accountant before getting into L'École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature (ENAM). He completed his studies as a treasury inspector, became an accountant general and currently, he is the Director General of Treasury at the Ministry of Finance. He started sponsoring his siblings and other relatives in schools from when he got his first job with USAID. He has expanded this gesture now to promote and sponsor a great number of under privileged children in Baba I. Mbare and Moh Tanghongho's stories above are two examples amongst others of those who were born out of the village and spent most of their lives outside the village though under different circumstances but decided to work hard to gain and maintain their identities with those back at home. From Mbare's perspective, the misfortune of his father brought the family home and they had to face the harsh reality of life as they were treated as strangers. This was principally because his father had no landed investments especially a house to shelter his family and had to do the unthinkable as Yoyo puts it, staying at his father's house and depending on others. The penalty heaped on one being a parasite is very frustrating as pointed out by Yenwoh and Mbare himself. A man with his family under such circumstances is hauled at with all sorts of abuses and treated with disdain. Even during public celebrations you could ridiculed and turned to a laughing stock by dancing to your insults if you do not listen to the lyrics of the lead singer.

Moving to stay in Bamali was perhaps the best option for them for the growth of their family because the situation became a big source of inspiration for young Mbare. He took up the challenge to construct a house for his family to bring them back to their root.

Staying in Bamali meant being 'disconnected from one's home village which is seen as being without roots or having lost the social nexus that attaches an individual to a given community. This did not only imply physical separation but also a psychological disturbance as they are socially cut off as pointed out in Fisiy and Goheen (1998:386). The fact that his father went back and started the construction work though Mbare was the brain behind it boosted the father's ego. Through this, he was rebuilding his image amongst the people who had considered him 'inconsequential' and in the process gaining his self-worth. Though he appreciates their stay in Bamali for he learnt quite a lot, for Mbare, 'it is important to go back to your village because that is where you find your roots, your base', (Mbare, 2011). Living outside and not having a base at home was something which had hit hard on this family and Mbare could not afford to take more chances on this for his family and himself.

Not having any house in the village, they had been 'excluded' from the family and treated like strangers. In this case, it was not their descent that was in question but the fact that Mbare's father had not fulfilled one of the paramount expectations of the Papiakum people of having a house. Houses are therefore signifiers of visible and physical attestation of one's rootedness and belonging freeing oneself and family from ridicule and abuses. Mbare had become very conscious of this and did everything to build a house for his parents before one for himself. 'Right now, if I go back to the village, I will feel free even with some of my friends. I will have my privacy and have my home and things in order. Formerly, when I went home, any shirt I put on smell of smoke', (Mbare, 2011).

Through his active participation in BADECA, he is leaving behind imprints as he puts it, 'when you are now in Baba, you develop Baba, tomorrow your names will be cited as those who brought such and such development to your own village. That is why I think it is good to go back home and carry out the necessary developments there. After you have brought in development, you will enjoy the facilities put in place in your old age', (Mbare, 2011). The village community is the watch dog of the participation of the urbanites in the infrastructural developments in the village. Conscious of these sorts of checks, the urbanites work hard to contribute their quota to develop their communities of origin.

Moh Tanghongho's return was not as dramatic as that of Mbare. Though he had spent most of his life outside his village of origin, he was seen, considered and treated as a stranger especially giving the circumstances surrounding his birth. However, as a young boy he grew up knowing he was away from home and when he finally got the opportunity to go back home, he could not miss any chance to build his contacts with his parents and siblings. Though treated with a lot of scorn at first by family and friends, he eventually gained acceptance when they figured out whom he was and that he had come to stay in the village especially for those who had never seen him. His holidays spent at home gradually bridged this gap for him and made him more comfortable among his people even though he never forgot about his other family in Ndop where he had grown up. It is only when he returned home that he started re-building his bond with his biological mother and father. He regrets his 'parents' in Ndop (his maternal aunt and husband) did not live long after he became an independent and mature man to enjoy the fruits of their labour. He lives with a watchful and sensitive gaze on this family as he is largely treated and regarded as one of its members.

However, due to this bond with his parents in Ndop his first ever land dispute was on their behalf as he explains.

> ‘They have a compound in Ndop. That is where I grew up and that is what I know like my own. The co-wives of my aunt had children. So when the husband died, they took one of the grandchildren as successor. We had a lot of big land in Ndop, in Bikom quarter at the centre of the town. He came and started selling the land and was actually getting closer and closer to the compound. That is where I had to intervene and it went right up to the level of the gendarmerie and even the court to get back the land. He had even sold part of the compound. I went and bought it back from the person and even paid back three times more than what the person paid just to keep that place. My aunt and husband were buried there. So at least, I have some attachment to the land. I could not stay and then they come to dig up my aunt’s grave. This is because if land is sold to somebody and the person wants to develop it, you have no authority over it. That strong link made me fight. For the first time, I was involved in a land dispute. I could not stay like that and a small child is selling the whole place. I had to buy back the place and proceed to do a land title. I said I am not going to stay there but I just want the compound to be there with some life. After that, there were a lot of problems but finally he himself has seen that what I was doing was really quite good. He is happy now and once in a while, I try to help whenever he calls me for help’ (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

From the above excerpt, I realised that the house was not the only symbol and signifier on the landscape of a person’s belonging. Graves held even a stronger link to an individual’s attachment to the place. This case of Moh Tanghongho concurs with that of the successor buried on his facet of land (see Fig. 4.8), in dispute with the prince that ended in court, after his death. There has to be a sufficient reason for a corpse to be exhumed in the same way one is regarded as ‘useless’ when he/she sells the place where a parent or both parents are buried. These places and graves, like that seen beside the house below (Fig 5.2), remain symbolic performing art spaces for the family as libations are constantly poured there as rituals to appease the ancestors. Thus, for one to think of selling off such a place is an ultimate show of disregard, disrespect and ungratefulness. You basically are considered as having acquired the worst curse and done away with your birth right and attachment.

Figure 5.2: An example of a grave beside the house that serves a symbolic art space and a symbolic signifier of attestation of belonging.

Source: Photo by Author

Human investments in terms of health care and education are one of the predominant ways through which urbanites use in maintaining links to the home village. This is most often centred on family members. Moh Tanghongho got into this venture as soon as he started working. He took up the responsibility of sponsoring his siblings through school as well as providing for their health care. It must be pointed out that coming from a very large family coupled with the fact that he is now the successor, his responsibilities are abundant, and this is even a position which he resisted because it did not follow the right order considering that his step mother was a princess. He explains this peculiar situation as follows,

> 'it is quite a long story anyway because there were a lot of people who were on the line so I will say that destiny had it. First of all, we had the first daughter of the Fon's father Fue Shanghamagha I, Muentoh married to my father, she is in the compound. She had a son Forchu. So normally if he was alive, he would have automatically succeeded because that is the tradition. He died in 1979 when I was in form four. And now there was another brother, Yenwoh who had done a seven year course in the palace, staying in the palace and serving the Fon as a Nchinda. That one too according to tradition, in matters of succession they look at those people who had served in the palace and they are given some priority. Then I was born out. My father had about eight wives. The real people who had to do it, it happened that they were not there at the time my father died and even my own junior brother who left INJS died too in 1998, a very dynamic young man who could have been the successor. One week before he died, he actually indicated. He showed signs to me that he wanted me to take over but by then, he was very weak. I came to the compound on the 7thof December 2001and he asked me to carry him up. I carried him up from the bed. He sat, held my hand like this, put it like this (lifting it up and down). He did it three times that I have put it. Even then it meant nothing to me. So when he died on the 14thof December 2001, there was terrible pressure from all over. I realised that I had been taking care of virtually everything in the compound and so there was no need trying to run away. Even when he was alive, I was taking care of him and all the children. So what is going to change if I became a Moh? On the contrary, I may instead have difficulties if I get somebody else who will come tomorrow and maybe you want to come and do something in the compound and he will say that you cannot do it. He will want that you give him money to do it for you. And when you will come and realize that he has not done it, there is nothing you will do' (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

Traditionally, following the Papiakum logic, a son of this princess should have been made the successor. Such connections serve to maintain strong social and political links with the palace, thus, establishing firm roots of control over landed property in the village. The case above ushers in a new socio-political change within the Papiakum network of relations. The rule of succession here was altered in preference to a more dynamic and viable person in recognition of his economic standing, interpersonal relations with the family/community and socio political position in the government.

> At the community level, he continues with his human investment projects. He worked diligently to make available water and electricity to his quarter to ease the livelihood of the people. For years, 'I used to actually finance the maintenance of the water project every now and then but I realised that it was difficult. It really needed that the community should get involved. I told them that the women could contribute 25 FRS or 50 FRS a month, which should be gathered into some small fund which could be used to do repairs. If there is a broken pipe somewhere, something should be given to the person who is repairing it. Now we are struggling to see how next year the government can assist us to redo the project with a good catchment' (Moh Tanghongho, 2011).

As the current president of BADECA Yaoundé branch, he is also using his personal networks within the governmental ranks joining forces with the Fon and Yoyo especially to even lobby for bigger water and electricity projects that would soon start in the village as he says,

> 'even if the external elite are not living in the village, they have their parents and
>
> relatives who are living there. And once in a while, they also visit. So they care. We have development meetings and we have contributions towards development but that cannot really be enough which means that we have to do a lot of lobbying to get some of our projects actually put in the budget, like we succeeded in getting 90 million in the budget of 2011 to do the road to the palace. Then now we have presently 165 million for electrification which is coming up. In the next one month, they should be able to start. We cannot contribute all that money even in the next twenty years. So the government is actually coming in with a lot to assist us through one's own external connections by presenting them to the right quarters and lobbying. That is what it is all about. Those are things that cannot be done by villagers' (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

This access to authority corroborates with Dike and Jua's (1982 and 2002) assertion concerning how urbanites penetrate the governmental structures to tap resources that are geared towards the development of the local communities. In his gentle nature, he wraps this up by saying,

> 'when you have done things that have an impact on the people in the village that is when they can say that you are successful. It is not being successful on your own. You must be able to do things in the village which people can benefit from. If you come to town and build your houses and stay there, you do not go to the village, you have never built in the village, and you have never done anything, I do not think that to the villager you are a successful person. You must be able to do things in the village; you can come home and pay fees for about twenty poor children. With those types of things, they can then see that this person is doing something. The Fon listens to all what people say when he interacts with people. They talk about some success of the child from the village or something and then he could take the initiative now and say ok I am going to give him a red feather or title in acknowledgement and appreciation' (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

This falls in line with Goheen's (1996) study amongst the Nso' people as one of the ways through which Urbanites are upgraded in social standings in their communities. Active participation of members was the expected norm and meritorious bushfallers were therefore awarded with traditional titles.

5.8 Losing and/or Loss of Identity

In as much as urbanites try to come together for the common good of their communities, there are still some to whom participation in such associations means almost nothing. In this section, two categories of persons are singled out. There are those who are losing their identity and those who have lost their identities and thus their 'belonging' amongst the people. Those who associate themselves with other urbanites, pay their annual contributions as required but who have not put up any structure in the village to attest their belonging and standing in the village. This category is losing their respect and identity. For this category of persons, their visits to the village were very short and limited as observed. What usually took them to the village were events they could not afford to miss like the death of a parent or sibling and aunt, uncle or cousin depending on their closeness. Most of them had lots of

investments in the urban centres and focused more on their immediate families most often with them in these centres.

Swebu is a vibrant young man with a very humble beginning who can be said to be a self- made man. He lost his mother when he was quite young and started his outward journey to the urban centre in search of greener pastures after finishing his primary education. He did all sorts of odd jobs and hawking starting from Bamenda to Bertoua and then to Kribi and Douala to see himself through secondary and high schools. Today, he is the owner of a business enterprise in Douala called Tropical Trading Company (TTC) with a catching slogan 'we supply from a pin to an elephant with competitive prices'. He has made several landed investments in Douala and has two apartment houses that are out on rent but he lives in a rented apartment which he says is cheaper for him. His human investments are mostly focused on his family and he participates fully rather in their family/lineage meetings in Douala.

While in Douala unlike the other urban centres, it was noted that there is no regular general meeting for the Papiakum people. There are instead small units of clan/family and quarter meetings that come together annually for the general meeting. This takes us back in history as mentioned above that CDAs developed from such meetings. Coming together under these units was more effective to take care of one's close relatives as the Papiakum community in Douala had gotten very big as I was informed. With large numbers, family members were easily tracked down in these small units. Cases of family feuds cannot be ignored in the formation of these small units. However, each person is expected to raise funds to make their annual contribution to BADECA. These contributions are redeployed into the various developmental projects going on in the village as in the construction of roads, upgrading classrooms the provision of water.

Swebu, makes his contributions but has never attended any of the annual general conventions. This attitude of staying away from meetings has made him rather unpopular amongst some of the members of the Papiakum community in Douala as they consider him snobbish, arrogant, and proud and to an extent, a strange person. Through gentle persuasion from some of the members of this community and with some push from the Fon, he is gradually coming back to the fold as he is being seen more often during their village events.

Paradoxically, he is highly sought for medical and other social assistance that requires financial backings. Through the persuasion and encouragement from the Fon, he has started the construction of his house in the village and is very proud for the development of this project. He frequents the village now more than ever before. As he said in his conversations, he feels really lost as he does not really know people in the village even in his own extended family. He is however happy that this construction project will bring him in close contact with his family and the wider Papiakum community having lived outside for so long.

As for those who have refused totally to associate with groups in one way or the other, they do not even participate in meetings nor keep company with the others. Some would not grant listening ears and out-rightly refused being interviewed. Others were just evasive and stayed off any topic concerning their life in the urban centres. Most of them treated the researcher with suspicion and some with hostility when trying to gently probe and when they were told about this interview, they were not interested. As gathered from others, some of them at one point in their lives had experienced misfortune and severe loss. Unlike Mbare's father, they cannot stand the shame of going back to the village empty handed. For others, the lack of education, capital and creativity/initiative has over the years

made it impossible to have jobs but they still hang around in the cities hoping that things would be better. They barely live from hand to mouth and live in crammed accommodations. Due to social/family pressures, some disillusioned urbanites have gone underground because they can no longer manage the expectations from their communities and gotten themselves into vices like drugs and excess alcohol consumption. These persons are considered lost and forgotten in a way.

When I asked the National Secretary of BADECA, how those members of the Papiakum community who are not interested in the association's activities were handled, he had this to say;

> 'For those who have left the village who cannot come back for one reason or the other or who do not want to come back, people are delegated to meet them and discuss with them and make them understand the good reasons for being part of the community. Sometimes too, those who are outside in their various groupings are advised to always behave very well so that those who are escaping can be jealous and then fall back within the fold. Sometimes when sanction is meted against one of them, they think twice. Sanction in the sense that some other relative can have some major activity to carry out in the village and they are impeached from carrying out that activity. The family members will be the first to run to him to try to beg him or whatever or induce him to comply with what is asked so that the event is carried out. In that way some of them will come back and I think many of them have been coming back. The most recent is one family by the stream at the Presbyterian Church. I think they were just lost. I was surprised to see some of them twice in the village on market days. They were entering off-licences, drinking, talking like any other person and even challenging the very regular Baba people. So I said to one how sweet it is to come back home. The man said 'massa give na my mimbo here make I drink', sir, just give me a drink (Victor Yenwoh, personal communication, August 13, 2011).

Belonging is therefore seen as having social and physical connotations. Socially, it is seen in terms of one's physical participation during events in the community. Participation in events gives social recognition as well as an opportunity to educate oneself on the norms and values of the society. One's presence is acknowledged and appreciated as a main pointer towards belonging in the community. However, this is only completed when there is a physical proof on the ground to testify and confirm this presence. Having a place or a home of your own is very important. As illustrated from the cases above, having and owning a house is a thing of great pride. It is the strongest indicator of one's belonging as it puts one on the physical landscape of the community. These discussions calls to some reasoning behind the building of these big houses back in the village.

Through the quest of belonging by the urbanites, this chapter have brought to light the different types of mobility from and in Baba I. This involve those who left home for greener pastures because of want of better education then moved on as civil servants and businessmen like Yenwoh, Yoyo and Swebu. As they went out, they maintained their links home through their participation in personal and community development of the village via their social and physical investments.

5.9 Conclusion

Mobility from without has to do with those urbanites who were born outside like Mbare and Moh Tanghongho but worked hard to reposition themselves through their investments in Baba I. For both categories of urbanites it has been demonstrated that these mobilities and investments does not remain at the physical level but expands to the socio-political and virtual levels. They have been engaged in this varied mobility as occasioned by their

different walks of life out there as well as back at home as they have gained positions in the local socio-political hierarchies. The empirical examples of my research partners above have been central in addressing the core questions of this thesis on mobility and belonging. The use of life histories elucidated the importance of mobility and belonging among the Papiakum and the Grassfields. Through this chapter I have added my voice to the body of literature on how mobility and belonging are intrinsically woven in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon in general. The next chapter would elaborate on the different investments mentioned here which will delve into the changing materiality of the Papiakum people

6. Architectural Landscape and Infrastructure Biographies of Material Culture

6.1 Introduction

The architectural landscape and infrastructure of a place are important vestiges that help to paint the present and past histories and cultures of any civilization. The biographies of these material cultures are of interest since they have a 'social life'. By focusing on these structures, their place and symbolic meanings are delved into bringing along with them the process of change. These architectural structures have evolved over time as one follows the ongoing construction and renovation activities. The goal is that 'a more profound appreciation of these things will lead to a more profound appreciation of the persons' involved in this process as suggested by Miller (2010:6). This chapter holds the central discussion of the thesis on material culture which is both tangible and intangible. The pith of the discussion here is on how through material culture we will gain insight into character and community structure which reveals emotional qualities. This involves examining utilitarian constructions, houses, to determine the values they embody among the Papiakum. Delving into these houses will inherently expose drives and aspirations in this class structured community bringing about transformations on the landscape through textual and visual forms.

By so doing this chapter will answer the question of how the various investments (material culture) are connected to mobility and access to land are handled as well as the meaning and place of houses among the Papiakum. What does this say about identity in a mobile society and the ramifications of material culture on the landscape transformation taking place will be our focus. This chapter has been structured in five main parts in order to bring out the meaning, illustrate changes caused and bring to light the effects of these changes on the community and its architectural landscape as follows: Things and their relation to people with the life history of Yakubu; Meaning of House among the Papiakum; Migrants and the changing architectural landscape; Home investments and witchcraft and getting into one of the houses.

6.2 Things and their Relation to People

Things, objects or 'stuff' as Miller (2010) calls them and their relationships with people have always been a source of fascination. Its 'meanings appear to be relatively simple, straightforward, essentially timeless and largely identical for any observer' when not placed within a specific socio-cultural context. This makes it possible for people to gloss over stuff rather than get into 'the complexities of deciphering the rich symbolic meanings inherent in or imposed upon objects' by those using them as indicated in Riggins (1994:2). Things do have a social life and thus a biography of their own. Biographies of things can make salient what might otherwise remain obscure by the way they are culturally redefined and put to use Appadurai and Kopytoff (1986). In getting into their imposed or inherent rich symbolic meanings, the different social fabrics of the society are made visible (Rowlands, 1989 and Malaquais, 1994). I can say so because they cease to be mere things but rather do have

multiple meanings. Contextualisation becomes very crucial as social interactions within specific spaces call for specific/different interpretations. Gender relations stand out as a crucial element in the evolution of the society. Through the 'fundamental materiality' of these urbanites, we will come 'to understand, convey and appreciate our humanity' better Miller, (2010:4).

'We are in an era of extended spatial mobility where increasing numbers of people have multiple and mixed spatial-cultural references, causing spatial-cultural paradoxes'. Through the houses and their processes of construction, some of these complexities caused by the extended network of spatial mobility will be disentangled. Focusing on the houses of these urbanites as well as those living in the village, the relation between objects and persons hopefully, will 'resolve the tensions implied by these dualisms' (Dalakoglou, 2009:52). Though the evolution of houses is undocumented, through life histories of my research partners, this will be illuminated on the new development of the architectural landscape in this village as experienced within this society over the past three years. Through the eyes of these urbanites, a brief history of the evolution/development of infrastructure in this Western Grassfield village of the North West Region of Cameroon will come to light. The feeling of most of the inhabitants of this study area is captured by this excerpt:

> 'There is some kind of awareness that you need to have a decent house at home. When I go home, at least there should be some minimum comfort. You can have friends who can come with their families, they should have where to stay, and you should have where to receive them. You should have electricity and water. Now it is not just whether you have built. They are interested in the quality of the house; it must be a very good house. It is becoming a part of social status. People want to meet up with modernity. There is this tendency of having storey buildings. When you have never built a house, in the Manjong group of your age bracket, you cannot talk there' (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

Figure 6.1: Pictures of some storey buildings from different quarters

Source: Photo by Author

For the Papiakum, houses and the amenities therein have become a social status symbol that validates a person's standing in the society. Figure 6.1 are pictures of some storey buildings to illustrate Moh Tanghongho's point.

There were however some single apartment houses that stood out on the landscape. The roofing of this house below was outstanding amongst others and with its internal toilet shows the pride and amount of comfort some of these urbanites are putting in the construction of their houses. As Yenwoh, one of my research partners, puts it below, it is a sort of challenge and competition among these urbanites to be above the other by introducing something new each time they are building in the village (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Gradual process of changing architectural landscape

in a compound, Mbakwat Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

> 'Those who are rushing home to build seem to be facing a lot of challenges and even abuses from friends and many other people outside because of the fact that they do not have any house in the village and so they cannot speak when men are speaking. Men here are those who have constructed their own homes and so they take it as a challenge now to come and build in order to stay off those abuses. It is really important because when you come and you are patching by somebody to carry out an activity, they just start abusing you on the spot. Some of them take it as a challenge naturally to build at home because it is difficult for a year to pass without them having an event. It could be a 'cry die' or a family meeting and when it happens like that, you need at least to come and stay with your own people in your home' (Victor Yenwoh personal communication, August 13, 2011).

These challenges and abuses are not reserved only to those in the urban centres. As per Yakubu's story below, those in the village are also out to prove a point. They are also striving to construct something modern for themselves to show that they are not oblivious of the changes that are taking place around them.

Yakubu of Mbaghangha Quarter

Yakubu is 39 years and he is one of the young, inspiring and hard-working rice farmers in Baba I. He has been into this business for over ten (10) years. He dropped out of school in form three when his father could not afford to sponsor his two elder brothers and himself at a secondary school in Ndop. He returned home to join his father on the rice fields in the village. By the age of nineteen (19), he had gotten his own rice plots and earned his own money as an independent farmer. Following the advice of his parents, he used this to get married as he had already built his hut (house). This excerpt reveals Yakubu's sentiments:

> 'It was really important for me because through that house I gained some respect from some of my age mates. At that time, many of them had not built. From that hut, I built my wife's house two rooms and roofed it while my own was still thatched. After my wife's, I built a three room house for myself. I settled down and the idea came up to put up this one that you see work is still going on. Since it is incomplete, I am not living in yet.

Figure 6.3: Yakubu &Wife on his rice field harvesting at

Mbaghangha Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.4: Yakubu's House at Mbaghangha Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

> Traditionally, a man is not supposed to live in the same house with his wife because I cannot cohabit in the same house with my mother in law when she comes. Also when she has some visitors, I am not supposed to be in the house all the time. So I have to be but in my own house' (Gowan Yakubu, personal communication, August 27, 2011).

He got the inspiration for the design of this new uncompleted house from one he saw and admired in Ndop. Putting this up gives the signal also that he is able which is an embarrassment he says to some of his friends in the urban centres 'because they do not really believe that somebody can be living in the village and do something like this since they think that the only means to make money is outside the village' (Yakubu, 2011). Being foresighted in his plans, he bought a piece of land in Ndop for future investment. He however, still plans to build a two storey building in the village and 'my intention of storey building is to challenge those business men. In a civilized world you don't have to build only where such buildings exist. An area develops when the people work hard. So in order to improve my quarter it is here that I have to build' (Yakubu, 2011). As a father of three kids, he also has a vision for his children's education and especially the first, who is a girl. 'I only pray for long life and I can assure you that I do not know the type of school that can be more than my capacity to send my daughter' (Yakubu, 2011). At 7 his daughter is already in primary three in a nearby school which makes him all the more proud. In his sitting room is a comfortable set of chairs, a plastic carpet on the floor, a big musical set with varied posters hanging on the walls as decoration. On display at an angle is his gun which he very proudly exhibited saying he is a complete man as required by the Papiakum tradition.

Yakubu's experience, suggests that with the passage of time, the landscape is gradually changing thanks to the infiltration of the urban cultures into the rural landscapes. The ambiguous concepts of time and space are inseparable – activities take time, and take place somewhere. Activities and processes bring aboutthe restructuring of space. Yet, the perspective is that space, at the same time is an abstract concept. Its place is inhabited and 'filled' with material as well as social content. From an abstract point of view, space contains structural parts as well as flows, and from a practical perspective from which it is experienced. People construct and produce material space as well as space filled with signs, culture and meaning like the case of the Papiakum people of Baba I. This implies that the

society as well as its places and landscapes, is changeable. The late modern landscape consists, to a great degree, of signs of consumption. This implies that more unambiguous landscape of production has more and more become a composite landscape both for production and for visual consumption and experiences at the same time (Jackson, 2000; Hägerstrand, 1991; Crang, 2003).

My focus being on the landed property of those who had travelled at some point in their lives, 'it becomes apparent that the infrastructure and culture of tourism surround our life. The surrounding world is more and more adapted to handle mobility, structures of experience and global flows. The commodification of landscape and the other environments we inhabit contribute to the organisation of mobility, such as the tourism economy's construction of experiences and the construction of places/landscapes as signals for consumption. ... The organization of our present society implies that from an individual perspective, people largely use tourism and leisure activities as a means for establishing identity and creating meaning in their lives. Places are important starting-points in the processes of seeking identity and meaning', (Aronsson, 2004: 82-83).

6.3 Meaning of Ndap (House) Amongst the Papiakum People

Generally, it is universally assumed the world over that a house is basically a place for shelter to both humans and animals. Yet amongst the Papiakums this assumption goes beyond the phase level. Ndap for the Papiakum people is not just a mere place for shelter to satisfy a human need as it is coded with different meanings from its inception. It is a home. This goes to corroborates Ariztia (2012:95) that investing in a home is not just an idea or a space but an active cultural process in which home-making practices are means by which dwellers ground personal and social meanings in the new residence. Houses are still seen as being masculine as they qualify and represent a person's place in the society. Ownership is masculine in the sense that it is attributed to men and regarded as the first visible sign that qualifies them as matured adults. Having a house also represents a young man's independence and serves as a physical and symbolic marker of his place within his people. 'Human beings and their dwellings are linked in a symbiotic relation, at the heart of which stands one fundamental concern: the acquisition of status' as pointed out by Malaquais, (1994:2). Yakubu's assumption as presented above suggests that having a house commands respect and admiration from one's age group Manjong (each Manjong group has its specific name for identification), as well as one's family since this seems to be an indelible sign of responsibility. This responsibility is geared towards managing and maintaining the smooth running of your household. Having a gun in the house as Yakubu proudly shows off is a sign that you can stand up for your family and village in the phase of adversities. The masculinity of houses shade a lot of things if simply glossed over. An example of this is the capability and participation of women in the negotiations and construction of houses.

Houses are also sign of wealth and social status. Yakubu expressively explained how though living in a thatched house; he built for his wife a two room house with zinc roof before building for himself a three room house showing off his sense of achievement and pride. Building and roofing his wife's house before his is not a usual practice as men would normally build their own houses first. These investments on houses (the zinc roofs) have gained for him a social standing which is very much admired and talked about. In her study amongst the Kasena people of Northern Ghana, Cassiman (2008:20) brings this aspect to light thus: 'the use of these materials (imported iron sheets and cement) adds to the prestige and status of the house and its inhabitants' and also shows how increased mobility has led to 'an intensified exposure to urban and "western" housing styles, be it in design, ground

maps, materials, or interior objects'. This has been imbued into the Papiakum social system, a people well known for their mobility especially when it comes to trade.

Long distance trade involving the peoples of the Grassfields has been one of the oldest means of accumulation of capital in this region of the country (Nyamnjoh, 2002; Rowlands, 1988 and 1993; Warnier, 1985 and 2006). In terms of conspicuous consumption, those who engaged in long distance trade were the first people to introduce some of these new construction materials that brought in the gradual changes. However, the expectation from the people that a man should house the woman has clouded the salient role of women towards the construction of houses. At the traditional court in Baba I, a man was brought in to justify the reason for sending his wife packing to their compound. She had brought the case to the council that her husband had chased her out of her house. During the hearing of this case at the council, the man explained that the wife's family had supported her in the construction of her house which was roofed with zinc and that she refused to hand it over to him or move into his thatched house with kids. How could he be staying under a thatched roof and his wife in a zinc house in his compound? His pride had been wounded and he was not ready for the ridicule from his family, friends and villagers in general.

Though this incident contradicts that of Yakubu above, it brings to light the expectation of men towards their wives and in-laws. On the other hand, the story also shows a changing mentality over time. The salient effects of the social process of urbanisation creeping in the community as the consumption of urban commodities are on the rise due to the mobility of persons, goods, services and ideas. However, this further goes to explain why it was not uncommon to hear women declare that their houses were constructed by their husbands even if it is common knowledge that they were the brains behind it even after their death. Despite the traditional and patriarchal restrictions imposed on women with regards to owning and constructing houses with changing times, some women circumvented such barriers. Mallama, one of my informants, was one of these women. She explained how she went about building her house after the death of her husband.

> 'I moulded bricks. I did this and that but I still looked back to my husband. Up till this moment as you remain his wife, everything remains his own. I am working for him. If I want to go out, like going out to buy a place and build, when I die, only his family children will come and inherit it. So you will not say that I am the one who built it' (Rose Mallama, personal communication, April 08, 2011).

Though she constructed the house as a wife she can only hold such land in trust for the male child/children. Figure 6.5 gives a glimpse of 'Big Mami' Mallama and her new house.

Figure 6.5: 'Big Mami' Mallama at her residence in

Quebessi Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

According to Mallama, this is a common phenomenon in the Grassfields. With every investment made by a woman in her marital home, credit is given to the husband. At the end of the day, it is his property since it is most likely on his land. For a woman to declare that she is the brain behind the construction of a house suggests she is openly challenging the masculinity of the husband which none will take lightly.

No woman would want to voice in a public arena the incapacity of the husband in making provisions for his household as head of the family. She will do as much as possible to cover up for him as she does not want to be a subject of discussion and ridicule amongst the womenfolk. The one who gathers and takes care of the husband's property as well as protects him from external ridicule and aggression is seen and considered a good woman. This explains, to an extent, in the case cited above why the traditional council blamed the husband for sending his wife away rather than negotiating with her amicably for a new housing and living arrangement. Though women are constructing and living alone, they are still attached to their husbands or fathers when references are made of them.

Among the Papiakum people, it is generally embarrassing for a grown up man to be buried in his father's compound. One's house provides the final shelter and resting place. The grave is either placed beside or behind the house. This space becomes a performing art space for the pouring of libation and invocation of the spirit of the dead in supplication and thanksgiving. These intercessory prayers at the grave side are crucial in their belief system as it is believed that the spirit of the dead lives on to protect and intercede for those left behind. This explains to an extent the zeal and desire for the building of houses in one's village. This is highly encouraged especially for civil servants since the government service where an individual works would normally take care of the coffin and transportation of the corpse to the home village. Belonging to a specific place or village is very crucial for recognition and acceptance. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (1998) and Tegomoh (2013) have triggered a heated debate on the issue of the 11thprovince of Cameroon, an enigmatic and imaginative region whose occupants are scattered all over the territory. This is in reference to those who had or have settled out of their home village of origin and not considered as belonging but regarded as strangers in their place of residence.

6.4 Migrants and the Changing Architectural Landscape

This section focuses on the effect of mobility and the process of urbanisation in Baba I as urbanites are introducing new infrastructure in the community. In tracing the architectural development I hope to illuminate this process of change on the landscape as well as in the daily interactions of persons. I am going to open this discussion by Yoyo, one of my informants, who states;

> 'When I was growing up, there were only two corrugated houses or two zinc houses in Baba; one small house which is in the market now and one in the palace. So if you have to look at that and then you see how the village looks like today, you can imagine the changes that have been taking place. First and foremost, these houses in the village can be classified in two categories, namely, those of the villagers themselves and those of the educated, of the elite of the village who are outside. You know the tradition is you must own a house at home' (Yoyo personal communication, March 24, 2010).

According to Baba I oral tradition, having a house is the first sign of maturity and responsibility of a young man in the sight of friends and family. The chosen site for construction would normally be around the family compound or on some family land elsewhere. Princes were an exception to the rule as they could settle anywhere in the village. The space provided for the house was in cognisance of the fact that it had to grow into a compound, a sub-unit to the main compound, which is with house(s) of wife (ves). For those building around their main compound, ample and comfortable distances were given between the locations. Linked through a network of footpaths, each was viewed as an independent unit that will eventually develop into a larger unit occupying all the space around obliging siblings to start moving on and off the main family settlement area as indicated in Figure 6.6.

Each quarter therefore was a congregation of compounds which constituted of several settlement units as shown in Figure 6.7. Each quarter had a quarter head whose compound was the central unit and did not necessarily mean he was having the most 'advanced' house in terms of material and design. The quarter head was/is usually a notable in charge of the smooth running of the affairs under his jurisdiction while functioning as an eye of the Fon. It was very possible then for an entire quarter to be made up of relatives. In a typical Papiakum compound, the head of the household's house faces the main entrance of the compound. Everyone entering the compound is likely to be seen by him and visitors could hardly go by without acknowledging their presence. Depending on the number of wives within a household, their houses are built behind the main house to the left and to the right. If there are four wives for instance, the house of the first wife will face that of the second wife and the house of the third wife will be next to the first and opposite the fourth wife who is beside the second wife

Figure 6.6: Illustration of how Compounds with several units

eventually run out of space for all the offspring.

Source: Photo by Author

The head of the household decides whether the wives take turns to provide his meals or every one of them presents a dish. His food is usually much and considered tastier by the kids. The children therefore will hang around to partake in the meal especially if there are no visitors at such hours.

Figure 6.7: A view of settlement units in different quarters

Source: Photo by Author

These houses were mostly built with the use of readily available local materials like bamboo sticks, brown earthen mortar, soft grass straw and fibre ropes. They started off as a single room house which was partitioned or demarcated as sleeping and sitting spaces. It should be noted that at first, houses were hidden and were close to water sources so they had to raise moulds on which they erected the structures to avoid floods of any sort. Bigger and stronger sticks were placed strategically as pillars to form and hold the rectangular structure. Then smaller bamboos or bigger ones were split and laced on the form with the aid of fibre gotten from wet bamboo. After the pegging and lacing of the structure, the owner invited the community to assist him with the plastering. Earth mortar was then prepared and used to build the walls in the processs and wiching the pegged structure leaving out the space for a door (Muafue-Mbarem, 2012).

There were no windows, but just a single door leading into the house. But when the windows were eventually introduced, they were so tiny that even a baby could not go through. Permission had to be sought from the palace to have more than a door or window in a house and this was controlled by titled women of the palace, Na'ah and palace servants, Tchinda. Payments of door/window taxes were made by all those who wanted to have more than a window. Limited permission was granted to those who wanted a back door. Actually, only highly placed notables after due considerations were allowed more than one door. This brings to mind the story about Moh Tanghongho's grandfather whose house mysteriously crumbled to the ground after a visit by some of the notables who claimed they could not find their way out by hitting themselves to the walls of the house. Either he had not obtained proper permission to have a back door or the house was viewed as a much more superior house than what was in the palace.

A rectangular ceiling made of closely laced bamboo sticks was then mounted on the constructed form of the house. The ceiling was not completely sealed off. A rectangular opening was left at one of its sides into the attic or garret which served as the main storage room/space for the most valuable possessions. Though most of the space was reserved for grains and dried vegetables, prestigious and ostentatious items including household utensils especially for women occupied the place of honour at this storage. This brings to mind Rowlands' (1989) findings on consumption and placement of prestigious household goods in conspicuous angles in the houses in Bamenda. However, a bamboo shelf attachment was made just below the ceiling along the walls of the room to store other stuff. Interestingly, this main storage place was also used as sleeping space in highly infested mosquito areas. Bamboo ladders were used to gain access into them.

The house owner could get someone if not capable to do the form work of the roof in triangular prism shape made of wet bamboos. They were laced in such a way that there were gaps in between which the straw would be slotted in/through. Each side of the roof was done individually but assembled at the end with the aid of the fibre ropes. Soft straws were then collected from the hills and tied in bundles before being transported on the head to the building site. A bundle was then taken up the roof at a time and wedged with the aid of bamboo stick so that it did not roll off. Starting from the base of the roof, handfuls of the straw were taken at a time and fitted in between the laced bamboo. This was a closely knitted process which continued to the top in order to prevent any linkages. Wet bamboo spikes were used to hold the folded straw in place that forms the top ridge to avoid it being blown off by the wind. The edges of the roof were trimmed using a piece of wood and cutlass to give it a nice shape. After this, rain drops would then beat and smooth the straw to give it a nice flow. The door was made of an alignment of bamboos that were used with the aid of another stick to block the house especially at night.

After the construction of the house, one did not move in straight away. The head of the family had to come in and light the first fire inside. This was the symbolic act of planting one in the land among his people and for peace and prosperity to prevail called simply as ‘opening of the house’. In the evenings especially, there was always fire burning in this parlour cum kitchen space. At times there could be a prized pot cooking on it, bush meat, from a successful hunt. This could be consumed either alone or with friends and if the wife and kids were lucky depending on the size and amount, they could have a piece to taste. Favourite kids could partake in this delicacy more than their mothers. Since men were highly mobile, the young wives stayed with their mothers in- law because staying in the husband’s house meant exposing oneself to danger. Also as mentioned by Yakubu above, men and women would normally not cohabit under same roof. Due to the mobility of men, it could take quite some time also to get the wife’s house done which was also a single room. She had to share space with her mother in-law and this was considered her educational period for household management and mother craft. She only went into her husband’s house to clean, serve food and spend the night until her own house was constructed. These single room houses started evolving to 2 rooms by the 1960s, when a sleeping room and a parlour cum kitchen for men was first constructed and then a house for women later.

The progression was from plastered huts to sun-dried bricks houses constructed briefly with stones for a few wealthy people and then to cement and back to sun-dried bricks with cement mortar as indicated in Figure 6.8. The stone foundation came with the stone houses.

Figure 6.8: An illustration of how most of these houses are constructed now and then plastered with cement before painting or tiling.

Source: Photo by Author

According to the building nomenclature of the government, these are categorised as permanent for the cement bricks, semi-permanent sun-dried bricks with cement mortar and temporal being the sun-dried bricks. Of course, for the Papiakum people, these are permanent structures which have been constructed. The financial means acquired for these structures were mainly through trading, coffee/rice farming, and animal husbandry. Now that coffee farming is no longer in vogue, rice farming has taken over along with corn. Cattle's rearing was and still is in the hands of few with those owning the highest number being urbanites and the Fon. The picture below shows the Fon's herd in front of the palace open arena, Trueyeh.

Figure 6.9: Herdsmen would bring the animals to Trueyeh, the palace arena, for the Fon to inspect and give them salt especially if he had not gone to check on them for a while.

Source: Photo by Author

However, this was the standard structure of the house before 1940. By 1970, these had evolved to complete sun-dried brick houses but still with thatched roofs. With the sun-dried bricks, the community was invited to help with its moulding using a form and a person did the construction. By this time, houses were constructed in more visible and accessible places as raids had come to an end with village boundaries defined. Eventually, with the houses of men, the surface and floor of the bamboo attic was plastered with mud mortar. This was a sort of decking, which served as fire broker for the house. That is why the corrugated or zinc house in the palace was a sight to behold which stuck in the minds of all my research partners above 50 and as mentioned above by Yoyo. This was a source of inspiration for the villagers in general. Those who were fully involved in trade and coffee spearheaded the construction of these houses with zinc roofs. This was an outward sign of prosperity which fast became a status symbol and almost everyone longed for one. This was especially so as fire used to cause untold pains and sufferings by razing houses down to dust. Many of my research partners told me of the havoc caused by fire to these thatched houses and to personal properties.

The level of acquisition of valuable manufactured goods had risen. The zeal for the acquisition and safeguarding precipitated the move from thatched to zinc roofs to prevent the loss of valuables through fire incidents. Also, people wanted to get more permanent

rather than temporal roofs, which in the long run were more expensive, as the thatched roofs required constant renewal to avoid leakages and decomposition of the straw whose weight could eventually bring down the roof/house. Moving from thatched to corrugated zinc roof became an element for social pride that raised one's social status as illustrated in the picture below (Cassiman,2008, Yoyo, 2010 and Yakubu, 2011).For those parents who could not afford the corrugated iron sheets for their roofs, these became a priority for the children especially the Bushfallers and sons in-laws in some cases to provide for their families.

Figure 6.10: Thatched houses besides houses roofed with aluminium sheets

Source: Photo by Author

Today however, there are few of these thatched grass houses dotted around the village. Almost everyone wants their roofs to be covered with zinc sheets. Thus they must work hard to save money and get them as a sign of achievement leading to one's progress on the social ladder of the community. Having a thatched roof house these days in the village is associated to misfortune and poverty. This is a sign of embarrassment to friends and family giving the leeway for abuses or empathy. However, in the urban centres, thatched roofs are coming back as sign of wealth and prestige as they are constructed in Boukarou forms with bamboos, bricks or cement as an exterior unit for the entertainment of special guests or relaxation place. Such thatched roofs in urban areas also serve as touristic sites.

As the roofing evolved, so too did the main body of the house in design, material and size. There was just but a brief period when stone houses or as it was called half concrete houses were in vogue despite the availability of this material especially in the upper part of the village on the hills where the Ntoh, palace is situated. As mentioned earlier on, these houses came in simultaneously with the corrugated roofing sheets. It did not gain much ground and it was restricted to the affluent of the village that were mostly into trading, coffee farming and animal husbandry. This was later on constructed by a few urbanites. Very few of them can still be seen around. Unfortunately, the very first and last standing one of these half concrete houses in the palace had to be demolished when parts of its foundation and walls sustained serious cracks after a series of horrific storms that caused havoc in the whole village. The picture below shows Nda Tarsah, a pride of its time which served as a VIP guest house as well as a place where difficult and highly confidential matters were handled. It was also called Nda Woh, stone house which was the first of its kind roofed with corrugated iron sheets (zinc).

Figure 6.11: Nda Tarsah or Nda Woh (Stone House)

at the palace.

Source: Photo by Author

The next picture is the new Guest House under construction with sun dried bricks and cements mortar as most of the houses under construction now on same spot where the Nda Woh had been standing.

Figure 6.12: New Guest House replacing demolished Nda Tarsah

Source: Photo by Author

These half concrete houses also ushered in stone foundations which are widely used now. The mud brick houses have stood the test of time though they are now competing seriously with cement brick houses. These sun-dried brick houses have over the years gotten bigger especially for women who now have separate sleeping rooms from children with a cooking, eating and sitting space.

Figure 6.13: Last standing Stone building at the

Market Square, Meya Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

As the sun-dried brick houses gained grounds, cement bricks were introduced to change the levels again to make a distinction between the urbanites and villagers. Like the half concrete, cement brick houses are limited. There is instead the move towards what is known as semi-dure. These are houses built of sun-dried bricks with cement mortar on solid dug in stone foundation, concrete pillars and plastered completely with cement. These houses have gradually moved from a single room to two and three room houses with external kitchens and toilets attached to them with most of the recent houses by urbanites being self-contained as well as having external kitchens and toilets. If it was a polygamous home, then each wife had her own apartment for herself and children took turns to share the husband's. It should be noted as mentioned above by Yoyo that these changes are taking place simultaneously between those in the villages and the urbanites. In all the houses that I went into owned by those living in the village, the kitchens for instance were separated from the sleeping rooms. The toilets are closer to the houses though some people still prefer to use the bushes. It should be mentioned that until the 1970s, toilets were not a common sight. Nearby bushes were used while the back part of the house was used for bathing. It was surprising to still find out that not all the compounds in the village have a pit toilet though the sanitary service is now at their necks.

It is relevant to note that the construction of these houses started in very simplistic forms to the more complicated structures that I find today. The architects/builders behind the houses were first of all based on individual creativity and efforts. Then came the formation of local guilds to handle various stages of construction the house. This however started changing with the coming of half concrete houses that saw the importation of architects especially from Nso' where these types of houses were common place already. In this work, architects and builders will be used simultaneously as architects were most often than not builders of the houses. These local architects from the neighbouring village of Nso' negotiated their contracts with their employers depending on the size of the house and they came with their team. They had the freedom more or less to design the houses though everyone stayed simple according the norms. Their travels influenced their design as the employers could tell the architects in reference to previous houses built that they had seen.

This also would change with formal education but most of the architects were still coming from Nso' as schools were introduced to them earlier than the Papiakum people.

We got to the field when storey buildings were in vogue and the team of builders were still dominated by those from Nso' Bamenda and even Douala. The architects who came from Bamenda or Douala were to handle specific aspects of the project like roofing and furnishing. The architects who designed some of the plans were never seen but for Lesley, the lone Baba I architect/builder who was on the field all the time. Lesley stands out as the most popular because of his educational attainment and personal dynamism. He features as one of the central figures in almost all the major constructions going on in Baba I and has been a key person in the work going on in the palace. I also came to learn that he had become a contractor who recruited and employed most of the builders coming into the village as well as locals in the village.

Before the 1990s in Baba I, you either went to Ndop or Kumbo for technical education if you were interested. Consequently after his primary education in Baba I, Lesley moved to Kumbo to continue his studies where he spent four years and obtained his CAP (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle) in Civil Engineering. Thereafter, he went to Bamenda where he got his Probatoire and BAC. He joined his patron and mentor in Yaounde, Mr Ndam, whom he holds in high esteem because he gave him (Lesley) lots of opportunities to gain and perfect his technical knowhow by getting him involved in various and varied building contracts. It should be noted that technical education in Cameroon is well developed in the French sub-system and the titles of the certificates are in French acronyms.

Lesley worked under the patronage of this architect and contractor until he was brought home by one of the elite to construct his house. From this particular project, he started leaving his footprints around the village and became the source of inspiration for many youths in Baba I to pursue technical education and become independent. In a short while, he became highly solicited due to his technical knowhow. Thus the constructions of these houses are mostly carried out by local builders and they have developed their skills in rapid progression. Due to the availability of jobs, non Papiakum builders have also gained access into the labour/job market either through their connections with Lesley or one of the urbanites.

Most often, these urbanites complain about these workers abandoning their jobs for new ones thus delaying with the progress of their work. This is costing them more time and money especially for those who take time off work to come home to personally supervise their work at some stage. In most cases, parents and siblings are in charge of the construction of these houses while the urbanites stay connected virtually via wireless services (phone calls and money transfers).There are a handful of unpleasant stories about the management of these projects in the hands of relatives and friends. One of the worst case scenarios of friends and relatives taking money and not doing the job required is that of Mbare's family whose parents came home found out that no house had been constructed despite the huge sums of money they had sent home. Mbare's case is an example of such incidents that have torn families apart. There are other cases of mismanagement that have even brought siblings and parents to disagree to a level of not talking to each other.

As concerns the roofing of these houses which are getting more and more complicated, migrant workers come in just to do the roofs/ceilings, doors/windows and floors/walls. Some of this type of housing is illustrated by a number of pictures on Figure 5.14. Depending on the source of inspiration, these workers might come from neighbouring villages, towns or cities and might stay a week, fortnight or a month to do their job

according to their contract. They are provided for with sleeping and cooking space or provision is made for their food. Nonetheless, they do get cooked food from family members/relatives as a sign of support for the job being done. In most cases when work is going on close to the main compound, the mothers (step mothers inclusive), siblings, wife (ves) and friends sometimes provide food for the workers. Generally, since constructing a house at home is considered a crucial and giant step in one's life and a source of family pride, support for the project is always given at one stage or the other by family, friends and community as a whole. One's social investment is a big determining factor as to the amount of assistance provided. The decking of the storey buildings has gone a long way to confirm their conviviality as a group with recognised bonding.






Figure 6.14: Collage of pictures from author's collection showing the evolvement of houses

All these changes in the construction of houses in Baba I go a long way to validate my assertion and stance that urbanisation is a social and mental process in this thesis. It is this process of urbanisation which Bhandari (2010) saw as socio cultural evolution where the rural setting gradually becomes urbanised and developed. This assertion is corroborated by Yoyo, my informant as follows;

> 'All these things are coming up because of the elite, the educated class, and the business guys who are outside there and who want to do something for themselves in the village. In trying to do it, they want to do it to meet up with a certain standard that they have enjoyed in other places. Every body of course now and workers will want to do their own things. Then there is a class of the villagers which is a general trend in all villages, they want to roof their houses even if the houses are not self -contained, not very modern but they want to do something that they will not be repeatedly using grass which sometimes used to cause a lot of accidents. So there is that level of development down there which is just almost the same level for everybody. There are some few villagers though who think that they are rich and want to live like those who are working and so they also improve on their own a bit. I mean just within the last few years, let me just say five years for example, buildings have been put in the village by the elite. You know the storey building in the village, is synonymous to serious development. You do not think if you build a house like this one and another man builds a storey building it's only his own they will talk about. So you are having many of them coming up in the village. You are seeing many fellows actually improving on their own environment in the village, their own lives, and even from their clothing from what they eat. I think that the general situation in the village has improved a lot and the mentality of the people in the village has changed seriously, I mean in connection to this issue of development. If a fellow in the village now thinks that he should have the type of thing people in town own, then you know that they are really interested in developing themselves without necessarily moving into the town' (Yoyo, personal communication, March 24, 2010).

As voiced out by Yoyo and as per my experience in the field, there are a lot of changes on the ground as people are adopting these new housing arrangements brought in by the urbanites. Visibly for recent buildings, there is much more space in the houses with children having their own rooms which was not the case before. The urbanites more often than not have a single wife. Their beautiful apartment houses are self-contained with everything inclusive with extra kitchen (for wood) and toilet outside the main house. These extensions outside, are designed to manage the situation when they run out of gas or to facilitate heavy cooking if there is an occasion and to manage water shortage which often is the case except during the rainy season. During this period, water is collected through channelled means from the roof tops and kept in large storage containers. These new modern houses usually have a big sitting room for relaxation and for visitors and also enough space for visitors and for guests to stay. Guest rooms have become a necessary addition to these houses. Being able to bring home friends and host those comfortably for a few days or weeks from the urban centres go to elevate your social status.

Most of the recent houses being built now could be found in any of the big urban centres in terms of architectural design and size. Most of these houses make use of additional material now such as sand, cement, paint and tiles. If the houses are not constructed completely using cement bricks then cement mortar is used with sun-dried bricks but the plastering of the walls and floors are done with mortar from cement and sand. Ceramic tiles are being used to replace bear cemented floors and industrial woven or hand woven is replacing plastic carpets. For the most recent buildings, instead of paint being used on the outside walls, ceramic tiles are in vogue and the inner walls are painted and sprayed.

The most recent innovation is the ornamental plaster ceiling giving a new twist and feeling in the interior of these houses as shown on Figure 6.16.

Figure 6.15: Cross view of the Dinning and Sitting Places in Tamfok

(Fon's resting quarter at the Ntoh)

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.16: Cross view of the upper parlour in the Guest House at the Ntoh

Source: Photo by Author

The building of these houses has brought encouragement, zeal and competition amongst these elite. They are constantly seeking to challenge each other by taking the houses to the next level (Figures 6.17 and 6.18). This is captured by Yoyo in the following words:

> 'The house that I broke down now was built in 1980 and was supposed to be a very nice house. It was then considered a very important house. Of course once somebody starts a thing, it inspires others. The Fon's house also inspired me to push my own faster, and then my own house has inspired Thaddeus. When Thaddeus came and saw my house, he just decided that he has to start his own immediately. Even the Fon of Bangolan, he came to the palace and they went to my house. Now he has launched his project, though his own is in a different way. He has invited people for launching; they are contributing for it. He is not ashamed to say it. He says that my house is stronger than that of the Fon. That he has suddenly rediscovered himself. He sees that he has been sleeping so you can imagine. That is just how it goes with all other people. If somebody else were to build his house, he will be inspired by mine and so on' (Yoyo, personal communication, March 24, 2010).

Figure 6.17: Cross view of Yoyo's residence under construction showing built in decorative water fonts and his former resident adjacent to the storey building, Mbanka

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.18: Cross view of Yoyo's residence showing a paved walk way lined with decorative tree plants brought in from the South West Region of the country, Mbanka

Source: Photo by Author

For these urbanites, the designs of their houses are inspired from their travels and stay in the various urban centres at home and abroad. Others just copy from those designs brought home by one of these urbanites or through films and magazines and catalogues. The architectural styles vary a great deal and most of these houses can be found anywhere in the urban centres. Most of the material used in the house is coming from outside as well as some of the techniques used in the finishing. Nonetheless, there is a beautiful blend with locally acquired material which affirms their duality in both cultural settings. The bushfallers having migrated to various urban centres for varied reasons but all geared towards the search for greener pastures in these new hunting grounds through their material culture strive to maintain their connections and networks. These houses become an embodiment and representation of their 'spatially mobile and multi-sited migratory' lives. The material used for constructing and furnishing brings forth and confirms the ideas of social statuses as well as the notions of extended spatial mobility (Rowlands, 1989, Cassiman, 2008 and Dalakoglou, 2009) thus evoking the process of urbanisation with its

amenities.

These houses no doubt have been a source of inspiration to many as expressed above creating an awareness of having something beautiful at home which tells much about one's achievements outside and rootedness within his community. This development that caught my interest has been growing in geometrical proportions encouraged expressively by the dynamic nature of the Fon who is relentless in his own endeavours to see the participation of the urbanites towards the growth of his village. Moh Tanghongho captures this in the following words:

> 'the presence of the Fon during the construction of those houses is an encouragement, not only mine, my junior brother's, and there is even Christian's at Mechacha. The Fon was always there, it gave some … I don't know whether to call it legitimacy to the construction. The villagers too saw that this is the right direction if the Fon himself is even supporting that people should build houses that are more than his own, then it means that this is good. He used to call and say they have done this here and it is not good, then we will discuss and then break it. That personal implication has really helped in the growth of the village in terms of the building of houses. He encourages people, and he himself even calls people. I was there when he called Mr. James and told him to come and build his house. He has a small house. It is not a storey building. He has been telling him to come and build his house (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

Putting his hands on the plough also, Fue Kemshi IV has constructed an ultra modern structure in the palace as a residential unit and he is currently working on another which he thinks should serve as a befitting guest house for those visitors who cannot spend a night in the inner court (see Fig. 6.15 & 6.16 above). Though it is said that everything beautiful and new should come but from the palace, by his presence and anticipation/contributions made, he has taken off the negative thinking in the minds of the people thus encouraging them to build whatever structure they wanted or could afford to build. These buildings also spurred him to do his own bit. As pointed out by Moh Tanghongho above, by his presence during these construction works, he is giving the green light for the people to go beyond the former traditional practice of window tax to build with liberty more airy, spacious and light filled houses with multiple doors and windows without fear of any traditional penalties. By subtly challenging and changing this old practice meant recognition of the potential of the development of the village by the urbanites which had been hampered not only by the window tax but also by the fear of witch hunting associated with the introduction of new projects.

In constructing these modern complexes in the palace, he, the Fon, is also challenging the notion that palaces in the Grassfields are old tattered, daunted and gloomy places with hardly any light and beauty. By listening to his spontaneous speeches during the annual regional development meetings, which doubles up as 'meet my people tour' of the country, one can clearly perceive his vision for the development of the village. His challenging but encouraging words to the urbanites on the importance of maintaining contact with home through private, public/community and /social investments and his willingness to support these projects are good signals to his people. He says 'for one to make all his investments outside is like putting a golden ring on a pig's nose'. This new vision and outward perspective has had him nominated twice and awarded the prize of the most modern traditional ruler in the North West Region for 2014 and 2015respectively. He has received similar awards from the urbanites (Figure 6.19).

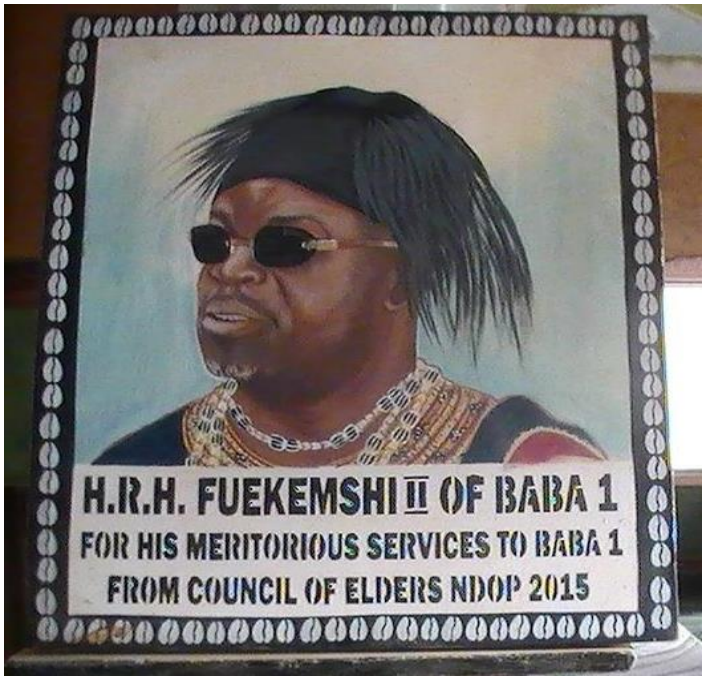


Figure 6.19: One of the awards from the urbanites in form of a portrait painting hanging as a decorative piece in Nda Tarsah.

Source: Photo by Author

Though most of these houses are situated on the family property/land (Figures 6.20 and 6.21), their locations are interesting as they are positioned at a vintage point which you cannot miss more so as its surroundings are beautifully curved out on the landscape with the use of flora (flowers, trees/hedges) (Figures 6.17 and 6.18). It is also becoming common to see these urbanites acquire land elsewhere to put up their houses. This might either be due to the shortage of family land, avoiding family squabbles, accessibility or the need for a peculiar and strategic location. Unlike most of the houses in the urban centre, these are still free of concrete walls and gates though demarcations of limits are made visible through the use of various types of flora. The road access at the entrance is usually specially done. Generally their positioning within the landscape gives them a simultaneous and interchangeable detachment and relocation in its physical surroundings. The houses are foreign to the local architectural landscape yet belong within its socio-cultural context of raising the social status of the owners and their families.

Figure 6.20: The entrance to Moh Tanghongho's compound apparently busy as they are home celebrating Christmas with the rest of the family.

It's during such occasions that these houses become alive

with many persons coming and going.

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.21: Moh Tanghongho's house adjacent to David's

(his younger brother)in their Compound at Mboghombam

Source: Photo by Author

At the beginning of the field work when trying to map out the various houses built by urbanites in Baba I, I (researcher) was amazed at how much the Fon knew of his territory and people. There was hardly any house or construction going on that he did not know something about it especially about the owners. As Moh Tanghongho says, the impact of his participation and actions cannot and should not be ignored in the drive towards development.

> 'I think that the Baba villagers are actually developing themselves and developing their village and have a better notion of what life should be today. I mean when you look at it from every perspective. If you have to bring into the picture the Fon who is head of the village, you see that he is improving a lot on his own and the people living around him that is the example. It is coming from the leader of the village and it is going down to the rest of the people. At first, somebody would have thought that to own a house like the one he is

> having, you have to own it only in town not in the village. But he has made it in a way that somebody living in town like the Fon of Bangolang now comes to copy the example in the village. So you should understand that development is really moving into the village, and therefore, the man in town is more envious of the man in the village. The Fon in the village is not envious of the situation of the Fon in town; on the contrary it is the one in town who is jealous or admiring what the Fon in the village is having. These are very living examples' (Sylvester Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

The Fon of Bangolan mentioned above, His Royal Highness Fon Chafah Isaac is a first cousin of the Fon of Baba I, HRH Fue Kemshi IV. I observed he was a 'regular' guest especially during some royal family events and would spend a night in his cousin's private quarters. Twice during those visits I noticed he would organise for breakfast for those present in the royal courtyard. He often ended his visit by having a close moment with his 'mothers' (his aunts/Fon's wives) which always ended with distribution of gifts (washing soap, salt, oil and money).

Nowadays, compounds are usually serene especially between 9am and 5pm as the children must have gone to school and the adults to the farms as well. In some compounds, the elderly/sickly are present with very little children below school age running around. Schools have been brought closer to the people and kids now go to school early since the distances are not as long as was the case before. Very few kids now stay behind to take care of their younger siblings as they are left under the care of these grannies. These adults especially females can be seen in their home gardens or taking a tour around the compound or just basking in the sun and having little conversation with the kids (most often than not their grand children). One or two of their own kids are often away in one of the urban centres or bush for their hunting expeditions and come home sparely as Moh Tanghongho attest in his interview. They are likely the first to report any incident taking place around or on one's property as they are the care - takers. Cassiman (2008) as well points to this aspect amongst the Kasena communities in Northern Ghana. She shows how women/mothers have become in charge of households as their children/husbands have travelled to the cities leaving them behind with little or no support.

6.5 Community and Public Infrastructure

Some facilities are primordial for development. These are water, electricity and roads. When these land investments on houses started, these urbanites also had to provide some basic infrastructure to facilitate their work and thus the life in the village. This was to facilitate easy transportation of building materials. This led to the enhancement and provision of some basic facilities like water, electricity and roads. The first major hurdle was the road networks which were almost impossible. The early birds had to pay the price as they led the way. As trucks passed on the road several times to drop off material so too they were creating paths for the people. In the long run, community service had to be employed and roads were manually dug. As the years went by, more and more urbanites had to go through this tussle. The road from the market to the palace was graded at three instances by the Fon, Moh Tanghongho and Yoyo. Through Baba I Development and Cultural Association (BADECA) activities, they started work on some of the main roads in the village. Yoyo for instance, used his position as the Parliamentarian for Ngoketunjia to lobby for the insertion of the Meya-Mbanka road via the palace into the national road network and the amelioration of some other roads in the village. Through other private connections and negotiations, some of the urbanites lobbied and won the road contract supervised by Yoyo that ran from the market square through the palace to Mbanka close to

the borders with Oku in Bui Division in 2010. In doing this job, he diverted a few hundred of meters into Mboghombamas well as the building of good gutters and bridges that divert into smaller roads of private compounds along the way. As he puts it

> 'The idea was to make the road quite good. … I always think that when you are given jobs to do like this, do it very well before you see whether you have a gain not. That you decide on what should be your gain before you do the job, it means that it will not be well done. We actually just thought that we should do it, to show an example anyway to the people around that it is not always the money that people want to be after but that you should see into first and foremost about the welfare of the people and their interest. That is why we …, put in all that effort to do the work the way we did.… I thought it was good to divert the road to Mboghombam, another quarter with many elite from the village, who will surely receive good or important friends in their homes. If you do not also look at their road, it will look a bit selfish and self-centred. They (villagers) appreciate things that I do now more than before because they know that I am not in the parliament' (Yoyo, personal communication, March 24, 2010).

For Yoyo it was important the road should be properly done since he was going to be a benefactor as well. By diverting the road to Mboghombam it not just the that there were many elite there but it was crucial also in the process of maintaining good standing with these elite through whom he wins contracts for various projects. Yoyo had to nurture his relations well as it did not end with this project. An ongoing lobby was already taking place in Yaounde to connect all the sixteen (16) quarters (Vemngang, Mboghombam, Mbawat, Mbanka, Ngohmesengong, Mechacha, Meya, Konyar, Kungoh, Mbaghangha, Mbakwa, Kengang, Membeh, Mbwikam, Quebessi, Ndumenkwi) with motor-able roads and even the tarring of the palace road.

Electricity: The Fon reminisces how he worked as a labourer with an electricity utility company in 1984 that was to install high tension cables in Nkambe passing through Baba I. As young boys then with all the excitement, they thought that this was a very strong signal that Baba I will soon be electrified. This was not to be the case until 1990 after he ascended the throne in 1989 and took this up as one of his first challenges when one phase transformer was then connected from the high tension cable whose main destination was from Meya to Vemngang (Market square to the palace). This was to be the main source of electricity from which these urbanites tapped to electrify their quarters especially those around the palace and market square. Though there was light, the supply and distribution was poor due to the pressure on the main source. They witnessed constant power failure due to low voltage or break down of the transformer.

Due to this breakdown, some urbanites and the Fon had resorted to standby generators. Though these generators were handy, they worked hard to get something better that would serve the community at large. They lobbied and negotiated therefore for a three phase transformer which saw the light of day in 2014 through government public contract. It has been an uphill task and they still have not met their target as just 40%of the village is electrified with six quarters (Konyar, Kungoh, Mbaghangha, Mechacha, Ndumenkwi and Quebessi) having no electricity and one (Mbanka) partly electrified. This is a project that will apparently be on BADECA's agenda for a long time as the country as a whole is experiencing power shortage. There is hardly a week in the urban centres without power failures and some regions are worst hit.

Portable Water: As I was informed and as I experienced the supply of good drinkable water has always been a big hurdle in the village especially during the dry season when the water tables would naturally drop. Unlike the electricity which had been made

easily accessible, the Fon, Fuekemshi IV, had to tackle the water issue from scratch. By the end of his first year on the throne in 1989 with the aid of his friends and some urbanites, he had successfully built two water catchments in Vemngang and Mechacha which were connected to two water tanks. Figure 6.22 is the photo of the water tank in Vemngang.

Unfortunately, the water catchment at Mechacha whose tank was strategically situated above the Government Health Centre in Meya developed a technical fault and could not supply water as had been planned. Nonetheless, pipelines were eventually constructed from the Vemngang reservoir for water supply down into the lower tank. These two tanks could not definitely supply water of course to the whole village. It spurred into action however, the building of more water catchments in the village in Meya, Mbakwa and Mboghombam quarters respectively. Further, pipelines were dug to extend the supply of this precious liquid as far as possible which did not reach everyone but created a

Figure 6.22: Water Tank at Fessame, Vemngang Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

significant impact. In 2010, Yoyo harnessed a spring source for Mbanka quarter and connected to different spots away from the main source which was poorly used. Plan International (Non Governmental Organisation) as well as the local council office in Babessi, through lobby and persuasions from these urbanites constructed some water points. In 2012, the African Development Bank (AfDB) took to the construction of boreholes around the village. These urbanites would not relent their efforts in the maintenance of these pipes and ensuring that the populace could be free of water borne diseases which are very frequent cases in the health centres.

Health Centres: There are two health centres in Baba I. -St. Monica's Catholic Health Centre was opened in1968 and it is run by the Sisters of Holy Union. It started as a Prenatal Clinic to cater for the dire needs of mothers and children. In 1974, the Reverend Sisters opened a house in Ndop where they left more frequently to Baba I to work. Unfortunately, the place was shut down in 1989 as the Sisters were growing older and no Cameroonians to take over after having tried lay health personnel who failed them. This closure accelerated the drive to lobby for a Government Health Centre which was granted and through community endeavours, was constructed and opened in the early 1990s. The

Centre however lacked health personnel and equipment to take care of the needy population. This was quite frustrating as people had to go long distances for medical care.

After much pressure and persuasion on the Holy Union Sisters, they reopened their health centre in 1994. This was a welcomed relief and in a very short while they were having difficulties managing the large numbers that needed their assistance. An extensive land was then offered for the construction of a bigger centre and lodging for the Sisters. All hands on deck with the Fon championing the cause, community solidarity was once again demonstrated in the construction of the new blocks from 2000-2004. Its doors were opened in 2004 with an emergency unit, consultation rooms, maternity, theatre, laboratory, female/male/children wards, infant welfare clinic (IWC), pharmacy, echography and ECG unit, and premature unit. It has a total capacity of 75beds, 2 delivery beds, an incubator and a blood bank permanently on a solar system (the only one in the whole of Ngoketunjia Division of the North West Region). The whole health centre, convent and pre-novitiate buildings are all connected to their own solar systems. They have employed a permanent medical doctor who is now resident within the health centre complex since 2006.

Figure 6.23: St. Monica's Catholic Health Centre Baba I, Meya

Source: Photo by Author

Contributions in terms of cash and material keep coming in with the hope of upgrading the centre to a full hospital which is a source of inspiration for younger generations. Figure 6.23 shows the front view photo of St. Monica's Catholic Health Centre.

Schools: The Catholic Church opened the first school in Kengang in 1947 after a few years of their arrival (Figure 6.24). The timid start of education in the village maybe associated with their engagement in long distance trade that had already gained grounds. This might explain why until 1982 all those who had completed primary school would have to go either to Kumbo or Ndop or even further away to Bamenda to continue their education. Baba I Comprehensive College was opened in 1982 but unfortunately folded up in by mid 1990s after the death of its proprietor. Despite the difficulties faced outside by the majority of young people, they still were really bent on going to school. Their struggles could not be ignored thus the beginning of the lobbying and negotiating for a government secondary school and the acquisition process of Baba I Comprehensive College gained grounds. Thus, in 2000, everything fell in place and Government Secondary School (GSS) which is today Government High School (GHS) opened its doors in September 2000.

Figure 6.24: Catholic Primary School, Kengang

Source: Photo by Author

The primary and secondary schools have since then have seen an exponential growth rate. Today each of the sixteen quarters can boost of a primary school within their vicinity which are twenty-four (24) in total. There are eight secondary schools, four of which have been raised to high schools. I witnessed an unprecedented zeal in the opening up of all these schools. Since as one of the conditions to grant a school is a proof of available structures, urbanites offered their houses and even the palace farm house at Mbaghangha was rehabilitated to host one of these new schools as shown in Figures 6.25 and 6.26.

Figure 6.25: Building Hosting GSS Kunweh in Kengang when it was

created until 2012 when the school moved to its site.

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.26: Palace Farm House now hosting the Government

Primary School at Mbaghangha.

Source: Photo by Author

The literacy level is relatively low which makes the well placed urbanites determined to bring educational possibilities right to the door steps of their relatives at home. The opening up of these schools also has caused investments for houses on rent for students and staff (as illustrated in Figures 6.27and 6.28) especially those coming from outside as well as students whose homes are far from their school of choice.

Figure 6.27: The Holy City Hostel for students lodging at Meya

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.28: Apartments for rent along the Ring Road at Meya

Source: Photo by Author

Like the other people of the Bamenda Grassfields, the Papiakum had been exposed to the outside world through trade especially which later increased their educational career and job pursuits. In their migratory trajectories, they imbued newly acquired knowledge and aspirations which were expressed visibly on their architectural landscape. Bringing the new found knowledge and tangible objects home implied changes that brought about the evolvement of these material objects. The finishing, furnishing and facilities brought into these houses and public structures saw a gradual move from local to urban and then a blend of both as some of the local materials and techniques remain indispensable like stones, sand and mortar preparation. With these activities going on, competition is rife as younger urbanites would also like their presence to be felt at home. It is not just the building of a house that counts but the quality of the house. This competition in construction has also let to all sorts of stories about those engaged into building these modern houses. By successfully lobbying and developing these community and public infrastructures in the village through these urbanites goes to corroborate Nkwi (1997) and Jua (2002) assertion that urban elite through their associations were the backbone behind development of their areas.

6.6 Home Investments and 'Ram', Witchcraft

This section focuses on how community evaluate and questions who should be able to do, have and own what. Through vivid examples I am going to illustrate how investments are perceived and the types of discussions evoked in this community. This section also examines the changing attitudes of urban migrants constructing houses at their homestead. According to one of my research partners, Moh Tanghongho,

> 'Generally in the village, when you start a giant project like that, you have those slangs; they say what do you want to show, is it a palace, this and that but you see the Fon was there from the foundation. He will come and stand there for hours following up so even people who had those types of negative comments to make for example, could not because the Fon himself was so interested. I am saying this because when you go into Baba history … you were not authorized to build a house and open the back door … you had to be initiated. Somebody built his very big house and opened the back door,... some group of people, let me say village wizards, came congratulating for the house, saying this house is terrible; they would say, 'hm, this house, na how they di comot', then they went and hit the head on one

> of the walls, so 'I don miss road' and then went and hit the head on the other wall, then when they left, the house collapsed. I was talking of somebody but it is my grandfather … he too was a notable he built something that was getting more complicated than the palace, so the people came there and did what I was telling you' (S. Moh Tanghongho, personal communication, August 21, 2011).

This narration about Moh Tanghongho's grandfather's predicament is in concurrence with what Muafue-Mbarem (2012:51-52) noted on ambitious, big and new projects. In this community it was believed that wealth and new innovations were in the hands of the Fon. Individuals were more or less to copy what was coming from the palace as it was their centre of innovation not the other way. Through the evolution of architectural development this becomes clear as any new development emanated from the palace. Thus anything contrary was seen as a challenge on the authority of the Fon and not taken likely as the story above illustrates.

Tita Moh Tanjah

Moh Tanjah considers himself not well educated as he is a primary school graduate. Being the lone son amongst six daughters, he is the successor of his father with the title Tita. Having lost his dad when he was quite young, he was taken away by his paternal cousin to Kumbo where he did and completed his primary education. With no means for him to continue with his education under the sponsorship of his cousin, he returned home to Baba I in 2001. After 5 years struggling with his mother and siblings, he got engaged in rice farming in 2006 on a rented plot. He soon realised that the benefits gotten from his rice farming went only into social investments amongst relatives and he had no concrete investments as a proof of his hard work.

He decided to move to Douala at the end of 2008 where some of his friends were and got engaged in the sales of roadside medication with some small money he had saved. This enabled him to generate some more money and started making some improvements in his family. When he had his wife and two kids brought to Douala, he started nursing the idea of constructing a house in the village where he would eventually return at the end of his "hunting expedition". He says he got valuable advice from one of his friends who had constructed on how to go about it. He advised him to first of all buy enough metal roofing sheets after having conceived the design and size of the house which he did and was successful.

His house is on the family plot, close to their main compound and along the Ring Road that runs through Baba I. The three bedroom apartment left behind by his dad had become too small for his mother, sisters, wife and himself. To create more living space/privacy and also to avoid problems between his mum, siblings and wife, the building of his own house became imperative. These were the push factors for him to start constructing his house as soon as possible. When he started this building project, he sent his wife home to supervise the work as he stayed behind in Douala to keep 'hustling' for more money. He would send money through one of the micro finance houses and Express Union Ndop to his wife for the purchase of building materials as well as the payment of the workers when the need arises. In the meantime, he was also buying furniture and other stuff that he would love to be in this house when he came across them at affordable prices. These were stored up in his rented apartment in Douala and would be moved to the village at the right time. With the construction of the Ring Road going on, he was already dreaming of another structure that will stand out and mark his name in the 'development archive' of the village as some of the urbanites were already doing. He said this was to attract more

development in his quarter/village and to make sure that when he was in the village, he should live happily and responsibly. Being at the road side, he was also thinking of getting a land title for security and identification purposes not leaving out compensation if the road construction affects his property.

By starting up with this construction barely after two years in Douala have strained some of his relationships in the village as people questioned the source of his money for such a project. According to him,

> 'They are mostly my family members and other villagers who are afraid to consume anything that is from me. Some say for two years this boy has gone to Douala he is trying to do this and that maybe he has engaged somewhere or maybe he has money from a certain spiritual source. So there are so many people who are not dealing with me as they were before in the village. I just call this foolishness. Last time when one of my nephew's daughters died there were all sorts of talks around it. My mum even pulled me aside to ask if I knew something about it and I told her all I have is from my struggles. They even put red (palm) oil on the dead child's hand that I should lick and I did. Since then nothing has happened to me because I am innocent. I just called this stupidity. Here in town everybody knows how we struggle. They are happy and appreciative because there are some who have been here for 10 – 20years and have nothing solid at home. I always try to advice them that they should put up even a one room hut in the village which is important because we do not know tomorrow. Today there might be a source and tomorrow there might be no means to do anything. So when the opportunity comes you should just try to make great use of it' (Z. Mohtanja, personal communication, August 18, 2011).

As the head of his family, being the successor, he continues with his social investments especially on his family with his in-laws inclusive. He can be seen as actively wearing his father's shoe. During farming season, he sends money to his mum to pay people to work the fields and to buy seeds for planting if need be since she no longer has the strength as before. His four elder sisters are married and the two younger ones are under his direct care. One is into tailoring and the other as he says has decided to be a school drop out after having paid her fees. This worries him because he does not know what she wants.

Amongst the Papiakum, 'someone who suddenly acquires wealth, fog or good fortune has done so at the expense of close relatives or friends', who are usually thought to have been 'made into zombies' and 'given to societies of sorcerers to work for them and produce wealth in return to good fortune given to one of their members' (Rowlands, 1994:15 in Nyamnjoh, 2001:42). This as the above quotation states was the fate of Moh Tanjah as well as others as I listened to life histories, comments and observations made about urbanites. The wishes and prayers of mothers in particular were that the money these 'children' were using to put up these fabulous structures was 'good and clean money'. I asked why people were often accused of being in Nyongo when they were carrying out big important projects for themselves and their community. There were hardly any clear cut answers but for the suspicions that they might have 'put their hands somewhere'. Like Moh Tanjah, these urbanites are simply condemned because of their source of wealth that had not been 'domesticated' or cannot be accounted for especially by those left behind at home.

These witchcraft accusations however are not a new phenomenon among the Papiakum neither is it unique amongst the people of Cameroon as shown through the studies of Warnier, Rowlands, Chilver, Geschiere, Fisiy, Konings and Nyamnjoh in the Grassfields, South West, Littoral and the Eastern regions of the country. These authors had previously looked into the perception and display of wealth through position and/or material objects within the various communities. In cases where one's success or wealth could not be

accounted for, it was directly associated to witchcraft. Nyamnjoh (2001) observed that for one's success to gain legitimacy amongst the peoples of the Grassfields of Cameroon, it should have been domesticated. This has to be constantly done through the redistribution of resources gained within the family circles and the community at large. Redistribution (through material and immaterial things) gave one the attestation of approval and belonging among the people.

With Moh Tanghongho pin-pointing that it is not just the building of any type of house that was interesting but the quality these days, the building of these 'modern houses' all over the landscape of Baba I is contrasting with the time of his grandfather but always bringing to mind the history of the evolution of houses in this village (it be noted here that houses have always been modern depending on the context and time of construction thus modern becomes a contested term). Here we can draw a parallel with the forest people of East Cameroon where Geschiere started his field work in 1971. He noted that it was a major developmental challenge to get 'elite sons of the land to invest in their home area'. The fear of being eaten by witchcraft in the East was very much alive as I have come to know among the Papiakum people. This fear of witch hunting especially coupled with other factors accounted for the slow investment rate by the urbanites back at home especially before the late 1980s as well as pointing to it as a contributory factor for rural exodus (Fisiy and Geschiere, 2001:236) among the forest people.

Fue Kemshi, Thaddeus and Yoyo

According to most informants, the approach of the Fon has greatly encouraged the construction of these modern houses in Baba I that are sprouting out in a geometric progression like mushrooms on the landscape. During my visit to Yoyo's ultra-modern building site in May 2012, I had the opportunity to interact first with Thaddeus and Yoyo and later on with the Fon. After having visited the building site in Mbanka, Thaddeus started commenting on our way back when he saw men just hanging around and women on the farms and how lazy these men were which ensued into a discussion on the working ethos of men and women until we got to the palace where they had to pay their homage to the Fon. After their closed meeting with the Fon in the inner court, on their way out, they stopped to make a tour of the Fon's recent building site. They made suggestions for improvement as well as gave their encouragements. This conversation soon led to the working ethos of the Papiakum people again. Along these lines, the Fon asked me to recount the story about them and Nyongo at the building site of his kid brother. Suddenly I found myself as the centre of attraction amongst the Fon, Yoyo and Thaddeus, the workers, some princes and villagers having to tell a story of witchcraft accusation levelled against them.

Bearing in mind that these three men are considered as the wealthiest men in the village, the yard stick of measurement unknown to me and the story was told in the presence of the Fon, I cannot really explain what was going through my mind but I felt really small among them but they with the others around were waiting anxiously to hear the story. I told them how it was recounted by some young men at Abouba's building site that they (Thaddeus and Yoyo) were in Nyongo and they had taken the Fon to the meeting as well. According to them, Thaddeus had the highest echelon followed by Yoyo and then the Fon. They explained how Thaddeus was doing away with his family members, examples being that of his two nephews living and working under him and Yoyo recently gave his mother to witchcraft in order to accrue more wealth. As for the Fon, he had 'sold his stomach', that is, he had been castrated in order to acquire riches. That explains why he did

not want more wives and could not have more children. Spontaneously, the three burst out laughing and said these are lazy people with idle minds causing hindrance to progress in the village.

For the first time, Thaddeus narrated the story of his humble beginning as a houseboy after he finished primary school, passed examinations and started training at the Police Academy in Mutegene but dropped out. He later picked up a job as a sales person at Mobile petrol station in Bamenda. With the money generated from there, he started his own private business. Over the years, he built a Vatican garage in Douala and started the Vatican Bus Service with Regional agencies linking North West, South West, Centre and Littoral. He also purchased some public transport buses with agencies in the major cities of Cameroon and some divisional headquarters in the North West Region. The agency in Bamenda has been transformed into a big business complex offering catering services, rest rooms, a mosque and other privately owned businesses and renting space within the complex. There is also the Vatican Supermarket stocked with foreign luxurious goods for the 'rich or middle class'.

From previous conversation with him, he equally told us that he was going to start the construction of his house in the village before this incident and I took this opportunity to follow up on that. He explained that he wanted to complete the job at the Travel Agency in Bamenda before starting the building project in the village as he did not want to spread his efforts and wings too far. Interestingly, he is one of those urban elite considered by the people as 'inconsequential' for not having a house in the village.

Figure 6.29: Thaddeus' house at Mechachaa far cry from his residences in Bamenda and Douala

Source: Photo by Author

Juxtaposing what he has currently in the village with what he has in Bamenda and Douala for instance, many research partners told me that he is seen as a nobody in the socio-cultural setting of the village. Figure 6.29 shows a picture of Thaddeus' house in the village which the villagers regard as an eye sore comparatively to the assessment they have of his wealth.

It was interesting listening to these young men talking opening about these persons because it is held that the 'people above a certain level of wealth and power are perceived to be sorcerers of such a powerful kind and that it is best to leave them alone' (Rowlands and Warnier, 1988:123). Contrary to this, they were talking to the hearing of the Fon about their different positions in their Nyongo meeting house. This is ironical because as a 'Divine

King', he is supposed to possess the strongest 'spiritual force' in the land to acquire riches and to maintain peace and security within his jurisdiction and beyond where his people are found. According to these young men, he had just 'sold his manhood' for riches as he was not having many children and wives.

The impact of these accusations could be seen and felt as I went about my research work. Some urbanites who could not stomach these accusations abandoned beautiful construction projects. Some of these have degenerated until they have crumbled to the ground while others are still standing waiting for their fate. When I asked some of these urbanites why they were seriously investing in other places than home, their answers were for fear of witchcraft. Some expressly said 'we are sometimes scared of being eaten by the villagers' corroborating Rowlands and Warnier (1988:130). Jealousy and witchcraft were closely linked and there were lots of suspicions in the air. In some cases, this caused the isolation of family members and splits in families like those of Mbare and Moh Tanjah.

Moh Tanjah's story and the others go to confirm 'the fact that sorcery accusations that occur between family members or kinsmen is indicative of how much ordinary Cameroonians cherish the solidarity of domesticated agency and how ready they are to protect it from aggression and harmful pursuit of personal success (Fisiy and Geschiere, 1991 and 2001; Nyamnjoh 2001:33). To an extent this kills the entrepreneurial and developmental zeal of some of these urbanites as they are scared of the unknown if they introduce something new into the community.

6.7 Getting into one of the Houses

As one branches off to Mbanka from Vemngang quarter, you cannot fail to notice that the road was recently maintained. If you miss this, you would not miss the water fountain recently created from a spring close to a stream as you cross Mbawat into Mbanka, Yoyo's quarter. This water source was upgraded to give the population a constant supply of potable water with a bridge built over the stream in such a way that the water source is not contaminated during the rainy season. Some of the people I spoke with told me they preferred this water source to the pipe borne water source available. From this bridge, there is a concrete water drainage built to direct the flow of water into the stream that continues into Hon. Yoyo's compound. As one turns right off the main road about 100m from the bridge, you get onto a beautifully paved road lined with beautiful tree plants on both sides.

Figure 6.30: Yoyo's residence at Mbanka Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

From this entrance as one walks in is an impressive modern storey building facing you as shown in Figure 6.30. To the right as you gently descend the slope into the compound is a recently constructed modern apartment house by Yoyo for one of his relatives sharing boundaries with him. Attached to this apartment behind is an external kitchen and toilet facilities. To the left as well as to the right there is a solid embankment to check any soil erosion. Selected flowering and shade plants have been carefully planted to bring in a fresh and different aesthetic touch to the surrounding landscape. Next to the relative's house is another apartment with a large parlour, pantry and a store room. This is a hall to cater for big entertainment and also space to hang out with visitors that he does not want into his main house. A few metres from this building is his previous apartment which he is still using adjacent to his mother's made of sun-dried bricks and plastered completely in cement. The mother's apartment is what he cracked down completely and bulldozed the area to put up this ultra modern imposing storey building with a garage for at least two cars having a connecting door leading into the main house. Figure 6.31 is a rear view of the housing complex that shows the external kitchen and toilet facilities.

Figure 6.31: Rear view of Yoyo's residence showing external

facilitiesat Mbanka Quarter

Source: Photo by Author

The basic material for the construction of these houses apart from cement, iron rods and zinc are being locally tapped. The numerous hills in the village are endowed with stones used for foundations and other concrete surfaces as shown in Figure 6.32.

Figure 6.32: Piles of dug up and cracked stones at Mbanka during the construction of Yoyo's new residence tapped as an available natural resource.

Source: Photo by Author

Laterite for roads, sand and water sources are readily available though water can be a problem in the peak of the construction seasons which coincides with the dry season. Nonetheless, there is also very good soil for the production of mud sun-dried bricks. The collection and cracking of stones in some cases include pupils and students who use it as a means to earn extra money during weekends and holidays. Access to the main sand depot (Membe Quarter) on the plain is hampered by a broken bridge which if maintained would bring in a lot of income to the village. Most constructions combine the available resources as indicated with Figure 6.33 to minimise the cost of building.

Figure 6.33: Setting up a foundation with stones and mud bricks at Mbanka by one of the builders from Bamenda who has finally gained residence in Baba I.

Source: Photo by Author

The technicians were locally recruited and part of the work force being Yoyo's permanent workers. Depending on his taste and availability of what he wants, this over six bedrooms, two sitting rooms, pantry, kitchen and toilets are gradually being equipped with local and imported manufactured materials from markets close by and far off in various urban centres of the country as well as abroad. Though these houses are endowed with signs and symbolic meanings, it would also be necessary to illustrate through these houses that 'all material culture conveys social meanings and perhaps more importantly that the production of meaning is an ongoing process, depending as much on the reader and the reader's context as

on the producer(s). … Material culture is in the world and plays a fundamentally different constitutive rule for our being in this world than text and language. Things do far more than just speak and express meanings' (Olsen, 2003:90.)

With the improvement of road networks and the availability of wireless services, spatial mobility has gained grounds and most of these urbanites are more regular in the village for one thing or the other. They also create time for holidays in the village with their family as well as follow their ongoing projects personally. These holidays at home served as opportunities for children to get to know more about their relatives, participate and learn more of the Papiakum culture especially the language which is greatly affected. Almost all the urbanites living and working in the various urban centres complained the degeneration of the Papiakum immaterial culture among the young people especially with the children born out of the village. By so doing these urbanites are promoting diaspora tourism which is a form of ethnic and personal heritage tourism where people from difference background travel to the homeland in search of their roots, participate in religious and ethnic festivals, visit relatives and learn about themselves, Timothy and Nyaupane (2009).

Figure 6.34: MTN antennae at Mboghombam from which Orange

and Nexttel telecom networks have been able to make their connections.

Source: Photo by Author

From the village, they do keep in touch with their work place and businesses as most work places are now intrinsically linked to Information Communication Technology, (ICT). The major wireless service supplies in this community are the MTN, Nexttel and Orange Cameroon. They have all found their hot spot and installed their antennae as seen in the picture (Figure 6.34). MTN was the first on ground and the others have tapped from their installation.

6.8 Investments and Power

Our discussions have demonstrated that people had very little faith on the external bushfallers in terms of what they could do for the village. Even at the level of BADECA, nothing was mentioned about their contribution towards the various projects at home. Quantitatively, internal bushfallers are keeping their home village going and the difference in terms of human, social and landed investments between these two categories of persons is glaring. This goes to challenge the notion that the development of these places are based on the remunerations from abroad, that is, Europe and America to be specific. According to

the Papiakum urbanites, the Fon has also actively gone a long way in encouraging these bushfallers personally and especially during development meetings to return home to construct. As observed in some cases, he has supervised construction work, contributed ideas for the amelioration of the buildings and sent words of encouragement out. This has had positive effects as these bushfallers are humbled and proud that the Fon visited their construction sites or cares enough to call them as pointed out also by Moh Tanghongho. He is therefore using his traditional position to reach out into the modern system to challenge those living in urban centres to come back home and do something. This goes to elucidate and answer the question of the connectedness of investment (material culture), mobility and identity/belonging within this community.

In the perspective of his (Fon) own time, things are changing as educated persons in this region ascend to the position of Fons. Some of them are civil servants and not just auxiliaries of the state as is presented officially. So it is not just a competition within his jurisdiction but also from outside in the Grassfield. This means that the Fons of this region have to defend themselves inside and outside as they compete with each other. In that competition, they will show their power. Thus, the means of playing the power game to maintain your position becomes crucial. With the Papiakum people, fog, wealth is very different from nthi, power. A distinction they make with this saying; 'fog lah mbue nthi' meaning 'wealth is not power'. Power is not physical strength but who you are in the socio-political stratum which has to be contextualised all the time in daily interactions. Thus you might have wealth but considered powerless in the traditional context. Therefore, the Fon's power can be viewed as traditional but on the other hand seen differently as modern or a way to legitimise position regarded interestingly as urban mentality of neo-capitalism.

In the process of building those huge houses (Figures 6.35 to 6.37) and bringing in furniture (Figure 6.15) from Dubai to show off his position, wealth, and his base for power, the Fon is living up to expectation. The palace is supposed to be the richest place in the village.

Figure 6.35: The Fon's private quarters in the palace at Vemngang

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.36: Palace Guest House having six rooms each with its toilet facilities and two sitting rooms (ground and first floor)

Source: Photo by Author

Figure 6.37: Front view of the Palace at Vemngang

Source: Photo by Author

The fact that the current Fon is young and educated unlike his father and grandfather, makes it possible for him to be constantly merging these two systems of knowledge. As witnessed during some heated discussions with the elders/notables to convince them about the need for change, he uses both knowledge systems for them to see that there is something also good from outside. There is this contention whether he is changing too much or destroying the traditional system.

The Fon is very out-going unlike his predecessors. He has succeeded to break some of the traditional barriers of accessibility into some parts of the palace using projects realised since his enthronement. These to an extent have become touristic sites which is causing friction between the custodians of tradition and the new generation. Posing for photographs (Figure 6.38) have become a common sight within the inner court where

access was very limited before Fue Kemshi IV ascended the throne. By so doing he is promoting diaspora tourism by making it possible for persons of difference background and statuses in the community to travel to the homeland and participate in activities thus rooting and learning more from the cultural landscape, (Timothy and Nyaupane 2009).

Figure 6.38: The Fon (middle first role) with some Urbanites at the Fon's private quarters in the palace at Vemngang. Access to this space was very limited before but now opens to visitors.

Source: Photo by Author

It is therefore not surprising that he got the award of the most modern Fon of the North West Region in 2015 by Watch Dog Newspaper because of his outward look for the development of his village. In this light, some of my key research partners feel that 'there is a strong sense of obligation and commitment of feeling that one must use one's own success in an effort to help promote the success of the community'(Trager , 1998:374). From interviews and participation in various events, Yoyo, Moh Tanghongho, Mallama, Yenwoh, and Mbare amongst others are very proud of what is happening in the village in terms of public and private infrastructure. Baba I is a place which they hold dear to heart which makes it evident that belonging transcends social construction to include people's physical relationship with the landscape and with materials. Mujere (2010:501) captures this in a more forceful way when he notes that, 'though belonging is a social construct, the materiality of objects and landscape also matter'.

The investments serve as another mechanism through which the Papiakum urbanites are inscribed into the Baba I traditional roles. 'The conferment of a neo-traditional title (for example) is a clear and visible representation of the acquisition of social or symbolic capital. The beneficiary's investment in horizontal networks and services to the community are rewarded by upward social mobility within the body politic', (Fisiy and Goheen, 1998:389). Figures 6.39 is a photo essay of the process of conferring one of the traditional titles. The person is led to and kneels in front of the Fon by notables of senior rank. He receives a short talk from the Fon pertaining to the title about to be conferred on him. He

then drinks palm wine poured out from the Fon's cup after which his shirt is taken off and a cap worn on his head. The Fon then rubs cam wood on his back, inserts a puckinpine stick into the cap and wears him a necklace. All these items are taken from the Fon's traditional bag held by a royal page, Nchinda. The new Moh (notable) goes to join his family and friends for celebration.


Figure: 6.39 a & b


Figure: 6.39 c & d


Figure: 6.39 e & f

Figure: 6.39 g & h

Figure 6.39a-h: Fue kemshi IV conferring traditional titles during Mei'nyi,

the most celebrated festival that pulls into the village most

of the urbanites with some of their friends

Source: Photo by Author

These house constructed by urban migrants which are considered as second homes play a great role 'in influencing identity; senses of belonging, family and place; and ideas of heritage. These motivations are expressed in second home locational decision-making processes which may then serve to affect the communities and places in which individuals locate.… yet such extremes also connect discussions of second home tourism to broader issues of access, circulation, mobility and regulation, and the insights that such discussions may bring to our understanding of contemporary society' (Hall et al, 2004:14).

6.9 Conclusion

Particular moments in the life of an object may be more revealing for its social embedding. A closer look at these instances can show how significantly the role of an object has changed. The ways in which histories of objects and people inform each other can be described through a closer examination of the moments of transformation of objects and also of people themselves (Gosden and Marshall 1999). This is not only a question of socially acknowledged meanings like stigma or prestige, but also a practical question of the knowledge required for dealing appropriately with the object in question. Furthermore, the stories associated with an object and evoked by its presence require special care. This applies to old things that may have special relevance as memory objects, reminding the owners about specific events in their lives (Svensson 2008).

The life histories of these urbanites have demonstrated that things travel around the globe. They are shipped as mass consumer goods or transported as souvenirs or gifts. This society elucidate how there are infinite ways for things to be mobile, not only in this globalisation era but since as the earliest traces of long distance trade show. This has brought out the relationship between mobility and material cultural vividly. The study has showed that material objects are characterised by a temporal continuity, embodying a prior existence with lingering effects. This material continuity might disguise the transformations they undergo which only became evident upon closer examination.

Within the Papiakum context it has been illustrated that objects are in perpetual flux, leaving visible traces of their age, usage and previous life. While travelling through

time, objects also circulate through space, and their spatial mobility alters their meaning and use with respect to their new cultural horizons. As objects transform through time and space, so does the value attributed to them by people in their mobility. By mapping out the itineraries of persons and value in the realm of material culture, has allowed us to grasp the nature of a given social formation through the shape and meaning taken on by its value stuff. It also provided insights into the nature of materiality, through the values ascribed to objects as a given point in time and space (Hahn and Weiss 2013).

Corroborating Kapp and van Dommelen (2010) the movement of people as well as objects has always stood at the heart of attempts to understand the course and processes of human history. The fact that material objects constitute an integral part of culture and society, this study draw upon the key concept of materiality in formulating its perspectives on mobility and identity among the Papiakum. Through materiality, the material dimensions of cultural encounters and social contexts are highlighted, focussing on the role material culture plays in identity formation and cultural transmission. This was achieved as connectivity, insularity, travel and exchange as mechanisms that served to establish, motivate or modify diasporic, trans-regional and local identities were examined.

Just as Zittoun (2015) notes, social relations unfold between people, in specific societies yet these social relations are never immediate, or naked and they appear as always mediated. In effect, people's relationships are made through exchanges of words and objects, filtered by beliefs and expectations. Objects are therefore rarely inert; not only do most objects experience peripatetic lives before arriving at a destination, many kinds of objects continue to be moved, repositioned, or displaced throughout their existence. One might go so far as to say that mobility is an inherent property, or even a defining element, of material culture. The next chapter on actions of the Papiakum people which have visual dimensions will illustrate how people are engaged in producing visible objects, reflexively constructing their visual environment and communicating by visual means. These visual worlds reflect different ways of seeing and appreciating persons within their community.

7. The Film

7.1 Introduction

This chapter dwells on the visual representation of the community where fieldwork was anchored that is making visible the written text. It serves as a complementary part of the thesis that brings to light the central discussions material culture mobility, and its relations towards the changing socio-political hierarchies. Producing and using film, photography and other visual supports are a research method which was just part and parcel of the fieldwork process. It is understood as a medium of capturing essential aspects of anthropological research, using the camera as a laboratory of capturing information, like a lab, where information can later be 'seen' again, and analysed. Visual supports, film/photograph, are not just a tool for 'storing' images but are both a method for capturing images and a framework for analysis.

Producing a documentary film for the researcher was a means of engaging on the whole process of anthropology, from the recording of data, through its analysis to the dissemination of the results of research. This engagement was taken here because visual anthropology was considered central to the study because of its reflexive nature in the process of cultural translation and interpretation involving the use of still and motion pictures. Images taken during fieldwork formed the foundation of discussion with my research partners which unravelled more about the people. In other words, the use of images will help to appreciate the positioning of all actors (researchers, informants, and media people) in time and space.

This chapter is structured into three sections: first, the methodology cum process of the production of the film (using camera) will be elaborated following the five major stage; second, the summary and narration of the film and third the significance of the film; how it contributes to answering the central question of the thesis.

7.2 Methodology cum Film Production

Making use of video is becoming a widespread practice within the social science studies interested in real-time production of social life and the studies of gestures and multimodality. It forms the fundamental techniques for constituting the corpora for data analysis and serves as an important vehicle to render research results through documentary films or multimedia presentations. Producing images gives us central insights into the organisational features of recording the images themselves, revealing their local orders and intelligibility as reflexively produced by their display to and for the camera Mondada (2006:52). Knoblauch and Schnettler (2012) assert that in recent decades, video analysis has emerged into a powerful new tool for qualitative research. Within this dynamically expanding field, methods for analysing 'natural' video recordings have developed considerably over the past decades. In their article the authors discuss methodological aspects of general importance for any analysis of this type of video data. Being a fundamentally interpretive method, Knoblauch and Schnettler argue that sequential analysis is always a hermeneutic endeavour, which requires methodical understanding; secondly referring to data collection they stress that, in addition to sequential analysis, the ethnographic dimension of video analysis should be taken into account methodologically. Video analysis requires, thirdly, a systematic account of the subjectivity, both of the actors analysed as well as of the analysts.

As pointed out by Knoblauch (2012) in our times we are witnessing the proliferation of an increasingly sophisticated new instrument of data collection and analysis: camcorders. Camcorders do not only allow for a rich recording of social processes. They also provide and produce a kind of data for sociology, which, with the exception of some pioneers using film before, was hardly available in the Social Sciences. With the production of audiovisual data and their use by social scientists, Knoblauch (2012:251) states that "gradually a methodology is emerging that has come to be called succinctly 'video analysis'".

Knoblauch, Tuma and Schnettler (2014) emphasise on the fact thatone of the major cultural changes with long-lasting effects on our way of life being witnessed in recent decades is, indisputably, the massive visualization of our culture. Still and moving images are literally pervading our everyday and our professional life worlds; they are increasingly employed to operate in much of our communicative exchange and our knowledge production. They have invaded educational processes, and are even reshaping our self-representation. While visual studies have been focusing mainly on the role of 'images' (see Banks, 2014) the cultural dynamics of video are still widely neglected. Video is a technology that allows the recording, storage and repeated viewing of visual and acoustic data.

Film and photography are both a method for capturing images and a framework for interpretation and analysis thus a medium to capture essential aspects of anthropological research. Film has come a long way as an expressive medium since it surfaced during the later part of the 19th century. The contemporary usage of ethnographic film and ethnographic photography create surprising images, stimulating reflexive practice and challenges the paradigm of realism. Despite the extraordinary creativity and inventiveness of film makers, the production process that leads to the final film, has remained relatively uniform since the 1930s.

Inspired by the works of Pink (2001); Allison and Lampel (2006); Mondala (2006); Lee-Wright 2010, Knoblauch, Tuma, and Schnettler (2014), Rose (2016) and Webb (2019), the thesis goes into the production process of this film. In the process showing how visual research methods was used informed by my knowledge of the visual cultures where fieldwork was done, including knowledge about local and academic uses of photograph.

Film production consists of five major stages: Development; Pre-production; Production; Post-production and Distribution which the researcher will elaborate on to demonstrate how the final film came about. As in 'the cases where video is collected to illustrate a prior analysis or contribute to the development of some documentary record, the ways the data are collected are intimately tied to the analytic orientation that frames the research' Luff and Heath (2012:274). Thus the production process of the film followed the four sites for critical visual methodology by Rose (2016); (i) the site of production, where images are made in relation to other objects (ii) the site of the image itself, visual content (iii) the site of circulation, where images travelled to and (iv) the site of the audience, encountering its spectators and users.

Development: This is the first stage in which the ideas for the film are created and financing for the project has to be sought and obtained. Though there was no specific budget set aside for the production of the film, the researcher went ahead with its production from very limited resources given its important link to the thesis and its accessibility to the Papiakum people for dissemination of knowledge. The topic was researched, the information outlined, and the script written. The audio of the film was done in combination of both off-camera narration, and on camera narration. Usually the audio portion of the script should be roughly written out before any shooting begins but this was

not the case with the researcher as whole processes were captured. However, in the process of writing out the storyline line which the researcher finally settled on, a shot sheet was developed. For a documentary film a shot sheet is like a grocery list of shots needed to support the audio portion of the script. This shot sheet was carefully mounted so as bring out the visual systems and material culture of the Papiakum in relation to the pith of the subject matter of the thesis; mobility, material culture, access to land and its impact on the socio-political hierarchy of the society. The visual culture, the plethora of ways in which visual is part of social life, of the Papiakum.

Pre-production: Since it was basically a one man crew, arrangements and preparations were made for the shoot within locations noted as the sets were constructed within a given process that was being followed. Meaning the researcher had to do pre-interviews to find out how to position one to shot as the process was going on. This pre-interview process concords with Luff and Heath (2012) that, 'the collection of video recordings rarely is undertaken without some accompanying fieldwork; interviews and general observations of the domain being fruitful for selecting initial locations and activities to focus on'. Carrying out this elementary study of set was essential for the preparations of technical challenges and requirements. These had to be taken care of as well as all necessary clearances and permission from subject had to be obtained before the onset of any cultural process based on research and preliminary interviews. Meticulous notes on processes had to be taken to equip one and to avoid losing any important aspect that could be captured on camera. This procedure was to handle several technical issues such as; minimising the use of 'roving' camera although roving camera could be excellent for gathering materials for the purposes of documentary or illustrative use, but it is also note worthy that the data collected in this way often undermines the development of detailed analysis of how participants produce and accomplish their actions and activities Luff and Heath (2012:258-259); decision on the position of the camera, that is whether in a static location that is neither too close to the domain of action or too far away. However, there could be problems selecting an appropriate framing for recording with static location as the audible data might not match the visual; type of shots, for instance static shot that has an open angle that typically captures the activities of two to three people, where the camera angle is placed on a tripod and typically captures two to three people in a scene (usually shots from the tripod are steady but the risk of falling/being knocked over especially when the population is clamouring for better view of the event; the placement of microphone near the participants, the video recording provides materials to support an analysis of how the talk and visual conduct of the participants are interleaved; A simple choice of camera angle can serve as an important way to resolve many of the problems faced when starting to record video data in naturalistic settings. It can aid in gathering data, which, being stable, can be systematically reviewed not only by the person recording them but by colleagues. Erickson (2009) argued for the need to aim for as much 'raw a footage as possible': to position a wide angle camera where it can capture as much as is possible without movement, panning and zooming to capture events unfolding over stretches of time, and keep a long-shot provides both action and response; the use of lone camera as opposed to multiple camera angles provides greater access to the conduct of the participants in the environment; for example, taking different views of the audience during Meinyi dance; attending to details like the hands on the drums or dance steps. These are some of the technical challenges that had to be taken care of depending on the context of the social gathering. This was especially so because the researcher conscious of being a woman and not also a member of the Papiakum was aware there will be some restriction to filming

some ongoing processes.

As articulated by Luff and Hearth (2012:273) video can provide unprecedented access to a domain and can provide an invaluable resource that can be subjected to repeated scrutiny not only by the researcher but also by colleagues. They further state that a convention has emerged for video data collection which seems to support this kind of research activity, particularly the analysis of focused interaction. However, even in domains that are not that complex, gathering video recordings needs to be supplemented with fieldwork, not only observations to help make sense of the social organization of an activity but also the technical resources and competencies of the participants. Such fieldwork not only supports the analysis of audio-visual materials but can also inform how materials are gathered, suggesting suitable locations as to where to record and where to position a camera, whether this is for a conventional shot or to gather supplementary or alternative materials. Just as the conventional framing of a shot may need to be supplemented with additional materials, the analysis of video may need to draw on resources not immediately available in the recordings. This stage was full of a lot of anticipation and anxiety.

Production: The raw footage and other elements for the film were recorded during the film or photo shoot. Since shooting was broad based, the shots on the list were captured as well as other shots that included specific items, people, or anything that could add to the film's content and would be interesting to the viewers but related to the central theme of the study; the relationship between material culture, mobility, access to land and the ways it affects the hierarchies (political, social) that structure social relations in the village. Shot sheets were therefore just a springboard for the researcher and thus hardly exhaustible to provide enough footage to assemble an entire film. This explains why from the onset shooting was on a broad base so as to shoot more footage than was listed on the shot sheet.

Post-production: Here, images; sound, and visual effects of the recorded film were edited and combined into a finished product. At this juncture due to lack of equipments and software, the researcher had to negotiate with a private film production house for time and space to assemble and edit the film. This was made possible through the connections of a colleague and we had to spend sleepless nights at the studio given the short time frame (4nights). Though stage could be a painstaking process it was, however, facilitated by properly labelling of tapes which expedited the search of particular shots. Interviews were transcribed, suitable musical sound track chosen and voice-over recorded before any rough outline of the film based on interview transcriptions and voice-over. The sound track came from one of the guest artists who had become a regular and popular guest during celebrations in Baba I. With little or no hassle permission to use the sound track for the film was obtained. More so because the tracks chosen from his albums fell in line with our storyline. After the rough assembly and First Cut of the film, the researcher had to invite the Regent of the Fon in Douala and three others for previewing and discussions before the Final Cut. This was very emotional giving the socio-political situation now in Cameroon as the village, Baba I, like most villages of the Western Grassfields have been deserted with no clear sign of when people will return home.

Distribution: Since this film is strictly for educational and non-commercial purpose, the researcher intends to, after her defence, screen and distribute copies of the completed film during the Papiakum meetings in Yaounde and Douala where most of the people are now seeking refuge. This will serve as a token of gratitude to the Papiakum people for their immense support and knowledge impacted on me during my stay with them.

7.3 Narrative of the Film

Baba I is one of the thirteen villages that make up the Ndop plain of Ngoketunjia Division of the Grassfield in the North West Region of Cameroon. The people here refer to themselves as the Papiakum people and have a population of over thirty-five thousand. Their settlement in this area is recent compared to the other ethnic groups of Ndop. Like most of the peoples of the Bamenda Grassfield, they claim to be of Tikar origin. Though within a modern state structure this village has kept its traditional socio-political organisation centred on their chiefdom with the Fon as paramount ruler. Today their Fon, Fue Kemshi IV, one of the auxiliaries of the State, still commands a lot of authority.

The topography of Baba I is made up of undulating hills, valleys and plains. As one drives in from Bamenda, the Ring Road passing through splits the village into two parts-an upper and lower part. The upper part which is to the North, and where the palace is situated, covers 60% of the village's surface area. The lower part covering 40%, is the site of the majority of its rice fields on the plain. Coffee used to be the main cash crop until the drastic drop in market prices forced the population to turn to rice farming. Apart from rice and cattle rearing which constitute the main cash earners for the people today; significant additional income is also earned from hectares of corn, groundnut, and beans fields interspaced with coco yams, cassava and sweet potatoes, cultivated by women. In the lower part of the village, there is also a royal fish pond as well as the palace farm house where the Fon used to stay during the farming/harvesting seasons. Today, that farm house has been transformed to a primary school.

The quest for personal enhancement and development of this village has led to rural-urban migration with a rewarding feedback to the community. The impact can be seen through the changing architectural landscape and infrastructure. The construction of these diverse public infrastructure in the village and environs; roads, schools, health centres, water, electricity and communication technologies are the result of lobbying and pressure on government by influential urban elite of Baba I origin. These investments, personal and public, are considered by the urban elite as their own way of giving back to their community and showing their sense of belonging. The private homes constructed by these urban elites are mostly used during socio-cultural events and festivals.

Fue Kemshi IV as the custodian of custom and tradition in encouraging the construction of these modern infrastructures bestows traditional titles to successors, outstanding elite and friends of the village for their contribution towards development.

The Meinyi festival is the largest cultural event of the Papiakum people. This festival brings together people from all walks of life both at home and abroad. Though the people co-exist as Christians and Moslems the visit to the Nikwah shrine is a crucial aspect of the culture that binds the people.

At the shrine sacrifice is made to appease the gods. When this is done cam wood powder is distributed to the populace as a sign that their prayers have been accepted. Also at the shrine the Queen Mothers present the petitions of the women seeking the fruits of the womb to the gods. It is their belief after this visit and rites are performed, they will conceive and bear many children.

The Papiakum people like the other Tikars always use gun salutes in most of their events but the Meinyi cultural festival is void of this. However there is a colourful fanfare of cultural exhibition during the last day of this festival marked by the majestic entry of the notables according to their ranks.

Richard Kings a renowned Cameroonian artist and the kids closed the day with a wonderful performance.

7.4 Discussion

When I started fieldwork, the main fascination was on material culture with focus on the big houses constructed especially by the urbanites. These houses stood out in the landscape as representations of the persons owning them. They constituted the visual systems which are part of a more general cultural process that influence the construction of the world of the people who were going to be under study. Given that I had adopted film and photography as a method of collecting and analysing data my cameras were with me almost everywhere. Quietly taking pictures of landscapes and objects thought to be interesting was part of my daily activity. The people of Baba I village soon got use to the fact that these tools were an essential part of my work just like pens and note books. This, however, did not take away curiosity and maybe suspicions to an extent as some concerned persons stopped to ask the reason for the pictures. These encounters were cherished as it prompted discussions on and around the subject matter. These discussions led to cultural translations and interpretations.

With over a hundred hours of film footage and close to a thousand pictures, there were various possibilities for the focus of a documentary film. The original idea at the proposal stage was to make a film on the evolution of houses to shed more light on their meaning amongst the Papiakum people in relation to the Grassfield. When work started other opportunities presented themselves with the footage at hand there was a change. There were celebrations that brought urbanites home accompanied by their friends and colleagues. These celebrations offered the possibilities for the researcher to meet and talk with some research partners at home, village. When we carried out our feasibility study before choosing this site for our research, very little written literature was available on the Papiakum people. This we found interesting being in the western grassfield region of Cameroon where early ethnographers like Chilver and Kaberry (1967 and 1970) and Warnier (1985) had carried out extensive studies. This was a strong pull factor thus getting into their basic ethnography became imperative.

The lived experience of the researcher corroborated with McDougall's view that in reflexive anthropology the ethnographer makes visible the dialogue, improvisations, learning processes, negotiations from which the work emerges and is dealt with as part of the ethnographic information. This reflexive nature made it possible for the researcher to build the storyline of the field in a holistic manner that touches all the spheres of the society. As McDougall reiterates, 'no ethnographic film is merely a record of another society: it is always a record of a meeting between a film maker and that society. Illustrative ethnographic films make use of images either as data to be elucidated by means of a spoken commentary or as visual support for verbal statements', (1978:413).

Thus, in an illustrative ethnographic film narrative, the film produced on the Papiakum people, took cognisance of its history, geographical location and the socio-cultural activities because the researcher was in constant dialogue with the community through their daily interactions. 'Since all films are cultural artefacts, many can tell us as much about the societies that produced them as about these they purport to describe' (David McDougall, 1978:405).

In this learning process through participation in a range of activities/events the researcher witnessed how the celebration of life brought the community in good or bad times to commune. Among these celebrations; birth, marriage, death, memorials; were

Njuweh, Samba and Meinyi festivals that had not taken place for over five years. Through these celebrations cum festivals the researcher partook in the celebration of 'Papiakumness'; of how things are seen and how what is seen is understood within their visual systems. The Meinyi festival, which involves week long activities, was therefore chosen for the film to show case the core of the Papiakum culture. It addresses the question of socio-political mobility as well as material culture and how they are related to the hierarchical changes which are central themes in the thesis.

In the film the power and authority of the Fon is displayed as a supreme ruler through the royal insignia and his personae. During the long walk to and from the Nikwa shrine for the pouring of libation, the reverence and respect reserved for their divine ruler is demonstrated as the populace come out to watch, pay their respect with hymns of exultation. These scenarios can be observed each time he makes a public appearance and when he joins the dance, the population is euphoric and their dance steps towards him are done in an honourable manner without any of the dancers backing him which would be a sign of disrespect for hierarchy.

His office is also made public and political power demonstrated as he confers traditional titles to successors and meritorious elites. Through the endowment of these titles, the researcher witnessed how upward socio-political mobility was being elucidated. The conferment of these titles calls for great celebration at the various compounds afterwards since the person has moved ranks within the hierarchical structure of the village. It was regarded as a special privilege to be found qualified to join the club of notables. These individuals now relate differently with the tangible and intangible material culture of the Papiakum people. Via the endowment of these titles their social interactions and presentation of self metamorphous as they are regarded and treated as per their norms accorded to the newly acquired socio-political status.

Respect accorded the members of Ngirri (big men) is beautifully illustrated as they move out of the Ngumba house in their ranks and the populace observe in silent admiration and respect for the people who hold socio-cultural, political and religious powers of their society. This particular outing was highly awaited with the presence of a very senior member of the government actively participating and toeing the lines in the traditional setting and by so doing attested to his presence and oneness with his people. Like the other notables he came out in his full traditional regalia that tied to his persona.

During the long walk to Nikwa, princesses could be seen adorned and carrying various royal insignia which should not be touched by commoners. Since princes are in the line of succession, they too are excluded from carrying these royal valuables. The princes who have however settled in their own compounds/houses join the ranks of the notables accompanying the Fon to/from the shrine. At the shrine, after the sacrifice and libation has been made by the chief priest, the queen mothers are given the privilege and duty to bless the women seeking for the fruit of the women. Women scramble to the pit reserved for this claiming the number of children as these royal women lay hands on them. As the population, indiscriminately receives cam wood powder on their foreheads after the visit to the shrine from the notables, it is their belief that it will free them from tribulations, grant them protection and blessings. It was observed and noted that the cam wood powder is a very significant and value object within the Papiakum material culture illustrated by how people rush to have it placed on them. This object has been adapted and adopted into their cultural process thus no longer a mere object.

I got to see various types of guns (ranging from dane to sophisticated modern guns) and learnt so many stories about them being part of the social status symbol. They were well appropriated as a very important masculine object. These definitely came into full display during the scene of shooting down the branch of the tree. By the sound of the guns and the rounds of shots of a gun persons were ranked accordingly. During these festivals, I got to see all manner of guns and what was noticeable amongst the younger elite was their aspiration to get very good sophisticated guns comparable to that of the Fon. It was also interesting to find out that during these occasions people go out of their way to borrow guns which they will use for display. Class and joining a certain rank is very crucial for these urbanites. It is important to note here how guns came into the Grassfields. Warnier (1980) traced the history of the incursion of these flintlock and percussion muzzleloaders known as 'Dane Guns' into the Grassfields. He explained how they were already a popular sight among the peoples of the Grassfields of Cameroon by mid 19C. These were brandished by men, executing grotesques charge and fired them off in great clouds of smoke during death celebrations and annual festivals. These guns bore witness to the pre-colonial coastal trade with European merchants in West Africa who bought slaves and ivory in exchange for salt, cloth, ironware, guns and gun powder. Nkwi (1986) added that Dane guns became prestigious goods in the royal trade route as they were ferried in from Calabar through the Cross River Basin controlled mainly by the Fons who gave them out as gifts to distinguished young men after wars and to their sons. By late 19C, the Dane guns had become common place as they were used as local armament made even more popular after the Chamba invasion of about 1830. By this time there were local blacksmith repairing and fabricating large quantities of these percussion muzzleloaders of medium calibre whose barrels were made from drive shafts of discarded vehicles (Land Rover, Volkswagen 'Beetle', Renault 4) as noted by Warnier (1980). Nkwi (2011) gives us a glimpse into the euphoria of the coming of the first motor vehicle from Lagos to Kom as a mark of progress and status signifier as well by the 1950s.

Ojuku (2018) will concord with Warnier that funeral celebrations in Grassfields communities of Cameroon are cultural events often characterized by pomp and pageantry marked by firing of guns. He elaborates that prosperous and wealthy peasant farmers in the South West and North West Regions upon sale of farm produce, often buy, brandish and shoot expensive firearms during funerals as a symbol of wealth. In his study area of M'Mouck Leteh in Lebialem division of the South West Region, wealth from market gardening has become an indicator of mapping social boundary in rural areas. He continues further on how these emerging rural aristocrats have expensive modern guns that fire several rounds ranging from 4 to 25 rounds. Fire arms are shot in several rounds continuously to manifest symbol of power, wealth and social status during these funeral celebrations and annual festivals in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon. The pomp and pageantry during these events is also enhanced by other objects like cars and display of fanciful expensive dresses. The other phase of the film takes us through an apparently quiet phase; the landscape to witness the impact of investments accrued due to spatial, economic and social mobility.

Going critically through the images there is a clear indication that investment in agriculture is evolving. There are large facets of land for rice fields which is the main cash crop now since coffee died out. There are also large fields of maize, cassava and palms and there has been an attempt to mechanise farming. Animal husbandry is a visible agricultural activity controlled mainly by these urbanites though the Fon has a sizeable herd of over 200 cattle.

7.4.1 Significance

Documentary films serve as an important means to render researcher results to a far reaching audience. This is to fulfil its primary purposes of instruction, education, or maintaining a historic record. This follows the site of circulation and audience through which images would be critically analysed as propounded by Rose (2016). Documentaries therefore have the power to educate as in-depth and informative resources which are a perfect platform to create dialogue. They serve as powerful tools that bring important topics to the table in a captivating way that also sparks conversation, and sometimes even social movements. The recent upsurge in popularity of documentary media, combined with technological advances of internet and computers have opened up a whole new set of opportunities for film to serve as both art and agent for social change as pointed out by Karlin and Johnson (2011).

It is therefore in line with the studies of Barrett and Leddy (2009) and Karlin and Johnson (2011) that I will view the impact of this documentary within the Papiakum community and the country at large. Through previewing of excerpts from my film footage during fieldwork it was clear that film can increase public awareness by bringing light to issues and stories that may have otherwise been unknown or not often thought about. Those outside (elites and their kids), in the urban centres became aware of what is happening at home. This is the level of impact that has received the most attention, as films are often discussed in terms of their "educational" value. This film project had the ability to raise awareness around issues, since awareness is a critical building block for both individual change and broader social change Barrett and Leddy (2009:6). This film like other documentaries will help to promote culture as they serve as a vehicle through which people can learn about the cultural and social aspects of different countries. For the Papiakum urbanites or Diaspora, it will facilitate to break the ice that is making it possible for them to ask questions in areas where conversations were reserved (for example, the excerpt where the Fon and notables are making a majestic walk into the ceremonial ground).

Karlin and Johnson (2011) posit that films need not stop at simply raising public awareness but must proceed to have a ‘Public Engagement Impact’. Engagement indicates a shift from simply being aware of an issue to acting on this awareness. Following through the discussion during the BADECA meetings as well as family meeting in the various urban centres, the film became imperative. I viewed the film as a tool in encouraging others to look towards home for building and development. Like Barrett and Leddy (2009:7) this film will be seen as an outreach campaign able to provide an answer to the question 'What can I do?' and more importantly mobilize that individual to act?” By distributing to the Papiakum diasporic communities (especially those abroad whose impact was hardly felt on the field) through transmedia outlets such as YouTube, WhatsApp, websites, blogs, etc. the documentary can build off the interest and awareness and provide outlets for viewers to channel their constructive efforts towards more developmental projects for the community.

In terms social movement and social change the significance of the film will be felt in its impacts on individuals, as well as also serve to mobilize groups focused on a particular problem. The film can be used as a tool for mobilization and collaboration by creating awareness and encourage involvement in community development projects – roads, water, light etc. Moving beyond measures of impact as they relate to individual awareness and engagement, I look at the project's impact as it relates to the broader social movement.It is possible that the project can strengthen the work of key advocacy organizations like BADECA that have strong commitment to the issues raised in the film. This will

promulgate long-term and systemic social change though social change is often a long and complex process. For those who have not been to the village the film will serve as an inspirational tool for their return and enactment of belonging as members of the community. The gift is my little gift to all and sundry of the Papiakum community at home and abroad which will serve as part of their archive for the reconstruction of their village when things return to normalcy in that part of Cameroon now living in dire conditions.

8. Conclusion: Material Culture as a lens to Socio-Political Change

The houses in Baba I, belonging to the Diaspora elites tell a story about how urbanisation and migration influences the way the villages in the Grassfields developed. The houses in themselves are material culture that speaks. In the documentary that goes with this thesis I show how they speak, through their forms and structures that are often rather exorbitant. It has become clear through the stories of the owners of the houses that for them these houses represent their link to the village, almost their umbilical cord. What they do not realise probably is how their investment in the village is also part of a changing social landscape in which they become a new elite with specific positions in the village. This thesis has attempted vividly to illustrate this point of view.

The approach in this thesis was ethnographic. I spent more than a year with the people in Papiakum also known as Baba I, where I also had the privilege to share the space of the palace for a certain time. My vision on ethnography does also include the visual. I have been trained as a visual anthropologist and the choice to follow material culture is also a fact of life for me. I was one of the first anthropologists to be interested in Baba I. The ethnography of the Grassfields has been centred on Mankon, Kom, Bafut, Bali and Nso just to name but a few. This fact urged me to include a chapter on the imagined origins of the Papiakum people which included also extensive explanations of land issues. In fact we should realise that this thesis is the first thesis written on Baba I (Papiakum people).

In this study I combined the visual representations and ethnography of the Papiakum illustrating how closely knitted they are. Architectural expressions were the central visualization of the problems that I discovered during this ethnographic research. It is important to read the landscape and its visuals. This can be best grasped in photography and film. That is why this study made use of photography and film as research tools for the dissemination of knowledge of this society. The film, The Papiakum People, gives us a glimpse into the ethnography and visual representations of some key events of this community.

Through the evolution of the architectural landscape, I had the opportunity to open up the writing of the basic ethnography of the Papiakum people. By tracing their migratory routes, I have also searched to understand the Papiakum and their mobile culture. I have added my voice in showing how mobility, material culture and access to land are intrinsically linked serving as a crucial vector in the development of any society. It is very hard to see that this part of Cameroon has become a conflict region. The Fon no longer lives in Baba I simply because he is a target for the independent fighters. I will come back to this in the afterword of this thesis.

Like other people in Anglophone Cameroon, the Papiakum are very mobile. Already in the early 20th century they moved to the plantations located in coastal Cameroon. Post-colonial migration patterns of the Papiakum show a deviation from what has been described for other groups in the region. Here I introduced the concept of bushfalling as a contested category. Bushfallers, those who search for greener pastures, do not only go far away, beyond national borders, as is suggested in the literature on the phenomenon. Instead the people with whom I interacted and who are the people constructing in the villages were all migrants within the borders of Cameroon. Thus bushfalling is national as well countering the literature that suggests that bushfallers are

only those in Europe, United and States and quite recently, China Korea and Vietnam. This finding subscribes the statement made by Landau and Bakewell (2018) 1 that most migration movements are on the African continent and not intercontinental. Consequently, Africa generates its own diaspora.

In the thesis I link the stories of these bushfallers to their itineraries of building houses in the village and the implication this has for local hierarchical relations, access to land. To understand their influence it is necessary to understand the ways hierarchies functioned in Baba I and how the urban elites interfere with that; and it was important to show the land tenure system (chapter 4) to be able to link this as well to the 'disturbances' that these elites create in these land tenure and hence hierarchies of the village.

Another core concept that I used in the thesis is belonging. Belonging to the community is the driving force behind the actions of the elites that I describe in the thesis. As I went along with those urban elites, their struggle to belong became even more central in the way I perceived their stories. Participation in village life forms the kernel of acceptance and belonging in the community which is visibly displayed during socio-cultural and political gatherings as portrayed in the film Papiakum Their investments at home, both in cash, in houses, and emotionally were the centre of their lives. Their houses and community projects have reshaped the village and the life of its inhabitants. This is what I have tried to show in this thesis.

[1] Landau, Loren, and Oliver Bakewell 2018. "Introduction: Forging a Study of Mobility, Integration and Belonging in Africa," (https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58194-5_1). In: Forging African Communities Mobility, Integration and Belonging. Editors: Bakewell, Oliver, Landau, Loren B. (Eds.); Palgrave Mcmillan, pp 1-24.

Figure 8.1: Yoyo's well-tailored compound.

Source: Photo by Author

In my methodology I kept very close to what is called visual ethnography. I combined the collection of life histories, with observation collected in pictures and film that I present in a documentary. From various corroborating stories of my research partners, one is confronted immediately with the notion of urban-rural connection which is an underlining factor in the growth and social changes of the urban elite in the establishment of their rootedness at home as well as for their social security.

In the following I will delve into the main conclusions of the thesis: First, the importance to read through material culture and what changes happen in society; Secondly, how the houses are not just material culture but go with a socio-political regime that changes the village; Thirdly, the importance of the rules of land access to the processes described in the thesis; Finally, the phenomenon of bushfalling as being national. I added a afterword to this thesis to reflect on today's situation and also on the astonishing touristic possibilities that the Fondom of Papiakum could have would there not have been a war erupted in 2016.

As emphasised by most informants, owning a house in the village was a basic requirement of society, to show the maturity of a (wo)man and her/his rootedness. This was also in the past when, as shown in chapter two, the building materials were mostly gotten from the natural environment where they settled. This changed with the availability of imported materials. For instance, the engagement of the Papiakum into long distant trade to Nigeria and coastal Cameroon saw the coming of new building materials like corrugated iron sheets, nails, cement, sand; iron rods just to name a few as shown in chapter three. These building materials did not only change the architectural styles but also introduced other elements as the construction of roads, bicycles, vehicles, bikes, pipe borne water, and electricity due to their contacts with the outside world. However, it did not change the cultural and social signification of the houses for the mobile people that the Papiakum are. On the contrary, the construction of the modern houses, though related to processes of belonging and identity, did introduce or probably better emphasize social hierarchies. The houses do not only attest the maturity and belonging of its members but also create new social classes. The storey buildings for example have their rankings and these houses also put to question their financial stand. This ranking of houses also attests emotions of

belonging of the owners of the houses. Their participation in events of the society is paramount as it confirms and reaffirms their sense of belonging to the community.

Post-colonial migration brought in wealth differences, and such economic distinction brought in a new class in Papiakum society. As Osili (2004) posits, migrants often maintain economic and social ties to their origin communities. The study of migrants' housing investments can inform a broad literature that seeks to understand the economic ties that migrants maintain with their communities of origin. Under the standard investment explanation, migrants invest in housing assets in the origin community because these investments yield high rates of return relative to the return on other assets. It can also be argued that migrants' investment decisions are closely related to their return migration plans as stipulated by most of my research partners.

Important in the processes at stake is the changes in the educational system. With the coming of formal (English) education, a new category of people/social class was created as Papiakum people interested in continuing their education were obliged to travel out of the village to places where these educational institutions were found. It should be noted that the first primary school came to being in 1947 and the first secondary school in 1982. Schooling brought in a category of persons who aspired to be civil servants. Through their travels these persons experienced and brought back home new ideas for the enhancement of themselves and the society at large. A new class of people came out from these groups whom I refer to here as bushfallers or urbanites. Among them are the main interlocutors for this research. These are people who had or are resident in the urban centres of the country, have not only concentrated in the construction of their private houses at home but have contributed a great deal in bringing urban amenities in the village that I see as the urbanisation process of the rural area.

However, the hierarchical position can never bypass the Palace that is the touching stone of the society. The palace always stands out as the focal point for innovations and development. The expectation is that every new thing is brought in, made known and validated by the palace. The Fons have been the main drivers of this transformation and validity process. This is corroborated by Yoyo as he talks about the first stone and corrugated roof house in the palace he saw as he grew up. The story of Moh Tanghongho's father's house being knocked down mysteriously because it was thought of being in competition with the palace demonstrates the importance of the approval for construction from the palace as they say'fog lah mbue nthi' meaning wealth is not power. By this, there is a constant reminder of the respect of customary and socio-political hierarchy in the society.

Nonetheless, the activities of individuals made it possible for them to be considered as innovators, entrepreneurs and springboards for the urbanisation process. Businessmen and civil servants can be said to be the two main categories of persons found in Baba I whose activities in the village are gradually changing the architectural landscape. The Fons, close collaborators and their carrier boys have been seen to have spearheaded the evolution of houses through their different trading routes and activities that exposed them to the consumption of foreign object (ostentatious goods).

This study demonstrated that the construction of these houses and the infrastructures with it are ordered through the land tenure system which is experiencing change as these new social classes are formed and with the coming of urban amenities need land to build. The access and acquisition process of land have moved from being handed down from father to son on family plots to the re-appropriation and purchase depending on the vision of the community or the entrepreneur's project. Land which was seen at the face value as

masculine is being questioned as gender relations are changing, when it comes to access and acquisition also by women. Today, women are a force to reckon with when it comes to acquiring land and building of houses for their sons or as widows or single parent families.

The construction of these infrastructures are probably laudable, but it also touched on access and acquisition of land, which in Papiakum society is an important part of one's identity. It is clear from the stories of the house builders that they trespass the rules of the village in some cases, which leads to situations in which the position of these elites are challenged. At the same time we also have noted that also other conflicts around land tenure, such as herder-farmer conflicts are intensifying.

The way the houses are constructed in the village and how it differs from the houses that were built in the past can be explained through the presence of more materials, but it should also be related to the mobility and the expectation of mobile people by the Papiakum. People who leave the village are expected to come back with wealth and invest for the good of the society back home. The houses are a sign of the success of the bushfaller. It is important to emphasize again that the notion of bushfaller in this thesis has also been a point for debate with scholars who introduced the concept in the academic debate. This thesis challenges the notion that the quest for greener pastures and bushfalling, for personal enhancement can only be abroad in Europe, America or out of one's country of origin. In Baba I, just two out of hundreds (with a dynamic community of over 50 in Belgium) of bushfallers from Europe, America or Asia have constructed houses and their contributions to the cultural and development association, BADECA has been minimal over the years. In this case, the numbers of in-house or internal bushfallers are much higher in than those bushfallers from Europe, America or Asia. The notion that is generally accepted nowadays that there is return migrants (those abroad) in households in terms of remittances and houses is therefore questioned. In this study I showed that urbanites within the national territorial boundaries are championing the development of their communities. Baba I is a glaring example that remittances from abroad are not the driving force behind development/house construction and that people have used their home based networks within the state to urbanise the rural area.

On a final note many studies have shown the interest of migrants to invest in houses in their countries of origin. Yet scholarly and political debates have mainly focused on the productivity of these investments, arguing that the money spent might have found more productive uses. These arguments thus forget to take into consideration these two dimensions: social and cultural. This study on the Papiakum has shown the relevance of social and cultural effects of these constructions. For instance as they have been central to socio-cultural and political networking of the community. It is a vivid example to also illustrate that migrants are seldom able to construct their own homes, instead depending on actors in their country of origin and in this case in their home village. Similar to Smith and Mazzucato (2009) this study elucidates the importance of unravelling the relationships involved with migrant investments in houses in order to understand the meaning of these investments as indicators also of socio-political change.

Afterword: A Reflection on Papiakum and the (impossible) Future of Tourism: Postcards from Baba I.

As I was folding up my research mats and putting down my research tent, another challenge to the Papiakum and Anglophone Cameroon was around the corner. It was what has been dubbed as the Anglophone problem which entered a new gear in the second decade of the 21st Century. It has become to be known as the Anglophone War of Independence, or the

Ambazonian War of Independence, that began in November 2016. This was after the ring leaders of the Ambazonia struggle were kidnapped in Nigeria and brought back to Cameroon where they are jailed presently. The arrests appeared to have been the final straw that escalated the simmering Anglophone marginalisation which is assumed by some Anglophones to have existed for more than 50 years since 1961 when the two units (Anglophones and Francophones) came into union to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon. According to most Anglophones, the Francophone dominated government failed to address the issues raised by the lawyers and teachers strike in the 2015/16 strike (Nkwi, 2020). The Anglophones took to armed insurrection as the final resort and turned the demands of the lawyers to the return to Federation which will gave the Anglophone regions some autonomy. The Francophone dominated government rather than soothing the rising tensions remained adamant that there was no Anglophone Cameroon. The Ambazonians remained resolute and as the war increased. The ramifications were telling both on the population and traditional rulers and the traditional institutions.

Due to the crisis, the Palace has been left weeping. The Fon and his entourage have escaped the palace for safety in Yaounde and other urban towns in Cameroon for fear of reprisals from the separatist and the Cameroon military. Almost all the informants whom I worked with in the field cannot go back to the village since the start of the crisis. Developmental projects with houses envisaged have come to a standstill. Many people have disappeared as all are running away from the reprisals that are orchestrated by the Amba soldiers or "amba boys" as they are popularly known. The elites especially who come home for construction have not been to Baba I for the past four and half years or so. By extension, Baba I has been deserted as almost all the population has vanished into the cities and escaped into the bushes. The separatist and the Cameroon military are different sides of the same coin when it comes to atrocities committed on the civilian population. Hence the exotic and romantic Baba I has for the past four years or so remained a 'Wasteland'.

I will dwell on the possibility to develop the touristic sector of Baba I that I was really thinking could become important. However, today this dream is far away. I complied a series of post-cards from my pictures. The pictures on the postcards were taken when all was "well" and everything was going on smoothly.

However, the touristic potential of the area was brought to light for more studies and entrepreneurial activities to be established in the tourism and hospitality industry giving its location on the ring road. Second home tourism broadens issues of access, mobility and regulation. The photographs are illustrations of rich cultural heritage of the Papiakum people that could serve as pull factor for tourism and more research within this community. Though they are living in precarious times, with the once vibrant village almost empty due to the crisis these potentials are there to spark up the economy once this war is over.

Below are the pictures that can be future postcards representing the landscape and various events that took place in Baba I while I was on fieldwork. These pictures tell their own stories about the society as Pink posit that "...ethnographic photography can potentially construct continuities between the visual culture of an academic discipline and that of the subjects or collaborators in the research. Thus ethnographers can hope to create photographic representations that refer to 'local' visual cultures and simultaneously respond to the interest of academic disciplines. To do so involve a certain amount of research into uses and understandings of photography in the culture and society of the fieldwork location", (Pink 2001:5). These pictures (postcards) do not only illustrate and represent lived experiences but serve as indicators of the cultural potentials of the Baba I people that can be explored by further studies in the field of cultural tourism.











Source: Photos by Author

References

ADB. (2009). Cameroon: diagnostic study for modernization of the lands and survey sector. http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Cameroon_Etude%20sur%20le%20cadastre_english_001.pdf (Accessed 05 September 2011).

Adewale, J. G. (2005). Socio-economic factors associated with urban-rural migration in Nigeria: A case study of Oyo State, Nigeria. Journal of Human Ecology, 17(1), 13-16.

Adichie, C. N. (2012). Purple Hibiscus: a novel. North Carolina: Algonquin Books.

Ajaero, C. K., & Onokala, P. C. (2013). The effects of rural-urban migration on rural communities of southeastern Nigeria. International Journal of Population Research, 2013.

Akinola, A. O. (2018). Women, Culture and Africa's Land Reform Agenda. Frontiers in psychology, 9, 2234.

Alpes, M. J. (2011). Bushfalling: How young Cameroonians dare to migrate (Doctoral dissertation). Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.

Alpes, M. J. (2012). Bushfalling at all cost: the economy of migratory knowledge in Anglophone Cameroon. African Diaspora, 5(1):90-115

Alpes, M. J. (2017). Why aspiring migrants trust migration brokers: the moral economy of departure in Anglophone Cameroon. Africa, 87(2):304-21.

Anderson M. D, and Rathbone, R. (2000). 'Urban Africa: Histories in the Making'. Africa's Urban Past, 1-17. Portsmouth, Heinemann

Anh, N. T., Rigg, J., Huong, L. T.T. and Dieu, D. T., (2012). 'Becoming and Being Urban in Hanoi: Rural-Urban Migrations and Relations in Vietnam'. The Journal of Peasant Studies39(5):1103-31.

Ansoms, A. (2009). Re-engineering rural society: The visions and ambitions of the Rwandan elite. African affairs, 108(431):289-309.

Antonsich, M. (2010). Searching for belonging–an analytical framework. Geography Compass, 4(6):644-59.

Appadurai, A. (1986). 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value',pp.3-63 in The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective, ed. Arjun Appadurai.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appadurai, A. (2006). The thing itself. Public culture, 18(1):15-22.

Ariztia, T. (2012). Decorating the New House: The Material Culture of Social Mobility pp 93-106 in Sinclair J., Pertierra A.C. (eds) Consumer Culture in Latin America. Palgrave Macmillan, New York

Assmann, J. (1995). Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. New German Critique, 65:125–33.

Atekmangoh, C. (2011). Expectations abound: family obligations and remittance flow amongst Cameroonian "bushfallers" in Sweden. A gender insight. (Master's thesis). Lund: Lund University.

Atekmangoh, C. (2017). " Les Mbengis"-Migration, Gender, and Family: The moral economy of transnational Cameroonian migrants' remittances. Bamenda: Langaa RPCIG.

Athelstan, A., & Deller, R. (2013). Visual Methodologies. Graduate Journal of Social Science.10(2):43-53

Baker, T. A., & Wang, C. C. (2006). Photovoice: Use of a participatory action research method to explore the chronic pain experience in older adults. Qualitative health research, 16(10):1405-13.

Bamaenda', pp. 503-523 In Geschiere, P. and Konings, P. (eds), Conference on the Political Economy of Cameroon: Historical Perspectives. Leiden: African Studies Centre.

Banks, M., & Zeitlyn, D. (2015). Visual methods in social research. London: SAGE.

Barkan, D. J., McNulty L. M. and Ayeni M. A. O., (1991). 'Hometown' Voluntary Associations, Local Development, and the Emergence of Civil Society in Western Nigeria'. Journal of Modern African Studies 29(3):457-80.

Barrett, D., & Leddy, S. (2009). Assessing Creative Media's Social Impact (White Paper). New York: The Fledgling Fund.

Barten, J. (2008). 'Families in Movement: Transformation of the family in urban Mali, with focus on intercontinental mobility'. (Master's thesis). Wageningen: Wageningen University.

BCDP, (2011). Babessi Council Development Plan: Draft Report

Benson, M., & O'reilly, K. (2009). Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. The sociological review, 57(4):608-25.

Berry, S. (1989). 'Access, Control and Use of Resources in African Agriculture: An Introduction' Africa: Journal of the International African Institute 59(1):1-5.

Berry, S. (1989). 'Social Institutions and Access to Resources' Africa: Journal of the International African Institute 59(1):41-55.

Berry, S. (2002). 'Debating the Land Question in Africa', Comparative Studies in Society and History 44(4):638-68

Berry, S. (2009). Building for the future? Investment, land reform and the contingencies of ownership in contemporary Ghana. World Development, 37(8):1370-78.

Berry, S. (2009). Property, authority and citizenship: land claims, politics and the dynamics of social division in West Africa. Development and Change, 40(1):23-45.

Bhandari, A. K. (2010). 'Urban Anthropology: An Overview of the Discipline and Scope', Himalayan Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, 4:1-14.

Black, R., King, R., & Tiemoko, R. (2003, March). Migration, return and small enterprise development in Ghana: A route out of poverty. In International Workshop on Migration and Poverty in West Africa 13, 1-22.

Boamah, F. (2014). Imageries of the contested concepts "land grabbing" and "land transactions": Implications for biofuels investments in Ghana. Geoforum, 54:324-34.

Brand, G., & McMurray, A. (2012). Reflection on photographs: exploring first-year nursing students' perceptions of older adults. Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 35(11):30-37.

Brazg, T., Bekemeier, B., Spigner, C., & Huebner, C. E. (2011). Our Community in Focus: The Use of Photovoice for Youth-Driven Substance Abuse Assessment and Health Promotion. Health Promotion Practice, 12(4), 502-511. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839909358659 (accessed 01.02.2020)

Buller, H. and Hoggart, K. (1994a). 'The social integration of British home owners into French rural communities', Journal of Rural Studies 10(2):197-210.

Busia, K. (1950). Report on a Social Survey of Secodi-Takoradi Crown Agents for the Colonies. London. Heinneman

Cahyanto, I., Pennington-Gray, L. & Thapa, B. (2009). Reflections from utilizing reflexive photography to develop rural tourism in Indonesia. Tourism Analysis, 14(6):721-36.

Cassiman, A. (2008). 'Home and Away: Mental Geographies of Young Migrant Workers and their Belonging to the Family House in Northern Ghana', Housing, Theory and Society 25(1):14-30

Cassiman, A.(2010). 'Home Call: Absence, Presence and Migration in Rural Northern Ghana', African Identities 8(1):21-40

Ceuppens, B. and Geschiere, P. (2005). 'Local or Global? New Modes in the Struggle over Citizenship and Belonging in Africa and Europe'.Annual Review of Anthropology 34:385–407

Champion, T. (2001). 'Urbanization, Suburbanization, Counterurbanization and Reurbanization', pp. 143-161. In R. Padison (ed.) Handbook of Urban Studies. London: SAGE

Chilver E. M. (1981). 'Chronological Synthesis: The Western Region, Comprising the Western Grassfields, Bamum, the Bamileke Chiefdoms and the Central Mbam' pp. 453-473.In Claude Tardits (ed). The Contribution of Ethnological Research to the History of Cameroon Cultures. Paris. Editions de Centra National de la Recherche Scientifique Vol. II.

Chilver E. M. (1981). 'Chronological Synthesis: The Western Region, Comprising the Western Grassfields, Bamum, the Bamileke Chiefdoms and the Central Mbam' pp 453-73 In Claude Tardits (ed). The Contribution of Ethnological Research to the History of Cameroon Cultures. Paris. Editions de Central National de la Recherche Scientifique

Chilver, E. M. and Kaberry, P. M. (1965). 'The Cameroons Highlands'.The Journal of African History6(1):117-120.

Chilver, E. M. and Kaberry, P. M. (1967).Traditional Bamenda: The Pre-colonial History and Ethnography of the Bamenda Grassfields. Buea: Government Printers.

Chilver, E. M. and Kaberry, P. M. (1970).'Chronology of the Bamenda Grassfields'. The Journal of African History. 11(2): 249-257.

Cleaver, F. (2002). Reinventing institutions: Bricolage and the social embeddedness of natural resource management. The European journal of development research, 14(2):11-30.

Clifford, J. (1992). 'Travelling cultures', pp. 97-198. In Grossberg, L. Nelson, C. & P. Treinch (eds). Cultural Studies. New York: Routledge.

Colin, J. P., & Woodhouse, P. (2010). Interpreting land markets in Africa. Africa, 80(1): 1-13.

Cottyn, I. (2020) Between modern urbanism and ‘rurban’realities: Rwanda’s changing rural–urban interface and the implications for inclusive development (Doctoral dissertation, Utrecht University).

Crang, P., Dwyer, C., & Jackson, P. (2003). Transnationalism and the spaces of commodity culture. Progress in human geography, 27(4):438-56.

Cresswell, T. (2016). Towards a politics of mobility. In Routes, Roads and Landscapes (pp. 181-196). Routledge.

Crysler, C. G. (2003). Writing spaces: discourses of architecture, urbanism and the built environment, 1960–2000. London: Routledge.

Dalakoglou, D. (2009). 'Building and Ordering Transnationalism: The 'Greek House' in Albania as a Material Process' pp. 51-68. In Miller, D (ed) Anthropology and the Individual. A Material Culture Perspective. Oxford: Berg.

De Bruijn M, van Dijk R. and Foeken D. (eds), (2001). Mobile Africa: Changing Patterns of Movements in Africa and Beyond. Leiden: Brill.

De Bruijn M. and Van Dijk H. (2003). ‘Changing Population Mobility in West Africa. Fulbe Pastorialists in Central and South Mali’. African Affaires 102:285-307

De Bruijn, M. and van Dijk, R.(2012). The social life of connectivity in Africa. Springer.

De Bruijn, M., (2014). ‘Connecting in mobile communities: an African case study’. Media, Culture & Society, 36(3):319-35.

De Bruijn, M., Nyamnjoh, F., & Angwafo, T. (2010). Mobile Interconnections: Reinterpreting Distance, Relating and Difference in the Cameroonian Grassfields. Journal of African Media Studies. 2(3):267-85.

De Haas, H., Bakewell, O., Castles, S., Jonsson, G., and Vezzoli, S. (2009). Mobility and Human Development. Geneva: UNDP Human Devlopment Reports Research Paper Nr. 1.

Devereaux, L., & Hillman, R. (1995). Fields of vision: Essays in film studies, visual anthropology, and photography. Berkeley: University of California

Dhunpath, R.(2000). ‘Life History Methodology: "Narradigm" Regained’. International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 13(5):543-51.

Dike, A. A. (1982). ‘Urban Migrants and Rural Development’.African Studies Review.25(4):85-94

Dinhopl, A. & Gretzel, U. (2016). Conceptualizing tourist videography. Information Technology & Tou-rism, 15(4):395-410.

Ebrahimpour, F., Esmaeili, M., & Varaei, S. (2018). Photovoice: Method of data collection in qualitative research. Nursing Practice Today, 5(1):216-18.

Edwards, Jason. 2010. Introduction: From the East India Company to the West Indies and Beyond: The World of British Sculpture, c. 1757–1947. Visual Culture in Britain 11 (2): 147-72.

Englund, H.(2002). ‘The Village in the City, the City in the Village: Migrants in Lilongwe’, Journal of Southern African Studies28 (1):137-154 Special Issue: Malawi.

Erickson, F. (2009) Ways of seeing video: Toward a phenomenology of viewing minimally edited footage, in Goldman, R., Pea,R, Barron and Derry Video Research in the learning sciences Routledge: New York: 145-158.

Evans, M.(2010). Primary patriotism, shifting identity: hometown associations in Manyu Division, South-West Cameroon. Africa, 80(3):397-425.

Farstad, M., & Rye, J. F. (2013). Second home owners, locals and their perspectives on rural development. Journal of Rural Studies, 30:41-51.

Fele, G. (2012). The use of video to document tacit participation in an emergency operations centre. Qualitative Research, 12(3):280–303. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111436140 (accessed 01.02.2020)

Findley, S. E.(1997). 'Migration and Family Interactions in Africa', In Adepoju, A, Family, Population and Development in Africa. London and New Jersey: Zed Books

Fisiy, C. and Geschiere, P.(1991). 'Sorcery, Witchcraft and Accumulation: Regional Variations in the South and West Cameroon', Critique of Anthropology. 11(3):251-278.

Fisiy, C. and Geschiere, P.(2001). 'Witchcraft, Development and Paranoia in Cameroon' pp. 226-46 in Moore, H. L. Magical interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa. London: Routledge.

Fisiy, C. and Goheen, M.(1998). 'Power and the Quest for Recognition: Neo-Traditional Titles among the New Elite in Nso',Cameroon'. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute. 68(3): 383-402.

Fleischer A.(2007). Family, Obligations and Migration: The role of Kinship in Cameroon. http://www.demographic-research.org/Volumes/Vol16/13 (Accessed 21 August 2011)

Fonjong, L., Fombe, L., & Sama-Lang, I. (2013). The paradox of gender discrimination in land ownership and women's contribution to poverty reduction in Anglophone Cameroon. GeoJournal, 78(3):575-89.

Fowler, I. and Zeitlyn, D. (eds). (1996).African Ccrossroads: Intersections between History and Anthropology in Cameroon.Oxford: Berghan Book.

Geschiere, P. and Gugler, J.(1998). 'Introduction: The Urban-Rural Connection: Changing Issues of Belonging and Identification'. Journal of International African Institute 68(3):309-19.

Geschiere, P. and Jackson, S.(2006). 'Autochthony and the Crisis of Citizenship: Democratization, Decentralization, and the Politics of Belonging',African Studies Review 49(2):1-7.

Geschiere, P. and Konings, P. (eds). (1993). 'Alternative Modes of Accumulation and their Regional Variations' pp. 9-31. In Itineraires d,accumulation au Cameroun:Pathways to accumulation in Cameroon. Paris: Karthala

Geschiere, P. and Nyamnjoh, F. (1998). 'Witchcraft as an Issue in the "Politics of Belonging": Democratization and Urban Migrants' Involvement with the Home Village'. ,African Studies Review,41(3):69-91.

Geschiere, P. and Nyamnjoh, F. (2000). 'Capitalism and Autochthony: the seesaw of mobility and belonging'. Public Culture 12(2):423-52

Geschiere, P. and Rowlands, M.(1996). 'The Domestication of Modernity: Different Trajectories', Africa: Journal of International African Institute, 66(4):552-54.

Geschiere, P.(2009). The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in African and Europe. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gheasi, M., Nijkamp, P., & Rietveld, P. (2011). Migration and tourist flows. In Tourism economics (pp. 111-126). Physica-Verlag HD.

Gilmartin, M. (2008). Migration, identity and belonging. Geography Compass, 2(6):1837-52.

GOC. (1974). Ordonnance No. 74-1 du juillet 1974 fixant le regime foncier. http://cameroun-foret.com/fr/system/files/18_93_99.pdf (Accessed 05 September 2011).

GOC. 1974. Ordonnance No. 74-2 du juillet 1974 fixant le regime domanial. http://cameroun-foret.com/system/files/18_93_99.pdf (Accessed 05 September 2011).

Godelier, M.(2002). "Some Things You Give, Some Things You Sell but Some Things You Must Keep for Yourselves: What Mauss Did Not Say about Sacred Objects, pp 19-37 InThe Enigma of Gift and Sacrifice. New York: Fordham University Press

Goheen, M.(1996). Men Own the Fields Women Own the Crops: Gender and Power in the Cameroon Grassfields. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Gosden, C. and Marshall, Y. (1999) The cultural biography of objects. World Archaeology 31 (2):169–78.

Greig C.C.(2003). Writing Spaces: Discourses of Architecture, Urbanism, and the Built Environment, 1960-2000 New York: Routledge

Greiner, C., & Sakdapolrak, P. (2013). Rural–urban migration, agrarian change, and the environment in Kenya: a critical review of the literature. Population and Environment, 34(4):524-53.

Grønhaug, R.(1978). "Scale as a Variable in Analysis", pp.78-121. In F. Barth (red) Scale and Social Organisation.Oslo: Universitetsforlatget.

Gubert, F. (2005). Migrant remittances and their impact on development in the home economies: the case of Africa. Migration, remittances and development, 41-63.

Gugler, J.(1971). 'Life in a Dual System: Eastern Nigerians in Town, 1961', Cahiers d'Études Africaines 11 (43):400-20

Gugler, J.(2002). 'The Son of the Hawk Does Not Remain Abroad: The Urban-Rural Connection in Africa',African Studies Review 45(1):21-41.

Gülcan, M. E. L. T. E. M. (2013). Challenges of Coastal Resort Towns Regarding Second Home Developments: The Case of Ayvalık. Basılmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi). Ankara: ODTÜ Şehir ve Bölge Planlama Bölümü Kentsel Tasarım.

Gyau, A., Faith, A. N., Fondjem-Tita, D., Ajaga, N., & Catacutan, D. (2014). Small-holder farmers' access and rights to land: the case of Njombé in the littoral region of Cameroon. Afrika Focus, 27(3).

Hahn, H. P and Weiss, H. (2013): Mobility, Meaning andthe Transformations of Things:

Hall C. M. and Müller D. K., (eds)(2004). Tourism, Mobility, and Second Homes: Between Elite Landscape and Common Ground. Aspects of Tourism (Vol. 15). Clevedon:Channel View Publications

Hall, C. M., & Müller, D. (2018). The Routledge handbook of second home tourism and mobilities. Routledge.

Haugerud, A. (1989). 'Land Tenure and Agrarian Change in Kenya'. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute 59(1):61-90.

Heath C, Hindmarsh J and Luff P (2010) Video in Qualitative Research. London: Sage.

Heath, C. (2011). Embodied action: Video and the analysis of social interaction. Qualitative research, 3, 250-270.

Heath, C., & Hindmarsh, J. (2002). Analysing interaction. Video Ethnography.

Heath, C., Knoblauch, H., & Luff, P. (2000). Technology and social interaction: the emergence of 'workplace studies'. The British journal of sociology, 51(2):299-320.

Hebinck, P. and Lent, P. (eds) (2007). Livelihoods and Landscapes: The People of Guqukaand Koloni and their Resources, Leiden: Brill.

Hiltunen, M. J., & Rehunen, A. (2014). Second home mobility in Finland: Patterns, practices and relations of leisure oriented mobile lifestyle. Fennia-International Journal of Geography, 192(1):1-22.

Hoskins, J. (2006). 'Agency, Biography and Objects', pp. 74–84.Handbook of material culture: London: SAGE.

Huijbens, E. H. (2012). Sustaining a village's social fabric? Sociologia Ruralis, 52(3): 332-52.

Jaakson, R.(1986). Second-home Domestic Tourism. Annals of tourism research, 13, (3):367-91.

Jackson, P. (2000). 'Rematerializing Social and Cultural Geography'. Social & Cultural Geography, 1(1):9-14.

Jansson, B., & Müller, D. K. (2003). Fritidsboende i Kvarken. Umeå. Vasa: Kvarkenrådet.

Jua, N. (2002). 'Small Is Not Always Beautiful: A Case Study of the Njinikom Area Development Association'. Nordic Journal of African Studies 11(3):336-58

Jua, N. (2003). 'Differential Responses to Disappearing Transitional Pathways: Redefining Possibility among Cameroonian Youths'. African Studies Review, 46(2):13-36

Kaberry P. M. (1962). 'Retainers and Royal Households in the Cameroons Grassfields'. Cahiers d'etudes Africaines, 3(10):282-98

Kaltenborn, B. P.(1997a). 'Nature of place attachment: A study among recreation homeowners in Southern Norway'. Leisure Sciences, 19 (3):175-89.

Kaltenborn, B.P.(1997b). 'Recreation homes in natural settings: factors affecting place attachment'. Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift, 51(4):187-98.

Karlin, B.& Johnson, J. (2011). Measuring impact: The importance of evaluation for documentary film campaigns, M/C Journal 14(6):1-9

Kelly, G., & Hosking, K. (2008). Nonpermanent residents, place attachment, and "sea change" communities. Environment and Behavior, 40(4):575-94.

Kietäväinen, A. T., Rinne, J., Paloniemi, R., & Tuulentie, S. (2016). Participation of second home owners and permanent residents in local decision making: the case of a rural village in Finland. Fennia-International Journal of Geography, 194(2):152-67.

Kilic, T., Carletto, C., Davis, B., & Zezza, A. (2007). Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania. Policy Research Working Paper; No. 4366. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Knapp, A.B.&van Dommelen, P. (2010): 'Material connections: mobility, materiality and Mediterranean identities',pp. 1-18.In: van Dommelen, P. and Knapp, A.B. (eds.) Material Connections in the Ancient Mediterranean: Mobility, Materiality and Mediterranean Identities. London:Routledge.

Knoblauch, H.(2012). "Introduction to the special issue of qualitative research: video-analysis and videography." 12(3):251-54.

Knoblauch, H., & Schnettler, B. (2012). Videography: Analysing video data as a 'focused'ethnographic and hermeneutical exercise. Qualitative Research, 12(3):334-56.

Knoblauch, H., Schnettler, B., Raab, J.& Soeffner, H. G. (2006). Video Analysis. Methodology and Methods. Qualitative Audiovisual Data Analysis in Sociology. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang

Knoblauch, H., Tuma, R., & Schnettler, B. (2014). 'Video analysis and videography',pp. 435-49. In The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis,

Kondo, M. C., Rivera, R., & Rullman Jr, S. (2012). Protecting the idyll but not the environment: Second homes, amenity migration and rural exclusion in Washington State. Landscape and urban planning, 106(2):174-182.

Konings, P. (2001). 'Mobility and Exclusion: Conflicts between Autochthons and Allochthons during Political Liberalisation in Cameroon', pp. 169-94. In De Bruijn M, van Dijk R. and Foeken D. (eds), Mobile Africa: Changing Patterns of Movements in Africa and Beyond. Leiden: Brill

Kopytoff, I. (1986).'The cultural biography of things: Commoditization as process', pp. 64–91. In A. Appadurai (ed.) The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Landau, L. B., & Bakewell, O. (2018). Introduction: Forging a study of mobility, integration and belonging in Africa. In Forging African communities (pp. 1-24). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Laoire, C. N. (2007). The 'green green grass of home'? Return migration to rural Ireland. Journal of Rural Studies, 23(3):332-44.

Lentz, C.(2007a). 'Land and the politics of belonging in Africa', pp 37-58. In P. Chabal, U Engel and L. de Haan (eds), African Alternative.Leiden: Brill.

Linz, S. (2011). Photo elicitation: Enhancing learning in the affective domain. The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 42(9), 393-394.

Little, K. (1957). 'The Role of Voluntary Associations in West African Urbanization', American Anthropologist, 59(4):579-96.

Little, K. (1974).Urbanisation as a Social Process. London: Routledge.

Löfgren, O. (1999). On Holiday: a History of Vacationing. Berkeley: University of Berkeley Press.

Luff, P., & Heath, C. (2012). Some 'technical challenges' of video analysis: social actions, objects, material realities and the problems of perspective. Qualitative Research, 12(3):255–79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112436655 (accessed 01.02.2020)

MacDougall, D.(1978). 'Ethnographic Film: Failure and Promise'. Annual Review of Anthropology, 7(1):405-26

MacDougall, D.(2005). The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses. Princeton:Princeton University Press.

Malaquais, D. (1997)'Constructing Power: Architecture, Landscape, and the Design of Space in a Chieftaincy of the Bamileke Highlands'.(Doctoral dissertation). UMI: Columbia University.

Malaquais, D. (2002). Architecture, pouvoir et dissidence au Cameroun. Paris: KARTHALA

Malaquais, D.(1994). 'You are what You Build: Architecture as Identity Among the Bamileke of West Cameroon'. TDSR 5(2):22-36

Martin, S. F. (2004). Women and migration. In Consultative Meeting on "Migration and Mobility and how this movement affects Women", Malmo.

Massey, D. and Jess, P., (1995). 'Places and cultures in an uneven world', pp. 215-39. In A Place in the World.

Mazzucato, V. (2011). Reverse remittances in the migration–development nexus: two-way flows between Ghana and the Netherlands. Population, Space and Place, 17(5):454-68.

McSweeney, K., Richani, N., Pearson, Z., Devine, J., & Wrathall, D. J. (2017). Why do narcos invest in rural land?. Journal of Latin American Geography, 16(2):3-29.

Menjo Baye, F. (2008). Changing land tenure arrangements and access to primary assets under globalization: A case study of two villages in anglophone Cameroon. African Development Review, 20(1):135-62.

Mercer, C., Page, B., & Evans, M. (2009). Unsettling connections: transnational networks, development and African home associations. Global Networks, 9(2):141-61.

Miller, D. (2010). Stuff. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mondada, L. (2012). Video analysis and the temporality of inscriptions within social interaction: the case of architects at work. Qualitative Research, 12(3):304–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112438149 (accessed 01.02.2020)

Monga, Y. (2000). 'Au village: Space, Culture, and Politics in Cameroon', Cahiers d'Études Africaines, 40(160):723-49.

Montreuil, M., & Carnevale, F. A. (2018). Participatory hermeneutic ethnography: a methodological framework for health ethics research with children. Qualitative health research, 28(7):1135-44.

Mooney, M. (2003).'Migrants' Social Ties in the U.S. and Investment in Mexico'. SocialForces, 81(4):1147-70

Moore, S. L. (2012). The experience of hope and aging: a hermeneutic photography study. Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 38(10):28-36.https://doi.org/10.3928/00989134-20120906-93(accessed 01.02.2020)

Muafue-Mbarem, M. (2012). Baba I History and Culture 1394 – 2011(Mimeo)

Mujere, J.(2010). 'Land and the Politics of Belonging in Africa' .Africa: Journal of International African Institute 80(3):497-502.

Muller, D. K., Hall, C. M and Keen, D. (2004). 'Second Home Tourism Impact, Planning and Management. In Hall C. M. and Müller D. K. (eds). Tourism, Mobility, and Second Homes: Between Elite Landscape and Common Ground. Aspects of Tourism(15):15-34 Clevedon:Channel View Publications

Müller, D.K.(1999). 'German Second Home Owners in the Swedish Countryside: On the Internationalization of the Leisure Space'.(Doctoral dissertation). Umeå: Umeå University.

Muller, D.K.(2008). 'Tourism, Mobility and Second Homes' pp. 387-99. In Lew, A.A., Hall C.M. and Williams A.M. (eds). A Comparison to Tourism. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons.

Ndjio, B. (2006). 'Intimate Strangers: Neighbourhood, Autochthony and the Politics of Belonging' pp. 66-86. In Konings P. and Foeken D. (eds), Crisis and Creativity: Exploring the Wealth of the African Neighbourhood. Leiden: Brill

Ndjio, B. (2009). 'Migration, Architecture, and the Transformation of the Landscape in the Bamileke Grassfields of West Cameroon', African Diaspora (2): 73-100.

Nicholson, B. (2004). Migrants as agents of development: Albanian return migrants and micro-enterprise. New patterns of labour migration in Central and Eastern Europe, 94-110

Nkwi, P. N. (1997). 'Rethinking the Role of Elite in Rural Development: A Case Study From Cameroon'. Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 15(1):67-86.

Nkwi, W. G. (2017). Rivers and ports in transport history of Cameroon, 1916-1961. OGIRISI: a New Journal of African Studies, 13(1):200-35.

Nkwi, W.G. (2013) "The Mungo: A River of many Cultures in Cameroon History, c,1884-1969"pp. 95-113. In Pierre Fandio (eds) Popular Culture and Representation in Cameroon, Kansas City, MO: Miraclaire.

Nkwi,W.G. (2011). Kfaang and its technologies: Towards a social history of mobilityin Kom, Cameroon, 1928-1998. Leiden: African Studies Centre.

Nuessel, F., (1997). Review: The Socialness of Things: Essays on the Socio-Semiotics of Objects. Approaches to Semiotics by Riggins, H. R. 1994. The CanadianJournal of Sociology. 22(2):282-285

Nyamnjoh, F. (2002). 'A Child is One Person's only in the Womb': Domestication, Agency and Subjectivity in the Cameroonian Grassfields' pp.111-38. In R. Werbner (ed), Postcolonial subjectivities in Africa, London: Zed Books.

Nyamnjoh, F. (2005). 'Images of Nyongo Amongst Bamenda Grassfielders in White-man Kontri'. Citizen Studies 9(3):241-69.

Nyamnjoh, F. (2009). Married but Available. Mankon Bamenda: Langaa Research and Publishing CIG

Nyamnjoh, F. (2011). 'Cameroonian Bushfalling: Negotiation of Identity and Belonging in Fiction and Ethnography'. American Ethnologist 38(4)701-13

Nyamnjoh, F. and Rowlands, M. (1998). 'Elite Associations and the Politics of Belonging in Cameroon', Journal of International African Institute, 68(3):320-37.

Nyamnjoh, F.(2001). 'Delusions of Development and the Enrichment of Witchcraft Discourses in Cameroon' pp. 28-49. In Moore, H. L. Magical interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa. London: Routledge.

Ojuku, T. (2016). 'Peasant Farmers and Insecurity in the Country Side: Experiences of Market Gardeners in the South West and North West Regions of Cameroon' Global Advanced Research Journal of Social Science Vol. 5(2)39-53

Osili, U. O. (2004). Migrants and housing investments: Theory and evidence from Nigeria. Economic development and cultural change, 52(4):821-49.

Pacione, M. (1979). 'Second Homes on Arran', Norwegian Journal of Geography.33(1):33-38

Page, B., Evans, M. and Mercer, C. (2010). 'Revisiting the Politics of Belonging in Cameroon'. Journal of International African Institute 80(3):345-70.

Paris, C. (2010). Affluence, mobility and second home ownership. London, Routledge.

Pelican, M. (2013). 'International Migration: Virtue or Vice? Perspectives from Cameroon', Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 39(2):237-58

Pelican, M., (2006), Getting Along in the Grassfields: Interethnic Relations and Identity Politics in Northwest Cameroon, PhD Thesis, Martin-Luther Universität, HalleWittenberg.

Peters, P. (2007). Challenges in land tenure and land reform in Africa: An anthropological perspective (No. 141). Center for International Development at Harvard University.

Peters, P. E., & Kambewa, D. (2007). Whose security? Deepening social conflict over 'customary'land in the shadow of land tenure reform in Malawi. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 45(3):447-72.

Pink, S. (2001).Doing Visual Ethnography. London:SAGE.

Pink, S. (2004). 'Applied Visual Anthropology, SocialIntervention, Visual Methodologies and AnthropologyTheory',Visual Anthropology Review 20(1):3-16.

Pink, S. (2006).The Future of Visual Anthropology: Engaging the Senses. London: Routledge.

Pink, S. (2007). Doing visual ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research. 2nd ed. London:SAGE.

Pink, S. (2009). ‘Between experience and scholarship: representing sensory ethnography’ pp. 132-54. In Pink, S. Doing sensory ethnography. London, SAGE.

Plurilocal homes and simultaneity of place attachments. Emotion, Space and Society, 4(4):238-48.

Ralph, D. and Staeheli, L. (2011) 'Home and migration : mobilities, belongings and identities.', Geography Compass, 5 (7):517-30.

Riggins, S. H., (ed) (1994). The Socialness of Things: Essays on the Socio-Semiotics ofObjects.New York: Mouton de Gruyter

Rodrigues, A. I. (2018). The use of visual methods in tourism classes: The case of photo essay, cartoons and videography. Proceedings Book, 57.

Rose, G. (2016).Visual methodologies: an introduction to researching with visual materials. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Rose, G. (2007) Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials. 2nd ed. London, Sage.

Rowlands, M. (1989). ‘The Material Culture of Success: Households and consumption in

Rowlands, M. (1992). ‘Accounting for Personal Success in Bamenda’, pp. 117-34 in Maw, J. and Picton, J. (eds) Concepts of the body/self in Africa. Wien: Afro-Pub.

Rowlands, M. and Warnier, J-P. (1988). ‘Sorcery, Power and the Modern State in Cameroon’ Man, 23(1):118-32

Rowlands, M.(1993). ‘Accumulation and the Cultural Politics of Identity in the Grassfield’, pp. 71-99. In Geschiere, P. and Konings, P. (eds),Itineraire accumulation au Cameroun:Pathways to accumulation in Cameroon. Paris: Karthala

Rowlands, M., & Warnier, J-P. (1996). ‘The magical production of iron in the Cameroon Grassfield’. pp. 512-50. In Arnoldi, M. J., & Hardin, K. L. (Eds.). African material culture. Indiana University Press.

Rowlands, M., & Warnier, J-P. (1996). Magical iron technology in the Cameroon Grassfields. African material culture, 51-72.

Schapendonk, J., van Liempt, I., Schwarz, I., & Steel, G. (2018). Re-routing migration geographies: Migrants, trajectories and mobility regimes. Geoforum.

Schiller, N. G. (2009). A global perspective on migration and development. Social Analysis, 53(3):14-37.

Shifting Contexts of Material Culture through Time and Space. Oxbow Books, Oxford

Shipton, P. and Goheen, M. (1992). ‘Introduction. Understanding African Land-Holding: Power, Wealth, and Meaning’ Africa: Journal of the International African Institute 62(3):307-25

Simmel, G. (1950).The Sociology of Georg Simmel. New York: Free Press.

Simo, JA Mope. (1991). 'Royal Wives in the Ndop Plains'.Canadian Journal of African Studies, 25(3):418-31.

Sjögren, A. (2014). Scrambling for the promised land: land acquisitions and the politics of representation in post-war Acholi, northern Uganda. African Identities, 12(1):62-75.

Smart, A. and Smart, J. (2003). Urbanization and the Global Perspective Author(s): Annual Review of Anthropology, (32):263-85

Smith, D. P., & King, R. (2012). Editorial introduction: re-making migration theory. Population, Space and Place, 18(2):127-33.

Smith, L., & Mazzucato, V. (2009). Constructing homes, building relationships: migrant investments in houses. Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie, 100(5):662-73.

Sontag, S. (1977). On Photography. New York: Penguin.

Sopcak, N., Mayan, M., & Skrypnek, B. J. (2015). Engaging Young Fathers in Research through Photo-Interviewing. The Qualitative Report, 20(11):1871-80. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss11/12 (accessed 01.02.2020)

Souza, M. L. de (2006). 'Social Movements as 'Critical Urban Planning' Agents'. City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action 10(3):327-42

Spalding, A. K. (2013). Lifestyle migration to Bocas del Toro, Panama: Exploring migration strategies and introducing local implications of the search for paradise. International Review of Social Research, 3(1):67-86.

Stedman, R. C. (2006). Understandingplace attachment among second home owners. American behavioral scientist, 50(2):187-205.

Sutton, D. (2006). Cooking skill, the senses, and memory: the fate of practical knowledge. Sensible objects: Colonialism, museums and material culture, 5, 87.

Sutton-Brown, C. A. (2014). Photovoice: A methodological guide. Photography and Culture, 7(2):169-185.

Svensson, T. G. (2008) Knowledge and artifacts: People and objects. Museum Anthropology 31 (2):85–104.

Tacoli, C. (2001). 'Urbanisation and Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa: Changing Patterns and Trends',pp. 141-52 In De Bruijn M, van Dijk R. and Foeken D. (eds), Mobile Africa: Changing Patterns of Movements in Africa and Beyond. Leiden: Brill.

Tacoli, C. and Mabala, R.. (2010). 'Exploring mobility and migration in the context of rural—urban linkages: why gender and generation matter'. Environment and Urbanization, 22(2):389-95.

Taylor, J. E., Arango J., Hugo G., Kouaouci A., Massey D. S. and Pellegrino A. (1996). 'International Migration and Community Development'. Population Index (62):397-418

Tegomoh E. N. (2007). "Cultural Entrepreneurs, Sacred Objects and the Living Museums of Africa", pp. 228-234. In Knell, S.J., Macleod, S. and Watson, S. (eds.) Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed. London. Routledge.

Tegomoh E. N.(2013). ‘Being a Foreigner in One’s Country: Mobility, Land Acquisition and Investments in Cameroon’, pp. 221-35. In Evers S.; Seagle C.; Krijtenburg F. (eds). Africa for Sale. Leiden: Brill.

Tegomoh E. N.(2017).‘External Elites, Land Usage and the Process of Urbanisation in Cameroon: An Anthropological Perspective’. African Journal of Social Sciences (8)2:79-91

Trager, L. (1998). ‘Home-Town Linkages and Local Development in South-Western Nigeria Whose Agenda? What Impact? Africa: Journal of International African Institute 68(3): 360-82.

Urry, J., & Rojek, C. (eds.). (1997). Touring cultures: transformations of travel and theory. London: Taylor & Francis.

USAID. (2011). “Land Tenure and Property Rights Portal-Cameroon Country Profile” http://usaidlandtenure.net/usaidltprproducts/country-profiles/cameroon (Accessed 05 September 2011).

van den Bersselaar, D. (2005). ‘Imagining Home: Migration and the Igbo Village in Colonial Nigeria’. The Journal of African History 46(1):51-73

Van Meeteren, M., & Pereira, S. (2013). The differential role of social networks. Strategies and routes in Brazilian migration to Portugal and the Netherlands (No. 66).

Vepsäläinen, M., & Pitkänen, K. (2010). Second home countryside. Representations of the rural in Finnish popular discourses. Journal of Rural Studies, 26(2):194-204.

Vickerstaff, S. 2007, ‘I was just the boy around the place’: What made apprenticeships successful?Journal of Vocational Education & Training. 59(3):331-47. 10.1080/13636820701520369.

Waite, L., & Cook, J. 2011, Belonging among diasporic African communities in the UK:

Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. Health Education & Behavior, 24(3):369-87. https://doi.org/10.1177/109019819702400309 (accessed 01.02.2020)

Wang, C.C., 2006. Youth participation in photovoice as a strategy for community change. Journal of community practice, 14(1-2):147-161.

Wanyeki, L. M. (2003). Women and Land in Africa: Culture, Religion and Realizing Women’s Rights. New York, Zed Books Ltd.

Warnier J-P and Fowler I. (1979). A Nineteenth-Century Ruhr in Central Africa. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute. 49(4):329-51

Warnier, J-P. (1980). Trade guns in the Grassfields of Cameroon. Paideuma, 79-92.

Warnier, J-P. (1985). Echanges, développement et hiérarchies dan le Bamenda précolonial (Cameroun). Stuttgart: Steiner.

Warnier, J-P. (2006). ‘The transfer of young people's working ethos from the Grassfields to the Atlantic Coast’ Social Anthropology. 14(1):93-98

Webb, M. (2019). ‘Understanding the 5 Stages of Indie Film Production’https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:MlQrulkiKOMJ:https:

//indiefilmhustle.com/5-stages-indie-film production/+&cd=11&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=cm (accessed 31.01.2020)

Weiner, A.B.(1992). Inalienable possessions: the paradox of keeping-while giving. California: University of California Press.

Williams, A. M., & Hall, C. M. (2002). Tourism, migration, circulation and mobility. pp. 1-52. In Tourism and migration. Springer, Dordrecht.

Wirth, L. (1938). 'Urbanismas a Way of Life' American Journal of Sociology, 44(1):1-24

Yahirun, J. J. (2014). Take me "Home": Return migration among Germany's older immigrants. International Migration, 52(4):231-54.

Zittoun, T. (2015). Social relations and the use of symbolic resources in learning and development. In Social relations in human and societal development (pp. 134-145). London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Appendix: House Owners and their Various Quarters

Name	Geographical Location of Interview	Added related information (i.e. occupation	Mobile Itinerary	Residence
VEMNGANG QUARTER				
Fue Nkemshi IV, Joli Melo Forchu	Baba 1 and Bamenda	Fon of Baba I and Business	Bamenda, Cameroon-Nigeria, Yaounde, Europe, Dubai, Cotonou	Baba 1
Mohfessame Amido	Kumba	Business	Ndop, Cameroon-Nigeria, Douala	Kumba
Moh Alfred Melo	Yaounde	Business Contractor	Ndop, Nigeria, Wum, Kumba	Yaounde
Moh Charles Melo	Yaounde	Business	Limbe, Douala, Kumba, USA	Yaounde
Mohnkong Sidiki	Ndop	Business Contractor	Yaounde	Ndop
Mohfessame Mamah	Kumba	Business	Ndop, Douala, Kumba, Cameroon-Nigeria	Kumba
Chu Emmanuel	Baba 1	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba 1
Mohfessame Smella	Baba 1	Teacher	Wabane	Baba 1
Mohfessame Pepila	Ndop	Business	Ndop, Cameroon-Nigeria	Ndop
Mohnkong Ousmanou	Douala	Business	Ndop	Douala
Moh Sobi Melo	Douala	Council Worker of Douala	Ndop	Douala
MBOGHOMBAM QUARTER				
Moh Henry Melo	Limbe	Custom Officer	Ndop, South Africa	Limbe

Tita Mammah Nganjo	Bamenda and Yaounde	Superintendant of Prison	Mbengwi, Nkambe, Yaounde, Tel Aviv, Ndop, Europe, Bamenda	Yaounde
Mohmbamembieh Charles	Douala	Business	Ndop, Douala, Europe	Douala
Moh Tanghongho Slyvester	Yaounde and Baba I	Inspector of Treasury – Director General	Ndop, Kumba, Bamenda, Yaounde, Bamenda	Yaounde
Moh Tanghongho David	Bamenda	Head of FEICOM – Northwest Region	Ebolowo, Kumbo, Ndop, Yaounde	Bamenda
Moh Mohtanjah Melo	Baba 1	Business	Ndop, Yaounde, Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba 1
Nyambih Cliff	Kumbo	Teacher	Yaounde	Kumbo
Tita George	Douala	Logistic Operator	Buea, Kumbo, Bali, Yaounde, Douala, Europe	Douala
Tita Niah	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Mohkwimueh Mbemi	Kumba	Farmer and Business	Douala	Etam
Tita Madu	Kumaba	Farmer and Business	Douala	Etam
Yemih Musa	Douala		Baba I	Douala
Tita Tapenyi	Douala		Baba I	Douala
MBAWAT QUARTER				
Moh Ndzemofue Shipeh	Yauonde	Business	Ndop	Yauonde
Mohkongeyuh Tahnuh	Douala	Business	Ndop	Douala
Sundzeh Smella	Baba 1	Business	Douala	Baba 1
MBANKA QUARTER				
Yoyo Emmanuel	Ndop and Baba I	Ex-Parliamentarian, Farmer and Business Contractor	Ashing Kom, Ombe, Yaounde, Nwa, Ekok, Bamenda	Ndop

Pangmashi Roland	Yaounde	Parliamentarian	Ndop, Yaounde	Yaounde
Tita Shifue Richard	Yaounde	Business	Ndop, Foumban	Yaounde
Sopse Mohtanjah	Kutaba	Business	Ndop, Bamenda	Kutaba
Colonel Yogho	Yaounde	Military Officer	Bamenda, Limbe	Yaounde
Muandzeh Standley	Douala	Prison Warder	Ndop, Buea	Douala
NGOHMESENGONG QUARTER				
Mohmbo'oh	USA	Engineer	Bamenda	USA
Mohndzemban ghangha Abdou	Bamenda	Business	Baba I	Bamend a
Alhadji Inusa	Kumba	Business	Mecca, Bafang	Kumba
Dr. Idrisou	Baba I	Medical Doctor	Yaounde, Jakiri, Congo DR,	Congo DR
METCHATCHA QUARTER				
Nkipang Christian	Yaounde	Business	Ndop, Bamenda, Douala, Holland	Yaounde
Tita Julius	Baba I	Business	Bamenda	Baba I
Tita Wutirma	Bamenda	Business	Ombe, Cameroon-Nigeria, Douala, Europe	Bamend a
Moh Forchu Joseph	Kumba	Police Officer	Bamenda	Kumba
Ibrahim Mbare	Kumba	Business	Nkongsamba, Baba I, Ndop, Kumba	Kumba
Mohmuentoh Daniel	Bamenda	Retired DO	Baba I	Bamend a
MEYA QUARTER				
Tita Mammah Nganjo	Yaounde		Bamenda	Yaounde
Moh Charles Melo	Yaounde	Business	Limbe, Douala, Kumba, USA	Yaounde
Tita Yenwoh	Ndop	Teacher (Delegate of	Ndop, Bambili, Yaounde, France, Fontem, Batibo,	Ndop

		Secondary Education)	Baba I, Bamenda	
Kunkeh Mbare	Muyuka	Farmer and Business	Ndop, Muyenge	Muyuka
Tita Njemeh	Kumba	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria, China	Kumba
Anastasia	Baba I	Farmer and Trader	Ndop, Bamenda	Baba I
KONYAR QUARTER				
Tita Manyah	Ndop		Baba I	Ndop
KUNGOH QUARTER				
Suifue Salifu Leboh	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba I
Moh Njimefeleh	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Shipuh Valentine	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria, Bamenda, Douala	Baba I
MBAGHANGHA QUARTER				
Mohmbue	Bamenda	Business	Bamenda	Yaounde
Tita Simon Mohmbue	Douala	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Douala
Mohmbue Clovis	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria, Douala	Baba I
Shiwoh Zuchorou	Kutaba	Business	Baba I	Kutaba
Chuwoh Gowon	Baba I	Farmer	Ndop	Baba I
Mohtem	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Nah Lassa	Baba I	Farmer	Ndop, Douala	Baba I
Nah Mammah	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Useni Merue	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I, Douala, Yaounde	Baba I
Mohnkongho Dahiruh	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I, Lolodorf	Baba I
Tita Muenjih	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Tah Chueh Yakubu	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Nah Doda	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I

Nah Ndzefuetayi	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
KENGANG QUARTER				
Suifue Valentine	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba I
Suifue Oumarou	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba I
Mohmelafah	Douala	Business	Yaounde, Nsamalima, Douala, Bafoussam	Douala
Genesis	Baba I	Farmer	Douala, Bafoussam, Yaounde	Baba I
Alfred	Kumba	Electrical Engineer	Ndop, Bamenda, Douala, Buea, Kumba	Kumba
Eric Ndrioh	Muyuka	Farmer and Business	Baba I	Munyenge
MBAKWA QUARTER				
Muetcha Nicholas	Yaounde	Business	Douala, Ndop	Yaounde
Tita Tamueh Usmanou	Douala	Business	Bafoussam	Douala
Salifu Tamueh Ndashi	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Tamogho Mohpwah	Baba I	Retired Police Officer	Kumba	Baba I
Benard Lamyah Ghambom	Baba I	Teacher	Wum, Nkambe	Baba I
Richard Ghambom	Wum	Teacher	Ndop	Wum
Michael Ndzenchknteh	Baba I	Business	Kumbo, Ndu, Douala	Baba I
Nwana Kenneth Ndashi	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Tita Koloh Mammah	Baba I	Farmer	Baba I	Baba I
Sabiatou Mohfessame	Baba I	Farmer and Trader	Foumbot	Baba I

Tita Mohtanjah Nwana	Douala	Business	Bafia	Douala
MEMBEH QUARTER				
Tita Tareh	Douala	Business	Ebolowa, Yaounde, Sangmalima	Douala
Swebu Triyah	Douala	Business	Bamenda, Kumbo, Foumban, Douala, Ebolowa, Kribi	Douala
MBWIKAM QUARTER				
Moh Ndzengiengang	Baba I	Business	Baba I, Cameroon-Nigeria, Douala, Bafoussam	Baba I
Julius Moh Ndzemongwi	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Tari Tamboh	Muyuka	Farmer and Business	Douala, Kumbo	Muyuka
Tita Jum	Bamenda	Business	Baba I	Bamenda
QUEBESSI QUARTER				
Mallama Mallama	Baba I	Farmer	Ndop, Nigeria, Bamenda, Baba I,	Baba I
Suifue Pius Mallama	Baba I	Farmer and Business	Bamenda, Baba I, Kumba, Douala, Ekok	Baba I
Mohmbameleh Tanteh Dominique	Bamenda	Retired DO	Bamenda, Mamfe	Bamenda
James Nangu	Yaounde	Computer Engineer	Bamenda, Bambili, Britain	Yaounde
Mbwang « D. O »	Kumba	Farmer	Konye	Baba I
Mohndzekongang Hamidou	Douala	Herbalist and Business	Bamenda, Kribi	Douala
Mohndzekongang Usmanou	Douala	Business	Ndop	Douala
Muafuenjikam	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Malam Lassa	Douala	Business	Ndop, Bamenda	Douala
Ndzemamue	Baba I	Business and	Bamenda, Yaounde	Baba I

Mbare		Farmer		
Yaye Ndzemamue	Douala	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Douala
Abdou Nkono	Baba I	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Baba I
Muafue Njikam Iliasu	Douala	Business	Cameroon-Nigeria	Douala
Fuekang Amadou	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Yakubu Nyembeh	Douala	Business	Baba I	Douala
Moh Christopher	Ndop	Business	Yaounde, Bamenda	Ndop
Tita Sule	Mbouda	Herbalist and Business	Baba I	Mbouda
NDUMENKWI QUARTER				
Captain Nkipang	Bafoussam	Military Officer	Bafoussam, Yaounde, Ndop	Bafoussam

*Cameroon-Nigeria trade route actually had several routes used by those engaged in it through the North West and South West Regions (by land and sea).