



An Interdisciplinary Research Project

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Meaningful Interdisciplinarity: Challenges and Opportunities for Water Research

Paper:

**“Accumulation by dispossession:
communities and water privatisation in Cameroon”**

Ben Page
St Peter's College and Mansfield College
University of Oxford

**School of Geography and the Environment
University of Oxford
April 24-25, 2002**

PRINWASS is supported by the European Commission under the Fifth Framework Programme 1998-2002 and contributes to the implementation of the Horizontal Programme “Confirming the International Role of Community Research”. The views and information in this document are the sole responsibility of the research consortium in charge of the project and do not represent the opinion of the European Commission. The Commission is not responsible for any use that might be made of data or other information appearing therein.

Ben Page is a development geographer with particular interests in West Africa especially Cameroon and Nigeria. His research is based on histories of water management, water privatisation and community development. He is also interested in economic geography, particularly in relation to water, governance, participation and citizenship in the European Union. He is currently a College Lecturer at St Peter's College and Mansfield College. He gained his BA (1993) and DPhil (2000) at Oxford and his MSc at Cranfield University (1994). He lives in Witney, Oxfordshire, and is active in local politics. Among his recent publications are: "Taking the Strain - the ergonomics of water carrying", Waterlines, 1996, 14(3), pp. 29-31; "The Ergonomics of Water Carrying", Proceedings of the 2nd Western Africa Conference on Water and the Environment, Accra, Ghana, July 16th-19th, 1996; (with C. Katz, L. Berg, K. Morin, K. K. Simonson, K. Bakker, E. Swyngedouw, G. Pratt, and G. Uribe-Ortega, G. "Lost and found in the posts: addressing critical human geography", Environment and Planning D; Society and Space, 1998, 16(3), pp. 257-278; "Urban agriculture in Cameroon: an anti-politics machine in the making?", Geoforum, 2001, 33(1), pp. 41-54.

For enquiries on this paper, contact Ben Page: bpage@geog.ucl.ac.uk

Abstract

The paper asks the question: what happens to secondary urban centers when a national water corporation is privatized? It is argued that one response is to scale up community management and to hand secondary water supplies over to local not-for-profit institutions. Whilst this shift has many merits, it also has considerable problems in terms of capital investment in infrastructure over the medium to long term. It is argued that it is necessary to see this scaling-up process as part of a wider process of liberalization and functional to privatization. The paper traces the history of the initial growth and recent attempted privatization of the national water supplier in Cameroon. It also outlines various community attempts to break away from the national water supplier. The relationship between the two histories is seen in the government's changing attitude to community management.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization of the water industry is running hand in hand with the privatization of government-run water supplies in Africa, Asia and South America (Hall, 1999). Notwithstanding occasional failures the rapid pace and the large scale of water privatizations across the non-west is astonishing. In West Africa the privatization of water supplies has already influenced parts of Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal (Bayliss, 2001, Bayliss and Hall 2000). This paper is particularly concerned with recent events in Cameroon. However, whereas most studies have examined the consequences of privatization by looking at towns and communities where operation has been handed over to the private sector, the focus here is on the consequences of privatization for towns where operation is not handed over to a private operator. I ask the question :What happens to secondary towns after the privatization of a national water supply corporation ? It is argued that in such circumstances there is a rapid rise in community ownership of infrastructure, but that whilst this has many positive consequences it has to be considered critically in terms of the consequences for long term economic sustainability and service quality. It also has to be understood as part of the privatization process

One of the most important and largely unexamined consequences of the desire to privatize water supplies in West Africa has been that community groups are being actively encouraged to take on the water management of small and medium sized towns (Boydell 1996; Dennis 1998; Parry 1996). In some places this shift entails elaborate development projects which aim to support a shift of ownership from state to community. In some places the shift is encouraged by changing the legal position and allowing communities to reappropriate infrastructure if they wish to do so. Whilst this

shift appeals to the communitarian instincts of many within the development industry it is better understood as part of the cherry-picking process that has so often accompanied privatization elsewhere. Until recently, many national state water corporations encompassed a large number of different water supply systems that varied enormously in size. Many of the smaller systems were consistently loss making and were often blamed by state water managers for economic problems in the water sector at a national scale. When the management of these small regional water supplies is transferred from the state to the local community, the national water corporation is divested of an economic burden. This makes the corporations more attractive to foreign investors, thus more amenable to privatization. State and communities are effectively, if not knowingly, cooperating to reduce the large number of unprofitable water supplies in national water corporations in order to make them more attractive to potential private-sector operators.

In some places, such as Ghana, this scaling-up of community management is overt. In Cameroon, it is both more covert and more half-hearted. A pro-market faction within the government would like to assist in the privatization of the water corporation by encouraging community management, but many powerful interest groups oppose them. The communities and NGOs involved have no interest in the privatization process, and do not see their actions as connected to it. This is a case of some sectors of the government exploiting pre-existing communitarian sentiments for their own economic interests. The communities are motivated by dissatisfaction with the existing service provided by the state and prefer to take control of urban service provision locally. The popular belief in parts of Cameroon in the advantages of community management draws on ideas of “traditional communalism” and a history of community

involvement in urban water management that dates from the early 1950s. The new community managers are encouraged and financially supported by international NGOs who also view community management of water supplies as preferable to state management at this scale.

In most of the literature on water provision in West Africa, the management of water supplies by state corporations and the management of water supplies by communities and NGOs are usually portrayed as quite separate activities. The aim here is to draw out the connections. The former sphere revolves around cities, state-run institutions, sophisticated technology, and considerable capital investment. In these urban settings, water is meant to be treated as an economic good and sold by volume to consumers. The development of water supplies is the realm of NGOs, simple technology, community participation, and aid money in the form of grants. Until recently, these strategies were limited to rural areas. Here water is treated as a basic need and a social service; maintenance costs are covered according to annual requirements by community contributions. However, in Cameroon in the late 1990s, the rhetorically opposed worlds of ‘market-led development’ on the one hand and ‘appropriate development’ on the other have effectively—though not deliberately—acted in concert. Considered at the national scale, these local community-managed water supplies supported by international NGOs and aid capital are being put to work to make Cameroon a more attractive investment environment for international water companies. The two worlds of local community development and state-led national development of water supplies are linked by the process of privatization, even if, in the case of communities, this cooperation is unspoken and unintentional.

The Form and Chronology of Water Privatization in Cameroon

As in many other African states, Cameroon experienced a period of considerable political and economic upheaval in the early 1990s (Konings 1996). The government's money supply was cut off as it came under pressure from international lending agencies to introduce political and economic reforms. Oil revenues and French support forestalled immediate concessions, but as a result debt spiraled. Recruitment to the civil service was halted and eventually the government ran out of money to pay its employees. The failure to pay salaries disturbed the 25-year period of stability that had characterized Cameroonian political life. Campaigns began for the return of multiparty elections, freedom of the press, less centralized government, and secession for the two anglophone provinces. Local opposition to the government was overt and violent, and the government's response was no less forceful. New political parties coalesced and gained influence. At the end of the decade, however, the same political party that has governed since independence remains in power and many of the key individuals are also still influential. The government has not only survived largely unscathed, but political opposition has declined (Ngwane 1997). Given the government's new international credibility as supporter of a free press and instigator of democratic reforms, its authority has even been enhanced.

The crisis of the late 1980's forced Cameroon down the road of structural adjustment. The introduction of private management to the parastatal sector has been one of the central planks of economic reform. In general, however, the government of Cameroon has been unenthusiastic about the privatization of any part of the parastatal sector (Atangana 1997; van der Walle 1991). This sector—comprised of a broad range

of national corporations—is widely regarded as a mechanism for supplying political favors and key to preserving political stability (Bayart 1979, 1996).

The transformation of the national water corporation—the Société Nationale des Eaux du Cameroun (SNEC)—which is still incomplete, is usually justified as a means of generating new sources of capital for infrastructure investment. As elsewhere in West Africa, this type of privatization does not constitute a total divestment of fixed capital (as in the British water privatizations), but involves leasing the operation and management of particular networks (akin to the French system of *affermage*). The particular balance of responsibilities and sources of income are variable, but it seems likely that the government of Cameroon will remain the owner of the infrastructure and will lease it to a private operator, which will gather what rents it can for the duration of the 20 year lease (Franceys 1997; Lee 1996). The relationship between state and private operator is expressed in a series of negotiated contracts. So, for example, in this case the government is insisting on a collaborative venture that incorporates local businesses rather than the wholesale transfer of management to an international water company. Reciprocally, the companies with whom they are negotiating deals want to make sure that SNEC’s existing debts remain the responsibility of the government.

The privatization of SNEC was first discussed in the late 1980s, but only really took off in 1998, at the urging of the World Bank and IMF.ⁱ In its thirty-year history, SNEC has had only one general manager, Obouh Fegue, and the existing management is very hostile to change. In May 1998, the invitation for pre-qualification to tender for the concession was published. The government specified that it was looking for “an internationally known operator” which had been carrying out similar work for at least three years. Sixteen months later, in September 1999, the short list was published. In

May 2000 the Cameroon government struck a hasty deal with Suez-Lyonnaise, which was the only company that eventually made a bid. The privatization of SNEC was one of the World Bank/IMF's structural adjustment targets and a precondition, for receiving debt relief. Cameroon's progress towards its reform targets was assessed three days after the deal with Ondeo was announced (Bayliss and Hall, 2000). In October 2000 Cameroon was granted \$2 billion in debt relief under the enhanced heavily indebted poor countries initiative (HIPC).

Suez –Lyonnaise initially offered around 800 million FCFA (\$1.08 million) to buy a 51% stake in SNEC but were only prepared to operate six out of the 107 urban water systems run by the national corporation. These big six represented about 78% of SNEC's annual turnover.ⁱⁱ Subsequently negotiations between the Cameroonian government and Suez-Lyonnaise continued because the Cameroonians regarded the offer as derisory in relation to the value and potential of SNEC. There was also considerable hostility to the proposal to separate the six profitable water systems from the other loss making urban supplies. Cameroonian business associations demanded that the offer from Suez-Lyonnaise should be disqualified and that bids should be reopened. In December 2000 the deal with Suez-Lyonnaise was unsuccessfully challenged in the Supreme Court in Cameroon. By January 2001 Suez-Lyonnaise had raised the value of their bid, but it was still limited to the largest six urban centers and in addition they demanded the dismissal of Obouh Fegue, the managing director of SNEC.ⁱⁱⁱ In February 2001, a further deal with Suez-Lyonnaise was announced. The offer now stands at 2.6 billion FCFA (\$3.5 million) to operate the same six centers with compensation for the other urban centers of 20 million FCFA per year paid through a National Water Development Fund. This amounts to around \$250 per year for each of the smaller water

supplies.^{iv} Whilst, Suez-Lyonnaise clearly remains the key international player their status and the final outcome of this privatization process is unclear as the government continues to pursue the politics of non-reform (van de Walle, 1991). The Cameroon government is described by some analysts as a “sorcerer state” (Mbembe 1992; Nyamnjoh 1999b) that likes to keep its audience in the dark for as long as possible before sweeping away the magician’s cloak to reveal its decisions. But in this case it is hard to resist the conclusion that their main aim is just to delay the privatization for as long as possible.

The Position of Small and Medium Towns in the Privatization Process

The nation-building and modernizing projects of the postwar era drove forward the construction of numerous autonomous water supplies in regional urban centers. In Cameroon, for example, the government ruled that every settlement that functioned as the headquarters of a Division (the smallest geographical unit of the Ministry of Territorial Administration) ought to have a water supply built and operated by the state. At the same time, it increased the number of divisions as a political strategy for rewarding different regions for loyalty to central government (Nkwi and Nyamnjoh 1998; Nyamnjoh 1999b). The result has been a proliferation of small, remote water supplies within the portfolio of the state water corporation. SNEC has always maintained that it is the obligation to operate these secondary centers that has made it impossible to operate the corporation profitably. Many of the new divisional headquarters that were to be supplied with water had been deliberately sited to act as growth poles in areas where there was little infrastructure, in some cases, towns with populations of fewer than 10,000. These secondary centers have expanded relatively

slowly, and the proportion of the population who can afford to bring water into their homes is relatively low. It was assumed that the population would grow sufficiently to cover costs, or if not, the state would be able to subsidize these expensive systems in the name of rural development. The high running costs of these systems, compounded by the expense of transporting bulky chemicals and spare parts, would probably have ensured that they operated at a loss regardless of the quality of management. In 1990, SNEC operated nine main centers and 101 secondary centers.^v According to SNEC employees, at the beginning of the 1990s, only four of all their water systems were profitable. Following pre-privatization restructuring, SNEC now claims that the largest 20 systems are profitable.^{vi} Even so, these small-town systems are not a commercially attractive prospect.

The international water companies, therefore, want the national water corporation to be broken up prior to privatization. If national networks are divided in this way, then the existing opportunities for cross-subsidy within the sector are removed and the government will have to find the capital to operate and renovate these increasingly inadequate secondary networks from other sources. As a result, the Cameroon government (like others across West Africa) is exploring alternative strategies for transforming the management of water in small towns. Some people propose that the government should oblige the foreign companies to assume management of some loss-making systems as part of the deal granting access to profitable ones. Others hope to attract a specialist private operator dedicated to the management of small-town supplies. The government would offer a different lease to cover these towns. However, here we are primarily concerned with a third option: the transfer of responsibilities from the state to local government or local communities. In

this option, the institutions and practices more often associated with rural water development would be scaled up and take a more prominent role as privatization progresses.

THE EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

During the period of national social unrest in the early 1990s, local communities in three medium-sized towns expelled the state water corporations by force. Kumbo, Bali, and Tombel all had populations between 20,000 and 40,000. All three towns are united in that they are in anglophone Cameroon, but in many other ways what is interesting is how different they are. In Kumbo and Bali, the protests that drove the SNEC workers out were led by youths and students, in Tombel by women. They claimed that the water supply systems belonged to the community and had been appropriated by the state in the 1980's and used by the state as a means to extract money from local people.

In Kumbo, the 1991 protests were organized by university students specifically to mobilize the population against the governing party. Following an initial protest in which four Kumbo people were killed by government forces, the students were able to capitalize on popular resentment toward the water corporation in order to challenge state authority. S.N.E.C. was unpopular because it had introduced direct payment for water users in the mid-1980's. Meters were introduced at public taps and at private domestic connections. Monthly bills were delivered to local governments for public taps and directly to households for private connections. Failure to pay was rapidly followed by disconnection. The failure of the council to pay the corporation meant that the number of working public taps had decreased steadily. In Bali, where protests occurred

in 1994, pro- and antigovernment factions united to take advantage of existing social unrest to drive the water corporation out of town.

In Tombel, there was no direct challenge to government as part of the opposition to SNEC. The anger here was caused by the attempt to introduce direct payment at 'public' tapstands. The women of the town responded by marching to the water corporation office and performing traditional rites that terrified the staff sufficiently to force them to flee.

THE CHANGING GOVERNMENT POLICY TOWARD COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

When these towns broke away from SNEC, the government was initially hostile. Troops were sent in and ministers dispatched to put pressure on traditional rulers and the general public. The new community water committees were summoned to the offices of the provincial governors, and were even called to Yaoundé, the capital. In spite of all the pressure, the communities refused to allow SNEC's return. They claimed SNEC's service was poor, the domestic bills too high, and it had closed down public taps.

However, within a few years, an accommodation was reached. Individual civil servants resident in these towns, and even some government offices, began to pay their domestic water bills to the community water committees. Local administrators began to work with the committees, and recognized them as *de facto* if not *de jure* operators. Meanwhile, it was made clear that the community water committees would have to earn

their legal status. In all three towns, the Divisional Officer (the principal government administrator and representative) allowed the communities to operate the water supply only on the condition that they did so effectively. The criteria were never specifically set out, but failures in water quality, the regularity of supply, or the speed of repairs would force the D.O. to dismiss the committee and restore SNEC's authority.^{vii}

This change in attitude stemmed from an active campaign by local community leaders to depoliticize the water committees. Within a couple of years, the political threat posed by community-led water supplies had been neutralized. In Kumbo, where SNEC was originally attacked because it symbolized government, community leaders moved swiftly to distance the new community-based management from an overtly antigovernment stance. Water supply, they said, was too important to be a political issue, and anyone who tried to make it one would be punished by traditional means. In 1995, the students who had originally controlled the water supply were replaced by older men who were more closely allied with local elite groups and, through them, to the governing party. The community water authority in Kumbo (KWA) is making a bid for legality through the 1992 Act of Associations, by allying with the nominally nonpolitical non-accountable undemocratic hometown association rather than through allegiance to the local Council, which is controlled by the opposition party (Barkan 1991; Eyoh 1998; Geschiere and Gugler 1998). Community-based organizations are no longer a threat to the government's sense of its own authority if they are allied to the local "development association." In Kumbo, there is even a proposal that the D.O., the government's main representative will join the governing board of the community water authority.

The 1998 Water Resources Law opened the way for this informal relationship between state and community water managers to become a legal and contractual one. One implication of the Act is that local and community management of water supplies could be expanded. This change is only possible because of the influence of the development associations in ensuring that the political threat of such autonomy has been defused. As commentators have observed, this effectively ends SNEC's national monopoly on providing water in favor of decentralized institutions. Sources close to the Minister of Mines, Water Resources, and Power say the bill "will provide a chance for the National Water Authority S.N.E.C. to withdraw from rural areas where their work is generally non-profitable."^{viii} However, although the bill has been adopted by parliament, it has not necessarily always been applied by local administrators when dealing with specific cases. For example, when the opposition MP for Kom, a town in the Northwest Province, appealed to the government to transfer management from SNEC to the local council, he was accused of inciting unrest and threatening public peace.^{ix} Similar calls have been made by opposition local councillors in Limbe, which were also dismissed by the administration as "rabble rousing."^x The link between the political opposition and anti-SNEC sentiment may only be part of their populist rhetoric, but it makes it harder for the government to tolerate such transfers of responsibility. The portrayal of the Cameroon government as a coordinated and united body is clearly a simplification.

Community Motivations and the History of Community Development

The government's interest in transferring responsibility for small-town water supplies onto communities has an economic logic. However, what is the reciprocal motivation for the communities in taking on this responsibility? Primarily the communities were driven by dissatisfaction with the state operator, but their action in taking control was also contingent upon the specific history of water management in these towns. In some parts of Cameroon, there is a widespread preference for community-managed water supplies and a latent belief in the effectiveness of the community as a guardian of civic infrastructure. The impulse toward community management in the early 1990s is symptomatic of a much more widespread desire for local control that must be understood in historical terms.

The interest in local control is underpinned by a belief that "communal action" is an authentic part of local tradition and culture. Since prehistoric times, it is claimed, young men have had to work without pay for the welfare of the community. Originally, the explanation goes, this work involved either tasks that required large numbers of people, such as laying trees across rivers for bridges, or tasks associated with ceremony and chieftaincy, such as rethatching buildings in the chief's compound. These stories of "traditional" communal activities are placed seamlessly within a history that also includes forced road building in the 19th and early 20th century, participation in colonial agricultural projects, and the construction of schools, clinics, and water supplies. For people in this part of Cameroon, cooperation is integral to their traditional culture.

This is a powerful ideology, but there is a problem. What is presumed to drive community management in anglophone Cameroon does not seem to exist in francophone Cameroon. This suggests that the impulse toward community management

has its roots in the colonial period rather than some older African “tradition.” This is not to argue that the claim for a tradition of cooperation is wrong or inaccurate, but that it is only part of the explanation for the current interest in community development in some parts of Cameroon. There is a convincing case to be made which dates the invention of “community development” in anglophone Cameroon to between 1950 and 1952, when “self-help” became the main British strategy for implementation of the new welfare-oriented colonial development policy.

As a strategy for mobilizing communities to undertake small-scale development projects (in both urban and rural settings), Community Development was enormously successful. In no sector was this more true than water supply, although the scale of work only took off after independence. But one of the lasting legacies has been a sense of community autonomy. An inevitable outcome of consistently persuading people that “God helps those who help themselves” because the state does not have the money to help them is going to be doubt about the abilities of government compared to those of the immediate community. The subsequent history of community participation after independence records the formal introduction of the Community Development Department as part of the Ministry of Agriculture. This department has deployed self-help or community-participation methods on rural water supply projects for 35 years while working with a Swiss NGO, SATA/Helvetas (Zimmerman 1981; Helvetas 1989). During this time, they have supervised the construction of over 100 village and small-town water supplies in the two anglophone provinces. SATA/Helvetas has been the main conduit for international aid into rural water supplies in Cameroon for over three decades and remains highly influential. Although the Community Development Department does exist in francophone Cameroon, it has never been as influential or

effective as in anglophone Cameroon. Thus, it is argued that contemporary community management in parts of Cameroon is a legacy of British colonial development policy as well as the effective manipulation of an ideology of “tradition.”

CONCLUSIONS

The instrumental outcome of this effective collusion between community water managers and the state is important for three reasons.

First, it represents a carving up of the territory into different institutional zones of influence and a de facto legitimization of a hierarchy of different standards of water supply. In the largest cities, international water companies will operate state-owned water supplies, adhering to the international guidelines on drinking-water quality and pursuing the technological advances in both water delivery and revenue collection that their experience and access to loan capital can provide. In the remainder of the country, community groups and local councils will operate the existing inadequate water systems. Evidence from Cameroon suggests that in order to cover operation and maintenance costs, these supplies depend on unpaid community labor and a reduction in the standards of water treatment. These secondary centers will rely on internal revenue generation and foreign aid to expand or replace the infrastructure.

Second, this narrative illustrates the fluid meaning of citizenship in Cameroon, as the obligations of the state become diffused. This story concurs with those analysts who regard claims of the existence of any “national project” in Cameroon with skepticism. The equation between government service delivery and the citizens’ responsibility to pay taxes has underpinned urban water management for fifty years, but if the government retreats from this most basic of fields, that equation becomes

unbalanced. The voluntary withdrawal of large parts of the infrastructure from state management is indicative of a widespread disillusionment with the state and, indeed, with any kind of bid for “Cameroonianness” in favor of more localized identities. However too often critical discussions about water privatization are focused on the crucial but narrow politics of class struggle. Cases like this suggest we need also to think about a more territorial geo-politics. Is water privatization another nail in the coffin of building a Cameroonian nation?

Finally, this process raises questions about the romantic and rather naive characterizations of “community participation” that remain the orthodoxy among many international NGOs. Privatisation only becomes a possibility when governments have found some way of managing those water supplies which are of no interest to private capital. Community management not only solves this problem but does so in a way which appeals to a different strand of international development practitioners. Insofar as the efforts of appropriate development appear to be serving, among other interests, the international water companies, this case study challenges that analysis of the development industry, which sees some development strategies and institutions as distinct from, and superior to, others. The caricature of development as “Oxfam good, World Bank bad” glosses over the relationships between these apparently distinct development institutions .

References

- Atangana M (1997) *The Privatisation of State-Owned Corporations in Cameroon: Evolution and Prospects*. Yaoundé: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- Barkan P (1991) Hometown Voluntary Associations.” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 29:457–80
- Bayart J-F (1979) *L'état au Cameroun*. Paris: Presses de la Fondation National de la Sciences Politiques
- Bayart J-F (1996). *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. London: Longman
- Bayliss K and Hall D (2000) *Privatisation of water and energy in Africa*. PSIRU Report, <http://www.psiru.org> Accessed 13 September
- Bayliss K (2001) *Water privatisation in Africa: lessons from three case studies*. PSIRU Report, <http://www.psiru.org> Accessed 13 September
- Bond P and Bakker K (2001) *Report-back on the 'Blue Planet' Conference in Vancouver*. Municipal Service Project, Special Report Series, <http://qsilver.queensu.ca/~mspadmin/> Accessed 13 September
- Boydell R (1996) Scaling Up Rural Water and Sanitation Projects. In Pickford J (ed.) *Reaching the Unreached: Challenges for the 21st century, Proceedings of the 22nd WEDC Conference*. Loughborough: WEDC
- Cowan M and Shenton R (1996) *Doctrines of Development*. London: Routledge

DeLancey M and Mokeba H (1990) *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cameroon*.

London: Scarecrow Press

Dennis C (1998) Privatizing Ghana's Water Sector: Interested Parties and Stakeholders.

Waterlines 16:20–22

Eyoh D (1998) Through the Prism of a Local Tragedy: Political Liberalisation,

Regionalism and Elite Struggles for Power in Cameroon. *Africa* 68:338–59

Franceys R (1997) *Private Sector Participation in the Water and Sanitation Sector*.

London: DFID

Frank W (1999) *British Development Policy, 1945–1960*. Paper presented at RGS-IBG

annual meeting (Leicester)

Geschiere P and J Gugler (1998) The Urban-Rural Connection: Changing Issues of

Belonging and Identification. *Africa* 68:309–19

Goubert J-P (1986) *The Conquest of Water: The Advent of Health in the Industrial Age*.

Cambridge: Polity Press

Hall D (1999) *The water multi-nationals*. PSIRU Report, <http://www.psiru.org>

Accessed 13 September

Helvetas (1989) *Evaluation of Water Supply Systems Constructed from 1964 to 1989*.

Bamenda: Helvetas

- Konings P (1996) The Post-colonial State and Economic and Political Reforms in Cameroon. In Jilberto F and Mommen A (eds.) *Liberalization in the Developing World*. London: Routledge.
- Lee T (1996) Alternatives for Private Sector Participation in the Provision of Water Services. *Natural Resources Forum* 20:333–41.
- Lobina E (2000) *Cochabamba–water war*. PSIRU Report, <http://www.psiru.org>
Accessed 13 September
- Mamdani M (1996) *Citizen and Subject*. London: James Currey
- Marvin S and Laurie N (1999) An emerging logic of urban water management, Cochabamba, Boliva. *Urban Studies* 36(2): 341-357
- Mbembe A (1992) Provisional Notes on the Postcolony. *Africa* 62:3–37
- Ngwane G (1997) Cameroon: Nation at a Crossroads. *West Africa*: 1678–80
- Nkwi P and Nyamnjoh F (eds.) (1998) *Regional Balance and National Integration in Cameroon*. Yaoundé: ICASSERT
- Nyamnjoh F (1999a) Press Cartoons and Politics in Cameroon. *International Journal of Comic Art* 1:171–90
- Nyamnjoh F (1999b) A Country United by Ethnic Ambition and Difference. *African Affairs* 98:101–18

- Parry J (1996) Community Management of Small Town Water Supplies. In Pickford J (ed.) *Reaching the Unreached: Challenges for the 21st Century, Proceedings of the 22nd WEDC Conference*. Loughborough: WEDC
- Porter A and Stockwell A (1987) *British Imperial Policy and Decolonization, 1938–64*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Rahnema M and Bawtree V (eds.) (1997) *The Post-Development Reader*. London: Zed
- Ruiters G and Bond P (1999) Contradictions in municipal transformation from apartheid to democracy: the battle over local water privatization in South Africa. *Working Papers in Local Governance and Democracy* 99(1):69-79
- Sachs W (ed.) (1992) *The Development Dictionary*. London: Zed
- van de Walle N (1991) The Politics of Non-reform in Cameroon. In *African Governance in the 1990s: Objectives, Resources, Constraints*. Atlanta, GA: Emory University
- Zimmerman M (1981) *1961–1980: 20 Years of Co-operation, Community Development Department and SATA/Helvetas in the United Republic of Cameroon*. Bamenda: Helvetas

Notes

ⁱ Among the more significant contributions to the discussion on privatization in Cameroon are special issues of the French-language newspapers *Dikolo* (no. 203, February 1996) and *L'Expression* (no. 2, February 1997). A more general survey about privatization in Cameroon was sponsored and published by the Friedrich Ebert foundation in Yaoundé (see Atangana 1997). The best information on privatization, however, was found on the *Isaha'a Boh* website (www.boh.org), a daily Cameroonian news bulletin from Yaoundé. Sadly, this website ceased operating late in 1999.

ⁱⁱ AFP, May 19th 2000; Tamtam du village (<http://wagne.net/>), August 31st 2000;

ⁱⁱⁱ Le Messenger January 10th 2001

^{iv} Tamtam du village (<http://wagne.net/>), February 26th 2001

^v *Isaha'a Boh Cameroon Bulletin*, no. 135 (April, 1998)

^{vi} Interview with North-west Provincial SNEC chief of service for production and distribution (Njang, Enow), Bamenda, April 10, 1999.

^{vii} Interview with Dr. Ganyonga III, Fon of Bali-Nyonga, April 1, 1999.

^{viii} *Isaha'a Boh Cameroon Bulletin*, no. 102 (March 1998).

^{ix} *Isaha'a Boh Cameroon Bulletin*, no. 263 (October 1998).

^x *The Herald*, February 10, 1999.