

LOCKED IN ISOMORPHIC CHANGE? CAMEROON PATH DEPENDENCY TO ITS HISTORICAL THRESHOLDS

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Abstract

This paper makes the case for the causal relation between national historical thresholds, isomorphic change, path dependency and the policy transfer of governance systems in a developing country emerging from a long “western domination”. The study used the isomorphic change to trace back the trajectory of administrative reform in a developing country like Cameroon. The theory of path dependency has provided the needed tools to decipher the hidden dynamics of administrative models loosely adopted through the lenses of the multi-level account of policy transfer. Finally, the systematic analysis of the German protectorate from 1884 to 1916, the France and British mandate and trusteeship from 1916 to 1945 and from 1945 to 1956/57 respectively, laid out the policy transfer’s dynamics and the lock-in frame binding the Cameroonian administrative reform into an atypical furrow of largely ritualistic/ceremonial changes. The said changes are hiding long-lasting conformity to mores of neo-patrimonialism, strategic conformity to international standards and the increasing returns’ outcomes ascribing the country into a path dependent “trap” since. By looking for causal assessment of historical sequences on today’s administrative outcomes in Cameroon, associated with a systematic and contextualised comparison of similar and contrasting cases, this research is conducted from the standpoint of comparative historical analysis. The core finding is that after several decades, Cameroon has adopted trajectories that remain fundamentally disconnected from domestic cultural and anthropological realities, producing hybrid, decoupled systems of governance. The study concludes that the historical cornerstones of Cameroon have promoted and served as fertile ground for the isomorphic reproduction and policy transfer of administrative models from former resident foreign countries (Germany, Great Britain and France).

Keywords: *Isomorphic Change, Path Dependency, Policy Transfer, Cameroon, New Public Management.*

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İZOMORFİK DEĞİŞİME HAPSOLMAK MI? KAMERUN'UN TARİHSEL EŞİKLERİNE OLAN PATİKA BAĞIMLILIĞI

Öz

Bu çalışma, uzun bir “batı egemenliğinden” çıkan gelişmekte olan bir ülkedeki ulusal tarihsel eşikler, izomorfik değişim, patika bağımlılığı ve yönetim sistemlerinde siyasa transferi arasındaki nedensel ilişkiyi ortaya koymaktadır. Kamerun gibi gelişmekte olan bir ülkede idari reformun yörüngesini geriye doğru izlemek için izomorfik değişimi kullanmaktadır. Patika bağımlılığı kuramı, siyasa transferinin çok düzeyli açıklamasının mercikleri aracılığıyla gevşek bir şekilde benimsenen idari modellerin gizli dinamiklerini deşifre etmek için gerekli araçları sağlamaktadır. 1884'ten 1916'ya kadar Alman himayesi, 1916'dan 1945'e ve 1945'ten 1956/57'ye kadar sırasıyla Fransız ve İngiliz mandası ve vesayetinin ardışık analizi ile siyasa ödünç alma dinamiklerini ve Kamerun idari reformunun büyük ölçüde ritüelistik / törensel değişikliklerin sıradan olmayan bir çizgi içine bağlayan hapsolmanın çerçevesini ortaya koymaktadır. Söz konusu değişiklikler, neo-patrimonyalizm adetlerine uzun süreli uyumu, uluslararası standartlara stratejik uyumu ve ülkeyi o zamandan beri patika bağımlı bir 'tuzağa' sürükleyen artan sonuçlarını gizlemektedir. Bu çalışma, karşılaştırmalı tarihsel analiz açısından, benzer ve zıt vakaların sistematik ve bağlamsal olarak karşılaştırılmasıyla ilişkili olarak Kamerun'da bugünün idari sonuçlarındaki tarihsel ardışıklıkların nedensel değerlendirmesine odaklanmaktadır. Onlarca yıl sonra Kamerun'un yerel kültürel ve antropolojik gerçeklerden temelde kopuk kalan yörüngeleri benimsediği ve melez, ayrık yönetim sistemleri ürettiği temel bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Çalışma, Kamerun'un tarihsel köşe taşlarının, eski yerleşik yabancı ülkelerden (Almanya, İngiltere ve Fransa) idari modellerin izomorfik yeniden üretimi ve siyasa transferi için verimli bir zemin oluşturduğu ve teşvik ettiği sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İzomorfik Değişim, Patika Bağımlılığı, Siyasa Transferi, Kamerun, Yeni Kamu Yönetimi.

Introduction

Institutions building, governance engineering and policy making are barely built on a vacuum. Previous formal and informal institutions, domestic, present, and past conjunctures and historical sequences offer fertile grounds to build on. Rose and Davies (1994) refer to it as the “inheritance in public policy”. Pollitt (2008) shortly advanced that “history matters” while Tilley (2006) sustains the ability of what happen before, to affect what happens later. North Douglass’ sweeping analysis of institutions change skilfully depicts the transversal role of the past in any social dynamic. North (1990, p. vii) argues persuasively that “history matters. It matters not just because we can learn from the past, but because the present and the future are connected to the past by the continuity of a society’s institutions. Today’s and tomorrow’s choices are shaped by the past. And the past can only be made intelligible as a story of institutional evolution”. The weight of past and historical sequence innerves

all the segments of social and political actions included governance engineering.

Of course, governance and administrative systems have been since the core elements in the running and construction of any polity regardless of the level of state development or prosperity. In advanced countries, the process of building up such systems, even slightly inspired from abroad, remains an internal process grounded on local needs, past achievements, and particular approaches to solving policy problems. The mechanism of lesson drawing depicts better this case (Rose, 1991,1993). It refers to cases where the administrative structure is built on a rationalistic transfer from foreign experiences and practices. The importing country, though a well-informed actor, after a proper appraisal of its own political and policy domestic environment draws on policy solutions likely to overcome popular dissatisfaction and safeguard the legitimacy of policymakers (Rose, 2005, p. 2). Increasing the credit for politicians to run for elections and obtain the favours of the electors. A commonly neglected variable, the historical sequence on no account is generally included in the analysis though of particular interest for any relevant analysis of the policy transfer. The account of policy transfer which is going to be used in the study is the multi-lateral one. Its main features are concerned with understanding the outcomes of policy transfer through combining micro, macro, and meso levels of inquiry (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996, 2000; Evans & Davies, 1999; Common, 2001; Evans, 2004).

The figure is traditionally different in developing countries or countries emerging from conflicts or any other social or economic imbalances, associated with a colonial long record. These countries have weaknesses in the main components of policy capacity (analytical, managerial, and political) at the individual, organisational and systemic levels (Migdal, 1988; Turner & Hulme, 1997; Amin Saikal, 2016). It is by no means straightforward to note that the policy capacity framework which we are talking about is the one developed by Xun Wu, Howlett, M. and Ramesh, M. (2015) which is based on the association of three competencies (analytical, managerial and political) at three levels (individual, organisational and systemic) to obtain a sum of nine components of policy capacity. A necessary balance among these components is crucial to building a policy capacity likely to engender successful policies.

For many, the solutions are the recourse to solutions already implemented in the former colonial country to fix domestic problems. Bugnicourt (1973) used the concept of “administrative mimesis” to paint the picture offer by former colonised African countries attuned to look toward their “white ancestors” to pick up host of tools as well as institutions up for grabs. To others, the sole successful route available consist of getting the support of influential donor states and intergovernmental financial organisations likely to provide financial and technical supports in dire need. Such support is generally conditioned by a range of local reforms and

involvement in international or global processes of governance which induced sometimes a full-fledged U-turn in the way public affairs are conducted, at least officially in instruments like public official discourse and the commitment to international governance mechanisms (Haggard et al., 1992). Among the conditionalities, political, economic, and financial reforms are central and remain of critical importance. The weight of conditionalities and the low ability of the recipient country to overtly opposed them, with the long-lasting scares of historical sequences, propel the negotiated policy transfer at the core of the process. Evans (2004, p. 3) defines the negotiated policy transfer as “a process in which governments are compelled by influential donor countries, global financial institutions, supra-national institutions, international organizations or transnational corporations, to introduce policy change to secure grants, loans or other forms of inward investment”. It is the form of transfer commonly used by developing countries and the Cameroon is one of them.

The country of course, due to the configuration of power in international relations expressed in the process of colonisation, later with the League of Nations’ trusteeship and United Nations’ mandate, associated with domestic economic downturns, has been involved in a huge and multiform of isomorphic process of policy change that is seldomly perceived and analysed.

Moreover, the impact of these different historical jolts, on the development process of the country has never been scholarly explored. In this article we set out to fill this gap and we have chosen to look upon administrative systems and mechanisms regarding their central role in countries’ march toward prosperity. The policy transfer process we acknowledge occurs in all the domains of social actions and it is becoming a pervasive leading mode of analysis widely used throughout the other modes of policy development and policy dynamics (Capano, 2009).

Policy transfer is associated with the history of human-organised societies. Aristotle (2009) was already claiming that it is rational to learn from positive and negative administrative lessons elsewhere. He puts it “First if any individual points have been well made by previous writers, let us try to follow them up; then from the collection of the constitutions we must examine what sort of thing preserves and what sort of things destroy cities and particular constitutions, and for what reasons some are well administered and other are not” (2009, p. 203).

Nevertheless, the scholarly analysis of policy transfer is quite recent. Far from enumerating the growing number of researchers in the field, what has already been largely made elsewhere, we rather stick to the definition given by Dolowitz and Marsh which is explicit enough. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 5) defined policy transfer as a process in which “knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system”. Evans (2004,

p. 11) distinguishes three forms of policy transfer regarding the extent to which the recipient country can act freely. The voluntary transfer, the direct coercive transfer, and the indirect coercive or negotiated transfer mentioned before. Voluntary policy transfer refers to the traditional rational form of policy transfer. The direct form less used today is the case of a country imposing policy change on another one regardless of the willingness of its people and leaders. This form of policy transfer as used during the colonial era is rare today. The last form, known as the negotiated policy transfer, involved the recipient country in a policy transfer process pushed by more powerful actors with an unreservedly defined agenda. Even if the recipient country is allowed to be part of the policy transfer network and to take part in the negotiation process leading to policy transfer, it is a simple formality because of its inability to influence the negotiation process consistently. Nonetheless, in the implementation phase, although it exists a monitoring committee headed by experts from the powerful side, the recipient country regains some strings and could achieve to denature and instrumentalise the implementation process, making it sound well and in line with their proper internal goals. Meyer and Rowan (1977, p. 356) termed this move “decoupling”. To Nils Brunsson it refers to “hypocrisy” or “double talk”. Brunsson (1989, p. 7) claims that:

“The separation of the formal and informal organizations, the rituals and the double talk are often important and even necessary ingredients in any modern organization that want to act according to current demand for rationality, decency, and fairness, while also efficiently generating coordinated action”.

The case of Cameroon is different. A deeper analysis of its historical trajectory could favour a better understanding of its relation to policy transfer from a historical perspective. The historical perspective will give ways to introduce isomorphic change tradition in the scene and by doing so, perceive the impact that path dependence nurturing produces in the field of administrative change in Cameroon.

1. A PANORAMIC HISTORICAL PRESENTATION OF CAMEROON

The state of Cameroon is situated in Central Africa, with a population of around twenty-seven million people. The country got its independence on 1st of January 1960 for its ex-French mandate. On 1st of October 1961, Southern Cameroon which was administered by the British joined the ex-French mandate to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon. This state structuration lasted until 1972 with the creation of the United Republic of Cameroon which ended with the Republic of Cameroon in 1984. From 1884 to 1916, the country was a territory under German protectorate. A protective agreement was signed between the then Kamerun coastal Kings (Douala Manga Bell, Manga Akwa) and for the German side Gustave Nachtigal who had been appointed by Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck to represent and defend

the German interests in many places near the Western African coast including Kamerun.

It is noteworthy to note that from the outset, the territory of Cameroon has never been per se a colony of any foreign power. Before the signing on 12 July 1884 of the Germano-Douala Treaty establishing the German protectorate over “Kamerun” (the name of the territory at the time) this territory was made up of an aggregate of ethnic groups, each led by a traditional authority and maintaining friendly or conflictual relations with neighbouring ethnic groups, depending on the case. The Protectorate gave the German authorities the task of defending this territory against British attempts to colonise it. The Douala chiefs, who lived in the coastal part of the country near the Atlantic Ocean, were aware of this threat and chose protection rather than colonisation. However, the German authorities went beyond this “mandate” and eventually administered the country as a colony. This provoked the protests from local chiefs, who did not hesitate to denounce this abuse, and many of them ended up being arrested and executed after makeshift trials. In contrast to the majority of Western literature, which seems to us biased on this point, we will use the concept of “territory” rather than “colony” in this article. Given the strong ontological charge of terms in politics (Connelly, 1974). (see Le Vine, 1964; Ngoh, 1979, 1987, 1996; Anyangwe, 2008, 2010).

The German protectorate, to be more specific, lasted only five (5) years, from 1905 to 1914, due to the preparatory phase between the signing of the German-Douala treaty establishing the protectorate on 12 July 1884 and the outbreak of the First World War, which jeopardised the continuation of the protectorate in Cameroon. Nchoji Nkwi (1989, p. 10) underlines that:

“The proclamation of Cameroon as a German protectorate took place in July 1884, but German effective control of the hinterlands did not come until years later. For years, the Germans remained on the coast having contacts with the rest of the county through middlemen of native stock. The hinterlands remained virtually undisturbed for many years... From 1889 until 1915 when the German were defeated, effective control was only achieved through diplomacy and ‘punitive expeditions’”.

After several years of hesitation due to the German Chancellor's unwillingness to administer the protectorate of Cameroon, he finally designed a light administration built around a Governor of the territory, the government council and local administrative officials. From a functional point of view, the German protectorate's guiding principles were to administer, secure and exploit the territory of Cameroon. To carry out this complex mission, the German representatives relied on the traditional authorities to carry out activities such as collecting taxes. These were the beginnings of the indirect administration system also called the “indirect rule” that was to be intensified by the British authorities a few years later. The Indirect rule is a model for the

administration of territories belonging adopted by Western countries which consists of relying on local traditional structures and institutions to administer the territories. In Cameroon in particular, the German and later the British authorities relied on local traditional chiefs to administer their territory on the basis of ancestral customs. The co-ordination principle of the time consisted of limiting this power local issues and to the condition that local customs did not conflict with foreign norms.

In addition, large agricultural plantations were created to meet the needs of the metropolis for agricultural produces. Immense farms of cocoa, plantain, and palm oil were created and the local workforce, usually recruited by force was obliged to work under rude labour conditions without real wages. The goal of the German protectorate from Germans was not to develop the territory. But simply to exploit the immense natural resources and meet the needs of the German empire.

It is obvious that the first experience of the country with the foreign administration was deeply far from constructive and beneficial. It produces an extravert administration oriented toward the preservation of foreign interests, rather than the search for local full economic, social et human improvement. This structure of power produced a hybrid administration divided between preserving the interests of the foreign power and pursuing the interests of the community. The local administrators working with the Germans were taught to defend the foreign interests and their evaluation was based on the extent to which they were able to advance the empire's goals. This dilemma worked in favour of the interests of the foreign power, which had all the material and human resources at its disposal to make its aspirations prevail. This configuration of public action was accentuated during the periods of mandate and trusteeship.

At the end of World War one, the country was officially placed by the Society of the Nations under the Mandate of France and Britain between 1922-1945. Each state, France and Britain administered a specific part of the country. Later, with the inception of the United Nations (UN), the Mandate was replaced by the Trusteeship of the same states from 1946 to 1960. The UN gives France and Britain "the mission" to prepare the country to become an independent international actor. It was not a colonisation per se, but simply a territory administered under the guidance of League of Nations and later the UN aiming at making it fully independent. The administrative regimes applied in each part of the country were proper to France and Britain's administrative schemes on their territories in other parts of Africa.

France inherited a territory of around 431.845 km² with a population of two (2) million people. In the French part of the country known as the Republic of Cameroon; the "direct administration rule" was applied. Contrary to the indirect administration model in force in the British territories, the direct administration system is a territorial administration model in which the nationals of the metropolis, in this case France, are in charge of the

administration of the territory in accordance with the laws and regulations enacted by France. The approach is assimilative and unifying, and aims to use the administrative machinery set up in the territories to turn the local populations into citizens of the metropolis (citizenship which it would not be superfluous to describe as second-class).

The metropole assigns an official to administer the territory on the ground of rules edited in France making Cameroon the place of implementation. Even if the local people were officially slightly involved in the decision-making process through their representatives, the foreign authority was given significant power in ruling the local affairs. The regime of the mandate was profoundly different from the one of trusteeship in terms of the extent of rights and autonomy allowed to local citizens.

The mandate in the French part of the country was characterized by a clear-cut distinction between local and French residents. The “indigénat” to name the model regulating public rights and duties of locals was adopted in the process of the conquest of Algeria. It was a range of decrees and regulations editing discriminatory measures aimed to preserve the colonial order and the privileges of the foreign administrators. Forced labour in the fields belonging to the French administrators, the payment of high taxes by the indigenous people and the application of inhumane repressive measures against these populations constituted the essence of the mandate regime. The administrative, institutional, and social organisation was aimed at preserving the domination of the metropole. This situation improved through the replacement of the Society of the Nations with the United Nations, which for its part is emanating from the founding treaty signed on 26th of June 1945 in San Francisco, which promotes equality and the emancipation of people from all forms of domination. Thus, on 13rd of December 1946, Cameroon changed from a mandate to a trusteeship regime.

The trusteeship aims were not solely a total emancipation of the people, but above all its goal was to guide them towards independence. In line with the requirements of trusteeship, France will deeply reform its approach to its territory. As a result, it abolished the “code de l'indigénat” on 30th of April 1946 and imported from metropolitan France laws of 1881 on freedom of assembly and the laws of 1901 on freedom of association. Subsequently, trade union freedom was established, as well as the emergence of numerous political parties, including French political parties, which found a field of expansion in the territory of Cameroon. On the administrative level, the Local Administration Frameworks was adopted to supplant the colonial administration. The later however retained a significant presence of executives in the territory due to the alleged lack of experience of the local public staff. Political life regenerated through a new dynamic emanating from the emergence of elective assemblies; first the Representative Assembly of Cameroon (ARCAM) and the Territorial Assembly of Cameroon (ATCAM).

The ARCAM was Created the 22nd of December 1946 to defend the interest of local citizens. It was replaced on the 30th of March 1952 by the ATCAM.

The partial autonomy of the territory was achieved in 1957 with the adoption in France of the “Loi-Cadre ” which granted internal autonomy to the territory of Cameroon. It accelerated the country's march towards national and international independence on the 1st of January 1960. The process was different for Western Cameroon under the British administration.

Britain was the first Western power to establish economic and religious links with the people of coastal Cameroon. However, the delay of the British Crown to endorse this fact allowed the signing of the German protectorate in 1884. It was until 1916, with the German defeat at the end of the First World War, that Great Britain was granted 1/5 of Cameroon's territory, i.e., 43,000 km² for 800,000 inhabitants, while the remaining 4/5 went to France. The British authorities divided the territory of Cameroon into two parts. The Northern Cameroon will be attached to Nigeria and was administered entirely as Nigeria which justifies its strong economic development, infrastructure and living facilities while the Southern Cameroon will be later attached to the Republic of Cameroon after a referendum and will be administered from Nigeria. Indirect rules mainly based on the authority of local traditional leaders was applied. However, the management of the latter had to be in harmony with British norms and values. On the other hand, matters of mining and international cooperation were the responsibility of the British authority.

Later with the trusteeship, the British authorities resolutely set in motion the process of emancipation of the country. In the beginning, some traditional authorities sat in the legislative bodies established in Nigeria. Finally, on 1st of June 1961, Northern Cameroon became independent, while on 1st of October 1961, Southern Cameroon, which had been independent since the 1st of January 1960, opted for joining the Republic of Cameroon. The same referendum will result in the attachment of North Cameroon to Nigeria.

From this panoramic historical analysis of Cameroonian trajectory toward independence, it appears a permanent path; the former territory has frequently imported from Germany, France, or Britain and even Nigeria, the mechanisms and techniques to run public affairs. The next lines assess this policy transfer process through isomorphic forms during the protectorate, the mandate and finally the trusteeship.

2. THE PREFORMATION PHASE OF THE PATH DEPENDENCY IN THE FIELD OF ISOMORPHIC ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES IN CAMEROON

The different Western countries involved in the pre-independence epoch of the country had to import from their homeland, or their territories situated in other areas of Africa or overseas, administrative, and public goods provisions techniques aimed to secure their position in Cameroon while at the

same time safeguarding their material interests. We will not adopt an exhaustive approach in making such analysis, it is beyond the scope of this research. But we will select critical facts, significant historical sequences, and relevant administrative systems, likely to illustrate the best policy transfer, isomorphism changes and the effects of increasing returns phenomenon in the administrative reform trajectory of Cameroon. The analysis will expand from the centralise and indirect rule in the German protectorate, to the indirect rule in British Cameroon without neglecting the French “indigénat” status and direct rule.

2.1. The Centralised and Indirect Rule in the German Protectorate

Germany inherited the administration of Cameroon after a protective agreement with coastal local traditional chiefs as previously noted. The terms of the agreement were to protect the chiefs and their subjects against the other colonial states and by so doing help develop the whole country including the hinterland. An appropriate administrative system was required to meet this target. Inside the country before German explorers, the traditional rules of each community were applied in their defined boundaries. There was not a common and national administrative system. Traditional authorities based on the traditional rules were ruling. There, the local traditional authorities called lamidé were ruling Lamidats while traditional chiefs were ruling villages. They all ably achieve to instore their power on their constituents. Germany did not choose and build up an original regulatory system in line with the peculiarities of the country. A system already applied in other territories occupied by the German empire was exported to Cameroon. The indirect rule system was adopted in the country. Geschiere (1993) depicts the core role attributed to chieftaincy by the different western country in Cameroon at that time. He emphasised that “to all colonial rulers, the French and the Germans as well as the British, it soon became a matter of policy to rule the new subjects through indigenous chiefs” (1993, p. 151). In that administrative architecture, local people were not granted the same right as foreigners and traditional authorities were recognised considerable competencies in ruling their communities. Locals were granted a lower social status in the society. They were the workforce in the big farm, mineral exploitations and infrastructure works. They were even forced to work without a proper salary because it was considered a national duty to serve in such areas. German authorities used to come down heavily on local people for not paying their taxes. A small distinction should be made between the structural and functional organization of the German administration in the territory of Cameroon.

Related to the structural organization of the territory, there was a Governor of the “Colony”, a Council of Government, and local administrative staffs (Dzomo-Silinou, 1998, pp.127-129). The Governor was appointed by the German chancellor and oversaw the administration of the territory. He was assisted by the Council of Government; a deliberative organ deemed to assist

the governor on all the matters related to the territory. The administrative functions were occupied by German civilians and the military. They oversaw specific areas of the territory to instore the authority of Germany and ensure that people are aware of the protectorate in the hinterland.

The functional organisation refers to the daily running of the area. It should be noted that the central aim of the German administration was to administer the territory and get from it the necessary resources to sustain the economic growth of the German empire. So, the German administration was oriented toward an increase of the agricultural and natural resources production in Kamerun to transfer them to Germany. “Kamerun” is the name given by the German authorities to their protectorate over Cameroon, established by the signature of the German-Douala treaty on 12 July 1884. With the end of the protectorate following the German defeat in the First World War, the territory was renamed “Cameroun” for the part under French administration, and “Cameroon” for the part under British administration. The picture was slightly different from the French perspective.

2.2. The Direct Rule System Under the French Mandate and Trusteeship

At the end of World War one, Germany lost its territories in Africa and Cameroon was one of the first ones to be lost. A decree of 14th of May 1916 transferred it to France and England, two countries that have long coveted this territory. France obtains the meridional part of the Country and England the western part.

France adopted the direct and assimilative form of the administrative system on its possessions. The system was a centralised one intricately linked to the hierarchical chain from the metropole to the territory. To a less extent, the Western administrators subtly use the local authorities to settle their authority. Fundamentally they were the sole ones in charge of administering the area. Quite no space was given to the local culture of administration. The administrative system implemented by France during the mandate in Cameroon is a copycat of what is going on in the French colonies. The mode of administration was exported from the other French territories around the world because France was assimilating Cameroon into its other colonies around the continent although it was a squarely violation of the terms of the Mandate given to him by the League of Nations to administer the country and make it an independent one. This organisation prescribed ruling countries to prepare African areas towards international independence.

The importation of the mode of administration is perceptible at three levels. First and foremost, the administrative organisation obeys to a mode of division of the territory into regions. Each region is headed by an administrative authority hierarchically subject to the Commissioner of the Republic who is a French personality appointed by the President of the Republic to administer the territory. The Commissioner is attached to the

French Minister of the Colonies. Secondly, subordinate administrative tasks are entrusted to the local population, while the representatives of the metropolis head all administrative services. As an example, 1800 agents assisted 729 French civil servants and soldiers (Chazelas, 1931, pp. 127-129). Finally, the regime of freedoms in place was the *indigénat*. The indigenous regime, commonly referred to as the “code de l’indigénat”, was a special penal and administrative regime reserved for indigenous subjects in France's colonial territories in the 19th and 20th centuries, applied differently depending on the territory and the period: sequestration of property, which could be private or collective; collective fines; the internment of individuals, which could go as far as house arrest or detention; forty-one special offences (reduced to thirty-three in 1890) such as refusing to inform officials; not having a travel permit to move around; acts of disorder in the market; refusing to transport officials in certain regions; refusing to comply with summonses from tax inspectors. The introduction of a colonial tax (or Arab tax) which - especially in Algeria - helped to finance the various institutions, maintain the settlers' standard of living and the various infrastructures built for them (houses, roads, schools, hospitals, airports, etc.).

By and large, this inhumane regime did not grant any real status to the local populations. They were subjected to caning, forced labour, payment of high taxes and an ostentatious distinction between citizens of the metropole and the local population. *Indigénat* was inherited from the Algerian War, where France faced Algerian populations.

The advent of the UN through the signing of the Charter in San Francisco on the 26th of June 1945 gave a completely different impetus to the fate of the territories previously under the mandate of the League of Nations. The new requirements of respect for human and people's rights led to the institution of the trusteeship regime. The later recognised more rights to the indigenous populations and prescribed the implementation of several economic and industrial development projects. The opening up of political freedoms amid the creation of political parties. The setting up of legislative structures called upon to bring the voices of the populations into the decision-making sphere. Concerning Cameroon, France launched a vast economic development plan over a period of ten years, from 1946 to 1956, which took the form of infrastructure projects in the areas of health, urban planning, education, mining, energy, and communication (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1976). This movement was to continue in the administrative field with the emergence of a body of local civil servants like that of the metropolis, i.e., recruitment on the basis of general and sectoral conditions and training in specific schools.

In Cameroon under the British administration, the administrative trajectory is different and the upcoming assessment of the policy transfer in that area will bring enough clues.

2.3. The Policy Transfer Process Under British Administration

The British administration of West Cameroon went as well through the two stages of mandate and trusteeship. Inasmuch as any physical occupation of a territory require an appropriate system of governance with which locals could comply willingly, British authorities adopted the system of Indirect Rule. It was applied in the whole British possessions in Africa. In Cameroon in Particular, the mandate and the trusteeship were conducted through the implementation of the indirect rule system in the territory.

Under the British mandate, the major fact related to policy transfer was the importation from Nigeria by the British authorities of the indirect rule system. The attachment of the northern part of British Cameroon to Nigeria helps this part to develop faster than the other part and to benefit from particular attention from the British authorities. Strong and lasting links developed between this part of Cameroon and the Nigeria. It later eases the legal integration to the northern part of British Cameroon to Nigeria. The instruction to rule British Cameroon on the “Principles of Indirect Administration” was issued to the 1919 Milner-Simon Agreement (Chilver, 1963, p. 104). It consisted of entrusting the local traditional authorities with the closely ruling of local people living in the territory. Traditional chiefs, grounded on the ancestral power inherited from their forebears were granted enough space to directly rule their locals. The mere condition to comply with by Cameroonian traditional leaders was to ensure a substantial rationality between British growing legal corpus regulating activities in foreign owned territories and the local customary rules, norms, and practices. Likewise, the British authorities oversaw matters of whole concern and related to international affairs. According to Nantang Ben Jua, there was an intrinsic and hidden agenda behind this governance system. Nantang (1995) noted that:

“Intrinsic to the colonial project was a European design to dominate physical space, to integrate local economic histories into the Western perspective and to reform the natives’ minds” He went on and added that “one implication of this hidden agenda was the fact that the Cameroonian had to be ‘Anglicized’” (p. 39).

The implementation of the indirect rule went on during the trusteeship. Under this regime from 1946 to 1960, the Northern part of Cameroon come closer to Nigeria. On the 1st of June 1961, the Northern Cameroon became independent by joining Nigeria while the meridional part got its independence on the 1st of October 1961 by joining French Cameroon independent since 1st January 1960. A sign of policy transfer in the present case could be seen in the administration of the English Cameroon with rules and norms applied in Nigeria. British authorities, looking for quick solutions and cheaper ones advocated an approach of importing from abroad (in the present case in another possession of the empire) the necessary norms and rules to guide the

Cameroonian territory toward independence. The practice of policy transfer was common and did not decrease the years ahead.

From our analysis of the historical trajectory of Cameroon before the independence, we perceive a continuum process of transferring from abroad the norms, principles, and mechanisms of administering the territory regardless of the English and French territorial division. This consistency in the policy transfer will not end with the independence of the country. After 1960 and later 1961, the country will stay stuck on the policy transfer approach while dealing with administrative affairs. During more than seventy-six years, from the beginning of the protectorate in 1884 to the independence in 1960, the three main phases of path dependence formation advocated by Schreyögg and Sydow (2010, pp. 6-7); the preformation phase, the formation phase and the lock-in could be said to have been settle. Schreyögg and Sydow (2010) clearly define and provide the structuring features of each phase. The Phase I or Preformation phase includes a host of actions highlighting the historical footprint of path dependency. They are previous choices not predictable by prior events or initial conditions. This “innocent” decision is likely to set into motion self-reinforcing processes. The phase II or the formation phase refers to the case where the choices previously made increasingly narrow, produce outcomes and progressively become difficult to reverse regarding the increasing returns that they generate. It then means the path is evolving. The last phase, the Lock-in is the one in which the dominant pattern start nurturing, gets fixed, and gain a quasi-deterministic and normative status.

It confirms the idea advocated by Evans (2010) that “public organizations are path dependent and characterized by “inheritance rather than choice” in the sense that “past commitments” limit current choices” (2010, p. 14). The same idea is defended by Rose (2005, pp. 104-105). In the case of Cameroon, the following developments will point up the causality of path dependency on the country administrative reform record.

3. THE FORMATION PHASE OF THE PATH DEPENDENCY IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE FIELD IN CAMEROON FROM 1960 TO 1980

Few years before the independence, between 1956-1957, Cameroun under the French Mandate started to enact norms and programmes preparing the country to deal with the requirements and challenges of an independent country. No area was spare from economy, politics to public administration. In the field of public administration, and to cope with the Gaston Defferre Law, the local people assisting the foreign officials have been recognised an extended range of rights and duties. The law no. 56-619 of 23 June 1956, known as the Defferre framework law, was authorising the French government to implement reforms and take measures to ensure the development of the territories under the responsibility of the Ministry for Overseas France, was adopted on the initiative of Gaston Defferre, the French

Minister for Overseas France and Mayor of Marseille, and Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the first President of Côte d'Ivoire and Mayor of Abidjan. So, in the aftermath of independence, Cameroonian subordinates who had previously assisted the foreign authorities saw their legal status regulated by a series of laws and regulations. This process, which began in the last years of the mandate, accelerated in the early 1960s. The specific feature of this process was the drawing from both French laws at the end of the mandate and the provisions of legal instruments that were to govern the Cameroonian public service.

This was the case, without being exhaustive, of acts of the French Commissioner of 1921 organising the local European and indigenous staff, the statute of the French Commissioner of 1943 regulating the status applicable to indigenous permanent auxiliary staff with monthly pay, Ordinance No. 59-70 of 27 November 1959 laying down the general status of civil servants of the State of Cameroon, and the Decree No. 66-DF-53 of 3rd of February 1966 to lay down the general status of the federal civil service. The initiative to regulate the Cameroonian civil service is drawn upon a corpus of rules enacted during the colonial period and in the aftermath of independence and this new law corpus was inspired by French law. This mimetic isomorphism, although appearing as a non-risky and cheap mean to conduct public reforms had many drawbacks. It was adopted with less consideration of the local political, social and cultural contexts, and though formally ensuring a semblance of stability likely to produce promising results, has, in reality, carried the seeds of inefficiency because of the undeniable incompatibility between the context of importing norms, principles and ideas and the framework of application in the latter, which remains a country in reconstruction and in search of landmarks after long years of German protectorate, British and French mandate. According Bugnicourt (1973), administrative mimesis is an inappropriate process impeding policy successes and the development process in countries making it. The model of “inappropriate transfer” developed by Dolowitz and Marsh among the causes of policy transfer failure meets Bugnicourt account of administrative mimesis in African countries. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 17) presented it as a situation where “insufficient attention may be paid to the differences between the economic, social, political and ideological contexts in the transferring and the borrowing country”. It was exactly the case during the first phase of administrative reforms in Cameroon from the independence of the country in 1960 to the beginning of the 1980s.

The bureaucratic rationalisation and Weber's principles such as the impersonality of norms, a central hierarchisation, the rule of law-oriented administration, the meritocracy in recruitment, a focus on rules, the division of work and hierarchisation were some of the traits adopted in the administrative and institutional engineering in Cameroon. The all emanate from Weber's “ideal” type of bureaucracy which is the first scholarly

developed account of public administration (1946, 1978). These structural, behavioural and instrumental characteristics of a “dehumanised” administration matched well with the building needs of Cameroon newly independent country. A tough and rude administrative structure was needed to help building the country while removing from official personal and emotional. The Weber’s model of bureaucracy regarding its depiction was likely to support this objective. As Weber (1946, p. 216) put it “the more the bureaucracy is dehumanised, the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special virtue”.

It is worth recalling that in the immediate aftermath of independence, Cameroon faced a political dilemma. The necessity of the new state to establish its authority and legitimacy, while at the same time figuring out how to construct an administrative machinery ably to replace the leaving colonial administration and ensure the management of public affairs. The lack of qualified executives, the urgency of the security, the political stakes, and the necessity to implement the best options in terms of value for money, and time capitalisation, lead the local leaders to adopted administrative mimicry. This consisted of adopting legal texts, such as the civil service regulations, which were inspired by French law at the time, it was the case of the civil service regulations of 1959. Although it succeeded in satisfying the need for regulation that was essential in a similar context, and though it conferred legitimacy and objectivity on the actions of political elites (Bonelli & pelletier, 2010, p. 29), it carried within it the seeds of its inadequacy in the medium term, as Bugnicourt (1973) strongly emphasised. He depicts the mimesis as being

“responsible for inadequacy of training in the new States, the compartmentalisation of services, the growing disconnects between legal appearance and substantial administrative action. Mimicry also involves a few stage errors - of regulations or measures copied which are in no way harmful in themselves but are situated in a different context linked to other means and objectives inconsistent and therefore out of phase” (p. 1263).

Indeed, the mimicry adopted by many newly independent countries produces reversal results such as the worsening of administrative mess.

On a completely different level, the bureaucratic rationality adopted by mimetic isomorphism, with its elements of centralisation, formalism, hierarchisation, legality and impersonality, appears to be better suited in meeting the country's development needs.

Following Cameroon's independence in 1960, the leaders of the time inherited a country that was certainly prosperous in terms of natural resources and diverse potentials but deeply scarred by three distinct modes of

administration spread over time and differently distributed over the territory. From 1884 to 1916, the German protectorate was characterised by the promotion of productive agricultural activities and the administrative rigour inherited from the Prussian system, which was close to the military model. From 1918 to 1945, the mandate came under the authority of Great Britain for a slide part of the country and France, which administered the larger portion of Cameroon under direct administration, while the British authorities opted for indirect administration. In both regimes, the local authorities and populations were excluded from the ruling machine, including those working at the administrative stage. And when they were involved in the management of public affairs, it was at a subordinate level and confined to the management of local issues. The indigénat regime, which refers to the legal status requiring the French authorities to use violence against local populations, to force them into forced labour and the payment of personal income tax negatively affected local communities. The country's transition to a trusteeship regime after the Second World War, brought it into line with the demands for respect for human rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter, although softening the conditions of the local populations, at least in legal terms, did not fundamentally change the "segregation" imposed on them by the foreign authorities. These long decades of domination and exclusion from the political and administrative spheres, combined with the absence of an endogenous administrative and political model, created a vacuum in terms of Cameroonian human skills and adequate institutions at the dawn of independence. The task of the ruling authorities, once getting independent was to "Cameroonise" the public administration, to define an administrative system that would translate the political aspirations of the leaders of the newly independent state into reality and to establish their political legitimacy. To save time and resources while ensuring the continuity of the State, the Model of Organisation and Method (MOM) and the Administrative Rationality Model developed by Max Weber, which appear to have precepts such as hierarchical administration, the authority of legal norms, the impersonal nature of norms and the centrality of power, among others, appeared to be the best suited to meet the requirements of the political authorities of the time.

In the practical sense, the Model of Organization and Method (MOM), the Central Service of Organization and Method (SCOM), and the Bureau of Organization and Method (BOM) were some of the structures settle to meet the goals of this administrative architecture and in line with the philosophy of bureaucratic rationalisation. These structures, linked to the Presidency were deemed to implement Taylor's scientific management approach in public work with Max Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy tenets.

African countries, once independent had to choose between Africanising the public administration or adopting a pragmatic approach of gradually replacing European officials with local ones. Cameroon adopted the second approach rooted on a liberal economic perspective. To support this

choice, at the level of the administration, policy transfer was used through importing from France the Model of Organisation and Method (MOM). This model aims to integrate into the public service the values of objectivity, hierarchisation and scientific organisation of work specific to Taylorism, and the Fordist principles of task standardisation and performance, including neutrality. It is the work of Fayol (1949) which led to the generalisation of this method originating from the private sector to all types of organisations, including public ones.

This approach, the MOM was promoted by international donors perceiving it as a rational way to secure their various forms of support to the countries. The African leaders conversely were getting an opportunity for legitimisation due to the trust and the strengthening of ties that this system was supposed to generate among citizens benefiting from a qualitative public service. The main idea was to optimise the efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of the structures called upon to provide public service. The materialisation of this process of institutional improvement is administrative reform. In short, MOM aims to rationalise administrative work by avoiding potential slowdowns, by scrupulously analysing the different tasks previously defined, studied and dynamized. In this respect, Satet (1949) underlines that MOM is simply the translation of the Scientific Organisation of Work into the public sector. The process consists of observing the work process, identifying its structuring stages, analysing the various components, and using this as a starting point to identify the best approach to providing a service, fleshing it out and conducting training sessions on the said method so that public employees are imbued with it and apply it daily to optimise the service. At the national level, the SCOM is created and attached to the Presidency of the Republic. Each Ministry has a SCOM's expert who is independent of the Ministry's hierarchical structure and reports to the head of the SCOM. This created many points of friction between the representatives of the SCOM in ministries and the different officials heading offices in the said ministries. It is irrefutably a materialisation of the approach of Taylor (1911) to scientific management in the public sector. It should be added that this model was already implemented in France and the Cameroonian authorities simply transferred it to Cameroon days after the country's independence. As proof of this, several Cameroonian officials were trained in MOM in France and official correspondences with the French authorities revealed a great deal of financial and technical support to improve MOM as implemented in Cameroon.

4. THE BURGEONING OF GOVERNANCE APPROACH IN CAMEROON FROM 1980 TO 2000

From the 1980s onwards, there were signs that the bureaucratic system that had been in place since independence was running out of steam and cracking. The accession in 1982 of a new President at the head of the young

state, was driven by an ideology of “rigour and moralisation”. The strategy of the new President, Paul Biya, to inscribe his political project in the ideological register of “rigour and moralisation” will irradiate all segments of the young Republic, and the administrative sector will not be spared (see Biya, 1986). This would be the beginning in our country of the managerial orientation which seems closest to this ideology and which would reach its apogee in the 2000s with the adoption of the values and principles of the New Public Management in Cameroon. This approach confirms the analysis made by Macridis and Hullung advocating that “a political ideology moves people into action. It motivates them to demand changes in their way of life and to modify the existing political, social, and economic relations, or to mobilizes them on how to preserve what the value” (1992, p. 3).

Among the objectives was to lead the country's administrative field being anchored to the global management values promoted by the neo-liberal ideology. The managerial option was primarily taken with the creation in 1985, with the help of the Canadian International Development Agency (ACDI), of the Advanced Institute for Public Management (AIPM), whose main missions were the upgrading and retraining of Cameroon's senior public administration officials, research in the administrative field and the conduct of studies and consultations in the area of public management, and finally documentation in public administration. It should be added that the setting up of the AIPM follows a process of mimetic isomorphism in which the National School of Public Administration of Canada plays the core roles of disseminator and facilitator in the Policy transfer network made up of the governments of Cameroon and Canada. The authorities intend to make the AIPM a tool for popularising and disseminating modern public management within the Cameroonian administration. The cohabitation of the AIPM with the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) led to the creation of the larger National Centre for Administration and the Magistracy (CENAM) with the addition of the Institute for Administrative and Financial Techniques (ITAF) created with the support of German cooperation in 1984. The National School of Administration and Magistracy is the National public school providing initial training to future senior civil servants, it also provides complementary and continuous training to keep public staff up to date on any new consistent change in the public sector. It was the case with many seminars organised in the ENAM on the NPM.

The cumbersome nature of this structure led to the implosion of CENAM into two entities few years later. It brought back the AIPM on the one hand and ENAM on the other, which took over the responsibilities of the ITAF. In a nutshell, the main thing to remember at this stage is the role played by the AIPM in driving the managerial option in Cameroon's administration. This process with the positive externalities attached to the increasing return effect will generate in the following years an intensification of the managerial option all around the country.

Moreover, during the 1980s, the economic difficulties affecting the country, combined with the gloomy international context, led Cameroon towards the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This option had major repercussions in administrative terms, with the emergence of good governance issues. Pressure from international donors is pushing the private sector to become the central player in economic growth while transforming the State into a facilitator and regulator of economic activity. This disengagement of the State through activities such as privatisation, economic and the marketisation of public services is fundamentally aimed at reducing public burdens while releasing substantial resources that can be reinvested in the social and infrastructure sectors, as well as in debt servicing. The adoption of SAPs and, by extension, of the managerial criteria of good governance, is the result of the worldwide expansion of SAPs under the impetus of international donors, who are promoting them in all developing countries suffering from enormous imbalances in their balance of payments. This exogenous origin of SAP measures will harm their implementation at the national level. There is still a wide gap between official discourse and implementation at the administrative level.

At the end of the 90s, the anchoring of SAPs in the country led to the transfer of the NPM in the running of the Cameroonian administration. This transition from one mechanism to another, far from leading to the dissolution of the previous one, favoured a vast annihilating cohabitation far from favouring the productivity of the local administration. The last major innovation in the country in terms of administration will be the Transfer, still within the framework of the SAPs, particularly the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF), of the NMP, which will enrich the administration register in Cameroon while at the same time making it more complex. This is one of the programmes conducted with the support of the IMF between 1997 to 2000 to overcome the financial and economic problems Cameroon faced due to the burden of its debt and the different other social, political and managerial problems.

5. THE LOCK-IN OF THE NPM-ORIENTED APPROACH INTO PUBLIC GOVERNANCE IN CAMEROON.

Alongside economic, social, and political changes, administrative reforms occupied a prominent seat in the SAPs landscape. The dominant idea is that, in addition to boosting the private sector and market logic, there is a need to transform the administrative structure and machinery, which is unambiguously a decisive tool in the economic growth of any country. State autonomy and capacity is in dire need to overcome what is termed “orthodoxy paradox” by Miles Kahler (1990). According to the scholar, “orthodoxy has not dealt successfully with the paradox of using the state-it only instrument-to change policy in a less statist direction” (1990, p. 55). Haggard et al., (1992,

p. 25) recognised the orthodoxy paradox and sustained that “for governments to reduce their role in the economy and expand the play of market forces, the state itself must be strengthened.” Evans (1995, p. 27) added to the debate and implicitly went into the orthodoxy paradox while claiming that “when liberalization, privatizations and other policies associated with neoliberalism were implemented, it was in fact state managers who formed the core of the ‘change teams’ that make change possible.” Government is then compelled to introduce structural and institutional well framed reforms to meet international conditionalities and maintain a rewarding balance between its own capabilities and the management of economics reforms induced by the SAPs.

At the end of the 90's the Cameroonian government, in line with the idea mentioned above, implemented two flagship programmes, namely the reduction of civil service staff and the benefits attached to the status of civil servants, including the reduction of salaries. The country went on with host of institutional and organisational reforms through the setting up of the Integrated System for the Computerized Management of Personnel and Salaries (SIGIPES) and the launch of a programme such as the Programme to Strengthen the Management Capacity of the Cameroonian Civil Service (PRCG/FP), with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Surprisingly, far from leading to a full fledged transformation of the public sector and the appropriation of New Public Management's principles deemed to fix governance issues, the polity projected a complete atypical picture. We point out that concomitantly, old different administrative schemes were running together. An “administrative sedimentation” due to the existence of bastions of bureaucracy, neo-patrimonialism, and neo-management flanges, characterised Cameroon public administration. This process of transfer and adoption of managerial options in the Cameroonian administration, which began in the 1980s, and reached maturity in the first decades of the 2000s is reflected in official rhetoric. Another characteristic feature of the transformation of the administration in Cameroon is the mimetic or normative isomorphism, even coercive in some historical milestones, associated with a strategy of legitimisation for the conservation of the levers of political power by the ruling elite. Before the independence, during the protectorate, the mandate and the trusteeship, the coercive isomorphism was the channel used by the administrating country to import into Cameroon the administrative model deemed appropriate to run public affairs. The result of the coercive isomorphism was the transfer of foreign models in the territory. Though in the short run, the mechanism was rewarding for the ruling actors, in the long run, it engrained the ingredients of path dependency in nurturing the practice through what Georg Schreyögg and Jörg Sydow term (2010, p. 5) “the non-reversible state of local equilibrium” or phase III of path dependency framework called “lock-in” by Paul David (1993, 2007). The years to come witnessed the externalities of the increasing returns or positive feedback

reinforcing the willingness of the ruling elites to recourse to policy transfer while dealing with public problems. We are not claiming that the practice is specific to Cameroon, but we would like to point up the critical role it has played in the policy circulation process in the country.

Here, political rationality takes precedence over managerial rationality. The constant result of this situation is the multiplication of instruments of governance which are limited at the formal level, and they have hardly found a tangible application in the operation of this administration. This situation gives rise to the concomitant application of different models of administration which are likely to clash with each other and hinder implementation process. It is recalling the “hypocrisy”, “double-talk” and “myth” discourse advance by Meyer and Rowan (1977) to depict the dilemma of institutionalised organisations and its policy choices and daily practices of public organisations.

It is the case, for example, with the neo-patrimonial logic of the political system in Cameroon, with the demands for objectivity, accountability, performance evaluation and sanctions for incompetence advocated by the managerial approach. Cameroon had a side effect, i.e. the huge gap noticed in developing country between extraordinary ability to subtly past through institutional isomorphism to ensure the preservation of the regime in place through what we would describe as the conservative sedimentation of the existing order. For his part, Raoul Tamekou (2017, p. 309) prefers to speak simply of “institutional contiguity” to depict the historical trajectory of administrative reform in Cameroon. With regard to this question, the author points out that institutional contiguity is defined as the coexistence within the same system of several regulatory spaces with often opposing temporalities, rationalities and purposes. Little scholarly explored since, the phenomenon of contiguity raises questions about the mechanisms that ensure the integration or addition of rules in a system, and their functionality, without leading to the collapse of the whole. Further research is needed to explore, empirically and analytically, how this mechanism works.

These outcomes recall that history matters as an explanatory function of present events like a causal factor as well as a framing scalar. The added value from comparative historical analysis is the “systematic and contextual comparison” which is likely to be conducted once the historical sequences are included in the explanatory function (see for deeper analysis Arthur, 1989, 1994; David, 1993, 2007; Pierson, 2000a, 2000b; Thelen 1999; Tilley, 2006). The openness of the comparative historical studies to any contextual and substantial suitable descriptive method or causal inference, added to its historical focus on “big questions” granted social scientists with an adaptable and accurate methodological compass to navigate into the Scylla and Charybdis like threats of the troubled and misleading waters of social sciences.

Conclusion

This study was engine by the inquiry of the causal linchpin linking historical sequences, the trajectories of administrative reforms, in a developing country. The case of Cameroun, from the German protectorate to recent years of governance under the shadow of the SAPs enlightened our scholarly saunter. The recourse to policy transfer through isomorphic changes with policy transfer and some selected case of administrative changes (direct, indirect, MOM, NPM) was of critical interest. The assessment of these cases leads us to assert that the path dependency is followed by the country and manifested with the isomorphic importation of administrative techniques from abroad to ensure the management of the public machine.

The objective to trace the political and administrative trajectory of Cameroon and decipher the complex and ambivalent nature of its administration, was constant. The observation revealed an aggregation of instruments and principles of bureaucracy, neo-management, and new management. Based on the theoretical models of policy transfer, isomorphic change and path dependency associated with the neo-patrimonial nature of the regime, we found that the historical cornerstones of this country illustrating the German protectorate, the French and British mandates and trusteeships, as a matter of course, have promoted and served as fertile ground for the isomorphic reproduction and policy transfer of administrative models from former resident countries. Once this observation has been made, there is another concern which is certainly touched upon in this article without a more extensive analysis though deserving a further exploration. This beg the question as to what could be the impact of such architecture on the productivity of the administration in Cameroon. A study devoted solely to this question would be of greater interest.

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