



The thatched roof of Achum shrine overlooking the site

Achum shrine

The Achum Shrine is the spiritual core of the Palace and houses important fetishes. Built of wood and bamboo, and covered with thatch, the shrine is an impressive example of traditional religious architecture.



The Museum

Museum

The guest house built during the German colonial administration is now a museum open to the public, displaying lots of objects representative of the Bafut traditions.



the Fon Abumby II

His Majesty the Fon Abumby II

The paramount ruler remains very important as a religious and social leader of the Bafut community.

Abin festival

Since 1516, there has always been celebrated yearly, in late December. For one week prior to the festival, the community of Bafut, performs traditional dances, sacrifices to spirits and ancestors, ceremonies, etc.

Abin Festival



Restoration work on the roof of Achum shrine

BAFUT PALACE

Bafut Palace is located in the heart of the Bafut kingdom in northwest Cameroon. With an estimated population of about 120 000 inhabitants, it is among the biggest Fondom (kingdom) on the Bamenda Plateau. The Palace has been the fulcrum of political power for over 400 years, and is still a center for religious rites and traditional ceremonies, headed by His Majesty Abumby II, the eleventh Fon (traditional chief) of his line. Included on UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites in 2006, Bafut Palace is one of the most significant cultural heritage sites in Cameroon.

The Grassfields cultural zone located on the high plateau of the West is characterized by numerous kingdoms of differing sizes, origin and complexity. There are about 108 palaces in the west province and at least half that number in the northwest province.



BAFUT
Bafut sub-Division,
Mezam Division,
North West Region
Republic of Cameroon
Latitude/Longitude :
6° 07' North; 10° 05' East



Annenberg Program for Endangered Heritage in the Developing World



Ministry of Culture of Cameroon

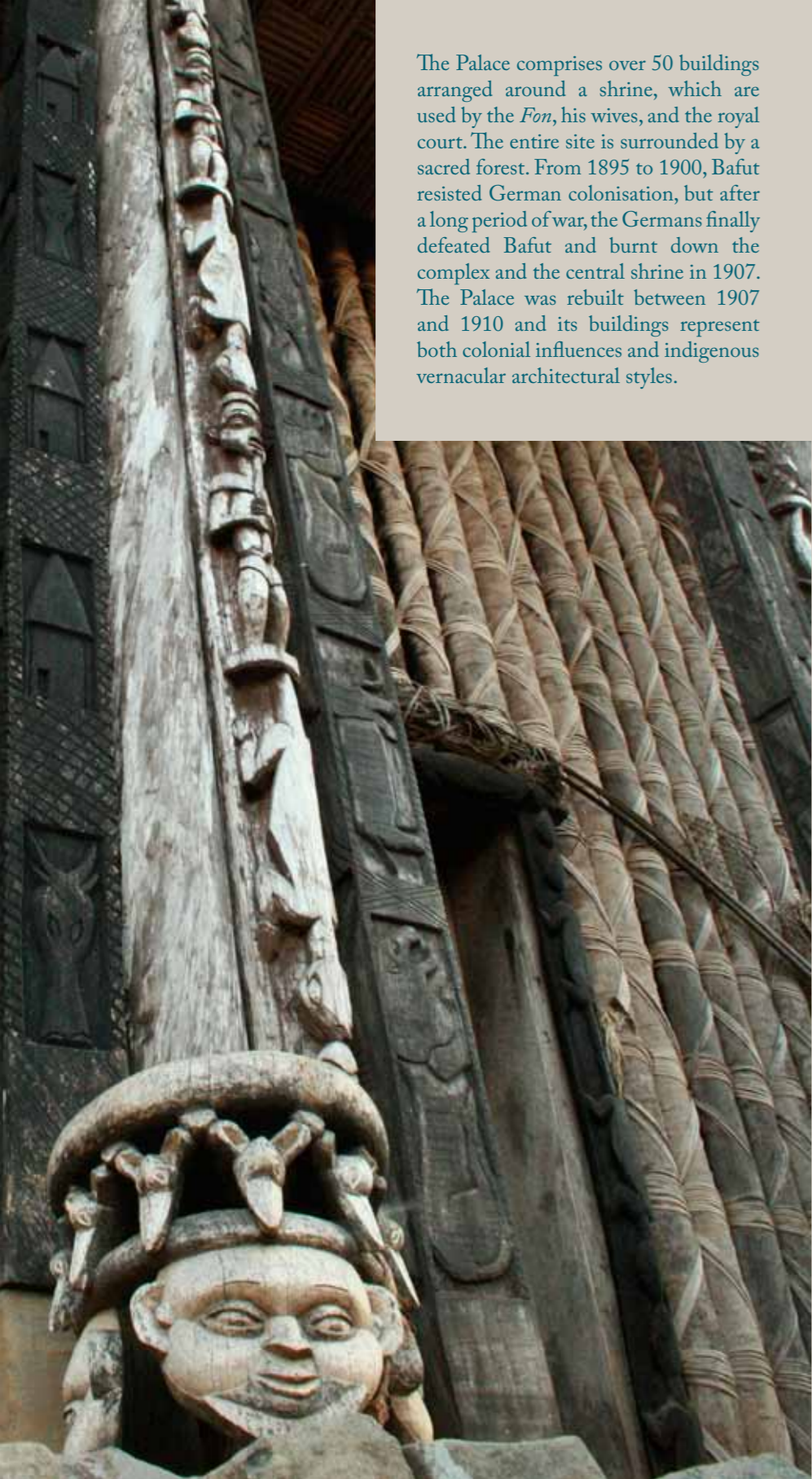


University of Yaounde



BAFUT PALACE





The Palace comprises over 50 buildings arranged around a shrine, which are used by the *Fon*, his wives, and the royal court. The entire site is surrounded by a sacred forest. From 1895 to 1900, Bafut resisted German colonisation, but after a long period of war, the Germans finally defeated Bafut and burnt down the complex and the central shrine in 1907. The Palace was rebuilt between 1907 and 1910 and its buildings represent both colonial influences and indigenous vernacular architectural styles.

BAFUT PALACE MAP

- B. PUBLIC PLACE FOR THE ENTIRE KINGDOM**
- C. QUEENS QUARTERS**
- D. RULER QUARTER**
- E. PRIVATE QUARTER FOR THE FON**
- F. SECRET SOCIETIES**
- G. SACRED FOREST**

- A. ENTRANCE**
- A.1 Public entrance
- A.2 Private entrances

- B. PUBLIC PLACE FOR THE ENTIRE KINGDOM**
- B.1 Heart of the shrine of Bafut fendom
- B.2 Former public execution shrine for the adulterers, fornicators, traditional and religious crimes and for war offenders
- B.3 Fondation shrine of the fonbam
- B.4 Shrine for purification
- B.5 Former execution place for women (hanging)
- B.6 Former execution place for men (hanging)
- B.7 Grand stand
- B.8 Nchuntang, public stand for the Fon

- C. QUEENS QUARTERS**
- C.1 Royal Courtyard for social, cultural religious activities
- C.2 Upper courtyards for the Queens
- C.3 Lower courtyards for the Queens
- C.4 Shrine for the spirit of the late Queens
- C.5 Shrine for the spirit of the Queens mother
- C.6 Mother Queen quarter
- C.7 Shrine for the spirits of the Queens
- C.8 Training ground for the princess between 7 and 21 years old
- C.9 Shrine to produce powders used to introduce the rulers
- C.10 Tomb of Queen Mother

- D. RULER QUARTER**
- D.1 Madele entrance (meeting hall, two private receptions rooms)
- D.2 Reception room
- D.3 Meeting hall
- D.4 Office
- D.4. Atah reserve
- D.5 Courtyard for male and female notables for very religious ceremonies
- D.6 Achum, central shrine for the Palace
- D.7 Place for enthronisation of notables
- D.8 Store for ritual objects
- D.9 Shrine for preparing cam foods for the spirits of the waterfalls

- E. PRIVATE QUARTER FOR THE FON**
- E.1 Garden
- E.2 House
- E.3 Quarter for the young servers of the Fon



- F. SECRET SOCIETIES**
- F.1 Fon Tombs
- F.2 Yard for the spirits of the Fons
- F.3 Yard of the court session for the secret societies
- F.4 Shrine for the King makers
- F.5 Shrine for secret societies
- F.6 Shrine for Princes
- F.7 Ndabahnikang

- G. COLONIAL BUILDINGS**
- G.1 Former colonial justice court
- G.2 Former colonial guest house, actual Museum
- G.3 Ancient prison