



## Post-independence Autobiographic Memories of Affliction and Resistance in Bate Besong and Chiha Kim's Poetry

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**Abstract:** This paper examined some selected poems from the poetic corpuses of Bate Besong and Chiha Kim as autobiographic substantiations of their aggrieved post-independence experiences in Cameroon and South Korea respectively. Premised on Margo Perkin's conceptualisation of autobiographic writing as a resistance paradigm, the paper proceeded through a text-context dialectic to discuss how the poets under consideration penetrate the deep recesses of their distraught memories in order to expose and resist the afflictions suffered by them as a result of discourses and practices of marginalisation, victimisation, incarceration and torture within the general post-independence settings of Cameroon and South Korea. The study found that life writing constitutes an essential modus for sustained resistance against post-independence afflictions and consequently contended that, Besong and Kim's autobiographic poems pithily bear witness to their individual angsts as well as the collective post-independence pains of their countries as a stratagem of activism.

**Keywords:** Post-independence, Autobiographic Memories, Affliction, Resistance

### 1. INTRODUCTION

It is an established fact that most post-independence nations especially in the developing world are still teetering in varied forms of afflictions instigated by structures and practices of violence, subjection and other related vices. Achille Mbembecorroborates this declaration when he avows in *On the Postcolony* that the post-independence state has become "a political machinery...that constitutes a distinctive regime of violence...and a dramatic stage on which are played out the wider problems of subjugation" (Mbembe, 2002, p.102-5). In fact, many post-independence states are still run by leaders who seem to have as political will, the pauperization and zombification of their own compatriots and countries. One of the reasons for this afflictive nature of the post-independence condition is related to the ability of wielders of political power to grant and or, abolish liberties and rights at their convenience. Apparently, their exclusive concern is to maintain themselves in power.

To maintain themselves in power therefore, narcissistic post-independence gerontocrats have built for their regimes, a strong military force that terrorises, and dissuades any rebellious voices. This force has as mandate and modus operandi, the systematic brutalisation and vapourisation of civilians who in anyway endeavour to challenge the regime in place. With the constellation of repressive structures and practices within many post-independence states, it becomes manifest that vocal and no-nonsense writers like Bate Besong and Chiha Kim who dedicated their literary careers to fighting all forms of injustice suffered victimisation and torture in the hands of the callous regimes in their countries.

The Cameroonian post-independence condition does not leave much to be admired. The trickery and inhumanity of the Amadou Ahidjo and Paul Biya regimes of the country have by the estimation of many been repressive towards voices of contestation and or, resistance. Worst, the bicultural nature of the country has further aggravated the situation since English-speaking Cameroonians who constitute a minority in the country, consider themselves as being marginalised. As early as 1964, Bernard Fonlon did signal this Anglophone ostracism in his essay entitled "Will We Make or Mar?". In fact, the scholar earnestly cautioned that the tide was "running hard against Anglo-Saxon influence in the

Federal Republic of Cameroon". Consequently, he surmised that, if things were left to chance, there would be "hardly any hope of worthy British uses and institutions surviving in...[the] cultural corpus" of the country in the nearest future (Fonlon, 1964, p.11).

John Nkengasong in "Interrogating the Union: Anglophone Cameroon Poetry in the Postcolonial Matrix" makes it even clearer that, the grim situation of Anglophone Cameroonians today is a fallout from the Ahidjo and Biya regimes' meticulous plans to effectively "obliterate Anglophone identity" (Nkengasong, 2012, p.62). Such plans as the critic expounds, included the abolition of the country's 1961 federal constitution in 1972, and the systematic suppression of Anglophone socio-cultural and political resistance. The case of Augustine Ngom Jua, one of the first Anglophone politicians to raise an alarm against Amadou Ahidjo's manoeuvres to efface Anglophone cultural identity as well as socio-political and economic institutions is a case in point. As corroborated by Fongot Kini-Yen in *Pan-Africanism: Political Philosophy and Socio-economic Anthropology For African* (Kini-Yen, 2015, p.477), this politician was purged in 1977 for speaking up. Given this anguished post-independence condition of Anglophone Cameroonians, a warrior poet like Bate Besong resolved to battle his, and his compatriots' sufferings through his poetry and drama. Consequently, he became a target for the Biya regime. He was thus victimised constantly and on a few occasions, he was incarcerated and tortured for his 'dissidence'.

The post-independence situation of South Korea from where Chiha Kim hails may have evolved into a fledgeling democracy today. Nonetheless, the early decades following the country's independence from Japanese colonisation were gory. Under the regime of Major General Chung Hee Park, an anti-communist consciousness law was enacted under provisions of the 1972 Yushin Constitution. As Nicola Geiger explains in his introduction to *Cry of the People and Other Poems*, such laws were aimed at countering the communist sways of North Korea considered as an "existential enemy", to use the words of Ji Young Yeo in "Contentious Narratives on National Identity of South Korea". Yeo asseverates that this tagging of neighboring North Korea was a maneuver that worked through a discursive mechanism of difference and othering that engendered a "demarcation of enemies" for the purpose of "inclusion and exclusion" (Heo, 2020, p.14-20). Therefore, under the anti-communist laws, heavy jail sentences including death penalties awaited those who spoke against the regime in place, or dared to nurse hopes for a possible reunification of the two Koreas. Of course, it is under these circumstances that a combatant South Korean poet like Chiha Kim wrote. Here regularly fell victim to this repressive machinery of the regime. At one time, he even served a life/death sentence that was later commuted in the mid 1970s.

Indubitably, the post-independence situations of Cameroon and South Korea spelt doom for socio-political activist-poets like Bate Besong and Chiha Kim. This is because they sought to resist the injustices in their countries by producing literature that rattled the core of the repressive regimes. Therefore, the afflictive post-independence circumstances of Cameroon and South Korea as experienced by both Bate Besong and Chiha Kim through marginalisation, victimisation, incarceration and torture, find expression in their poetic compositions. By bearing witness to their various angsts through autobiographic writing, both poets can be said to be nurturing their resistance enterprise against the multifaceted post-independence afflictions that are at once theirs and those of their countrymen.

Within the framework of the above discussions, this paper sets out to discuss some selected poems from the poetic corpuses of Bate Besong and Chiha Kim as autobiographic corroborations of their afflictive post-independence experiences in Cameroon and South Korea respectively. Premised on Margo Perkin's conceptualisation of autobiographic writing as a resistance paradigm, and the assumption that life writing constitutes an essential modus for sustained resistance against post-independence pains, the paper will proceed through a text-context dialectic to examine how the poets under consideration penetrate the deep recesses of their distressed memories in order to expose and resist those afflictions suffered by them as a result of discourses and practices of marginalisation, victimisation, incarceration and torture within the general post-independence settings of Cameroon and South Korea. The paper will thus argue that these poets' autobiographic poems pithily bear witness to their individual angishes as well as the collective travails of post-independence Cameroon and South Korea as a stratagem of activism and resistance.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: AUTOBIOGRAPHIC WRITING AS RESISTANCE PARADIGM

Critical debates on the status of an author as well as information about him in the hermeneutic process have surged. Volker Depkat in "The Challenges of Biography: European-American Relations" observes that, after a long period of its theoretical neglect and marginalisation, the cultural turn within the humanities did trigger a revival of autobiographical scholarship (Depkat, 2014, p. 39). He further adds that, despite this new boom, methodological approaches within the field continue to invite fundamental criticism. Leading such censure was Roland Barthes whose abjuration of the importance of an author within the interpretive enterprise sourced his assertion of the demise of the author in his essay entitled "The Death of the Author".

Michel Foucault following almost in Barthes' trajectory, problematized the concept of the author which according to him gave birth to what he dubbed the "author-function" in his essay captioned "What is an Author?". In an effort to further discredit autobiographical scholarship, Stanley Fish queuing from the postulations of Barthes and Foucault, sarcastically branded the field/genre as some sort of a "minutiae without meaning" in his essay titled "Just Published: Minutiae Without Meaning". In Fish's assessment, autobiographic writing constituted no more than "a collection of random incidents, and the only truth being told is the truth of contingency, of events succeeding one another in a universe of accident and chance" (Fish, 1998, p. 19). By considering autobiographical writing as minutiae of contingency, Fish called to question the reliability of an author's lived experiences as depicted in a text. It is evident that, Fish's position seems not to have considered the possibility of subjectivity within literary, and or fictional representation of biographical materials for the purpose of activism. Thus, his insistence on the logical flow of incidents in any literary production as conceived of in mega-narratives warranted his perception of their representation in autobiographical literature as occasioned simply by chance.

Fundamentally, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Stanley Fish's repudiation of the importance of an author as well as their criticisms of autobiographical writing in "The Death of the Author", "What is an Author?" and "Just Published: Minutiae Without Meaning" respectively were all engineered to critically dismiss the pertinence of the author and or, information about him in the hermeneutic process. These scholars here discussed wanted to stress in some way, the primacy of language over context in the interpretation of meaning as obtained in Structuralist and Post-structuralist postulations. Accordingly, they can be understood as endeavouring to herald a new "post-authorial culture" to borrow the words of Adrian Wilson in "Foucault On The 'Question Of The Author': A Critical Exegesis" (Wilson, 2004, p. 342).

Inasmuch as this paper recognizes the primacy of language in textual construal as hyped by Barthes, Foucault and Fish, it however does not concur with Barthes' categorical declaration of the demise of the author, and the complete annihilation of, or the obsolete position of biographical and contextual information in relation to the meaning of a text being studied. In the same vein, the study agrees with Foucault that, writers can, and do produce discursive practices such as Marxism and Freudianism. Nonetheless, the paper does not share his categorisation of such writers and his rejection of the voice of the author as an individual in a literary text. This is because the lived experiences of an author, and his representation of them in literary form can serve as possible insights into the socio-political, cultural and economic discourses and realities of the epoch in which he lived and wrote. By extension, studying authors' experiences can help trace how repressive discourses and practices have been developed and enforced in the post-independence state, and how through them, such discourses and practices have been confronted and denounced.

From the foregoing submission therefore, this paper conceives of autobiographical writing in the light of Margo Perkins in *Autobiography as Activism* in which she opines that, by "writing their lives, activists seek to document their experiences, to correct information, to educate their readers, and to *encourage the continuation of the struggle* [emphasis added]" against all forms of affliction (Perkins, 2000, p. 70). In the same fashion, Laura Tohe maintains that, the act of writing one's own life experiences "is [a means of] *claiming voice and taking power* [emphasis added]" (qtd in Flanagan, 2011, p. 48). By claiming voice and taking power through fictional representation of their afflictive

experiences as a means of resistance, the poets under examination are by every means, consolidating their revolutionary consciousness and activism against their lived post-independence afflictions. Of course, they are able to do this by exposing through confrontational and denunciative poetics, the various anguishes that are at once theirs, as well as those of their contemporaries.

### 3. MEMOIRS OF POST-INDEPENDENCE AFFLICTION AND RESISTANCE IN BATE BESONG AND CHIHA KIM'S POETRY

As already intimated, Bate Besong and Chiha Kim are radical and combatant poets who through their compositions sought to expose and resist the excesses of the post-independence leaderships of Cameroon and South Korea correspondingly. Consequently, they were regularly victimised, incarcerated and tortured. One of the most glaring personal afflictions experienced by these poets in post-independence Cameroon and South Korea is their constant victimisation and detention under appalling conditions. It goes without saying therefore that both versifiers in some of their poetic configurations prod deep into the recesses of their distraught memories in order to unearth and bear witness to their straits in autobiographic form couched in various confrontational and denunciative poetic tropes. This engagement of their grief-stricken experiences is in the understanding of this paper, a conscious attempt claim voice, and “to encourage the continuation of the struggle” against post-independence afflictions to use the words of Margo Perkins in *Autobiography as Activism*.

In his poetry collection entitled *Just Above Cameroon*, Besong goes down memory lane to excavate his gruesome prison experiences. The arbitrariness of the postcolonial Cameroonian judicial system as well as the brutality of its penitentiary conditions find expression in the poem “Prison blues” and leaves very little or nothing for admiration. It is noted that after the staging of his play titled *Beast of No Nation* in March 1992, Besong was arbitrarily arrested and detained possibly because the play raised concerns about Anglophone marginalisation and their second-class citizenship in Cameroon. Without due process, he was thrown in jail and callously molested for daring to raise voice against the sufferings of his Anglophone compatriots as well as the wretched Cameroonian proletariat in general. To expose these prison angsts, Besong in the just-mentioned poem, succinctly paints the physiognomy of his torturer and the prison environment where he is incarcerated:

A gray chill in a suit  
of pelican  
grey: cyclones of my intern-  
ment embalm  
voices of vespers.  
A gargoyle of leviathan  
Proportions as my gulag  
shook, so.../  
dressed in a kimono, wielding  
a samurai scimitar.  
Clement shrouds painted  
several furlongs of gore.../  
in that human  
abattoir... (Besong, 1998, p. 3)

Besong's physical afflictors in the prison are metaphorically described as “a gray chill in a suit”, “cyclones”, “gargoyle of leviathan proportions” and “cannibal militaire” in order to capture and denounce the horrors meted on him and other inmates. These metaphors attest to the brutality and beast-like tendencies of the prison wardens who are personified as “gargoyles” brandishing Samurai swords, and whose approach sends a “gray chill” through the interned Besong. The poet thus sees his prison cell as a “human abattoir” of “clement shrouds painted” with “several furlongs of gore”. The image of the “furlongs of gore” that imply blood from lacerations bespeak of the intense physical affliction the poet experienced, and justifies his description of his cell as a “gulag” and a “human abattoir” where he is treated like a common criminal for daring to speak against the marginalisation of his compatriots.

Furthermore, Bate Besong expletively refers to the penitentiary officers in charge of his affliction as “epileptic, unstable gangsters.../ deranged insomniacs.../ precursors of the hydraulics / of terror”



(Besong, 1998, p. 5) as he remembers his pains. This of course, is in order to emphasize their brutality and cold-bloodedness. These curators of terror are so perfect in the art of torture as though they study it from a pamphlet for Besong shudders that these “cannibal militaire[s]” cause pain as though they study it from a torture brochure and catalogue (Besong, 1998, p. 3). Through the sarcasm that permeates the poem, one winces at the perfection of the wardens in causing agony. Again, it is ironical that, instead of excelling in the reformation of lives, these “epileptic, unstable gangsters” are only good at causing terror and inflicting pain.

In accordance with the foregoing interpretation, the prison becomes a dystopia. That is a place of affliction wherein, “iron grills muffle sepulchral silhouettes...[and] Blood transfusions nurture / A debauched / Carcase” (Besong, 1998, p.10). On the contrary, the prison ought to be a place for the reformation of ‘criminals’. Besong’s diction, which includes such descriptive/suggestive words and phrases like: “cyclone”, “gray chill”, “internment”, “gargoyle”, “gore”, “torture brochure”, “gulag”, “human abattoir”, “cannibal militaire”, and “hermitically-sealed catacombs” (Besong, 1998, p. 3-10), suggest the horror and sufferings of prison cells, and by extension the ruthlessness of the post-independence regime in Cameroon. In revealing the above traumas, Besong is bearing witness and resisting his personal ordeals in an attempt to keep alive the struggle against post-independence afflictions in general.

Chiha Kim like Bate Besong had his own dose of personal prison experiences during which he had to deal with the brutality of penitentiary officers and the dictatorial post-independence regimes in South Korea as a whole. It is remembered that, Chiha Kim did serve several prison sentences and at one time, he was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment by the Chung Hee Park military junta of the 1970s. In Kim’s view, the prison is a place of no return because of the maiming that takes place there. In the poem captioned “No Return” from the collection *Cry of the People and Other Poems*, Kim believes that his prison cell marks the end of his life for once there, he is sure to be tortured until his last breath. It is for this reason that in the latter poem, he grieves that:

I shall not return having once stepped into this / Place.  
If I sleep, it is the sleep which cuts deeply into / the flesh.  
That sleep, that white room, that bottomless / vertigo.  
The place where they come and go on the ceiling,  
Invisible faces, hands, gestures,  
That room where voices and laughter arise—  
That white room, that bottomless vertigo. (Kim, 1974, p. 36)

The lament of Kim because he knows he will not return after he has entered the prison cell, and the fact that he is sure he will not wake if he sleeps, attest to the fact that, prisons are not correctional facilities for, if they were, then inmates could have hope for a return. As captured by the cited lines, the prison is a place where torture and pain reign, and as Besong depicts it in “Prison blues”, it is a “hermitically-sealed catacomb”, in fact, a “human abattoir” (Besong, 1998, p. 3). Resultantly, Kim in the poem “No Return”, knows that once he has stepped foot in the cell, he will never return alive for the excruciating torture will separate his soul from his body as he remembers opening his eyes to “the pain of a fingernail being pulled out” (Kim, 1974, p. 36). By remembering these horrors, Kim succeeds to reiterate the ferocious nature of uniformed officers in South Korean prisons. He graphically presents the torture implements and skills of these wardens in the poem “Five Thieves” from the collection entitled *Heart’s Agony: Selected Poems* when he descriptively narrates and reports that:

[The Police Chief] usually orders the criminal / to kneel down.../ and then beats, hammers, strikes / kicks, and treads him down mercilessly.../ He pinches, bites, hurls, and throws him / but it is a mere prelude / to his endless menu of tortures.../ To scare the flies to death / he displays his many torture instruments / a six-sided club, triangular iron poker, iron rake / sword, dagger, saber, dirk / rope for binding criminals, cudgel / truncheon, whistle, bat / rifle, machine gun, hand grenade / tear bomb, smoke shell, vomit bomb / dung bomb, piss bomb, muck bomb / coal, and hard charcoal. (Kim, 1998, p. 113-114)

With such torture apparatuses and know-hows, Chiha Kim in “No Return” and Besong in “Prison blues” understand that prison marks the end of their lives. Evidently, the poets in these poems given

their biographical information are unquestionably Chiha Kim and Bate Besong one-to-one. The Police Chief in Kim's "Five Thieves" comparatively resembles Bate Besong's torturer in "Prison blues" whose torture methods and tools are also listed in some sort of a "torture brochure" or catalogue. Despite the fact that the reader may laugh at the bizarre expertise of the prison wardens to cause untold pain to Bate Besong and Chiha Kim, in "Prison blues" and "No Return" one-to-one, genuine reader-activists however are drawn to feel empathy for them. Consequently, the resistant potential of the poems is generated through such readers' ability to internalise the agonies of the poets by envisioning their own anguishes if ever they are taken to the same prisons for the same, or different reasons. Though not expressly stated in the poems, such readers are at once invited by the horrors of the poets to find possible ways of flouting such afflictions. Even more, by bearing witness to their gruesome prison experiences, both Besong and Kim are thus castigating the post-independence regimes of Cameroon and South Korea respectively.

Additionally, Chiha Kim does not only see the physical pain meted on him and other inmates in the prison cell. He is keen enough to also recollect the psychological affliction they endured. In "No Return", Kim remembers his "comrades who died in vain / Fallen into humiliating sleep.../ Sometimes faintly smiling, sometimes crying out" (Kim, 1974, p. 36). This recollection serves as a signal to the poet that, like his comrades, he will not return alive from the prison. The mental image created by the inmates "smiling faintly" conveys grim pictures of someone who is at the threshold of losing his or her mind, or who has even already lost it. Chiha Kim is thus psychologically laboured by the impending footsteps in the same way as Besong in "Prison blues" is traumatised by the approach of the "gray chill in a suit". As Kim hears the sounds of "high leather boots" on the roof of his cell, and matches them with the voices and faces of his persecutors, he is sure his demise is nigh. He vividly captures this through pictorial imagery when he says:

The sound of high leather boots in the night,  
The place where they come and go on the ceiling,  
Invisible faces, hands, gestures...  
That white room, that bottomless vertigo. (Kim, 1974, p. 36)

The sound of the high leader boots and the hallucinatory "invisible faces, hands, [and] gestures" that come and go on the ceiling animate Kim's psychological affliction in that prison cell which he describes as a "bottomless vertigo".

The psychological torture and pain experienced and remembered by the poet is also a point of focus in his poem entitled "Blue Suit". The cruelty of the prison wardens coupled with his lack of sleep, pushes Kim to wish he were a bird to fly, or the wind to blow away as he hungers for dawn or death (Kim, 1974, p. 36). In addition to the blue uniforms prisoners of conscience in South Korea were supposed to wear, the 1960s Anti-Communist Law passed by President Park required all inmates convicted for crimes related to Communism to wear a scarlet badge pinned over the left breast of their jackets. The badge, according to the Park junta, denoted dissident citizens under the influence of Communist North Korea, Russia and China. Chiha Kim in the discussed poem wears one of such badges and declares that, he is willing to die but not for the crime of which he is wrongfully accused. It is on the basis of such false accusations that he in "Blue Suit" is incarcerated and thus cries in agony as he is starved and tortured for a crime he has not committed:

Imprisoning the thin naked body, this suit of  
Blue!... /  
Sticking in my heart, bleeding painfully,  
And then clotting into the square scarlet mark... /  
/ But for it / I might not refuse death... /  
Willingly would I die imprisoned in the blue suit;  
Were it real. (Kim, 1974, p. 37)

If only the crimes for which he is imprisoned and tortured were valid, he declares that he will willingly remain jailed and die for them. Because the accusations are false however, his heart bleeds and his tears flow ceaselessly as a result of the torture meted on him. Of course, since his nightly agonies and hallucinations are many and so intense, Kim waits for dawn impatiently. Dawn therefore

symbolises relief from the torments of his prison cell. Unlike Besong who expects relief through exile from the post-independence rogue state in the poem "The Beauty of Exile", Kim can only hope for respite from the approach of dawn.

While the blue suit in Kim's "Blue Suit" symbolises repression and wretched despair, the scarlet badge becomes an emblem of humiliation and psychological torture. Undoubtedly, the poem itself is a scathing confrontation and denunciation of the regime that perpetrates the zombification of post colonials through ruthlessness both in, and out of prison. Hence, Chiha Kim's constant repetition of the catchphrase: "Man is not an animal!" in the poem captioned "Brook 2" (Kim, 1998, p. 47). The use of this epizeuxis reiterates the disregard that the post-independence South Korean regime and its thugs have towards human life. As J.A. Cuddon in *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* explains, the use of epizeuxis in a poem usually reinforces a special effect desired by a writer (Cuddon, 1998, p. 283). Therefore, Chiha Kim's desired emotional effect in "Brook 2" and "Blue Suit" as well as other poems can be assumed to be, an encouragement of a critical internalisation of his afflictions by his readers in order that they may see the viciousness of the regime in place.

Both Bate Besong and Chiha Kim's remembrance of their prison travails bring to light the brutality of the post-independence regimes of their two countries. Because these anguishes are so intense, Besong paradoxically sees his possible deliverance or liberation through exile in the poem captioned "The beauty of exile" from his collection entitled *Disgrace: Autobiographical Narcissus*. One of course may be tempted to ask; how beautiful can exile really be? Of course, it is incongruous or ironic that it should be under any circumstance. Here, Besong can be understood as saying that those who voice contestation against their afflictive conditions in Cameroon can only hope to find solace in exile because "it is the beauty" of his activist friend's exile "that has shown how ugly... [Francophones who govern] have become" (Besong, 2007, p. 96) in his "flabbergasted / country, fractured / at genesis" as he describes it in his poem captioned "Eve of an apocalypse" (Besong, 1998, p. 26). Hence, exile can be read as symbolizing some sort of liberation for those whose resistance against the socio-cultural, political and economic wrongs of post-independence Cameroon like that of Besong, met with stiff counter-resistance from its brutal regimes.

Such counter-resistance from the rogue regime involves among others; imprisonment, assassination, and brutalisation "along Tcholliré swamps and nameless / Catacombs" where "their limbs... [will be] too frozen / For them... to walk" in those "torture-chambers" as Besong makes clear in the above poem (Besong, 2007, p. 95). In point of fact, Besong's remembrance and mention of Tcholliré swamp catacombs calls to mind, a maximum-security prison facility famous during the reign of Amadou Ahidjo in Cameroon. The establishment is allegedly located in a small village called Tcholliré in the North region of the country. It is rumoured that this prison complex was/is deadlier than those of Nkondengui in Yaoundé and New Bell in Douala. Such an allusion therefore foreshadows the brutality of the place.

Another important aspect of Bate Besong's life is his personal afflictions at the University of Buea where he was a lecturer until his death in early 2007 under suspicious circumstances in a ghastly car accident. In the poem "Appointments in UB", the poet remembers with disgust, his intellectual colleagues whom he labels "post-mortem intellectuals". Such a christening is occasioned by the fact that, these scholars had joined the ranks of those who sought to ensure the decay of the university system. Besong's tribulations as a university don under the Ministry of Education in general warranted him to challenge and censure the prevalent situation in the University of Buea as well as other state universities. In the mentioned poem, he remembers and laments the fact that, some intellectuals who, like him, had been victimised and afflicted by the corrupt UB system, readily joined the ranks of their erstwhile traumatisers immediately they got appointed:

I speak of yesterday's undesirable / lecturers, whose  
rheumy psyche still / bear the scars of occult / Cannibalism  
in an academy, constructed / on the muzzling / of dissident voices  
where the sword and / the bullet hold unmitigated / sway... (Besong, 2007, p. 22)

By metaphorically referring to the psyche of such intellectuals who joined the ranks of the university administration to afflict students and their colleagues after they got appointed as "rheumy", Besong at once expresses his antipathy towards them. The poet also remembers with bitterness the fact that,

because the bullet held unmitigated sway on campus, both nonconformist lecturers and students met their kismets through the barrel of the gun during the 2005 and 2006 students' uprising at the University of Buea in Cameroon.

It is ironical that, intellectuals like Besong and some students who sought to restore the dignity of UB were victimised while those who had heralded the same views against the system a few years back, readily joined the ranks of the "zoologist-assassin / with her predatory / stupidity" as Besong concludes in "Appointments in UB" (Besong, 2007, p. 23). It is possible that, the metaphor of the "zoologist-assassin" stands for the university administrator under whose watch, lecturers were haunted and students lost their lives around the time of the strikes. The metaphors, similes and invectives used by Besong in the poem here discussed, establish his confrontation and denunciation of such university bureaucrats, lecturers and trade union leaders whom he also invectively calls "freak messiahs", "nescient academicians" and "dead cormorants". In fact, the butt of the poet's resistance satire is against these fellows whose "materialist pursuits" govern their lives as they chose to afflict their colleagues as well as students. Thus, Besong concludes that their minds have been fashioned into a "programmed slave / consciousness" and crammed with a "superflux / Of boundless phlegm" which in "its corrosive / opprobrium.../ pollutes / the estuary / of the campus air" (Besong, 2007, p. 23).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the discussions and arguments advanced so far in this paper, there is no doubt that, the afflictive post-independence situations of Cameroon and South Korea as experienced by both Bate Besong and Chiha Kim find expression in their poetic compositions. By bearing witness to such experiences of angst through autobiographic writing, both Besong and Kim can be said to be fostering their resistance enterprise against post-independence afflictions of all kinds. The poems of the poets discussed here, demonstrate how they revisit the deep recesses of their memories in order to literarily detail their hideous personal experiences as a means of showcasing and resisting the horror and brutality reserved for those who seek to combat the excesses of the Cameroonian and South Korean post-independence governments.

Again, the various poetic devices identified and discussed in the selected poems of the poets in question, all work in tandem to generate the preconceived effect of their satire against post-independence violence and brutality within and without prison walls. In the same vein, these aesthetics constitute what this paper dares refer to as the poets' confrontational and denunciative poetics of resistance. It is thus understood that, these various poetics as utilised by Besong and Kim, serve to evoke emotions of commiseration and rage necessary for the continuation of the struggle against all forms of post-independence afflictions. Conclusively, it can be argued that Bate Besong and Chiha Kim's autobiographic substantiations of their ignoble post-independence experiences in Cameroon and South Korea respectively, sustains their activism and resistance against all forms of affliction orchestrated through discourses and practices of marginalisation, victimisation, incarceration and torture within the general post-independence contexts of their different countries.

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