

1 Bill F. Ndi's Peace Mongers at War: Deuniversalizing
2 Francophone Cameroon Pedigrees and Pluriversalizing Southern
3 Cameroons Contagions

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6 **Abstract**

7 This paper discusses Francophone Pedigrees and Southern Cameroon Contagions in Bill Ndi's
8 Peace Mongers at War by drawing on Mignolo's conception of the pluriverse. Francophone
9 Pedigrees refer to Francophone-imposed hegemonic benchmarks by which Anglophone
10 Cameroon culture and politics are condescendingly assessed and self-assertingly dismissed.
11 Southern Cameroon Contagions designate readily convivial pluriversal and accommodating
12 Anglophone cultures and politics downgraded by Francophones as pestilences or infestations.
13 The paper contends that Peace Mongers at War attests that in moments such as the ongoing
14 Anglophone crisis, dialogue cannot exist without humility and the naming of the Cameroonian
15 polity cannot continue to be an act of Francophone Pedigrees arrogance. The paper asserts
16 that Francophones start from the premise that naming the Cameroonian world is the task of
17 the Francophone elite and that the presence of Anglophones in history is a sign of
18 deterioration; that they are closed to " and even offended by " the contribution of
19 Anglophones because they are afraid of being displaced.

21 *Index terms*— pedigrees, contagions, pluriverse, hegemony, interconnectedness, power, powerlessness.

22 **1 Introduction: The Birth of Francophone Pedigrees and
23 Southern**

24 Cameroons Contagions out of the territory known today as the Republic of Cameroon was a German protectorate
25 from 1884. This protectorate was divided into British and French Cameroons in 1916 and confirmed, with some
26 slight modifications, by the Milner-Simon Agreement of 10 July 1919. British Cameroons was one fifth and
27 French Cameroun was four-fifths of the entire territory. They were Class B Mandated Territories of the League
28 of Nations until 1946 when they became United Nations Trust Territories. Britain and France instituted two
29 different administrative styles and systems in British Cameroons and French Cameroun respectively and these
30 have continued to impact the socioeconomic and politico-cultural lives of the two regions long after reunification
31 into a republic. In present day Cameroon, former British-mandated Cameroon is represented by the Northwest
32 and Southwest regions. Cameroonian from these regions are called Anglophones and they use English as their
33 major official language. Former French-mandated Cameroun is represented by the remaining eight regions of the
34 country. Cameroonian from this extraction are called Francophones and they use French as their main language
35 of administration. The relationship between the Francophone majority and the Anglophone minority has been
36 characterized by marginalisation in human resource development and deployment in the Anglophone region,
37 mistreatment of the English language, flooding of Anglophone Cameroon with Francophone administrators,
38 "Francophonization" of the English educational subsystem and the common-law system and the gradual erosion
39 of Anglophone identity. 1 Cameroon's checkered journey from a Federal State to the Republic of Cameroon
40 created Francophone Pedigrees (FP hereafter) and Southern Cameroon Contagions (SCC hereafter). The former
41 refers to Francophone-imposed hegemonic benchmarks by which Anglophone Cameroon culture and politics are
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43 condescendingly assessed and selfassertingly dismissed. The latter designates readily convivial pluriversal and
44 accommodating Anglophone cultures and politics downgraded by Francophones as infestations or pestilences.
45 The FP-masterminded change from a Federation to a Republic sacrificed the Anglophone peoples' sovereignty
46 and since then, the foundations of Anglophoneness have continued to be eroded by the centralizing processes
47 of nationalization without being synchronously reinforced by decentralizing tendencies wherein Cameroonian
48 should have been shrinking "we" to likeminded others and enlarging "they" to everyone else thereby opening
49 full accommodation to the realities of interdependence. A Francophone-Anglophone subgroupism has arisen
50 out of those deep affinities that people have developed toward what Rosenau calls "close-at-hand associations,
51 organizations, and subcultures with which they have been historically, professionally, economically, socially, or
52 politically linked and to which they attach their highest priorities" ??2004, ??3). That subgroupism values
53 the Francophone or Anglophone in-group over the Francophone or Anglophone out-group, sometimes treating
54 the two as adversaries and sometimes positing them as susceptible to extensive cooperation. Subgroupism has
55 been sustained by Anglophone disappointment with -and alienation from -the performances of the Cameroonian
56 system in which the Anglophone subgroup is located. Its intensities are the product of long-standing historical
57 roots that span generations and get reinforced by an accumulated lore surrounding past events in which the
58 Anglophone subgroup have continued to survive trying circumstances. Anglophone subgroupism has been
59 begetting subgroupisms as new splits are occurring. This has culminated most recently in the restorationists,
60 federalists, and unitarists divides that have been at the heart of the ongoing Cameroon Anglophone Crisis that
61 started in 2016.

62 Throughout Cameroon or "The Cameroons" (TC hereafter), Anglophone minorities and Francophone
63 majorities have been clashing over such ideological issues as bilingualism, federalism and regional autonomy,
64 and political representation. An increasing chorus of voices from civil society, victims of diverse forms of
65 discrimination, educationists, a huge range of social movements, sympathizers from some foreign governments,
66 and individual authors such as Bill Ndi are insisting that the roots of many of the contemporary problems
67 of TC, especially the conflict between FP and SSC, can be traced to the history, nature, and function of TC's
68 current political cultures and institutions. ??ill ??ar (2018). In all these collections, the absence of a much-needed
69 Francophone Cameroon-Anglophone Cameroon multilevel dialogue and its disintegrating effects on peacebuilding
70 and state-building are central to Ndi's thinking. The Cameroonian solidarity that Ndi's poetic vision envisages
71 is not that of a national uniformity but that of a unity in diversity. His personae often insist that Cameroonian
72 must learn to appreciate and tolerate pluralities, multiplicities, cultural differences, unity in diversity, and not
73 uniformity and hegemony because every Cameroonian culture has something distinctive to offer for the solidarity
74 and welfare of Cameroon.

75 In his 2018 collection, Peace Mongers at War (PMAW hereafter), Ndi depicts Cameroon as an oxymoron; the
76 epicenter of all types of wars, an upside down, inside out country, a society where the innocents are in jail and
77 the guilty are free with such Aesopian twists promoting hardened criminals to higher offices while petit thieves
78 languish in jails. In the poems, the violation of human rights is an inherent and necessary part of the process of
79 implementing a coercive and unjust political and economic structure on the Cameroonian world. In PMAW more
80 than in any of the collections, Ndi depicts a Francophonecentric control hierarchy where the higher Francophone
81 culture (pedigrees) has a significant degree of authority over the lower Anglophone culture (contagions). That
82 hierarchy is characterized by downward causation, harnessing of the energy of the lower Anglophone culture,
83 and the constraining of the degrees of freedom of microparts. The Anglophones are not allowed to exert
84 any important control over the Francophones, leaving Francophones more or less, fully autonomous from the
85 Anglophones, but the Francophones have the power to determine the Anglophones from above; they have a
86 relation of authoritative supersession with the Anglophones ??Kontopoulos 1993, 55). The relationship between
87 Francophones and Anglophones swings between complete inclusion and supersession and partial inclusion and
88 tangledness within structures of signification, domination, and legitimization. Francophone power has become a
89 non-denumerable, unaccountable network of powers inscribed in all the different institutional settings and social
90 spaces.

91 This paper argues that Ndi's PMAW attests to the fact that the Francophone Cameroon matrix of power
92 is built and operates on a series of interconnected heterogenous historico-structural hierarchies, bounded by
93 the "/" that divides and unites FP centres and cultures and SCC peripheries and cultures that are the
94 consequences of Francophonecentric one-dimensional thinking. FP and SCC are entanglements or, to use U.S.
95 Third World Feminist concept, intersectionalities (Crenshaw 1989;Fregoso 2003) of multiple and heterogeneous
96 national hierarchies ("heterarchies") of cultural, social, political, epistemic, economic, linguistic, and regional
97 forms of Francophone domination and exploitation. In Ndi's PMAW, the FP-SCC hierarchy is built on: a
98 national division of labor of core and periphery where capital organizes labor at the periphery around coerced
99 and authoritarian forms; a national or regional hierarchy that privileges Francophones and the Francophone
100 half of the country over the Anglophones'. This epistemic hierarchy privileges Francophone knowledges and
101 cosmologies over the Anglophones'. In addition, it is a linguistic hierarchy that privileges the French language
102 over the English language with a constituent pedagogical hierarchy where the Francophone forms of pedagogy
103 are considered superior over Anglophone forms. The Francophone controls the national media production and
104 information technology while the Anglophone has very limited means to make their points of view enter the
105 national media dialogue. The spatial hierarchy privileges the presumed Francophone urban over the supposed

106 Anglophone rural. ??Grosfoguel 2011, 9, 11). The complex multiplicity of power hierarchies at the national scale
107 in the present Cameroonian world is not just a social or an economic system, but a Francophone civilization
108 upon the Cameroonian.

109 Furthermore, anti-systemic decolonial struggles against the power hierarchies of TC are at the same time
110 a civilization struggle for a new Cameroonian humanism and a new Cameroonian civilization. In a way,
111 PMAW asserts that Cameroonians need to be hostile to easy relativisms and holisms built out of summing
112 and subsuming parts because passionate detachment requires more than just acknowledged and self-critical
113 partiality. Cameroonians are also bound to seek perspectives from those points of view that promise potent
114 knowledge for constructing TC worlds less organized by axes of domination. Ndi acknowledges that the
115 positionings of the subjugated SCC are not exempt from critical reexamination, decoding, deconstruction, and
116 interpretation. The standpoints of SCC are not "innocent" positions. On the contrary, they are preferred
117 because in principle they are least likely to allow denial of the critical or interpretive core of other Cameroonian
118 knowledges. They are knowledgeable of Francophone modes of denial through repression, forgetting and
119 disappearing -ways of being nowhere while claiming to see comprehensively. The SCC standpoints promise more
120 adequate, sustained, objective, transforming accounts of the TC. The above consideration leads to the conclusion
121 that because upholders of FP insist on the nationalization of Francophone ontologies and epistemologies and
122 the denationalization of the Anglophone system, they are guilty of fundamentalizing the French "universe."
123 Conversely, defenders of SCC (cf. Ndi's PMAW) advocate the contemporaneous nationalization of Francophone
124 and Anglophone systems and are therefore veritable agents of the construction of the much-needed Cameroonian
125 pluriverse.

126 Thus, the three points that the paper anchors on are first, that a Cameroonian pluriversal standpoint requires
127 an SCC broader canon of thought than simply the FP. The next is that a truly Cameroonian national pluriversal
128 stance cannot be based on an abstract Francophone universal that raises itself as universal national design,
129 instead of being the result of a critical dialogue between Francophone and Anglophone critical political projects
130 towards a Cameroonian pluriverse as opposed to a Cameroonian universe. Finally, de-Francophonizing pedigrees
131 and de-Anglophonizing contagions would require that Cameroonians take seriously what Grosfoguel calls "the
132 epistemic perspective/cosmologies/insights of critical thinkers from the [Anglophone community] thinking from
133 and with subalternized spaces and bodies" ??2011,4). It is also worth noting that in the FP-SCC hierarchy,
134 there is a difference between "epistemic location" and "social location." PMAW illustrates the fact that from an
135 ontologico-epistemic angle, even though one is socially located in the oppressed SCC side of Cameroonian power
136 relations, she/he does not automatically have to submit to thinking from a subaltern epistemic location (6).

137 Overwhelmingly, the success of the FP national system has consisted in making some subjects that are socially
138 located in the oppressed SCC side of the national divide, to think ontologico-epistemically like the ones on
139 the dominant FP positions. SCC ontologicoepistemic vantage points are knowledges and experiences coming
140 from SCC that produce critical perspectives of Francophone hegemonic knowledge and experiences in the power
141 relations involved. This is, in no way, a claim to an SCC populism where knowledge and experiences produced
142 from SCC are automatically building blocks of the Cameroonian pluriverse. The claim, here made, is that
143 all knowledges and experiences are ontologico-epistemically located in the dominant FP or the subaltern SCC
144 side of the Cameroonian power relations and that this is related to the FP-SCC politics of hierarchies. Thus,
145 "the disembodied and unlocated neutrality and objectivity" of the FP politics of Cameroonian leadership is a
146 Francophone myth ??Grosfoguel 6).

147 The above hypothesis will borrow critical perspectives from Mignolo's distinction between the universe and
148 the pluriverse i.e., the difference between universality and pluriversality (2018, x-xiii). To Mignolo, the pluriverse
149 consists in seeing beyond claims to superiority and sensing the world as pluriversally constituted. Pluriversality
150 names the principles and assumptions upon which pluriverses of being and meaning are constructed. Mignolo
151 argues that "[p]luriversality as a universal project is aimed not at changing the world but at changing the beliefs
152 and the understanding of the world, which would lead to changing our (all) praxis of living in the world" (x). It
153 consists of renouncing "the conviction that the world must be conceived as a unified totality in order for it to
154 make sense, and viewing the world as an interconnected diversity instead, sets us free to inhabit the pluriverse
155 rather than the universe" (x). Consequently, Cameroonian pluriversality as a national project would mean that
156 the universal or the national cannot have one single Francophone owner. The universal or national can only be
157 pluriversal, which also corresponds with this paper's vision of a Cameroonian world in which many worlds coexist.
158 Francophone universalism has the right to coexist in the Cameroonian pluriverse of meaning, but it needs to be
159 stripped of its pretended universality, i.e., Francophone cosmology. Such would be one of many Cameroonian
160 cosmologies, no longer the one that subsumes and regulates all the others (x).

161 Thus conceived, Mignolo contends that "pluriversality is not cultural relativism, but the entanglement of
162 several cosmologies connected today in a power differential" (x). A Cameroonian pluriverse would not be a world
163 of independent units but a world entangled through and by the Francophone matrix of power. Pluriversality and
164 the pluriverse of meaning would be connected to Humberto Maturana's idea of the multiverse, a world of truth in
165 parentheses, while the universe is a world built on truth without parenthesesunqualified, unconditional ??2004,
166 ??2). Whereas "universality is always imperial, and war driven, pluri-and multiverses are convivial, dialogical, or
167 plurilogical, pluriand multiverses exist independently of the state and corporations" (xii). Thus, pluriversity in
168 the sphere of the de-Francophonizing pedigrees and de-Anglophonizing contagions project emerges out of Ndi's

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169 poetic vision which cautions that Cameroonian enter the domain of constituted ontologies wherein all being is
170 constituted through observers. Were Cameroonian to follow that path, they would become aware that they can
171 in no way claim to be in possession of the truth, but that there are numerous possible realities, and should they
172 follow that path, they would not demand the subjection of fellow Cameroonian, but would listen to them, seek
173 cooperation, and communication (Maturana 42).

174 2 II.

175 3 Overcoming imperial Leadership, Rebuilding Pluricentric Interconnectedness

176 This section demonstrates that Ndi's poetic vision asserts that to overcome the imperial dichotomy between
177 FP and SCC, Cameroonian need to confront alienation from their own individual power and reclaim it from
178 those who have taken it from them on the pretext of representative democracy. They also need to rebuild the
179 socio-economic and politico-cultural spaces from which they have been alienated. This process would foster an
180 emancipatory politics that retraces the path to interconnectedness, conviviality, incompleteness, and pluriversality
181 from which they have been disconnected for a long time. Such emancipatory politics needs to be combined
182 with a constant striving towards a transformative social justice thereby fostering respect for multiple cultures
183 and knowledge forms coupled with an insistence on the infiniteness of the diversity of the Cameroonian world.
184 Succinctly put, TC is a multiplicity of worlds, ontologies, or reals that are far from being exhausted by the
185 Francophonecentric experience or reducible to its terms (Escobar 2016). For Ndi's pluriverse proposal, there are
186 multiple reals, yet it is not intended to "correct" the view on a single real on the grounds of being a truer account
187 of "reality." Ndi's pluriverse is "a tool to first, make alternatives to the one world plausible to one-worlders, and
188 second, provide resonance to those other worlds that interrupt the oneworld story" ??Blaser et al 2014, 22).
189 Paulo Freire argues that, "[h]uman existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only
190 by true words, with which men and women transform the world" (88). To him, "[t]o exist is to name the world,
191 to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a
192 new naming. Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection" (88). In line with
193 Freire's postulation, Ndi sets the stage for his delineation of FP-SCC asymmetry through "Peace Warring War,"
194 a poetic piece that records a conversation in which a poet and an audience univocally name the world of peace
195 they are longing for:

196 Poet: What do we want? Audience: We want Peace! Poet: What do we want? Audience: We want Peace!
197 Poet: Where do we differ? Audience: They want war! (20) If one recalls that "Peace Warring War" was published
198 in 2018, one could contend that the poem is a call for an end to the Southern Cameroons (SC hereafter) crisis and
199 a return to lasting peace. Conflict and war rage across much of SC as a culture of entitlements has replaced one
200 of responsibilities. The militarization of SC and the very real possibility of a genocide continue. A governance
201 that maintains a nonpareil Francophone ancestry and celebrates Francophilia while bemoaning and promoting
202 a worthless Anglophone lineage cum Anglophobia fuels this insecurity. Cameroonian politics and everyday life
203 continue to drift apart as "emancipatory politics" disappears and is replaced by "lifestyle politics" (Giddens
204 1991). In line with these worrisome times, the poet and the audience in the above poetic conversation challenge
205 silence and name peace as an act of empowerment. It is important to remember that renaming and renarrating
206 (especially SC history) are an essential component of Ndi's poetic vision. By renaming peace, Ndi achieves
207 what hooks calls "back talk," "a courageous act -an act of risk and daring" ??hooks 1989, 22). In the world
208 of the southern black community of the USA, "back talk" and "talking back" "meant speaking as an equal to
209 an authority figure. It meant daring to disagree and sometimes it just meant having an opinion" (22). By
210 naming what they want, Ndi's poetpersona and the poet-persona's audience, a microcosm of the macrocosmic
211 Anglophone community, dare to speak; to speak back to the Francophone authority. Within FP-SCC circles,
212 silence is often seen as the Francophoncentric right speech of Anglophonenessthe sign of SCC submission to FP
213 authority. This emphasis on the Anglophone's silence may be an Certainly, for Anglophones, their struggle has
214 not only been to emerge from silence into speech, but to change the nature and direction of their speech, to make
215 a speech that compels Francophone listeners, one that is heard. Anglophone speech, the right or imposed speech
216 of Anglophoneness, has often been the soliloquy, the talking into thin air, the talking to Francophone ears that
217 do not hear them -the talk that is simply not listened to (hooks 23). Unlike the Francophone whose speech is to
218 be heard, who is to be listened to, whose words are to be remembered, the voices of the masses of Anglophones
219 -demanding to be heard, asking for equality, negotiating their Anglo-Saxon identity, etc., -have been tuned out,
220 have become a kind of background music, audible but not acknowledged as significant speech. Dialogue -the
221 sharing of speech and recognition -has been denied the Anglophone. For Ndi, like for most Anglophones, "true
222 speaking is not solely an expression of creative power; it is an act of resistance, a political gesture that challenges
223 politics of domination that would render [Anglophones] nameless and voiceless" (27). Speaking the truth is a
224 courageous act, it represents a threat to those who wield oppressive power and "that which is threatening must
225 necessarily be wiped out, annihilated, silenced" (27). Through the dialogue in "Peace Warring War," Ndi asserts
226 that the movement from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle
227 side by side. This is a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new Anglophone life and growth possible. The
228

poem records that act of speech, of "talking back," that is no mere gesture of empty words but the expression of an Anglophone Cameroon movement from object to subject -the liberated voice. That is why in another poem, "Seeds of Peace," Ndi concludes that "True liberty knows and loves Peace/Not brutalities that them please" (24)! Furthermore, Ndi's use of the conversational style to distinguish between war and peace, monologue and dialogue, and silence and speech, is also a subtle way of asserting that FP foster monologue, silence, and war whereas SCC foster speech, dialogue, and peace. Through the poem, Ndi also affirms that while to say the true word -which is praxis -is to transform the Cameroonian world into a pluriverse, saying that word is not the privilege of a few persons, but the right of everyone. Consequently, no Cameroonian can say a true word alone -nor can she/he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs other Cameroonians of their words. The poem upholds that FP-SCC dialogue should be an encounter between men, mediated by the world, to name the world. Hence, FP-SCC dialogue cannot occur between FP who want to name the world and SCC who do not wish this naming -between FP that deny SCC the right to speak their word and SCC whose right to speak has been denied them. To Ndi, therefore, Anglophones who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression. The question-and-answer conversation between the poet and the audience and the unanimous demand for peace fall in line with the argument that Cameroonians cannot solve the crisis that have been plaguing the SC if they are unwilling to talk to each other. Indeed, openness to dialogue and to cooperation is required of all people of good will, and of individuals and groups with specific responsibilities in the areas of politico-economics and social life, at both the national and international levels. If it is in speaking their word, "we want peace", that the poet and the audience (Cameroonians), by naming the Cameroonian world, transform it, then Ndi's argument is that dialogue imposes itself as the way by which Cameroonians can achieve significance as human beings.

Dialogue is thus an existential necessity, an encounter in which the united reflection and action of the FP-SCC dialoguers are addressed to the Cameroonian world which needs to be transformed and humanized. Ndi argues that such a dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one group "depositing" ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be "consumed" by the discussants. The collegiality between the poet and the audience is Ndi's manner of affirming that for the Anglophone crisis to be resolved, dialogue must not be a hostile, polemical argument between those who are committed neither to the naming of the Cameroonian world, nor to the search for truth, but rather to the imposition of their own fundamentalizing truth. Because dialogue is supposed to be an encounter among Cameroonians who name the Cameroonian world, it must not be a situation where some name on behalf of others. It should be an act of creation; it must cease to serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of SCC by FP. That act of creation would result in a Cameroonian pluriverse which would be a rainbow of cosmologies, knowledges, and vital worlds (Mignolo 2018). In that pluriverse, Francophoneness and Anglophoneness would not be envisaged as distinct cultures or polities, each with its independent logic, but as multiple ways of being and knowing that have co-evolved in Cameroonian relations of power and difference.

In "The Fall of Bakassi," Ndi captures the irresponsibility of the patrons of FP by subtly arguing that when Nigeria claimed the Bakassi peninsula as part of her territory, France abandoned Cameroon at a time when she needed her most: "When Bakassi fell, France claiming Cameroon/Nothing did say that would his business maroon/A lesson our morons refuse to learn from/And would ties project to heights top in form/As the French his glass of wine savour/Poor cam marooned ions bleed in labour" (18). Ndi's argument is also that by abandoning the peninsula for several years at the mercy of the Nigerian government, the FP government of Cameroon was being politically irresponsible toward the peninsula's Anglophone community. When in June 2006 in Greentree, Cameroon and Nigeria signed a historic agreement under the auspices of Kofi Annan setting the modalities and time frame for the implementation of the 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice transferring the Bakassi peninsula from Nigeria to Cameroon, President Biya achieved commendable success in international politics. That landmark event was a testimony to the determination and resolve of both countries to respect the rule of international law and address their border dispute in a way that secured lasting peace and good neighborly relations. Given France's abandonment of Cameroon at such a critical moment, Ndi calls on TC to cut ties of dependency with France: "Relations between states: interdependence/Yet the dependents joy with independence/Cameroon, Cameroon, forty-eight years running/Cameroon, Cameroon, forty-eight years crawling;/Sit up and stagger/For you're no toddler" (18).

Ndi's argument that Cameroonians should commission and decommission their relations with France demonstrates an awareness that in a bit to construct a pluriverse, Cameroonians must constantly remember that even though many words are walked in the world, many worlds are made, and many worlds make them, there are words and worlds that are lies and injustices (Blaser and de la Caden 2018, 1). There are also words and worlds that are truthful and true but in the world of the powerful like France or Francophone Cameroon, there is room only for the big and their helpers. In the pluriverse world Ndi advocates, every Cameroonian would fit because it would be a world in which many worlds fit. Ndi, again, points out that the Cameroon government has not been able to extend the peace overtures of the Greentree accord to its Anglophone population over the years because by having adopted FP as its modus operandi, it has become a French slave thereby enslaving Anglophones: "As they've known all these years/They have spent shedding tears/You refused to wipe not being brave/For all you are is France's knave" (18)! Here, Ndi is saying that the Francophone matrix of power is an offshoot of France's neocolonial matrix of power.

In "Anthem for Essigang", a vitriolic distortion of TC's national anthem, the poet depicts the country as one

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292 that FP have turned into a Parisian sandwich cookie: "O, macaroon covered with poor chicks' feathers/Go sit
293 down and pride yourself in thievery/Like the slums your disgraceful flag shall fly/With your havoc to your name
294 ever true" (35). Ndi's gastronomical image of Cameroon as a sandwich is telling of the politics of the belly that
295 France and Francophone Cameroon have been practicing on citizens of La République du Cameroun and those
296 of SC extraction respectively.

297 Cameroon has been France's sandwich from the colonial period to the present in the same manner that
298 Anglophone Cameroon has been Francophone Cameroon's sandwich since independence. Further more, the
299 speaker's assertion that a clan of bandits have turned his/her father's "house that once all tongue could tell [into]
300 a house of thieves ??and] the rest of the world can see the emblem of the tears of [his/her] people" is another
301 instance of talking back (35). Ndi's back talk is not inherently a form of disrespect; it functions as a mode of
302 self-assertion, a way of being agential, a way in which the marginalized Southern Cameroonians strive to make
303 themselves known, recognized, and valued. In Ndi's poetic vision, back talk is a mode of SC coming to voice, a
304 way of taking a stand, a species of fearless speech concretized in the promise: "With death and sadness in our
305 store/Thine be disgrace, thine be great shame" (35). Hence, for Ndi, voice is a powerful vehicle in terms of which
306 Southern Cameroonians name who and what they are.

307 Also, to Ndi, the inability to question, interrogate, problem-pose, articulate the layers of imaginative wondering
308 and wandering that can kill the spirit of hope. As Freire reminds us, human existence, especially marginalized
309 existence, cannot be silent. To exist is to stand out, to pose one's existence as an object of critical reflection
310 and that is why Ndi's personae speak in and through multiple Cameroonian voices. They speak with the sort of
311 polyvocality or multivocality that maximizes access to the variegated downtrodden of both SC and La République
312 du Cameroun extractions. In "Our Leaders & Our Drums," Ndi tells us that the leaders "came with veils on
313 their faces" and the people "greeted and drummed their praises" only to discover later that "the stench of their
314 faeces" had infected the nation's health (31). The implication here is that the practice of naming and claiming
315 is not just about allowing marginalized voices that have been historically relegated to the margins to be heard.
316 Thus, the persona further tells us that to cling to power, the leaders crush the crowd "With their swords chiming
317 a tune/To bash [their] hopes out of tune/Hopes whose strength in non-visibility lies" (31). While Ndi's poetry
318 speaks to the pain and suffering of all groups, his poetry is fundamentally inspired by his love of and for SC
319 and her people. He speaks in a voice and writes in a poetry that is unabashedly Anglophone. Even though his
320 message is for all people, he is concerned with the existential welfare of SC; it is a unique, rooted, and defiant
321 concern. He encourages Anglophones to find the courage to resist the totalizing forces of FP marginalization:
322 "With the lies they had veiled with promises to bring in/And unleash their hounds to bite within/Which they do
323 but our hopes are the last words/To usher them out and bury their swords" (31). The persona's confidence that
324 the leaders will be Volume XXI Issue III Version I 44 () ushered out and their swords buried once more reminds
325 us that naming in the Freirean sense is the active process of breaking through forms of imposed silence; naming
326 reality is a mode of problem-posing, a way of calling attention to the Anglophone Cameroon social world and
327 its appearance of fixity. Infused with the kind of hope that one finds in "Our Leaders & Our Drums," naming
328 becomes a form of demasking, unveiling modes of FP's bad faith and ideological obfuscation. Ndi's naming, then,
329 is both about renaming the self and renaming reality; "renaming the self and renaming reality are coconstitutive,
330 hermeneutics of transformation that presupposes and valorizes the unity between" SCC and construction of the
331 Cameroonian pluriverse ??Davidson and Yancy 2009, 4).

332 In "His Victory," Ndi decries the phenomenon of contentious elections by taking a dig at presidential elections
333 in TC akin to the October 2018 simulacrum of elections: "After promises so untrue and surreal/Smiling for
334 being propelled to the helm to steal/From the miserable poor/The malapert having his way tricked to the
335 helm/When the west his deeds greets those of a strongman/On them we trample as those of a hangman" (32).
336 Having come to power through dubious means, Ndi, in "Really Odd," tells us that the bizarre activities of the
337 leader have culminated in a series of odd murders while avoiding the real murder he was elected to commit,
338 i.e., murdering corruption. Ndi writes: "Murderer, murderer kill your corruption/Sad sights on our streets with
339 slain liberty/Murderer, murderer why not kill all wars/Murderer, murderer your acts kill true needs/For even
340 madmen chastise your deeds" (23). In the former quotation, Ndi's contention that the malapert's ascension
341 to power was greeted by the West as the deeds of a strongman demonstrates his awareness that questions of
342 right and justice apply only to relations among equals in power. The double standards of the West, the haven
343 of FP, affirm that for others, the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must. Bill Clinton
344 said, at a private function in Los Angeles in October 2002, that as the top dog in the world, the USA faced a
345 fundamental choice. It could either make every effort to stay as a top dog or it could use its unchallengeable
346 dominance to create a world in which it was comfortable living when no longer as a top dog (qtd. Evans, May
347 8, 2013). The Western world under US leadership seems to have ignored Clinton's second laudable proposal to
348 the detriment of societies like TC. One would have thought that as the top dog of the world, the West would
349 have created a framework of complementary, mutually reinforcing institutions through interlocking structures,
350 each with complementary roles and strengths that condemn and dethrone leaders who come to power through
351 dubious means. But unfortunately, the West, by pressing such leaders encourages a form of liberal hegemony; an
352 ambitious strategy in which the West aims to turn as many countries as possible into pseudo-liberal democracies
353 like themselves while also promoting an open international economy and building international institutions that
354 seek to spread its own values far and wide in the form of FP. The dubious ascension to power by the "hangman"

leader continues to paint a rather grim picture of Cameroonian politics. The Cameroonian electoral system is thus portrayed as a brutal arena where undependable politicians look for opportunities to take advantage of the populace. Daily life has become essentially a struggle for power, where each politician strives not only to be the most powerful actor in the system, but also to ensure that no other politician achieves that lofty position. This explains why, in "Really Odd", the leader has become an indiscriminate murderer who instead of killing wars and corruption, has slain liberty, and killed true needs. Ndi paints an appalling picture of the situation by telling us that even madmen chastise the leader's deeds. Just like in "Really Odd," Ndi in "Gimmicks King Commander" paints the image of a chief commander who "gerrymandered his way to the boxes leaving the masses with losses" (44). The commander is oblivious to the fact that the masses are neither blind to his gimmicks nor to his rendering the nation sick year in year out (44). Even though the commander thinks that his people are fools in a crowd, the speaker says that they "are a crowd conscious of being fooled/And out of the mess will have ourselves pulled/Even with all his riggings and gun-totting/Hoping we'll yield and yield; that's not our thinking" (44)! In the same vein, in "Master or Monster," the persona also laments that "When we brought him in, we hailed, "Master, Master!"/Now wanting him out, we cry, "Monster, Monster" (72)! The "slain liberty" in "Really Odd," the "riggings and gun-totting" in "Gimmicks King Commander," and the cry "monster, monster!" in "Master or Monster" remind one of Maurice Kamto's apprehension for controversially claiming to have been cheated out of the presidency in the 2018 elections.

Kamto's arrestment, like that of several Anglophones, is an FP universalism that is congruent with a total neglect of Ndi's call for a Cameroonian pluriversalism built on a true FP-SCC conversation which is not to be confused with the idle chatter or the violent babble of competing voices of especially the Anglophone Cameroon elite and their politics of the six Cs: confrontation, collaboration, compromise, collusion, complicity, and co-optation. It is "an extended and open dialogue which presupposes a background of intersubjective agreements and a tacit sense of relevance. There may be different emphases and stresses by participants in the conversation, and in [that] living conversation there [will always be that] unpredictability and novelty" that reveal cracks and crevices in FP that have been hegemonically taken to be solid and secure ??Bernstein 1983, 1). In both poems, Ndi

Volume XXI Issue III Version I 45 () indicates three foundations for the commencement of the construction of that pluriverse. These include the leader's usage of his position to stop the misery of the poor plebes in "His Victory" and the killing of corruption and receiving an ovation and the killing of all wars and having thanks from all Cameroonian in "Really Odd."

For that pluriversal construction work to commence, the leadership must start by establishing proper institutions with a set of rules that would stipulate the ways in which Francophones and Anglophones would cooperate and compete. Such rules would prescribe or proscribe acceptable or unacceptable forms of state behaviour. These rules would be negotiated by Francophones and Anglophones, and according to Ndi's poetic vision, they would entail the mutual acceptance of higher norms, which would be standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations. These rules would be typically formalized in national agreements and Cameroonian would be obliged to obey the rules they created. From that perspective, engaging with Ndi's pluriversal vision, tarrying in conversation, would be to move within the critical space of recognizing that Cameroonian are all fallible and yet it would be to avoid succumbing to a state of epistemological nihilism; it would also imply a commitment to Cameroonian epistemic practices without assuming that such practices are grounded upon either FP or SCC epistemological foundations that are indubitable and apodictic ??Yancy 2017, xi). Recognition of every Cameroonian's fallibility would not mean that anything would go; and, being committed would not mean that Cameroonian must be dogmatic and unyielding. Rather, pluriversal conversations would demand that Cameroonian be willing to subject FP and SCC "assumptions and beliefs to open and often fragile dialogue, to engage those voices and perspectives that know otherwise than the arrogant we, to be epistemologically un-sutured/fissured as a condition for at least initially hearing the other and being prepared to examine and even revise one's views accordingly" (Yancy xi-xii).

This section thus asseverates Ndi's PMAW to be an SCC scream; a refusal to accept FP, a refusal to accept the unacceptable. A refusal to accept the inevitability of increasing inequality, misery, exploitation, and violence in SC. The poems demonstrate a refusal to accept the truth of the untrue, a refusal to accept closure ??Holloway 2003, 11). Ndi's scream -also an Anglophone scream -is a refusal to wallow in being victims of oppression. It is a refusal to readily accept the role of Cassandra adopted by some collaborative, compromising, collusive, complicitous, and co-opting Anglophone Cameroon elite who predict the downfall of the Anglophone world and accept there is nothing to be done about it. The Anglophone scream is a scream to break windows, a refusal to be contained, an overflowing, a going beyond the pale, beyond the bounds of an impolite Cameroonian society ??Holloway 11).

As demonstrated through the discussion of "Peace Warring War," "The Fall of Bakassi," "Anthem for Essigang," "Our Leaders & Our Drums," "His Victory," "Really Odd," "Gimmicks King Commander," and "Master or Monster," that SCC scream is twodimensional: the scream of rage that arises from the present experience of the ongoing Anglophone crisis carries within itself a hope, a projection of possible otherness. The scream is ecstatic, in the literal sense of standing out ahead of itself towards an open future; Anglophones who have been screaming since October 2016 exist ecstatically. They stand out beyond themselves; they exist in two dimensions. Their scream implies "a tension between that which exists and that which might conceivably exist,

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418 between the indicative (that which is) and the subjunctive (that which might be)" (??olloway 12). They live in
419 an unjust society, but they wish it were not so: the two parts of the sentence are inseparable and exist in constant
420 tension with each other. Their scream does not require to be justified by the fulfilment of what might be. It
421 is simply the recognition of the dual dimension of reality. The second part of the sentence (they wish it were
422 not so) is no less real than the first. It is the tension between the two parts of the sentence that gives meaning
423 to their scream (12). If the second part of the sentence (the subjunctive wish) is seen as being less real than
424 the first, then their scream too is disqualified (12). Some Anglophones may not even know what a true world of
425 their scream would look like, but they all have a vague idea. It would be a world of justice, a world in which
426 Cameroonians could relate to each other as people and not as objects, a world in which people would shape their
427 own lives. The poems discussed above even suggest, rightly so, that Anglophones do not need to have a picture of
428 what a true Cameroonian world would be like to feel that there is something radically wrong with the FPcentric
429 world in which they live. Feeling that the world is wrong does not necessarily mean that they have a picture of
430 a utopia to replace it with. This does not necessarily mean a romantic, someday-my-prince-will-come idea that,
431 although things are wrong now, one day they shall come to a true world, a promised land, a happy ending. They
432 need no promise of a happy ending to justify their rejection of a world they know to be wrong. Their starting
433 point is this rejection of a world that they know to be wrong, negation of a world that is negative. This is what
434 they must cling to ??Holloway 5).

435 4 Excavating the Ruins of Francophone Pedigrees' Power without 436 Responsibility, Scavenging for the Marbles Southern 437 Cameroon Contagions' Responsibility without Power

438 The central political dilemma that has confronted TC for more than fifty years now has been Volume XXI Issue III
439 Version I 46 () whether and how the principles and practices of Cameroonian liberal democracy, especially power
440 and responsibility, can be extended and guaranteed to the people of the SC extraction. This question centres
441 around two concepts: freedom and equality. Both were effectively denied to Anglophone Cameroonians within the
442 1984 constitutional amendment that changed the country's name from the United Republic of Cameroon to the
443 Republic of Cameroon with Law No 84-1 of 4th February 1984 being incontrovertible evidence that the original
444 intentions of the Francophones were to absorb SC and not to treat her as an equal. Thus, PMAW bears witness to
445 more than 50 years of two major types of Cameroonian leaders. There have been Francophone plenipotentiaries
446 who possess political power but deliberately shun leadership responsibility and accountability thereby ruining the
447 nation in what could be termed power without responsibility. There have also been Anglophones who generally
448 take up positions without portfolios and, therefore, they have leadership responsibility but lack the political
449 power with which to accomplish that responsibility i.e., they have responsibility without power. In both cases,
450 there has been a tradition characterized by an uncharismatic and unaccommodating political style marked by a
451 subordinating repugnant presence and a lack of the ability to articulate deeply held grievances and hopes among
452 their people. The power without responsibility and responsibility without power dialectic readily recalls what
453 goes on in other postcolonial societies like TC.

454 In PMAW, Ndi's chef d'oeuvre for the delineation of the ruins caused by FP is "Litany of Lamentations,"
455 a 58-line single stanza poem through which the poet records a litany of 58 socio-economic and politicocultural
456 Cameroonian wreckages. In the poem, Ndi parodies the Book of Lamentations in the Old Testament of The
457 Holy Bible; five poems that lament the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC; describing how city and country,
458 palace and Temple, king and people, suffered under the terrible catastrophe. Ndi's poem captures a parallelism
459 between the people of Judah and the people of TC. Like the Biblical lamentations, Ndi's poem displays the
460 tension between the presumptuous completeness of FP and the convivial incompleteness of SCC in both its form
461 and its content. The utter decimation of the Cameroonian society is reflected in the complete and indiscriminate
462 destruction of the people of TC and their institutions, and in the incomplete and fragmented state of TC as a
463 society. Thematically, Ndi first describes TC as a society without ethics and values. It is a polity cast as a vicious
464 cycle, a spiral of violence, a psychological torture chamber, a nation run by thieves specialized in the crushing
465 of youths' dreams, a wall made of gangsters, a nation constructed with their bricks of arrogance, a community
466 with people who are haughtily bawdy, morally uncouth, devilishly cunning, satanically sly, a country bedeviled
467 with the smell of "shit" and the stench of rottenness (81).

468 He then identifies the legalization of the politics of the belly that looks like political mishmash, political
469 indigestion, misery in squalor, abjection in a quagmire, legalization of corruption, bastardization of impunitiess,
470 condoning crime without punishment, consolidation of their heinousness, a throne and crown in decay, and their
471 timeless putridity (81). Ndi also contends that Cameroon has been for so long in the hands of a gerrymandering
472 king, a king noted for: sowing seeds of discord and dancing and rhyming with division. He is also a king who is
473 clannishly sheepish, gangsterly arrogant, sloppily clumsy, a thousand headed hydra, monstrously ugly, a basking
474 shark, and a symbol of the flames of passionate and unpardonable hellish hate (81). This king has established a
475 culture of stagnation where his cronies cannot change because they have made their minds impervious, they will
476 not look back and change because they are trapped in their quicksand of misery, poverty, and privation (82).

477 Ndi equally indicates that the king and his cohorts have sanctioned socio-economic deprivation. They are not
478 a gang of petty thieves pushed by hunger, but highwaymen robbing for greed, not just a lazy stupid bunch at the

479 helm but a lousy crazy bunch steering the ship aground (82). Lastly, Ndi affirms that Cameroon's is a leadership
480 of unconscionabilities: not just a demagogue thinking he is a pedagogue, but a coward with demagogic delirium,
481 not just fake politicians and statesmen but convoluted to the marrow bone, not just their disorderly debauchery
482 but chaotic apocalypse now, not just driving the nation into her grave, but making of every life living hell, not
483 just through blind and questionable greed but through reckless and unthinkable felony, not just by burning and
484 burning with fire but burning and burning to ash all hopes (82). Ndi ends the poem by promising that "When
485 the gangster in chief has to this listen/I would the world ask him what he has learnt as a lesson" (82).

486 The above thematic summary indicates that "Litany of Lamentations" is a communal lament that Ndi uses
487 as a way of maintaining community cohesion during crisis. The litany of 58 laments are not merely the speaker's
488 personal expressions of emotion, but socioeconomically and politico-culturally sanctioned, controlled ways of
489 expressing grief. Functionally, the 58 laments are meant to contribute to Cameroonian social cohesion in the face
490 of a leadership catastrophe. Second, it is Ndi's way of elevating the voices of Cameroonian survivors before the
491 Cameroonian world and before the international community. Third, the laments provide some sense of completion
492 of the tragedy of failed FP leadership and therefore points at SCC ways for individuals and communities, especially
493 the Anglophone community, to move forward beyond Volume XXI Issue III Version I 47 () tragedies such as the
494 Reunification tragedy. The speaker repeatedly uses "Not just?" for the commencement of the first line and "I
495 would say?" or "But I would say?" for the beginning of the second line of each pair of lamentations: "Not just
496 a demagogue thinking he's a pedagogue/I would say a coward with demagogic delirium" (82). The second lines
497 of each pair of lamentations repeats and intensifies the thought of the first line in different words (synonymous
498 parallelism) or develops further the thought of the first line (synthetic parallelism) or negates the thought of the
499 first line (antithetic parallelism). Through a division of "Litany of Lamentations" into a six-point thematic focus:
500 the absence of ethics and values, the legalization of the politics of the belly, political gerrymandering, cultural
501 stagnation, socio-economic deprivation, and unconscionable leadership, Ndi asserts that the poem is much more
502 than a cheerless essentialist critique of the inequities of Cameroonian life. It is more than a cloudburst of SCC
503 grief, a river of SCC tears, or a sea of SCC sobs conditioned by FP.

504 The poem captures the pervasive FP of Cameroonian society and the anti-Anglophonism of the Francophone
505 community. It is difficult for critical space and insurgent activity and by extension, Anglophone power and
506 responsibility, to be expanded. That expansion "will only occur more readily when Anglophone intellectuals take a
507 more candid look at themselves, the historical and social forces that shape them, and the limited though significant
508 resources of the community from whence they come" ??West 1987, 52). A critical "self-inventory" that scrutinizes
509 the social positions, class locations, and cultural socializations of Anglophone political elite is imperative; and Ndi
510 affirms that such scrutiny should be motivated by neither self pity nor self-satisfaction. Rather, that self-inventory
511 should embody a sense of critique and resistance applicable to the Anglophone community, Francophone society,
512 and the Cameroonian civilization. Given that the Anglophone politician has been a bastardized form of the
513 Francophone, the future of Anglophone power and responsibility lies neither in a deferential disposition toward
514 the Francophone parent nor in a nostalgic search for the Anglophone one. Rather it resides in a critical negation,
515 wise preservation, and insurgent transformation of an Anglophone lineage which protects the Anglophone and
516 projects a better Cameroonian world (Doh 2008). And indeed, Ndi's persona initiates that journey towards SCC
517 self-scrutiny and FP accountability by promising that "When the gangster in chief has to this listen/I would the
518 world ask him what he has learnt as a lesson" (Ndi 82).

519 Judging from the cavalierism with which the Francophonized and Francophonizing Anglophone elite and the
520 government of TC have treated the Anglophone crisis, it is obvious that "the gangster in chief" would say that
521 he has not learnt anything because TC of Ndi's poetic depiction is not TC he knows. But "Whose Cameroon?"
522 and "Whose knowledge?" In Ndi's poetry the Cameroonian leadership's "knowledge" about TC is subtly framed
523 "within the context of the epistemology of ignorance, whereby the leaders are blinded by a certain historically
524 structured and structuring [Francophone] opacity" ??Yancy 2005, 1). It is "'a particular pattern of localized
525 and global cognitive dysfunctions, producing the ironic outcome that [Francophones] will in general be unable to
526 understand the world they themselves have made'" (1). The Cameroonian leadership's refusal of Ndi's depiction
527 only further confirms the Anglophone's conviction that critics and pundits have failed to explore and interrogate
528 the subtext of power without responsibility that led to the escalation of the Anglophone crisis. His exploration
529 of themes such as agnotology and epistemological fragmentation, sadistic brutality, sexual violence, xenophobic
530 paranoia, the reduction of fellow Anglophone beings to brute beasts, plays itself out against a silent, though
531 familiar, backdrop of a long history of La République du Cameroun's assimilationist drama of stigmatizing and
532 brutalizing the marked Anglophone "Other" (2). Thus, when Ndi identifies "Not just the flames of passionate
533 hate/I would say unpardonable hellish hate" (82), he is asserting that TC that he or Anglophones know is a
534 Cameroon that paints the world in Manichean divide(s): us/them, civilized/barbaric, peacekeepers/warmongers.
535 The divide that is most important to the task at hand, and within the body of Ndi's poetry, is that between FP
536 and SCC.

537 In "String Puller," Ndi laments that because of their selfish economic interests, the French have continued to
538 nurture and sustain this Manichean divide in TC by ensuring the continuity of a leadership of brigands: "The
539 French? are good/To get us, they hoard? our petrol/And pay patrol/To put on our thrones brigands/Well trained
540 in their bands/To play just the music they love to hear" (65). The involvement of the French in the politics of
541 Cameroonian petrol indicates that this divide is by no means uncomplicated, always fixed, and neatly delineated.

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542 Indeed, it has at moments like the ongoing Anglophone crisis, proven to be extremely murky, coalescing at
543 significant points of shared interest, political struggle, and so on (Yancy 4). The French involvement reminds us
544 that one of the major areas of Anglophone discontent has been the FP's mismanagement of West Cameroon's
545 patrimony. Apart from the neglect of infrastructure in the SC and the mismanagement and ruin of the once
546 buoyant companies like Cameroon Bank, West Cameroon Marketing Board, Wum Area Development Authority
547 (WADA), Upper Nun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA) in Ndop, West Cameroon Cooperative Movement,
548 etc., oil revenues from SONARA found in SC are alleged to be used by those in power to feed the "bellies" of their
549 allies such as France, and to stimulate Volume XXI Issue III Version I 48 () the economy in other non-Anglophone
550 regions. In addition, there is also great anxiety in SC that its major agro-industrial enterprises, especially the
551 Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) and Plantations Pamol du Cameroun Ltd (Pamol), have been sold
552 or their headquarters have been moved to La République du Cameroun.

553 The mismanagement of the West Cameroon patrimony argument does not claim to lose sight of the fact
554 even within each hemisphere of the FP-SCC divide, there are elite-induced tensions, contradictions, fundamental
555 differences, rivalries, schisms, and further complex divisions and splits as has been demonstrated by historic
556 events such as the Foumban Conference of 17th-21st July 1961, the appointment of Honorable Solomon Tandeng
557 Muna to replace Honorable Augustine Ngom Jua in 1968, the Referendum of 20th May 1972, the constitutional
558 amendment that changed the country's name from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon
559 in 1984, and most recently, the restorationists, federalists, and unitarists divides within Anglophones. However,
560 the utter self-centeredness of the French is heightened by the fact that Ndi had earlier told us, through "The
561 Fall of Bakassi", that when Nigeria claimed the oil rich Bakassi Peninsula, France did nothing to help Cameroon
562 regain that territory. This is Ndi's way of reminding us that capitalist exploitation and cartels and monopolies
563 are the enemies of underdeveloped countries because they thrive on the dependency syndrome. Ndi's pluriversal
564 argument, therefore, is that if the regime were completely oriented towards the wellbeing of its citizens, it would
565 not allow France to "hoard" Cameroon's petrol, and thus make impossible that caricature of a Cameroonian
566 society where all economic and political power is held in the hands of a few "brigands" who have been put there
567 to use FP to safeguard French interest.

568 Also, the presence of French petrol barons in Cameroon reminds one of a few verses from one of Pablo Neruda's
569 early poems called "Standard Oil Company." In the poem, Neruda tells us that the obese Standard Oil "emperors
570 from New York/are suave smiling assassins/who buy petty tyrants and dictators/They buy countries, people,
571 seas, police, county councils/Standard Oil awakens them/clothes them in uniforms, designates/which brother is
572 the enemy" (qtd. ??oy, 12 March 2012). The parallelism between the French who put brigands on Cameroonian
573 thrones to play just the music the French love to hear and the Americans who buy petty tyrants and dictators,
574 countries, and county councils demonstrates both Ndi's and Neruda's awareness that the predatoriness of Empire
575 power and bimetallism is the same everywhere, especially when petroleum is concerned. The parallelism also
576 asserts that just as there are FP in Cameroon, there are American Pedigrees in other countries suffering from
577 US neocolonialism. By indicating that Cameroon "brigands" exchange Cameroon petrol for power, Ndi is saying
578 that more than 50 years after independence, the truly vanquished who look upon the Cameroon government
579 as mai-baap -the parent and provider have been disappointed and disillusioned. The somewhat more radical,
580 like the persona in Ndi's poem and most of the Southern Cameroonians have identified it as chor -the thief and
581 snatcher-away of all things. But, unfortunately, the Anglophone elite, like the elite anywhere in the postcolonial
582 world, find it hard to separate itself from the state. It sees, thinks, and speaks like the state. The diversion of
583 Cameroonian resources over time is maintained not only by the power of France, but also through the power
584 of elite in TC. These elite maintain a dependent relationship because their own private interests coincide with
585 the interests of France. Most of these elite were typically trained in France and share similar values and culture
586 with the elite in France. Both Ndi and Neruda are, therefore, saying that in a very real sense, a dependency
587 relationship is a voluntary selfish relationship.

588 Until quite recently, it was sometimes difficult for some Cameroonians to see themselves as victims of the
589 conquests of Empire and consequently victims of FP. But now, local struggles have begun to see their role
590 with increasing clarity. However grand it might sound, the fact is, they are confronting Empire in their own,
591 very different ways. This explains why Ndi ends "String Puller" by reminding us that: "When the French had
592 invited us/All we left behind was curse/Now with knowledge they feed our killers/That's why they can't save
593 us from these killers/That's why they are? ubiquity/Outright excuse from responsibility" (65). The speaker's
594 declaration that the French feed their killers reminds one of France's ominous silence throughout the now-more-
595 than three years of the Anglophone Cameroon crisis. The fact that a French invitation was answered with a curse
596 demonstrates that the urge for hegemony and preponderance by the French patrons and FP are being matched
597 with greater intensity by the longing for dignity and justice by others. Ndi's argument is that there are several
598 avenues of protest available to people who wish to resist Empire.

599 By resisting, he does not mean only to express dissent, but to effectively force change. France's hoarding
600 of TC's petrol, her putting of brigands on Cameroonian thrones, and her refusal to free SCC from their FP
601 killers demonstrate that Empire has a range of calling cards. It uses different weapons to break open different
602 resistance. For poor people like Cameroonians, Empire does not always appear in the form of cruise missiles and
603 tanks, as Neruda insinuates it has in Iraq or Afghanistan or Vietnam. To Roy just like to Ndi, it appears "in
604 their lives in very local avatars -losing their jobs, being sent unpayable electricity bills, having their water supply

605 cut, being evicted from their homes and uprooted from their land" (12 March 2012). All this is overseen by the
606 repressive machinery of the Cameroonian state, the police, the army, and the judiciary. As Ndi points out, their
607 "ubiquity" ensures a process of relentless impoverishment and the entrenchment and exacerbation of already
608 existing inequalities. Several of the struggles against these inequalities have been radical, even revolutionary
609 when they began, but, Ndi's persona's SCC steadfastness in the face of French neocolonialism is a reminder
610 that Cameroonian must watch against a situation where the brutality of the repression they face pushes them
611 into conservative, even retrogressive spaces in which they start using the same violent strategies and the same
612 language of cultural nationalism being used by the FP state they seek to "deFrancophonize" or "deFrenchify".

613 In "Burning Hate," Ndi bemoans the Cameroonian leader's transformation from a "head of state" to "hate
614 of state." Like in "Litany of Lamentations" and "String Puller," "Burning Hate" is about failed leadership:
615 "Hate of state dressed in ostrich feathers/ Fooling us he's better than burglars/In his pride unwilling to see
616 any triumph/Good reason all should stand and chant/Until he slops down from his lying seat/Shedding off
617 those ostrich feathers" (90). In the above cited lines, the leadership of burglars whose pride prevents them from
618 permitting anyone to triumph anywhere near or around the village trough coupled with their blatant refusal to
619 heed the plight of the people is a true reflection of what has been going on in TC. By acknowledging that the
620 people were deceived by the "hate of state's" ostrich feathers, Ndi is saying that it is never easy to live with a
621 sense of one's fallibility and genuine openness to what is other and different from us; especially when that genuine
622 openness is taken for granted. Even though the people's openness and fallibility were exploited by the leader,
623 Ndi's persona does not see this as a reason for despair or cynicism. On the contrary, because of the fragility of
624 political openness in the face of the leadership's incommensurability, there is a need for passionate commitment
625 to the task of achieving concrete freedom. The symbol of a personalized "village trough" (90) whether viewed
626 as a container from which animals feed or a period of little economic activity, reminds one that Anglophones
627 have been complaining that in human resource deployment, there is a gaping inequality in the distribution of
628 posts of responsibility between Anglophones and Francophones. For instance, of the 36 Ministers who defended
629 the budgets for the Ministries in November 2016 shortly after the commencement of the Anglophone crisis,
630 only one was Anglophone. In addition, their cry has been that there seem to be key ministries that have been
631 reserved for Francophone Ministers only and Anglophones do not even qualify to be Secretaries of State under
632 them. These include, but are not limited to, Defense, Finance, Territorial Administration, and Economy. This
633 perhaps explains why the persona in "Their Gift" affirms that "In? darkness we grope/While they laugh at our
634 hope/Attempting to fly without wings/For they've impressed on us new kings" (100). And the one in "Coming
635 of Vultures" concurs that "Realising we won't succumb to being their spoil/They did work out a way, a way to
636 recoil/Leaving us assassins to make sure we toil/Toil we do toil day and night on our own soil" (96).

637 Pluriversalism has become a basic fact of modern Cameroonian life, and the "hate of state's" abandonment
638 of his people is an indication that pluralism can take a great variety of benign and malignant forms. PMAW
639 asserts that the key issue would be how Cameroonian and their leaders respond to pluralism. They can seek
640 to deny it or to eliminate it. But Cameroonian can also, like the speaker in "Burning Hate," seek to engage
641 critically with what is really different, what strikes them as incommensurable and attempt honestly to further
642 the task of critically understanding what is other than them without denying or distorting its "otherness."
643 Unfortunately, by metaphorically killing streams and their banks, the regime has constantly passionately refused
644 to seek to bring about the material conditions that are the necessary condition for forthright critical pluralistic
645 engagement (Bernstein, 2016:2). Ndi's pluriversal contention in "Burning Hate" is that pluralism is important
646 for society and politics. The type of pluralism Ndi defends is "engaged fallibilistic pluralism" that is not confused
647 with "bad relativism" ??Bernstein 2016, 3). Engaged Cameroonian pluralism would always involve critique,
648 where there is both understanding and critical evaluation. Engaged pluralism rejects the very idea of a single
649 FP Cameroonian universal, a "God's-eye point of view." There are (and ought to be) a competing variety of
650 philosophical perspectives. Regardless of the depth with which one holds one's most basic FP or SCC convictions,
651 Cameroonian pluralists ought to have the obligation and responsibility to be open to learning from radically
652 different perspectives. At the practical level -in politics and society -engaged pluralism should involve much
653 more than passive tolerance of what is strange and different. It should demand a serious attempt to achieve
654 mutual understanding. Engaged fallibilistic Cameroonian pluralists should reject the quest for certainty because
655 as fallibilists, they believe that inquiry is essentially a communal self-corrective process ??Bernstein 3) based on
656 what Aturo Escobar calls "civilizational transition(s)," the complex movement from the dominance of a single FP
657 model of life "to the peaceful, though tense, co-existence of a multiplicity of models, a pluriverse" (2019, 121).

658 5 III.

659 6 Conclusion

660 This paper has demonstrated that Ndi's PMAW attests that the history of FP is fundamentally linked to Volume
661 XXI Issue III Version I 50 () the history of SCC, primarily as FP are expressed in the form of fear, sadism, hatred,
662 brutality, terror, denial, solipsism, policing, politics, and the production and projection of FP fantasies. From the
663 perspective of FP, SCC are criminality themselves. They are the monstrous; they are that which is to be feared
664 and yet desired, sought out in forbidden FP political, economic, social, and cultural adventures and fantasies;
665 they are constructed as a source of FP despair and anguish, an anomaly of nature, the essence of vulgarity and

6 CONCLUSION

666 immorality. The SCC are deemed the quintessential objects of the FP's universalist or fundamentalist gaze, the
667 strange, exotic, and fascinating object of fundamentalism. To paraphrase Yancy, the SCC are constructed as
668 antithetical within a binary logic that points to the FP's own signifying [and material] forces to call attention
669 to themselves as normative ??Yancy 2017, xxx). Indeed, "FPness" is deemed the transcendental norm, the
670 good, the innocent, and the pure, while "SCCness" is the diametrical opposite. This is the twisted fate of SCC
671 vis-à-vis FP forms of disciplinary control, processes of FP hegemonic embodied habituation, and epistemic
672 FP world-making. The paper has also demonstrated that barbarism threatens when men cease to talk together
673 according to reasonable laws of argument and that argument ceases to be civil when it is dominated by passion
674 and prejudice; when its vocabulary becomes solipsist, premised on the theory that my FP or SCC insight is mine
675 alone and cannot be shared. That is, "when [national] dialogue gives way to a series of [FP] monologues; when
676 the parties to the conversation cease to listen to one another, or hear only what they want to hear, or see the
677 other's argument only through the screen of their own categories; conversation becomes merely quarrelsome or
678 querulous ??and] civility dies with the death of dialogue" ??Murray 1960, 14).

679 Horace Kallen criticized the idea of America as a society that obliterates cultural differences by arguing that
680 an American "melting pot," just like the present Cameroonian "Republic," suggests that all elements are put
681 into the pot and to become a single homogenous mass. Drawing on a figure of speech that William James had
682 used in his lectures on pluralism, Kallen, like Ndi, recommends the "form of a Federal republic; its substance a
683 democracy of nationalities, cooperating voluntarily and autonomously in the enterprise of selfrealization through
684 the perfection of men according to their kind" ??Kallen 1915, 92). Using a musical metaphor, Kallen concludes
685 his article with an extended analogy of the USA to a symphony orchestra where just like every type of instrument
686 has its specific timbre and tonality and its appropriate theme and melody in the whole symphony, each ethnic
687 group is a natural instrument, its spirit and culture are its theme and melody, and the harmony, dissonances,
688 and discords of them all make a symphony of civilization whose playing is the writing with nothing so fixed
689 and inevitable about its progressions (Kallen 92). This paper affirms that Kallen's orchestra society would be a
690 wonderfully befitting adoption for a Cameroonian polity mired in unrest. However, Ndi's PMAW takes a step
691 further to caution that the Kellenian model would only be appropriate upon the condition that Cameroonian
692 really get a symphony and not a lot of different FP and SCC instruments playing simultaneously but out of tune.
693

694 But where does this leave Cameroonian today in confronting their historical situation? This paper concurs
695 with Habermas' declaration that our situation is one in which "both revolutionary self-confidence and theoretical
696 self-certainty are gone" ??Habermas 1982, 222). But, like Habermas, Ndi stresses the danger of the type of
697 "totalizing" critique that seduces Cameroonian into thinking that the forces of FP and SCC at work in TC of
698 today are so powerful and devious that there is no possibility of achieving a communal life based on undistorted
699 communication, dialogue, communal judgment, and rational persuasion. What Cameroonian desperately need
700 today is to learn to think and act more like the fox than the hedgehog -"to seize upon those experiences and
701 struggles in which there are still the glimmerings of solidarity and the promise of dialogical communities in which
702 there can be genuine mutual participation and where reciprocal wooing and persuasion can prevail" ??Bernstein
703 1983, 228). For what is characteristic of TC's present situation of the ongoing Anglophone crisis is not just
704 the playing out of powerful FP forces that are always beyond our control, or the spread of FP disciplinary
705 techniques that always elude our grasp, "but a paradoxical situation where [FP] power creates [SCC] counter-
706 power (resistance) and reveals the vulnerability of [FP] power, where the very forces that undermine and inhibit
707 communal life also create new, and frequently unpredictable, forms of solidarity" ??Bernstein 228).

707 Ndi's PMAW helps Cameroonian to think about their situation, their history, and their prospects. Ndi is
708 constantly directing Cameroonian to a critical appropriation of the traditions that have shaped TC, but he is
709 motivated by the practical-moral intention of searching for ways in which Cameroonian can here and now "foster
710 a 'reawakening consciousness of solidarity of a humanity that slowly begins to know itself as humanity, for this
711 means knowing that it has to solve the problems of life [in TC]" ??Bernstein 228). Preoccupied with trying to
712 comprehend the darkness of Cameroonian times, Ndi seeks to reclaim the "lost treasure" of the revolutionary
713 spirit of public freedom, to remind Cameroonian of the spontaneity and the miraculous quality of action in times
714 of crisis. Without suggesting or supplying any FP-like blue-prints for action, he directs Cameroonian toward
715 the tasks in which they seek to overcome systematically distorted communication and to develop the types of
716 communities in which they can reason and discuss Volume XXI Issue III Version I 51 () together. And although
717 he is sensitive to the plurality of forms of life and life histories rooted in the different Cameroonian traditions,
718 he is always reminding us that the ideal of unconstrained communication is a pluriversal ideal that embraces all
719 Cameroonian. In "Peace Warring War," "The Fall of Bakassi," "Anthem for Essigang," "Our Leaders & Our
720 Drums," "His Victory," "Really Odd," "Gimmicks King Commander," "Master or Monster," "Burning Hate,"
721 "Litany of Lamentations," "String Puller," "Burning Hate," "Their Gift," and "Coming of Vultures" Ndi stresses
722 that Cameroonian democratic politics needs to become an encounter among people with differing interests,
723 perspectives, and opinions -an encounter in which Cameroonian reconsider and mutually revise opinions and
724 interests, both individual and communal through governing by obeying. That democracy needs to continuously
725 happen in a context of conflict, imperfect knowledge, and uncertainty, but where community action is necessary.
726 The resolutions achieved need to always be temporary, subject to reconsideration, and rarely unanimous because
727 what matters is not unanimity but discourse. Ultimately, is a treatise on the fact that "[t]he substantive common
728 interest is only discovered or created in democratic political struggle, and it remains contested as much as shared.

729 Far from being inimical to democracy, conflict -handled in democratic ways, with openness and persuasion -is
730 what makes democracy work” ??Pitkin and Schumer 1982, 47).

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Figure 1:

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