

# Search for my tongue and presents from my aunts in pakistan essay



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Search for my Tongue and Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan both show people thinking about their 'roots'. How does each poem convey their thoughts and feelings? In "Search for my Tongue" and "Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan", the poets are conveying to the reader the strong feelings they have about their roots, and how it affects them in everyday life. Both poems talk of women who have Asian roots, but are now living in other countries.

In Search for my Tongue the poet tries to express to the reader, how very strange it feels to have been brought up with one language, and to have to give it up to make space for a new language. Her language is something very important to her, it isn't just a language but it also represents her culture and identity. The poet feels that, because, she has had to speak this new language, and live a new way of life, that she is losing her native language, culture and identity. The poet conveys her feelings by using strong images that show exactly how she feels.

The other poem "Presents" uses visual items like clothes to show the difference in cultures: "my costume clung to me I was aflame." Moniza Alvi sees her Pakistani clothes as a "costume" rather than normal clothes. She calls it this because they are so different to English clothes that when she wears them it's like she is putting on a play and she is an actress at the weekends. "I longed for denim and corduroy." Most people see Pakistani clothes as beautiful creations but she doesn't like them and would prefer to wear boring English clothes such as jeans.

All through the poem “ presents” the poet talks about the difference in the two cultures and explains that she feels she has “ no fixed nationality” and like the other poet wants empathy form the reader and wants the reader to know how it feels to have two separate parts of your life. Moniza Alvi calls her Pakistani clothes her “ weekend clothes” this shows that she doesn’t see them as clothes she wants to wear but clothes she is forced to wear by her parents and relatives so that she remembers her culture in Pakistan.

Both poets feel as if they don’t belong in either culture they long to just have a simple background from one country although other people who have that wish that they had different exciting backgrounds. Both poems are autobiographical and talk to you as a the reader not to a group of people. “ You ask me what I mean” is the first line of “ Search for my Tongue” Sujata Bhatt uses the first line to show that she is answering a question, not that anyone has directly asked but that she knows people are thinking.

Unlike “ Presents from my aunts” which uses a lot of similes throughout the poem this poem is one big metaphor. “ If you had two tongues in your mouth, and lost the first one. ” The poet describes her language all through the poem like she has two tongues in her mouth and Gujarati is her “ mother tongue” and English is her “ foreign tongue”. In each poem the poets both want to get rid of their original cultures but for different reasons can’t. In “ Search for my Tongue” Sujata Bhatt thinks she has got rid of her old language “ I thought I spit it out” but in her dreams that she can’t control she talks in Gujarati.

In "Presents from my Aunts" Moniza Alvi has constant reminders of her Pakistani culture every time she wears her "costumes". Although "Search" is a lot more grown up and has an older person's point of view, it is very monotone but a lot more emotional than the other poem. The words "spit" and "rot" are onomatopoeic and stress on the reader how the poet is feeling. The other poem is a lot more like a story showing a child's life so far. Both poems show the reader what having two cultures is like in their own different ways but both have the same message.