

How effectively do tathamkhulu afrika and chinua achebe

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



Tatamkhulu Afrika and Chinua Achebe both effectively convey their feelings and attitudes towards society in [A S 1]many ways. In this essay I hope to discuss the way both poems have managed to convey their personal feelings, emotions, thoughts and protest against the reality of living in Africa during the 1900's. If we compare the background of each of the poets we see that their backgrounds were very similar. Afrika was born in Egypt in 1920. He migrated to South Africa and was brought up by white farmers.

He worked as a professional soldier, a shop assistant, a barman, a drummer in a jazz band and a copper miner in Namibia. All of these jobs are jobs thought of to be low paid, disgusting jobs. He was arrested twice for an uprising in 1964 and for terrorism. He lives by himself in South Africa and has written many novels and poem describing his life. Afrika's poem, "Nothings Changed," is about the life of coloured people in South Africa. He also talks about the minor differences between the black and the white community in the road and the cafe.

Achebe was born in Nigeria and is also well known for his novel and poetry writing. He studied English Literature at the University of Ibadan. When civil war broke out in 1967 his friends were severely punished. This is reflected in the poem when he talks about Belsen concentration camp. The theme of his poem, "Vultures," is about a family of vultures that scavenge for food and then changes to describe the Commandant at Belsen Camp, a concentration camp during the Second World War.

This is completely imagery, his poem tells how strange we are can do such horrible things such as, eating an animals insides but yet still care for his

family. This paragraph intended to explore the differences and similarities between the two poets. Their backgrounds are similar as they both come from African families and their poems bring up major themes to do with how badly run that part of the world is. If we compare the form of each of the poems we see that they are very similar. They both are written in an orderly way.

Though "Vultures" has not got stanzas they both have a turning point in the middle of the poem which sticks out in both poems. This turning point allows the poet to compare to types of people or things. This makes both poems stand out and more interesting. Other structural features in, "Nothings Changed," include the use of punctuation. For example he uses colons to suggest that there is more to follow, "No sign says it is: but we know where we belong." This gives the reader a space to take in the rest of the poem and compare and contrast the text.

There is also the use of the word, "and," in lines 12 to 15 which could be a list of a drone encouraging the reader to read on and understand. Other features in, "Vultures," include a sentence that starts in the middle of line 13. This is perhaps his way of originally writing and making it stand out. He also uses three dots at the beginning and end of a statement to make it show up on the page. This paragraph has explored the form of each of the poems. We can tell that the forms are similar and the poets convey their opinions using a pivot point to compare two points.

Language features reflect the feelings and attitudes very well. Afrika uses language features in "Nothings Changed" to describe an object to its maximum. He uses poetic devices such as a simile to describe how he sticks out, "name flaring like a flag." This tells us that he was easily seen because he was black in a white community. Metaphors are also used for description such as the description of where he lives, "amiable weed." The weed cannot be friendly, it is a metaphor this tells us that in his mind they are the flowers of his life but yet they are weeds.

Another poetic device he uses is onomatopoeia in the first line to describe how it feels to walk on untarmaced road. The poem states, "click," which describes the sound that you would hear. Finally Afrika uses repetition and rhyme to keep the poem moving, "labouring of my lungs." This is an example of alliteration which is used by poets to rhyme. Achebe doesn't use as many language features as Afrika he dose use some. Alliteration is used on line 46, "icy caverns of a cruel heart," which gives the statement a better image.

From this paragraph we can tell that language features and poetic devices are used in both. Both poets use imagery in their poem to give the reader a deeper understanding. In "Nothings Changed," imagery is used to give the reader a hidden message in the poem. The reader can imagine a dusty lane where nothing grows but an, "amiable weed." Though it could be said ironic or be an oxymoron it gives the reader an image of life as a black person. The vision of an upmarket town selling pretty unneeded luxury such

as, "crushed ice" and "haute cuisine". This gives a picture of a rich community and the good life.

This kind of life is a white person's life not just someone who might share the same knowledge but because they are coloured they are discriminated against. This is the message Afrika hopes to get across through the powers of imagery. In "Vultures," imagery is used although the poem. The poem is not about a vulture nor is it about a commandant at Belsen camp. This is just to give an image to the reader of how one creature who is considered to be cruel can care for his or her family. For example, "ate the things in its bowel," is a very sickening and disgusting image.

This may also be a reference to the race of his community and how the people who run his community are like. Achebe states that it is, "strange" how the vulture manages to feed his family and how the commandant at Belsen camp does not wash his hands when buying chocolate (a luxury) for his child. There is imagery used in both poems to convey the feelings of the poet in a simple way. This paragraph has shown imagery used in both poems to show off their feelings toward racism and the use of luxury items by the better off to cast images in the reader's mind.

As both poems are very symbolic this paragraph will discuss the symbolism in each poem. Afrika's poem uses symbolism especially when describing the two cafes. The first cafe in the white area is said to have, "crushed ice." A luxury it is and yet they don't need it they still have it. Ice is also considered to be of a white colour and it could symbolise the domination of whites in

South Africa. He then uses the word, "white" again which when repeated enough might drums the image of racism into the readers mind. linen falls" could perhaps be another reference to the whites domination. The supposedly white linen is falling or covering what dose not want to be seen. This could be the coloured people. The other cafe is very different as instead of, "haute cuisine," it sells, "bunny chows." A bunny being a vegetarian who eats small left over vegetables.

This perhaps symbolises the food, "chows" in which black people eat. Another point that could be raised is that they have no luxuries of such. They have, "plastic" furniture, no handkerchiefs and it can't be changed because, "it's in the bone. Whereas Achebe's poem is very different. A vulture symbolises a beastly scavenger. One who dose not work for his or her food but steels it instead. This maybe the point he is arguing. The whites could be the vultures. Other symbolic statements Achebe makes include the chocolate which is a luxury food. This paragraph has explained the symbolism in each poem. We learn that both poems use symbolism to express their emotions. If we compare the two poems symbolism we find that they both manage to covey similar statement in completely different ways.

This essay has explained how each poet has effectively managed to convey their feelings and opinions. The essay has disgusted the similarities between the backgrounds of Achebe and Afrika and found that their poems argue similar points against racism in Africa. When compared to other cultures such as our culture we find that their lives are very hard and punishing. This

essay has also covered the use of language, form and symbolism to give a well arguable case into the culture of both the poets. It is even hard to believe that such things happen in the World today.