

Peter skrzynecki  
shaun tan postcard  
and feliks skrzynecki,  
the arrival  
belonging ...



We find belonging most importantly in our family.

Discuss. (Prescribed texts and related) A sense of belonging is the feeling of being accepted or connected to something or someone. One can find belonging within family, through shared experiences, notions of identity, forming relationships, and culture. Peter Skrzynecki's poems "Postcard" (PC) and "Feliks Skrzynecki" (FS), alongside Shaun Tan's silent graphic novel 'The Arrival' (TA), work together to convey this idea, through a range of language forms and visual techniques.

"It is place that that shapes our identity". Discuss. Family is a fundamental concept in terms of finding a sense of belonging as it develops relationships between people and the culture they are grown among. Peter Skrzynecki explores this in 'FS' by emphasizing the strong connection between the persona's father, Feliks and his 'garden', depicting a child-like sense of jealousy. Despite this, the poet uses a positive illustration to describe him as 'gentle', paradoxical words of 'Alert, brisk and silent,' reinforce Feliks' 'mind's...' strength of not being driven by images of status and money.

In addition, the nostalgic tone presented through, 'reminisced/About farms...' highlights that their agricultural background is what the father and son had in common and indicates how the migrants are bound together by their shared history. Henceforth, responders are able to understand the concept of belonging through the persona's relationship with his father and culture, and the experiences they share together. Skrzynecki establishes a sense of isolation, as the persona disengages himself from the community and family into which he has naturally attained. For example, he uses a

formal address to introduce his father, ' Feliks Skrzynecki'. Also, the use of historical and personal references, ' teases/ Gallic War' and forgetting his ' first polish word' amplifies a perpetual notion of disassociation from his father's world.

Although, a paradox is presented through ' Further/Hadrian's Wall', this classical allusion in which the persona chooses not to belong to his father's world exemplifies a slow drift from his heritage revealing to the audience... In the process of discovering one's sense of belonging, notions of identity can also transpire. The persona develops his identity by reflecting on his life experiences as growing up with a strongly influential and perhaps, invasive cultural community, ' I inherited unknowingly... ' This natural adoption of language and culture is juxtaposed with ' The curse that damned' a metaphor expressing the racial prejudice which most migrants experience upon arrival in Australia.

For example, ' Did your father/learn English? ', this patronizing and discriminating comment creates a contrasting imagery depicting... the differences in experiences which are encountered by both father and son. However, in the poem PC, the persona fails to experience the same connection and sense of belonging to his homeland Warsaw, as his father experiences ' half a world away'. This vision of the homeland continues on from the poem FS as the personas inability to identify with the image of the postcard ' haunts' his existence and deepens his personal discomfort. The enjambment of ' haunts' symbolises Skrzynecki's isolation, as well as, highlighting elements of the hardship he, and his father have endured in the past, ' bombs destroyed/people massacred'. Contrastingly to the way the <https://assignbuster.com/peter-skrzynecki-shaun-tan-postcard-and-feliks-skrzynecki-the-arrival-belonging-essay/>

persona in FS experiences a slow drift from his cultural heritage, PC reflects the personas conscious effort not to belong to the cultural and familial world of the card. The poet uses first person perspective to repetitively personify the postcard ' I never knew you/Let me be'.

This imperative repetition portrays a rejection of belonging. Skrzynecki describes the picture on the postcard with cliched imagery and alliteration ' Red buses on a bridge' to convey its illustriousness as a common place. However, an ambiguous tone is communicated through, '... something/ Like a park borders' signifying the persona's struggle to recognise one of Warsaw's distinctive features, as opposed to his parents who are naturally affiliated with their country and its landscapes. In addition, Skrzynecki's cognizant lack of belonging is further portrayed as he refuses ' to answer/ the voices', reflecting his unwillingness to associate with his homeland. The persona further doubts himself and believes it is the world that belongs to his parents, rhetorically questioning whether he should be a part of it, ' What's my choice/To be? ' Furthermore, Skrzynecki engenders communication between the speaker and the postcard, by personifying a natural figure, ' A lone tree'.

The 'whisper' also gives the impression that he will ultimately return to his homeland as he is enticed into a sense of belonging. Moreover, Shaun Tans ' TA' portrays belonging through illustrating the journey of a migrant into a figurative ' promised land'. The first chapter of the book demonstrates a sequence of shots summarising a small family's existence within a dystopian land. On pp. 1-2, Tan explores the most basic of human experiences in

intrinsic detail, as seen through the careful packing of the family portrait followed with the sorrowful facial expressions of the protagonist and his wife.

With hands connected upon the suitcase, the suitcase becomes a metaphor for hope and for transporting elements of the migrants' old life into a new and more hopeful one. Tan uses an extreme high angle shot/ bird's eye view on pp. 5-7 depicting a monstrous creature saliently dwelling overhead the protagonist and his family as they scarcely pass through. The extended metaphor of the monster further emphasizes its invasive and ominous atmosphere. In doing this, Tan parallels Skrzynecki's poems with a haunting tone as the monster stands as an indication of the hardships in which his family encounters and experience on a daily basis.

These hardships seem to be the reason why the protagonist must migrate to a safer and more opportunistic land. In divergence to the migrants' homeland which lurks a fearsome monster, the new land to which the migrant arrives appears to be illuminated beneath the guardianship of a large angel-like figure. With chimney smoke indicating a limitless chain of work opportunities, the migrant is torn within a blooming metropolis. However, the repetitive sequence of frames displaying his job acts as an allegory showing the migrants lack of belonging within the new land. Chapter two of the graphic novel evokes a deep and emotive response from the audience as the extreme wide shot depicts the lonesome migrant insignificantly positioned in comparison to the grandness of the ship and the ocean.

Tan's calendar-styled, cloud covered pages represent the migrants 60 days and nights travelling at sea. The individual changes of the clouds metaphorically represent the migrant's changes in feelings and emotional turmoil throughout his journey. Tan further supports the unique experiences of a migrant allowing the audience to reflect on the protagonist's adversities as the audience is able to visualise his feelings of not belonging through the title page, which written in a foreign and incomprehensible language forces the readers to contemplate what it would be like to not understand the language of the land in which they lived. Individual and realistic human migrant experiences of the characters who relate and befriend the protagonist, assist with his transition into belonging with the new land. Through flashbacks, their stories are communicated as close up shots to the characters faces reinforce the emotion present. In conclusion, through shared experiences in which Peter Skrzynecki's poems ' Feliks Skrzynecki' and ' Postcard' explore, alongside Shaun Tan's ' The Arrival', it is evident to view the dynamic process of belonging as being a versatile concept, emerging from formed relationships between people and place.

The various literary and visual techniques within these texts collaborate to reveal to the audience, a sense of yearning to belonging to home, contributing to ones development of their own identity and inevitable connection to culture and family.