

Comparison of allen ginsbergs `america and langston hughes `i, too`



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The two poem's, Allen Ginsbergs `America and Langston Hughes `I, Too`, speaks of America as a personal being. It speaks of an identification of both authors on being America itself. The authors uses different tones and styles of writing that make the emphasis of personal America meaningful in their own way.

Ginsberg poem reads like a spontaneous monologue and the train of thought is occasionally interrupted from time to time. For example, at one moment he speaks of, " America when will we end the human war? /Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb" and then he followed it with " I don't feel good don't bother me".

Or "" You should have seen me reading Marx./My psychoanalyst thinksI'm perfectly right./I won't say the Lord's Prayer./I have mystical visions and cosmic vibrations" (Norton 136). It seemed that the writer wrote the words in the poem as it comes to his mind, putting in any thoughts that come across while writing the poetry. The tone of the poem therefore is more like a mixture of confusion, agitation or urgency.

This style of writing makes Ginsberg's America look like a confused being who is overwhelmed with its many activities. Hughes poem on the other hand, is much shorter and had a more relaxed tone; obviously, the writer spends some time to arrange his thoughts to come up with the poem. As a result, the poem portrayed America as a calm desirable personal being.

The theme of the two poems is the portrayal of America as a personal being and not as a country. The two poem however generally portrayed opposite

feelings towards America as a person, the first poem expresses a negative feeling while the second poem a positive one.

The first poem portrays America as a howling, screaming person that seemed to be overwhelmed with the burdens of living the American life. The second poem expresses the idea that to be recognized as America is a desirable end for it had many privileges like if he is America he does not need to eat in the kitchen anymore but would “eat at the table” (Poetry Archive 2005).

Moreover, the two poems reveal the relationship of the two authors with regards to the personal America. In the first poem, the author is already living America, that is, he already recognize that he is the embodiment of an American.

As an America he describe the kind of life that he is living like he felt that “Asia is rising against me” or that “he does not want to join the Army” or he does not want to “turn lathes in precision parts in factories” or that he “read the magazine every week”(Norton 136-137).

When the author says that “Asia is rising against me” he means that as an American he is constantly faced with oppositions from all sides, or that when “he had to join the army” it means that he had many obligations, or that when says that “he turn lathes in precision parts in factories” it means that he had to work everyday or that when he had to “read the newspaper every week” it means that media had played an essential part of his life.

Meanwhile while the author in the first poem is already living America (and resenting some aspects of it) , in the second poem the author desires to be recognized that he too is America for while he is living in America, he does not enjoy the privileges or freedom of living as an American.

The two poems also explore the social problems of America when the authors wrote the poem. There is the communist America and the discriminated America. In the first poem, Ginsberg reveals that there are some Americans who sympathize with the communists while Hughes reveals that many black Americans are suffering from discrimination.

This two problem needs to be address for its tears apart the very core of America itself. Communists Americans and discriminated black Americans can be describe as two American social outcasts that are crying to be heard and assert itself in the American society.

As a conclusion, although both poems of Ginsberg and Hughes cover the theme of America as a personal being and not as a country it nevertheless explores opposing attitudes to being an American. Ginsberg portrays the state of being an American as overwhelming and at times resentful while Hughes claimed that black Americans desired the freedom and privileges of living as an American.

Works Cited

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Hughes, Langston. "I, too". The Poetry Archive. 2005. Accessed May 12, 2008.