

# False papers



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Intro People say that their memories are the most precious things they possess. One may say that memories are “Every man's memory is his private literature”. - Aldous Huxley. We can say that this can be shown in the works of Andre Aciman in *False Papers* (Square Lamartine) by and Carol Ann Duffy in *Nostalgia*. Both authors show attitudes and feelings of nostalgia but have incorporated these feelings in different perspectives and attitudes of what nostalgia is.

The question that will be discussed in this presentation are: how do both authors Andre Aciman and Carol Ann Duffy in *Nostalgia* and *Square Lamartine* use literary devices to portray their feeling of nostalgic feeling? Andre Aciman writes about his past memories from Egypt where he imagines himself reliving his childhood. He links his travels through his past through the different instances and occurrences that have taken place in his past. He links *Nostalgia* with the linked essays that ponder on the experiences of loss, moving from the forced departure from Alexandria as a teenager and the brief stay in Europe.

He himself quotes that his nostalgia is beautiful because “Most people are convinced I love Alexandria. In truth, I love remembering Alexandria, for it is not Alexandria that is beautiful. Remembering is beautiful” - Andre Aciman Carol Ann Duffy writes about the romantic view of the past and childhood, where one hopes for the past, by being too prized. She takes nostalgia in a different direction where it sets up a kind of barriers where the poem takes different tracks in writing about relation of the past and the origins of the feelings which draws one back to the past.

Body 1 Carol Ann Duffy in *Nostalgia* talks about how the feelings of romantic view of the past childhood and where ones hope for the past are expressed. In *nostalgia* she mentions the “early mercenaries” where the poem first imagines the first feelings of nostalgia: the origins of the feelings preceding the word. Even if emotions have origins, that are even if they don’t always exist, they only seem to some extent more arbitrary, more questionable than they have been so. The idea opens up the possibility of consideration, judgment, of the particular emotion.

The usage of “Early” establishes the origin of the emotion. The “mercenaries” is a little more complex in the sense that why would someone or anyone leave their home? In this case they are leaving home for money. The word suggest a kind of moral judgment where mercenaries fight for no other reason than money; values, etc, are not an issue for them. *Nostalgia* is first described as a sickness. This seems both a kind of punishment for the ‘mercenaries’ leaving home – but also a kind of reduction of the general ‘romantic’ aura of *nostalgia*, its description as a sensitive delicate feeling.

The usage of the word ‘wrong’ repeated over and over gives the sense of why there were not used to and what the mercenaries didn’t expect, what was not suited to them, or morally or esthetically wrong, bad in itself. The word ‘wrong’ blurs across all the different shades of meaning, although on it all depends on what you perceive to be the ‘moral’ of the poem. Every detail that the mercenaries felt is wrong; this is emphasized with the repetition of the word and the list of different qualities. Adding to this the emphasized wrongness is the one return: money. It sounds every cold and inadequate place against the list of all that is wrong.

The general idea of the first verse sounds critical – especially when it seems to be summed up by the final word of the long second sentence: ‘ wrong’ summarizing judgment given emphasis by placing the word; a run on line, completed by this single word alone. It sounds at least temporarily conclusive a moral judgment. In Square Lamartine by Andre Aciman, he uses repetition in making his point. He emphasizes his past feelings with how beautiful it is remembering the time he looked out of the window to remember the same sky, same city and the same feeling that overcomes the memory. My passage to France is no Longer easy I can go to France, But I can no longer be in France. To be in France is to think all of the times I came so close and failed, of near-misses and close calls”. He makes it clear that he’s trying to remember the beauty of the memory of France at that time, yet his attempt to remember that beauty had some “ near-misses and close calls” but to himself he still thinks of it as his failure. The repetition of France emphasizes his point on trying to remember the beautiful city and his memory of the place.

To question something is Andre Aciman’s literary technique to bring out the beauty in the memory that he is trying to remember. He also uses the usage of rhetorical questions to question the beauty of the remembering this nostalgia that sends our emotions spiraling. His question “ Why wasn’t I Born here. Why can’t I live here when will it happen, why am I here when it seem too late? Andre Aciman uses the question to ask the reader to sympathize with him. He is questioning how the realistic this feeling is but he still can seem to visualize the beauty of remembering the feeling.

He also links the why wasn't I born here with the live, and his presence of being there. It creates a two sided argument on what its really like to see yourself being there and actually being there. Body 2 In the 2nd stanza Duffy mentions, " they had an ache here", " it was given a name", " a sweet pain in the heart". The ' ache here' now seems to be leaving a consultation between the speaker and the doctor, and the ' here' point to is the speakers own heart; which comes back to the feelings suffered by the mercenaries is now also suffered by the speaker.

The distanced judgment is partially compromised as the speaker too has this ' illness'. There is a severity factors due to the speakers involvement compromising the distanced judgment, which adds more severity feeling when it suddenly changes from merely ' making them ill' to ' it was killing them'. The making of nostalgia an illness has not only stripped away that romantic aura that nostalgia is meant to feel like but also had increase its strength in the poem distancing and minimizing nostalgia making it more pressing.

The language and imagery of the second verse its noticeably more romantic than the first stanza. The feelings that are imagined in the second verse are that of those who stayed put, which were fearful i. e. those who merely imagine the feeling because they do not feel it really. The controversial language/phrasing/imagery of romantic verse is show in "...The sad pipes' and ' the dwindling light of the plain'. This poetic phrasing is not only the poet's own but also the imagination of these stay at homes, fearing nostalgia.

The division between those who really felt nostalgia as an illness and those who elaborated upon their fears of what I might be is just a far too simple division. By unnoticeably introducing the word 'dwindling' is a different perspective on nostalgia, the first verse emphasized geographic distance and now in 'dwindling; and in the last two lines of this verse introduces the perspective of time. The last two lines give a sort of snapshot of the memory from ones childhood. The shift is unnoticeable but it will determine how the poem ends. Andre Aciman in his writing uses word choice that laborates the thinking of how beauty is captured though different view. "... Put off grasping in the hope that, when we're not looking, when we've stopped hoping and thinking and dreaming driven out of its hiding place it might finally decide to tap us on the shoulder and beckon to us with a promise of bliss". This enhances the speaker's point of view, the usage of words that show hope of being somewhere and achieving that goal is hidden and with the use of 'looking', 'hoping', 'thinking' and 'dreaming' where he creates false sense nostalgia.

Since in square Lamartine he is remembering his past time that he spent his childhood in France. Aciman uses figurative language in which he mentions the "romance of Paris" which he implies as remembering is beautiful. Since romance is a feeling of excitement and mystery associated with love he connects this to his love for Paris and his love in remembering something of the past that is so beautiful, nostalgia. Body 3

In the third stanza Carol Ann Duffy when she says, "the word was out" this shifts the focus on the personal attachment that people had with nostalgia is now just publically out to be judged and criticized. The usage of the word out

emphasizes the word has escaped - and so cannot now be contained or restricted in how it will be used or interpreted: and, secondly, the rumor of the existence of this feeling is now general, public property, and so what it might mean, how it might be used, can now no longer be controlled.

Duffy uses the priest and the teacher as symbols for questioning the feelings of heartfelt nostalgia. The shift between the first verse where this is that feeling which has become purely mental, imagined, but also mournful, and, as such, impossible to eradicate because it concerns itself not with individual fate and actions but with fixed condition of Nature and Life and not depending on the person individual actions. The priest is “crying at the workings of memory through the color of leaves” because the memory cannot call back the past.

And why at the color of the leaves, because leaves turn red and fall in autumn meaning they die. This creates a time frame where time moves on and cannot be stopped. The teacher turns “too late” in her attempt to recreate her past through her reading the book. The last verse of the poem returns its focus back to the “early mercenaries” returning home- that should be the antidote for the illness of the first stanza. The seasonal shift being “spring” which is a symbol of revival and the repetition of the word “same” mimics but reverses the repetition of the word “wrong” in the first stanza.

Andre Aciman uses metaphors to convey his love and passion for remembering the time he had spent in France in his childhood. The remembering itself is expressed as beautiful as he uses the comparison of the two different aspects of music and harmony. He does so in the expression

“ If Egypt was the bass melody, Paris was the full orchestral score, an Saint Augustine thinking back to the time when we had not yet sooner...” The usage of music helps express the feelings of how the beauty of even the simplest of music elements can make memories so much brighter.

The usage of “ bass melody” and “ Paris was the full orchestral score” makes the memory of Paris seem so much full of life. Aciman compares the bass melody which in music is just plays in the background of the music, and makes Paris seem all the more beautiful with enhancing that melodious tune to become that whole orchestral score ignoring the harmony of music. Aciman makes usage of musical methodology to express the “ full orchestral score” which brings outs the beauty in music.

This is what makes his remembering the past so beautiful. Aciman also refers back to the past through usage of imagery. Aciman compares the past of Alexandria in compares to the beauty of life and the hardships that he has lived through, viewing up the beauty of man and memories that have been made. He mentions “ Alexandria and dreaming of a Seine scarcely seven minutes away was also cast upon this landscape, a past life, a pluperfect life, a conditional life, a life made, like Paris, for the mind Or the paper”.

The indication of a “ seine” which translated in English means a major French river, which is implied as a metaphor. This in turn creates a passage way through his memories which he can flow along and move across time and space, this is indicated with the ‘ seine scarcely seven minutes away which was also cast upon this landscape”. The river is his path which he takes back in seven minutes to his “ past life” in which he describes as more than perfect which he images to be more like he had in Paris. Conclusion



Overall these two different style writers have combined different aspects of reaching one goal. The different varied styles to achieve their view on nostalgia, may it be from personal experiences of fictional ones. Their different styles contribute to their writing differently. Duffy's different styles takes nostalgia in a different direction where it sets up a kind of barriers where the poem takes different tracks in writing about relation of the past and the origins of the feelings which draws one back to the past.

On the other hand Aciman making the most of nostalgia by expressing his feelings by linking his travels through his past through the different instances and occurrences and linking Nostalgia that ponder on the experiences of loss, moving from the forced departure from Alexandria as a teenager and the brief stay in Europe. Overall the two express their emotions and thought differently Duff on one hand goes to seek the true feelings and origins where as Aciman just want to remember the beauty and emotion filled experience that you get from remembering.