

Different stories about yamata

Literature



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1. Both stories explore individual citizen's relationship to his or her country. Describe the relationship(s) in each story and compare and contrast them. Explain the historical backdrop to these concerns.

Whereas Yamata has a close and loving relationship with her mother, father, and brother, the protagonist of *A Madman's Diary* describes strained relationships with a father and brother he believes are conspiring to eat him. Of course the most striking contrast between the two stories is that *A Madman's diary* is an allegory that is used to describe the bankruptcy of the Chinese feudal system and culture; whereas Nam Le recounts Yamata's description of life in Hiroshima during the American aerial bombardment of World War II. On the one hand, *A Madman's diary* is meant to be highly critical of the Chinese government and traditional form of culture for delivering the Chinese people into such hardships as they experienced during the first half of the 20th century, Yamata's story also recounts hardships and privations but invokes Bushido and love of Fatherland at nearly every turn in order to rally her spirit.

2. Both stories are concerned about the future of the next generation. Describe the concerns and compare and contrast them. Explain the historical context behind these concerns.

The protagonist in *A Madman's diary* spends a great deal of time concerned over the fate of future generations due to the fact that he sees society crumbling around him. Due to this image of utter degradation and loss of direction, balance, and reason, the protagonist sees little hope in his homeland for the future generation to thrive. Naturally, the historical backdrop to this centers upon the ongoing occupation of Chinese land by Japanese soldiers, a complete breakdown in governance and leadership by <https://assignbuster.com/different-stories-about-yamata/>

the Nationalist Chinese forces, and the concurrent civil war that exists. In short, this is a time of utter and complete societal upheaval that affects every single citizen on a deeply personal level.

Likewise, in Hiroshima, Yamata's mother shows a brief glimmer of maternal instinct as she recalls what life was like for her in Hiroshima when she was a child, how it differed from the life the family lives currently and how she longs for those days to come again. Additionally, Yamata's mother implores her to stay alive no matter what happens. Yamata's mother dubs Yamata as "her heart"; saying that even if she dies – at least her heart will live on.

3. Both stories explore a nation's culture during a crisis point. Describe the two cultures and compare and contrast the differences. Give the historical background.

Drawing a parallel to how strong the culture and propaganda levels of China were as compared to Japan in the given stories would be an exercise in futility. Even though it appears as though the Bushido code and willingness to endure anything for the Emperor is clearly manifest in Hiroshima, one has to remember that Japan had only been under serious aerial bombardment for a period of less than a year; whereas China had endured collapsed governments, famines, civil war, foreign occupation, and war with Japan. As such, it is much more easy to understand why the tone of exasperation and hopelessness existed in A Madman's diary. Additionally, one must also be aware of the fact that although Japan was still organized under the supreme leadership of the Emperor, China was fragmented at this point as many voices vied for power.

4. Both stories shed light into the experiences of women during this point in each nation's history. In Lu Xun, you need to also consider the absence of

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women. Describe the roles that women played in each country during this period and in these stories. Compare and contrast them.

One could argue that Lu Xun's story was devoid of female figures due to the fact that the society and culture which he is condemning did not value or place a high priority on females as members of an active society. As the story supposedly took place in a village far removed from the rest of civilization, it is not unreasonable that the role of women in such a place was even more provincial than in a Chinese town at the same period. Conversely, the role of women in Yamata's account differs entirely. Yamata's own mother is called up to work in the munitions factory as her sister also is called to organize for defense of the Fatherland. The picture of Japanese society during this trying time is one in which male and female are both fully organized in defense of their homeland.