

Poetry from other cultures essay

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



In this essay, I will compare how the theme of oppression is addressed in the two poems that we have studied, “ the poem of Joao”, written by Noemia De Sousa, and “ Still I Rise”, written by Maya Angelou. The word oppression means to treat something or someone, harshly or badly, the most common form of oppression is racism. Oppression affects people in the poem because it can cause people to let go of everything that they know of, like their culture, and become someone else. This all happens because of one person who doesn't like it, so they change the lives of thousands of people.

In “ the poem of Joao”, the Portuguese are the oppressors because they make all of the Mozambican people change their entire way of life. The people can over come the oppressors though by not listening to the oppressors and to stand against them. Oppression still exists today in places like Zimbabwe, where they have a fixed government, where if you don't vote for a certain person, then you will get killed. There are many different types of oppression and they include racism and hatred. The oppression which is in both of the poems is very similar.

In “ the poem of Joao”, the oppressors are the Portuguese. They are the oppressors because they just went to Mozambique, then took away their way of life and made them live as if they were actually Portuguese people. Noemia De Sousa's personal experience of oppression when she was growing up was racism and hatred that was aimed at all black people from the Portuguese. In the poem “ Still I Rise”, the main oppressors are racist people in America, and the Slave Trade across the world and its legacy.

A quote that refers to hundreds of years of slavery is “ Out of the huts of histories shame, I rise” this could mean that even though the black people have been treated badly, they will still rise up against the oppressors.

Another quote that relates to the slave trade is, “ Up from a past that’s rooted in pain, I rise”, this could mean that even though their past has been really bad, they will still rise up against it and will eventually forget their past. The oppressors didn’t respect the black people in general and they didn’t believe that the black people shouldn’t have any rights at all, so they treated them like rubbish.

Maya Angelou’s personal experience of oppression when she was a little girl growing up was racial discrimination and the fact that she was raped when she was a little girl. In “ the poem of Joao”, written by Noemia De Sousa, Joao was very close to the people that he knew. Joao’s main qualities were that he was happy and caring. We know this because it says, “ He always enjoyed work and always worked hard, we know this because it says, “ He smiled that same old smile of the shop girls”. He made money from working hard at his job. Joao also loved his life and he travelled around a lot, because he was a free spirit.

We know this because it says, “ Joao longed to live and longed to conquer life”. He was always welcoming, and was creative, because in the poem there is a line, “ He enjoyed art and poetry”. All of the people that knew him kept him in their hearts and he Joao is an important part, and could belong to Mozambique, because it says, “ for Joao they have stolen from us”. Joao could be representing everything in Mozambique. He could be representing

the people of Mozambique, especially when it says, “ Joao was the father, the mother and the brother of all multitudes”.

When it says the father, it could mean that he is there to look after and watch out for the people that you really love. When it says the mother, it could mean that he is there to be kind and caring to the people that he loves, and when it says the brother, it could mean that he is there to stick up for the people that he loves, like friends and family. According to the poet, the Portuguese took Joao away from the Mozambican people. I think that this is because they thought that if they did that, then the Mozambican people would listen to them because the Portuguese see Joao as some sort of tribal leader.

In the poem “ Still I Rise”, written by Maya Angelou, the narrator is being oppressed by racial hatred from the Americans. It could reflect on the poet’s own experience because when Maya Angelou went to the dentist, the dentist that was there was white, and he wouldn’t see to her just because she was black. A quote that explores oppression is, “ You may shoot me with your words” then “ But still, like air, I’ll rise”, and this could all mean that the oppressors will say nasty and hurtful things that they will always rise up above everything else.

The narrator could be anyone who is black and has been oppressed because of his or her race. A quote that would support this is “ I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide. Welling and swelling I bear the tide”, when it says a black ocean, it could refer back to the slave trade, and when it says welling and swelling means with pride. When it says I bear the tide, it means that they

had to live with it. When the people of Mozambique are faced with Joao being taken away, they react by saying that even though they think a lot of Joao that they will always believe that Joao will always be with them in a spiritual form.

When it says, “ Who will take us all and lock us in a cage? ” this could be a threat to the Portuguese, because they are testing the Portuguese to see if they are able to take them all, because if they can't, then they could get Joao back. When the Mozambican people are faced with oppression, they react by believing that Joao's spirit is in all of them, and they just wont listen to the oppressors and get on with their lives. This is shown in the poem as, “ But Joao is us all”. The narrator's reaction when faced with oppression was that she wouldn't listen to it because she believes that it is all lies.

The narrator is trying to say that it doesn't matter how much that oppressors put her down; she will always rise up against it. A quote to back this up is the most used line in the poem, “ Still I Rise”. The message that the narrator is trying to give to the oppressors is that no matter how much that oppressors put you down, you will always rise up against it as long as you are strong. The poet is trying to inspire anyone who has been oppressed. Maya Angelou achieved a lot in her life. She became close friends with Martin Luther king Jr and Malcom X, who all fought for black peoples rights all over the world.

They all eventually got what they wanted and now black people have the same rights as white people. In conclusion, I think that the two poems are very similar, mainly because they are both about someone who is being oppressed. Another thing that they have in common is that the poets are

both black and relate to the Slave Trade in their poems, and that have both been oppressed in their life. Both of the poems have a meaning, and I think that it is to be strong and fight for what is right.