

Why i love barbara kingsolver - my short story

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



In Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*, an epic about a family's tragic undoing and their subsequent rebuilding in postcolonial Africa, Kingsolver explores the theme of an inevitable power struggle between preservation native religion and the spread of Christianity. Through the voice of Ruth May, the youngest girl in the Price family, Kingsolver depicts an encounter between Nathan Price and Anatole about Tata Ndu and how Tata Ndu believes that Christianity is corrupting the natives and leading them astray. Ultimately, Kingsolver employs a plethora of literary devices in order to depict a culture clash over religion between native religion and Christianity in the passage by characterizing Nathan Price and Tata Ndu as uncompromising and stubborn men dead set in their religious beliefs to further the aforementioned religious culture clash.

In the first half of the passage, Kingsolver is able to characterize Nathan Price as a man quick to anger against nonbelievers in Christianity in order to set the scene for the religious culture clash by showing how uncompromising Nathan Price is to nonbelievers. First, Kingsolver uses negative, hostile diction through Nathan Price's dialogue with language such as "ignorance and darkness" and "false idolatry" to help show how Nathan juxtaposes the goodness of Christianity with the supposed backwardness of local religions to help set the stage for a religious culture clash by revealing Nathan Price's true feelings toward the local religions. Moreover, Kingsolver employs a simile when she states "Father looked like he was choking on a bone". This simile helps describe the extent of Nathan Price's anger with the statements made about Christianity by Anatole. Through the usage of the negative, hostile diction in Nathan Price's dialogue and the simile, Kingsolver is able to

characterize Nathan Price as a stubborn and unforgiving man who can't tolerate slanderous words against his religion and will go to great lengths to fight the slander, even if it means slandering other belief systems. This helps set up the religious clash of cultures as it shows and foreshadows the inherent struggle between Christian missionaries and local religion and how Nathan Price will try to adamantly finish his mission, even if it means fighting the natives over religion.

In the second half of the passage, Kingsolver is able to further the depiction of a religious culture clash through idiomatic expressions and another simile. First, she uses an idiom when she states "'Corrupt did you say' Father stated, rather than asked, after locating where the cat had put his tongue". This helps show the anger Nathan Price feels after his religion was called corrupt, as he was unable to say anything due to his sheer shock from the statement and anger. Moreover Kingsolver makes use of another idiom when she reveals Tata Ndu's true feelings on Christianity when she writes "he [Tata Ndu] said you are leading our villagers down into a hole, where they may fail to see the proper sun and become trapped like bugs on a rotten carcass". By first, showing Nathan Price's anger through the idiom as he can't comprehend his religion being called corrupt, along with the simile in Tata Ndu's dialogue in reference to Christian teachings leading the villagers the incorrect way, Kingsolver captures the religious culture clash perfectly. She is able to show how Nathan Price was so uncompromising and even angered by the statement that Christianity was corrupt as well as how the village chief himself uses, in his dialogue, a simile to compare Christianity as to leading people into a hole and being trapped like bugs on rotten carcass.

This all goes to build to the overall theme of a religious culture clash as representatives of both religions can't find any common ground and work together, but can only hurl abuses about the other's religious practices, showing a pretty clear religious struggle between Nathan Price and Tata Ndu.

In conclusion, Kingsolver is able to develop the resonant theme of a religious culture clash throughout the passage. Using a variety of literary devices, Kingsolver is able to characterize Nathan Price and the village chief, Tata Ndu, as obstinate, headstrong men who will not compromise and accept the other's religious views and are dead set in promoting and preserving their own, which help further the theme of a religious culture clash.