

Homeeland

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Introduction

In the African American shorts, the writers narrate their experiences in a foreign country, America precisely after fleeing their homes for various reasons. Among the major themes presented in the poems is the idea of homeland which many people who are perceived lucky do not understand. Additionally, the text takes us through the African American's journey to the foreign country pointing out the challenges they face in their everyday life as they try to adapt to the alien environment. This article will explore the illusions of the black community based on the experiences that the writers go through amid political struggle, colonization and gender discrimination, all of which affect their bond with homeland and their hope of returning home.

Amiri Baraka, who is one of the contributors attempts to bring to our attention the role of speech in shaping a person's culture. Further, Amiri states that every community has its own way of communicating despite the inflicted ideas in the minds of many African Americans who are mislead with the ideas that the inability to communicate in English is not "speaking proper." According to Amiri, a message can have different meanings considering the context in which they are spoken. The Africans' inability to communicate in English contributed to their slavery. Culture is the way of organizing thoughts which constitute their emotions as well as spiritual connections.

In another text, "Chicago's Congo" the overall idea is the writer's longing to establish his heritage in Chicago. The title of the poem Chicago's Congo is set to indicate his longing for a community in his current residence, Chicago. In his description, "⁴..see three million whites and two hundred thousand blacks civilized in Chicago" (Matta pg5), the writer intends to make us imagine the existence of mixed cultures where one race is dominant over the other. Davis explains about a moon that he sees from his flat, a view that does not last long. In an analytical perspective, Davis tries to express his imagined home which is merely constituted by thoughts. The idea of the moon is used to show the long distance between Chicago and Congo, an indication that his journey to return home would be impossible. "Chicago sings these songs everyday" (pg7). This line is meant to show the everyday homeland that African Americans create.

In another text, Marshal presents the issue of racism which perceives the whites to be important than African Americans merely because of their skin color. Despite his illusion for a democratic America where every person is regarded as important despite their race, he is faced with the reality of his situation where only the opposite exists. Despite the longing for homeland being a problem of African Americans living in America, gender inequality also affects many both Africa and America. For many decades, women have been perceived as inferior in comparison with men, an idea that seems to be inherited from generation to generation.

Chimamanda in his talk "we should all be Feminists," he takes us through her experience in her native country, Nigeria where gender discrimination is prevalent similarly to the region of America. In this talk, she gives a glance of her educational background, which tend to impact her perspectives of the female gender. Even after showing the potential to do well in class, the teacher opts to award another student, an incapable boy the leadership position. This action

makes it obvious that only boys could assume leadership positions in the class. Chimamanda blames the situation on both male and female who have contributed to the idea of feminism to be viewed in a negative way. The fact that gender discrimination exists even in a school setting indicates how rooted the problem is. Students can differentiate between the dominant as well as inferior gender at a young age.

After completing her studies, she is still faced with the same constraints in the work environment where women are paid less salaries despite having the same qualifications as men. Although many people deny its existence, sexism is an element that becomes embedded in every child's mind from an early age making social interactions take a new path. Boys grow knowing that mistreating women is the way of life. Chimamanda calls out for discussions to address these problems showing his desire for an environment that interests. Chimamanda expresses her longing for a better community that recognizes the role and abilities of the female gender in all aspects ranging from social, political to economic issues. Chimamanda wishes that she had the courage to engage in a free conversation with students without feeling inferior to the male gender. She longs for a place in the society where she can be treated the same way that men are treated. However, this community of gender equality is just imaginable since the societal norms have taught her that men are superior over women (Adichie 17).

"When I think of Tamir while driving" is a story in the African American short stories that tend to present the idea of homeland from a perspective of an African American. The writer in this story recalls the killing of a black boy, who tends to have been killed as a result of his race. While driving his children to school, the writer is disturbed by the thought of injustice in America since racism has made it impossible to demand equal treatment. Further, the fact that a father cannot question the reason for killing his son is an indication of racial discrimination and

the fear of African Americans to express themselves. The killing of black people in America has been a norm for the police who seem to follow the societal perceptions that all are not equal. From the reading, it is clear that the author of this text longs for justice and racial equality. However, his wishes are unachievable due to the lack of voice in a society where racism has taken roots.

I used to be a roller coaster is another text that explores a girls journey from her homeland to America and the experiences she goes through in her education journey. Jessica terms her mother as quiet to show that she had died and that God was the only father figure she knew her all life. "I used to be a roller coaster girl till you told me I was moving too fast"(Pg 22). The writer uses these words to illustrate how her culture became erased by the ideas inflicted in her mind while in America. With this regard, the writer wishes for her former sense of personal identity which has been eroded by the new environment in America. In broader terms, she recalls the person she used to be before migrating to the new lands, a longing that seems impossible to reverse.³ "I buy my damn drinks and oceans..still calls my name when it feels my toes near its shore" (pg 22). Even after she has become successful, the writer is not content with her current home. The writer's desire to be in her homeland shows how the memories of her former life are still embedded in her mind. In the film

"The trail of tears," the Cherokee people are faced by many problems after being forced out of their native land, Mississippi into a foreign land where they become separated from their original heritage. Their removal from the lands separated them from their cultural identity since it happened against their will. As a result, the immigrants find it hard coping with disease, hunger, and cold which lead to the fatality of many members of the community. The title "trail of tears" is designed to indicate the harsh circumstances that the Cherokee find themselves in a

while on their journey ² from their native lands including Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Alabama to the present day Oklahoma. Similarly to other African Americans who live in America as a result circumstances beyond their control, the writer lives in two communities, the community of her former heritage and the current community which she only lives physically. The aspects presented in these stories support the idea presented in the quote that homeland is more than just the current ground. In every aspect, ranging from the desire for gender and racial equality, the writers become citizens of the country of longing.

Work Cited

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