

The Émigree- Carol Rumens

The poem explores the memory of the poet and their experiences in a far off city they spent time in as a child. The poet is looking at this city through the eyes of a child and the happy memories she had, she compares these to the truths she knows as an adult which is much harsher. Émigree relates to the word emigrate, the idea that a person goes and settles in another country, sometimes not feeling welcome to return. The poet bases many of the ideas on modern examples of emigration from countries like Russia or the Middle East where people are fleeing corruption and tyranny, or those countries change in their absence to some form of dictatorship.

Checking out me history- John Agard

The poem looks through the voice and experiences of the poet at our understanding of identity through history. We look at how history is taught and the conflict between fact and truths which is sometimes obscured by race or gender. The poem gives examples of powerful black figures from history, often involved in conflicts themselves in one way or another. Noticeably the poet emphasises how we often celebrate our national or cultural history, without looking at the history and culture of those we were in conflict with.

Kamikaze- Beatrice Garland

The poem is set around the events of a kamikaze pilot flying to war and then turning back before it was too late. Kamikaze pilots were expected to use up all their weapons and then suicide by flying into their targets as a final act of destruction. It was considered a great honour in Japan to die for your country. The pilot in this poem returns home and is rejected by his family forever after, his own wife refusing to speak to him. The poem is written both from a narrator and the daughter of the pilot. The narrator explains the events, almost translating the story, while the speaker gives a first person account of how they excluded her father. The poet questions at the end which death would have been better, to die as a kamikaze pilot young, or to grow old with a family who shut you out.

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