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## Da Same, Da Same by Sipho Sepamla

(See p. 68 in *Poems From All Over*)

<b>Title:</b>	The repetition emphasises the content: all people are the same.
<b>Theme:</b>	All humans are the same, no matter what the colour of their skin is.
<b>Mood:</b>	Protest, angry, anti-apartheid.

### Discussion

Poetry was one of the ways in which protest against apartheid in South Africa could be safely expressed. In this poem, Sepamla is expressing such protest. The speaker in the poem is saying that all people, whether white, black, Indian or coloured (the mixed race population [rainbow nation] in South Africa) are people, we are all the same, so why should we suffer laws and discrimination against those who were not white?

The poet uses the language of those for whom English (or Afrikaans) was not a mother tongue and repetition to make his point. He shows that skin colour is just that: the colour of skin; underneath the red blood is the same for everybody. He thus points to the superficiality of judging people by their colour. He refers to the Christian Bible, which states that all people were made in God's image.

The speaker does not go as far as to compare language or culture as differences between people, he refers to the basic make-up of humans: we all have red blood and a heart that beats, therefore "how (can) one man make another (another) man feel / da (the) pain he doesn't feel himself (himself)"?

The poem is written in free verse with no rhyme scheme or regular rhythm. The stanzas are also of irregular length. One could say that this irregular form is part of the protest against the regulated and strict life that blacks were forced to live in South Africa.

\*Sepamla was an active protestor in the Black Consciousness Movement, an anti-apartheid movement.

### Analysis

Stanza		Comment
1	The speaker mentions the four official race groups in South Africa and repeats that he "doesn't care" which one you are, but if you live in South Africa you have a "big terrible terrible" (apartheid) to live with and can't look another man in the eye.	Apartheid was humiliating, inhuman, shameful, all the things that make people unable to look each other in the eye as equals. Notice the opposition between "I" and "you", with the later including everyone, whereas the "I" can be said to be personal: the speaker is black, not white.



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