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1.

In the poem Nightfall by B.W. Vilakazi the poet uses a variety of linguistic features in order to show the different ways in which black laborers are manipulated. This essay shall critically comment on how the poet uses linguistic features in order to introduce exploitation of black laborer. ✓

In the first stanza line two the word “withdraws” is a personification which means to remove or to pull out. “And hills withdraw their shadows”, this line gives us the image of hills that are gradually losing their shadows because of the sun going down. It suggests that the day is tired and similarly the life of an African is full of extortion and fatigue ✓ after a tough day. The fatigue is a result of possible manipulation. Line three the word “ochre” is an adjective which means dark burnished color. Here the black laborers have been working on the sun for the whole day and their skins have changed and become darkish in color because they are toasted by the sun. The last line in the first stanza which is line three use the simile “like”, where the skin of black laborer is associated with the color of the sun as it becomes red in color. Also in the first stanza line three “the sun, like ochre, reddens”, shows the image of the sun that is losing its glow after a long journey. This is used by the poet to show manipulation since the black workers work the whole day and tires as the sun goes down. ✓ In this case the “sun” might be taken as a resource that is manipulated just like a black laborer.

what is the significance ?

In stanza two “swallows” are the birds that move together. They are predators and parasites. This could mean that white people are parasites because they use black laborers for their own gains and those people who are working hard, get peanuts from the white people to be on top. They use black people as a stepping ladder to get to the top. This is exploitation. ✓ They are not paid even a living wage. In this stanza line one “the swallows are at rest”. This line gives us the image of water-birds that have lost energy and are at rest. Swallows reports in the coming rain but in this case the image suggesting a bad time or omen for the black laborer. This suggests manipulation since the birds have done their work and is exhausted. Also in the first line there is a simile “rest” which shows conditions under which the black laborer works. Most of them die from chest problems because of the dust that was not properly prevented from affecting them. The second line of the above mentioned stanza shows that the “sea” is now quite, which indicate the industrial noise that took place during the day and hard labor has reach the score of the day. In the last line the poet mention the “bats”, these are the birds that are noticeable because they are active during the night or at dark. The black laborer finishes ✓ their work late because they work long hours which are not paid for. By the time they finish work it is at night. In line three on the same stanza “above me fly

the bats". The image of the bats is very symbolic because they depend on its prey. They only come out at night when their prey has less vigilance to its predator. Blocks are fortunate because they are manipulated by the system (as workers) and they get nothing out of it. So the bats might represent a doomed scene for black laborers.

In stanza three line two "I fear the lurking thieves". This line gives an image of people with evil intentions. They waylay people at night and rob them their remuneration or living wage. This image is used to introduce black exploitation. Since thieves depend on other people for laborer. It is important to note that thieves are not representing blacks but any manipulative person in this poem talks to the white employers who are not remunerating their laborers with a living wage. The last line which is line three in the same stanza which says "who seek their pray like hunters". This line gives us image of hunters in the bush. The poet introduces black laborer manipulation by the white employer. Hunters go out to trap and feed on animals for their livelihoods. This suggests a scene where black laborers are at the messy of their white employer(s).

Stanza four line two "but dust from off the mine-dumps". In this line the poet gives an image of mountains of perspiration. This implies that the black laborer worked very hard to remove this resource from underground at under the instruction of the white man or employer. Unfortunately the black laborer lives from hand to mouth. One can also say this suggest manipulation because the black laborer do hard labor to enrich the employer. Line three in the above mentioned stanza "like smoke is drifting skyward". In this line the image of the smoke tells us that something is taking place on the ground. This introduces the manipulation of blacks in two ways. Firstly they are the ones who burn their energy for underserving payouts. Secondly they are like smoke because they are wasted in their livelihood.

In stanza five line one "frogs and water-fowl". In this line the image of frogs and water-fowl is a sorrowful one because the poet suggests that in order for laborers to survive they have to be exploited not on their own free will. The river is the natural habited of industrialization. Similarly the black labor has no proper place to live comfortable because of industrialization.

In the last stanza which is stanza six it shows that by the time the black labors finish work it is already dark this is after sunset before the night. It is late. The black laborers are the only ones who are from work as a result they are not going to be able to have quality time with their families. Children are sleep. In line two the word "jostling" creates an imagery of bumping into each other or bang against each other. There is an element of rushing here because it is late. Everyone wants to be home as quickly as possible.

In conclusion the essay has clearly shown how the poem created image on the exploitation of the black laborers in order for the gain of the white employers. It has also indicated that after working hard the black laborers end up with ~~nothing~~ because they live through hand to month andtThe only person who gets rich is an employer.

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A good analysis though it could b better than this. Be more critical. Nyoni K

## REFERENCES

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