



(Botswana National Flag)

Southern Africa: Kalahari San Grass Song

There is great variety in African songs and poems in thousands of languages. This form is based on a Grass Song of the Kalahari San. In two sets of couplets (a pairing of two lines) two very different things/ people/places/ideas are compared. The couplets should imply that both are similar and, yet, different from each other. For example, in my poem isn't there greed in both couplets? This is a sophisticated technique to pull off. But there's no need to rhyme or count syllables.

EXAMPLE:

GREED

The wind grips the soil with greedy fingers
and flings it far to fall on the faces of strangers.

Children, hold fast! Do not fly far from your home.
The land of your father's fathers has need of you.