**AP Literature Comparative Poetry Analysis**

**Prompt:**

The following two poems present two different minority perspectives of America as revealed by an experience in a movie theater. Read each poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you compare and contrast the techniques used in the poems to characterize the speakers and convey their unique viewpoints.

**Main Character**

Jimmy Santiago Baca

I went to see
How the West Was Won
at the Sunshine Theater.
Five years old,
deep in a plush seat,
light turned off,
bright screen lit up
with MGM roaring lion-
in front of me
a drunk Indian rose,
cursed
the western violins
and hurled his uncapped bagged bottle
of wine
at the rocket roaring to the moon.
His dark angry body
convulsed with his obscene gestures
at the screen,
and then ushers escorted him
up the aisle,
and as he staggered past me,
I heard his grieving sobs.
Red wine streaked
blue sky and take-off smoke,
sizzled cowboys’ campfires,
dripped down barbwire,

slogged the brave, daring scouts
who galloped off to mesa buttes
to speak peace with Apaches,
and made the prairie
lush with wine streams.
When the movie
was over,
I squinted at the bright
sunny street outside,
looking for the main character.
**“Indian Movie, New Jersey” (1990)**

    **Chitra Banejeree Divakaruni**

Not like the white filmstars, all rib and gaunt cheekbone, the Indian sex-goddess smiles plumply from behind a flowery branch.  Below her brief red skirt, her thighs
are satisfying-solid, redeeming
as tree trunks.  She swings her hips
and the men-viewers whistle.  The lover-hero dances in to a song, his lip-sync a little off, but no matter, we
know the words already and sing along. It is safe here, the day
golden and cool so no one sweats,
roses on every bush and the Dal Lake
clean again.

 The sex-goddess switches to thickened English to emphasize a joke.  We laugh and clap.  Here we need not be embarrassed by words dropping like lead pellets into foreign ears. The flickering movie-light wipes from our faces years of America, sons who want mohawks and refuse to run the family store, daughters who date
on the sly.

         When at the end the hero
dies for his friend who also
loves the sex-goddess and now can marry her, we weep, understanding.  Even the men
clear their throats to say, “What

qurbani! What dosti!”  After, we mill around unwilling to leave, exchange greetings and good news:  a new gold chain, a trip to India.  We do not speak of motel raids, canceled permits, stones thrown through glass windows, daughters and sons raped by Dotbusters.

In this dim foyer
we can pull around us the faint, comforting smell
of incense and pakoras, can arrange
our children’s marriages with hometown boys and girls,
open a franchise, win a million
in the mail.  We can retire
in India, a yellow two-storied house
with wrought-iron gates, our own
Ambassador car.  Or at least
move to a rich white suburb, Summerfield or Fort Lee, with neighbors that will
talk to us.  Here while the film-songs still echo in the corridors and restrooms, we can trust
in movie truths:  sacrifice, success, love and luck,
the America that was supposed to be.

*qurbani*:  sacrifice
*dosti*:  friendship
*pakoras*: fried appetizers
*Dotbusters*:  New Jersey gangs that attack Indians