**Compare and contrast how the two poems "War Photographer" and "a Mother in a Refugee Camp" give an anti-war message**  
To understand the two poems, their similarities, their differences and both their anti-war messages, one must really study the poems in depth, as both poems have a deep, unfathomable significance behind them.

Both Poems look at the bitter hardships in war-stricken areas of the world as Chinua Achebe’s ”Mother in a refugee camp” focuses on Biafra, Nigeria and Carol Ann Duffy’s (no specified location) far from ”(Rural) England” emphasizing that most of us -the audience- don’t actually experience any of this. Yet the two poems highlight the negative effects war has on humanity as they bring the reader into a third person perspective of two first person victims of war. The photographer, although he is just a psychological victim (passive victim) of the war, he is still deeply affected. We see this when the poem comments on his emotion ”from the airplane he stares impassibly” showing how the war has made him lose spirit.

In ”Mother in a Refugee Camp” the mental effect of war has been taken to a much more extreme level. The mother, whose child has died from starvation (a much more mentally wrecking experience) sits there holding a ”ghost smile between her teeth” thinking of all those memories of a proud mother she once had been. This must be psychological deprivation taken to an extreme.

As the poems prove to be strictly anti-war, the reader may notice that the writers of both poems have tried to hold a more distant approach to war. They strive in between direct aftermath of war and the long term problems war has on its victims. The poems bring out emotions in the reader, and make their “eyeballs prick out with tears, between the bath and pre-lunch beers” showing how the imagery puts the reader into a state of hidden apathy and passive anger.

In War Photographer, Duffy creates some powerful and disturbing images in this poem. Four in particular stand out:

-”fields which don’t explode beneath the feet of running children in a nightmare heat.”

-”how the blood stained into foreign dust.”

-”a hundred agonies in black-and-white.”

She tries to tell us that it can be difficult for us to relate to suffering elsewhere in the world, so she tries to make us feel guilty about it by using disturbing and powerful images. Images we would rather not want see or really see. This brings the reader to the theme of anti-war, introducing events that we consider a distressing melancholy. By linking these two ideas together war is put into a detrimental light giving off an anti-war message.

Even though both poems have a sad and negative tone, they have an informational awareness within them. The authors aim to raise awareness within the readers to create guilt and show us how people out there die and suffer all the time while we just push on my with our lives. Carol Ann Duffy uses a lot of comparison and reference to “Rural England, home…” to enforce this, unlike Chinua Achebe who sticks to using more direct, straightforward tools such as appealing to the senses. Achebe does this throughout the poem starting from line two; “the tenderness” referring to the child, showing its innocence and purity. Which justifying war and the effects it has on these people, supporting the theme.

Then he continues taking a sudden contrasting switch, using the readers senses to create a vivid image if disgust describing the surroundings as “heavy with odors of diarrhea.” Then the poem petrifies the reader with repulsive and disturbing imagery, evoking sympathy and guilt for the “unwashed children with washed out ribs” and their mothers, “long ceased to care.” Long ceased to care, that means mothers, who have just stop bothering with their children! In what state of mind must a mother be? To ignore the death wish of her child? This is one of the many questions that the poems raises but leaves unanswered, creating a mental resonance of the thoughts and feelings one might have after finishing the poem. Very Effective.

Although these poems do not necessarily leave the reader on a positive they leave a crass prodigious mark in the audiences mind. It puts people into a serious state of morose altruism. A formidable anti-thesis opposing to all warlike acts and oppositions.

Overall the two poems are very powerful since the authors Carol Ann Duffy and Chinua Achebe create images that resonate long after the poem has finished. What is chilling is the fact that after all the photographer and the mother have experienced to go what they went through, they still don’t make enough of an impact to change the world.