



LANGSTON HUGHES AND HIS POETRY

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Abstract. *This article also discusses Langston's works and their content and analysis. Along with this, the article discusses the genres of Langston's works, the periods in which they were written, and the literary methods used in the works. The article vividly reflects the life and work of English writer Langston Hughes.*

Key words: *poet, realism, literature, poetry, stories, poems, culture, music, novels, literary.*

INTRODUCTION

Langston was raised mainly in Lawrence, Kansas, by his maternal grandmother, Marry Patterson Langston. After the death of his grandmother, Hughes went to live with family friends, James and Auntie Mary Reed, for two years. Later, Hughes lived again with his mother Carrie in Lincoln, Illinois. His writing experiments began when he was young. Hughes was elected class poet, while in grammar school in Lincoln. Hughes's first and last published poems appeared in *The Crisis*; more of his poems were published in *The Crisis* than in any other journal[1] James Mercer Langston Hughes was an American poet. One of the earliest innovators of the literary art form called jazz poetry, Hughes is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance. Langston Hughes grew up in a series of Midwestern small towns. His father left the family soon after the boy was born and later divorced Carrie. Hughes traveled to Cuba and then Mexico, seeking to escape

the enduring racism in the United States[1] Hughes and his contemporaries had different goals and aspirations that the black middle class. During his time in England in the early 1920s, Hughes became part of the black community. In November 1924, he returned to the United States to live with his mother in Washington. In 1925, he landed a prestigious job as personal assistant to historian Carter G. Woodson at the Association for the Study of African American life and history. His poetry and fiction portrayed the lives of the working-class blacks in America, lives he portrayed as full of struggle, joy and music. He stressed a racial consciousness and cultural nationalism devoid of self-hate. In 1930, his first novel, *Not Without Laughter*, won the Harmon Gold Medal for literature.

MAIN BODY

In 1932, Hughes and Ellen Winter wrote a pageant to Caroline Decker in an attempt to celebrate her work with the striking coal miners of the Harlan County War, but it was never performed. Hughes' first collection of short stories was published in 1934 as *The Ways of White Folks*. He finished writing the book for a year at a summer house in Carmel, California, given to him by another patron, Noel Sullivan. These stories are a series of commentaries on the comic and tragic relationship between black and white people. In general, they stand out because they approach race relations with a general pessimism and sardonic realism. In 1937 Hughes wrote the long poem, *Madrid*, his reaction to an assignment to write about black Americans volunteering in the Spanish Civil War. Moreover, he wrote novels, poetry, short stories, operas, essays and works for children. From the mid-1950s to 1960s, Hughes' popularity among the younger generation of black writers varied even as his reputation increased worldwide. He continued to have admirers among the larger younger generation of black writers. He often helped writers by offering advice and introducing them to other influential persons in the publishing communities and literature. Langston Hughes died of complications from prostate cancer on May 22, 1967, in New York City. In his memory, his residence at 20 East 127th Street in Harlem has been given landmark status by the New York City

Preservation Commission, and East 127th Street has been renamed “Langston Hughes Place”. He wanted to tell the stories of his people in ways that reflected their actual culture, including their love of music, laughter, and language, alongside their suffering. Hughes documented African American literature and culture in works such as *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America* and the anthologies *The Poetry of the Negro* and *The Book of Negro Folklore*. Among his other writings, Hughes translated the poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca and Gabriela Mistral. His poems and works depicted the lives of black workers in America, their lives full of struggle, joy, laughter and music. Depicted in his works is pride for African Americans and their diverse culture. “My goal was to make the condition of the black people in America and of all humanity known to the world,” Hughes said[3] The poet published 16 poetry collections during his life. One of the most famous poetry collections is called “Shakespeare in Harlem”. Hughes uses poetry to convey the messages of equality, racial justice and democracy. He celebrates folkways, history and real lives of his people. His poems are highly subjective, impassioned, and refreshingly powerful. They portray the dignity, resilience, struggle and soulfulness of his people. They also depict their laughter, joys, and fondness for jazz and blues. Langston Hughes’ poetry did not merely impact the African American community of his time, but it also became an inspiration for all coming generations. His poems picture the daily life and struggles of the common Black people. He is one of the major leaders of the movement and his poem truly capture the spirit of the age. Langston Hughes’s poems use countless themes to depict the everyday life of African Americans. Langston Hughes’s poems also treat the theme of deportation and heritage. His poems uncover the history of deportation of the black slaves through the deep, wide rivers and oceans. Hughes’s poems introduce the African American heritage to the world and make people recognize their rich culture and historical significance. Langston Hughes’s poems encourage his people to dream for the betterment of their present life and future. They tell them that there will be a time when blacks and whites will live together in peace and harmony. Hughes urges his people to never let their dreams die despite the harsh realities and always strive for

their fulfillment. Langston's poems demonstrate that dreams generate hope in times of bleakness. That's why they are significant. Hughes rejects racism, celebrates racial pride, and depicts the expectations and the dreams of the African American people in his poems. Langston Hughes's various poems employ musical themes. The most famous ones in this regard are "The Weary Blues", "Harlem Night Club", "Jazzonia", "Blues Fantasy", "Trumpet Player" etc. The overall flow of Hughes poems resemble the rhythms or beats of music. The repetition of lines and the inclusion of blues lyrics in the poems successfully evoke the tone and tempo of Black music. A lot of Hughes's plays are literary, as he wanted to prove a point that although it may be the accepted thing in society at the time, it isn't always the right thing to do. The essence of Hughes's poetry lies in its ability to transcend time and culture. Hughes's works have had a profound influence on modern theatre and cinema. His witty dialogue, complex characters, and timeless themes continue to inspire playwrights and screenwriters. Many of his works, such as mistaken identities and romantic entanglements, are still commonly used in contemporary storytelling. They provided a harmonious blend of the two. Even the same character showed great interchange of tragic and literary strands. Hughes's poetry is the most difficult to classify. The reason is that they overlap in style with other genres. Hughes's plays are as popular as they are because he was perhaps the greatest writer who has ever lived. Langston, however, had the wit and wisdom to steal plots and ideas from a lot of the plays of that era and top them with better poetry. He also had more insight into characters' feelings and motives, and cleverer handling of light and dark, change of pace, and the weighing up of right and wrong. Langston remains vital because his plays present people and situations that we recognize today.

CONCLUSION

The major themes in Langston Hughes's poems come out of his personal life, his experience with his people, his travels, and his involvement in radical and protest movements. Some of the important themes noticed in the works of Langston Hughes are the Black pride, American Dream, racism, dreams of freedom and change, music

etc. Hughes's poems deal with black people and their concerns. Langston Hughes's poems elicit themes that expose African American heritage and culture to the world. In conclusion, Hughes's works have left an indelible mark on modern literature. His clever wordplay, use of mistaken identity, and creation of memorable characters have shaped the literary landscape for centuries. From films to sitcoms, his influences can be seen across various forms of entertainment. The enduring popularity of Hughes's poetry speaks to their timelessness and their ability to make audiences laugh even after hundreds of years. To sum up, Hughean works are a testament to the Bard's unparalleled talent for storytelling and understanding the human condition. Through humor, wit, and timeless themes, these plays continue to enchant and entertain audiences across the world. Their enduring appeal lies in their ability to reflect the complexities of human nature while offering laughter and hope in a world filled with uncertainty. Hughes's works or poetry are not just plays; they are a reflection of life itself. They teach us that humor may be a powerful tool to explore the deeper aspects of our existence, and they remind us that laughter is a universal language that connects us across time and cultures.

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