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Dream as an Alternative History in Langston Hughes's Selected Poems

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Letter of Recommendation

Miss Sushmita Budhathoki has completed her thesis entitled “Dream as an Alternative History in Langston Hughes Selected Poems” under my supervision. She carried out her thesis from 2073/07/20 B.S. to 2073/08/05 B.S. I hereby recommend her thesis to be submitted to *viva voce*.

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Approval Letter

This thesis is submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Miss Sushmita Budhathoki entitled “Dream as an Alternative History in Langston Hughes Selected Poems” has been approved by the undersigned members of the thesis Research Committee.

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Abstract

This proposed paper aims to explore dream as an alternative history in Langston Hughes' selected poems, "Harlem: A Dream Deferred", "Dream Variations", "Dreams", "Dreams Boogie", "I Continue to Dream", "I Dream a World" and "The Dream Keeper". This thesis also analyzes the historical connotation of African American revolution that attracts Hughes mind to tackle on the issues of the blacks. As the voice of the blacks was suppressed and muted, Hughes endeavors to raise voice on behalf of the blacks through literature. Hughes inaugurates a world of dream which becomes an alternative history for the blacks because the unsayable can be said through fantasy or dreams. The dream of the blacks is all about fantasy and imagination where they blacks imagined their colorful life with home, fraternity and freedom. The close observation of dream as motif in his poems serves as an alternative history when examined from the point of view of New Historicism.

Keywords: Dream, Imagination, History, New Historicism

Dream as an Alternative History

The prime motive of this paper is to explore dream as a motif that offers an alternative history of Afro-Americans in the selected poems of Langston Hughes. This paper examines Hughes's poems in relation to the past events particularly placed in the cultural context of Harlem. The burning issues of the then society are the isolation, race relations, equality and poverty. The history of Afro-Americans is punctuated by economic crisis, social tension, world war and oppression of race in mind, body and soul. So, Hughes realizes that there should be another history for the people who are racially discriminated in American society during the era of 1900 to 1960s. Mainly, the blacks are victimized racially and discriminated in the society. Hughes sees the images of everyday life of people in Harlem. Apart from the history, there is another history for the Blacks i.e. the world of dream where the Blacks dream for colorful life, home, rights, sense of security, freedom, justice and fraternity. Hughes utilizes the disconnected moments of Harlem and people living there. The concept of alternative history is inaugurated by Langston Hughes. Hughes through his passion for writing poems builds up the world of imagination i.e. world of dream where the blacks find the place of solace, peace and fraternity. Despite of torture and violence, blacks see the dream, imagine the peaceful life and hope for a colorful life for the future generations.

The world of the blacks in these poems is real and the dream of world inaugurated by Hughes is fictional and fantasize. The world of dream purely based on the form of imagination and fantasy. But later on when the blacks realize the importance of this fantasize world, it becomes the backbone for them to survive and make their life easier. In *A Dictionary of Postmodernism*, Niall Lucy introduces Michel Foucault's work as, "Foucault's archeological and genealogical investigations

introduce the possibility of difference and transformation into “human” institutions by way of showing up the discontinuity and dispersal, the accidents ruptures and mutations, which constitute the very fabric of history” (71). Foucault divides the history in two types: Official History and Unofficial History. The history of the blacks and the whites written by historians is an official history whereas the history offered by literary creations by few writers like Langston Hughes is unofficial one. Here, in this paper, the researcher explores an unofficial history of African American people and their living experiences as depicted in Hughes’s poetic works of dream which is purely based on imagination, fantasy and fictionalization. Similarly, an alternative history talks about the ruptures, accidents and mutations of the blacks. Dream becomes an alternative in a sense that it has included the fictional world where imagination and fantasy make it easy to share the pains and sufferings of the blacks. Hughes includes the voice of the excluded community of America because he realizes that the alternative history is needed to the excluded community i.e. the community of the blacks.

A literary work depicts the social and cultural life of the certain time.

Langston Hughes’s poems depict the social and cultural life of the blacks in the era of 1900 to 1960s. The poems that are chosen for this research work are the representation of the black’s cultural and social life. As the history of the blacks is misrepresented, they are often neglected in the mainstream history. The whites are at the center of everything such as social values, education, power, wealth, and literature. The creation of the world of dream allows Hughes’s to create space for the aspirations of the blacks and this world of dream has significant role to accomplish the dream of the blacks even in the imagination. The contemporary time of the blacks is recognized within the periphery of difficulties, struggles and dominations. Because

of the situation exist in the society, dream becomes the imaginable phenomenon. But later on that fictional dream helps to achieve the real dream of the blacks. The blacks get their rights as well as their dream of home, freedom, equality, equity, fraternity, and justice. Jean-Pierre Durix, in *Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse*, opines how history is restructured by the imagination, “Shame contains many elements belonging to the contemporary world. Yet artistic distance must always be kept so that reality may be restructured and made meaningful by the imagination” (118). Artistic distance, here, refers to the fictional world that the author creates in his or her texts whether that is novel or poem or anything else. The author creates the world of dream, fantasy just like Langston Hughes in order to represent and restructured the history. Hughes, in a very artistic way, imagines a new world of dream, hope, freedom and fraternity for the blacks because he realizes that the history of the blacks will remain as it is if he doesn’t let them to idealize their reality.

Similarly, Jean-Pierre Durix, in *Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse*, defines history in the following words:

History undergoes a similar process of shifting, reorganization and formally of mythologizing in the sense that a community of people come to accept as their own true heritage representations which may have been rearranged many times and which consequently bear little relationship with actual facts. These characteristics cannot be interpreted as a direct commentary. (118)

For Durex, history is perceived by the community of people according to the change of time and establishment of new theories. Durex also states the idea of history as history is changeable and it shifts according to the sense of community of people. It is reorganized, rearranged and mythologized based on the increment of knowledge of

the people. While talking about the history of the blacks, their history is also rearranged, reorganized and shifted. Firstly, the history of the blacks is based on the poverty, slavery and racial discrimination. After, when Hughes interprets their history including the new world, the history of the blacks is looked from new vision. Their history transforms within the ground of positive arrows such as the blacks get rights and freedom. The history is mythologized and the story of the blacks is modified within the contextual boundaries. The mythologized history also lets people know about the history of the blacks and the history of the Hughes at the same time. Thus, history cannot be presented in isolation, texts of the then time and context help to understand, rearrange, reorganize and shift the history.

Dream is an imaginative phenomenon through which Hughes revolts against the whites about racial discrimination and violation. The voice of the blacks is undermined and not listened from other community. They feel biased and neglected from the society. So, Hughes realizes that their voice is not listened by speaking or defending themselves. Their voice is muted and they become voiceless. Though there are already various movements against the injustices but those movements are not effective for the blacks. They are not able to get their rights through their speech, voice and movements. In proportion to these phenomenons, Hughes decides to launch the new approach and that approach later on brings the huge changes among the blacks. The approach inaugurated by Hughes is none other than dream itself. Though dream is related to fantasy and imagination but it has great influence upon the blacks to achieve what they want. This research attempts to show how the fictional world of fantasy lets human beings to live life without stress.

The selected poems “Harlem: A Dream Deferred”, “Dream Variations”, “Dreams”, “Dreams Boogie”, “I Continue to Dream”, “I Dream a World” and “The

Dream Keeper” are entitled with a word dream, which works as a metaphor or symbol. These poems are analyzed based on the theme “dream as an alternative history”. The choice of the poems is highly concerned with introducing the major theme of this research work. Though the selected poems are short in length, simple in language and choice of words, they do carry everlasting message and voice of revolution for the Blacks. In the poems, Hughes asks and leaves demanding the answer means these poems have ever ended argument in order to justice the dreams of blacks. So, the present work explores the optimism, positive thoughts and dreams of Hughes which he saw beneath the incurable depth of wounds compressed by racial discrimination, exploitation, partiality, biasness, absence of justice, violation and unfairness for the Blacks. Similarly, “dream” also works as an alternative history and a metaphor in the poem. It represents the solution to the problems of the blacks. Langston Hughes digs out the crucial problems of the blacks. Those problems of the blacks are collected and presented on his poems. Hughes unifies all the difficult moment and creates the hope of land for the blacks. Yet the era has changed, people are changed but the history of the blacks is always debatable under the theory of New Historicism. These poems are the evidence about the history of the blacks which represents the dreams seen by Hughes for the better life of the blacks. The selected poems highly concentrate upon the major theme of “dream”. Dream isn’t only the imaginative phenomenon but it is the rays of hope for beautiful life. Hughes expresses love, affinity, inner feelings, dreams and joy. Hughes tries to set awareness among the people to end the battle of racism, slavery system and poverty.

Before 1960s the period was suffered from several difficult moments such as racism, economic crisis, social tensions, and world war and so on. This research work also represents the opposition between Harlem of the 1950s and rest of the world.

Harlem is the place where most of the African Americans live with the poverty and series of economic boom and bust cycles. Langston Hughes, as a member of Harlem, views the images of Harlem from very near. Hughes sees the ups and downs, isolation and race relations in his daily life. This is the historical context of black literature during Langston Hughes time. He views partiality, violence, in depth racial discrimination and so on with the black. In response to the violence, racial discrimination and oppression, Hughes revolts through his writing i.e. poems. Therefore, he begins to write poems based on the theme of dream. Before this also, Hughes's priority is always for the black as he himself is a black and suffers a lot.

Nonetheless, the literary career of Hughes emerges into the new form from his adulthood when he firstly "published his first poems and searched for his authentic voice" (3), Arnold Rampersad, *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. He also introduces Hughes biography:

In the 1930s especially, in response to the Great Depression, certain features of his verse were altered as he began emphasize the need for radical political action. Hughes then wrote some of the most radical poems ever published by an American, as well as some of the most poignant lamentations of the chasm that often exists between American social ideals and American social reality. (4)

Hughes is more concerned about the life of the blacks because he has seen the great depression in America closely. Hughes begins to write radical poems that directly hit the American social ideals and American social reality. Americans, specially, the whites lament about injustice and biasness that they impose to the blacks. There comes the vast change among the mindset of the whites when they interact with the poems of Hughes's. Great depression of the era also helps Hughes to tackle the issues

of the blacks as they are more suffered during the great depression. During 1930s, poverty increases highly and the blacks are forced to become slave in their own life. Hughes is not able to see miseries of the blacks, in result; he constructs the imaginative phenomenon i.e. dreams to reduce their pains and sufferings. Hughes is turning outward from the literature, uses languages and themes, attitudes and ideas familiar to anyone who had the ability simply to read. Hughes spreads the messages humorously though always seriously to audiences throughout the country. Because of the simplicity and simple ideas and issues, Hughes's poetry is more conveying than the others. The readers easily understand his poems so that Hughes is able to create change in American society and the mindset of the people. Taking this point in case, the researcher explores the theme, motif and use of the dream in Langston Hughes's selected poems entitled with the word dream. The major argument- Hughes's use of the word "dream" works as a metaphor which provokes the black to see the dream of freedom, justice, colorful life and fraternity beneath the incurable wounds and pains of racial anxiety –will be substantiated in the frame of "New-Historicism". The texts cannot be isolated from the history. Hughes utilizes the disconnected moments of Harlem and reads from the perspective of New Historicism. The moments of the blacks are set under the isolation and poverty. Therefore, Hughes poems are analyzed based under the theoretical framework of New-Historicism.

Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, in *Practicing New Historicism* state that "New Historicism helps raise questions about originality in art and about the status of "genius" as an explanatory term, along with the status of the distinction between "major" and "minor." The process by which certain works achieved classic status can be reexamined" (10). Based on the opinion of Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, this research work also sees the originality of the Hughes's texts

i.e. poems. The originality of these poems lies on the ground or history of racism. The racist American society becomes the platform for Hughes in order to create the new world for the blacks. The art of Hughes's creates the new knowledge for the blacks. The world of dream follows the concept of home, freedom, fraternity, colorful life and brotherhood. Even in the imagination or the fantasy the blacks begin to revolt against the whites. For this new concept of revolution Hughes is recognized as a genius as his creation of the new world helps to merge the distinction between major and minor. On the then era, the whites are the major part of the society whereas the blacks are the minor one. It is also a method of critical interpretation, provides a mechanism by which to analyze his poems that invokes and indictment of racial injustice and the attendant isolation. Thus, New Historicism plays pivotal role to shape out the hidden history of the blacks based on the cultural context to which the poems of Hughes are embedded. Within the wide range of cultural literary struggle, the alternative history for the blacks gets an achievement and success.

M.A.R. Habib defines New Historicism as, "It saw the literary text not as somehow unique but as a kind of discourse situated within a complex of cultural discourses- religious, political, economic, aesthetic – which both shaped it and, in their turn, were shaped by it" (761). Texts and the history cannot be isolated or separated from the history because New Historicism looks the text as a part of history. Hughes's poems are not only just the poems about the black Americans but they are the part of history where Hughes introduces the new world for the blacks i.e. world of dream. "Dream" which Hughes refers to in the title of the poems is the American dream as it applies to African-Americans. In the contemporary America, white Americans are free to pursue their dreams. There is peace and harmony, love and fraternity and sense of freedom and rights among the whites but on contrary to them,

the blacks are suppressed under the racism and poverty. The voice of the blacks is manipulated under the history: history of the whites. It is at this point, Hughes realizes the need of alternative history for the blacks. As result, dream becomes an alternative history as the texts of Hughes present the real history of the blacks.

Taking this point in case, the researcher explores the theme, motif and use of the dream in Langston Hughes's selected poems entitled with the word dream. The major argument- Hughes's use of the word "dream" works as a metaphor which provokes the black to see the dream of freedom, justice, colorful life and fraternity beneath the incurable wounds and pains of racial anxiety –will be substantiated in the frame of "New-Historicism". The texts cannot be isolated from the history. Hughes utilizes the disconnected moments of Harlem and reads from the perspective of New Historicism. The moments of the blacks are set under the isolation and poverty. Therefore, Hughes poems are analyzed based under the theoretical framework of New-Historicism.

Specially, Delois Garrett, in "Dream Motif in Contemporary Negro Poetry", establishes the "dream of home" (768) and "dream of brotherhood" (769) whereas this project work points out the dream of freedom, justice, and colorful life that is seen beneath racial injustices and discrimination. Garrett opines that "the dream of home and the dream of brotherhood culminate in the dream of self-realization" (769). Garrett presents the dream of African-American that can reach climax only through self-realization. Self-realization is crux for Garrett. Without realizing the self it is quite impossible for the blacks to revolt or raise voice. He uses simple words to define the dreams pointed out by Hughes. Here, simplicity in both Garrett and Hughes is similar because both of them prefer simplicity whether it is dream or use of words or language. Garrett also indirectly signals to the issue of racism. In the era of Hughes,

blacks were often homeless; they were humiliated and treated as slaves by the whites. Blacks live their life being exiled under slavery and they were homeless. So, they often seek for home and brotherhood which Garrett explores in his review.

David R. Jarraway, in his work “Montage of an otherness Deferred: Dreaming Subjectivity in Langston Hughes”, states the dream as a subject or the issue in Hughes’s poetry. Similarly, in “Use of Dreams in Hughes’s Poetry”, Xu Wei supports Hughes point of view and explores the development of use of dreams in his poetry. Wei points out that Hughes uses the dream for racial equality and justice. In Langston Hughes poems, dream plays pivotal role to shape the tone of the poem as well as voice of the black. Xu Wei states that racial discrimination and injustice significant role to think about dreams and raise voice among the black. Wei explores that Hughes’s use of dream is also for racial equality and justice. “The spiritual aspects of dreaming and dream interpretation most familiar to Hughes would have come from the community he has brought up with” (129). This sentence provokes that Xu Wei is also presenting the historical background and where about of Hughes. For Wei, historical connotation of African-American revolution becomes the prior agenda for Hughes to think about dreaming and making dream a revolutionary movement.

James Presley in “The American Dream of Langston Hughes”, deals with historical background of Langston Hughes. He states the reason behind American dream of Hughes. Presley opines that Hughes is suffered a lot because of being an African American man. Hughes sees the obstacles and hurdles in Harlem and he is well aware about the everyday life of the people of Harlem. Before, American dream is only for the white and Hughes feels that the blacks are excluded from these dreams. So, Hughes inaugurates the world of dream through his poetry which becomes possible only because of Hughes. Presley writes that “Hughes has written most

frequently, though not exclusively, of Negro characters. Consequently the importance of the color line in America is frequently reflected in his work. The effect of the color line on the American Dream is therefore an integral part of his protest” (382).

In *The Journal of Negro History*, Arthur P. Davis introduces the dreams of Hughes towards Harlem. He points out the deep understanding and love of Hughes. As a point, Hughes is motivated by Harlem and the people of there who are strongly dominated. Davis writes, Langston Hughes, “as I have said above, knows and loves and understands Harlem. He can see the pathos in a Harlem night funeral or a fraternal parade. He understands the grim realism of poverty-stricken slum-dwellers who like war because it means money for them” (227). Every sorts of problem that he sees in Harlem night become the prior agenda for Hughes to write poetry based on the theme of dream.

Davis’ and Presley’s historical background of Hughes’ life becomes the major reference for the researcher in order to support the historical connotation of Afro-American revolution in the research work. Langston Hughes describes the controversial issues between Blacks and Whites in the poem. Similarly, most of the researches support Hughes’s points that all the grief, sufferings; injustices and so on are the product of racial inequality. Both of the researchers comment upon the real and alternative history of the blacks. The dream that they have elaborated and mentioned on their research works are the real dream that the blacks see beneath the incurable depth of wounds. Both of them also, admire the work of Hughes and the way Hughes inaugurates the world of dream for the blacks. It is important to celebrate the dreams of blacks because their dreams are precious and valuable as they are hardly achievable.

It is also important to see the relationship between past, texts, actions, self, power and language. Chung-Hsiung Lai, “Limits and Beyond: Greenblatt, New Historicism and a Feminist Genealogy” states that:

Greenblatt’s thesis on self-fashioning in the Renaissance also shows how words, however powerful, are ultimately never enough. The world will not allow identity to be formed through language alone; action must follow from exhortation, as man must seek to join the signifier with its referent. Language takes place in time and reminds us of the movement of history, even (and perhaps especially) when we try to stabilize it. (6)

According to Lai, history cannot be separated from text and history. Lai “explores the theoretical problems of New Historicism in detail by dividing its development into two stages—the first stage is the “panoptical past: language, self and power” and the second is “go-betweenness: wonder and resonance” (1). Lai defines self-fashioning based on Stephen Greenblatt’s idea of New Historicism. Actually, self fashioning is the way to create the identity in the poem, play, novel according to the social, cultural, and political codes. Hughes creates the identity of the blacks in his poems. Similarly, Hughes also creates the identity of himself as a black activist, poet and moreover black poet of Harlem. History cannot be isolated from the texts and so on texts also cannot be isolated from the history. According to Greenblatt, language and action both are the parts of history. They are the powerful components in order to describe the history. While talking about the history of the blacks, their history and the ‘dream’ become powerful because of the literary works of Langston Hughes. The succession of the dream movement is just because of the combination of history, texts and actions. New Historicism also praises the texts and history together. Language also

plays subtle role to describe the history. Thus, the history and the literary texts have communal relationship that shapes the actual art and meaning of the work.

Philip M. Royster, in “The Poetic Theory and Practice of Langston Hughes” states “the primary reason for making this study is to draw the relationships between Langston Hughes’ theoretical statements concerning writing poetry and his actual practice of the craft” (ii). Royster mainly focuses to show the connection among the theory and Hughes’ poems. While concerning Hughes’ poetry, they are more attached with his feelings and experiences that he shares in Harlem. Hughes also uses the emotions of the blacks in his poetry and the literary work. The selected poems for this research work also carry out the various emotions of the blacks. Each poems deal with the issue of dream, including the various concept and way. Apart from analyzing Hughes’s poems from theoretical perspective, his poems are the best examples and sources of inspiration on the then era. Hughes’s poetry are not simply the magic of words but they also works as a healer and booster to raise voice against the whites. By carrying out the simple and everyday issues of the blacks and Harlem life, Hughes consoles the mindset of the blacks and asks them to emerge within the wide range of freedom, equality, equity and knowledge.

While looking these poems from the perspective of New Historicism, these poems or Hughes’s work of literature reflect the historical and socio-cultural context. The researcher digs out the grave and ancient archives of historical and socio-cultural context of these poems. New Historicism, thus, analyzes the historical context of Langston Hughes. It also shows the way that literary criticism was done. From the context of politics, class and power, the literary texts of Hughes have great influence till the date of today. The readers follow his texts, read it again and again. Because of New Historicism, the in-depth meaning of the poems and the historical background of

the poems become the prime factor to complete this research work in easier way.

History has its own story. Just like it, Hughes has his own story and behind the poems there is hidden story of the blacks. Hughes presents the communal story of the blacks in his poems.

Langston Hughes is the man of changes as he spends his life preserving the pride of his people. Hughes encourages his people to fight against the oppression and discrimination in the society. The selected poems encourage and spread the message of fight back among the blacks. The poems, novels and the texts of Hughes's present the cultural context of the community of the blacks. In *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, Hughes opines the concept of dream, imagination, and freedom. Not only a particular dream works for the blacks, but also they need several dreams in order to get rid of the oppression and discrimination they are facing. The several dreams; such as, dream of home, dream of fraternity, dream of freedom, dream of colorful life, dream of end of slavery system and poverty, are the prime factors that Hughes sees beneath the incurable depth of wounds. Those wounds, pains and sufferings also motivate Hughes to come up with a dream. The use of dream in Hughes's poems has played significant role. It also becomes the voice of the blacks or revolution of the voiceless. In the poem, "I Dream a World", Hughes views the world from the eyes of the blacks' community. In the poem, dream becomes the powerful source for the blacks in order to raise their voice against the racism:

I dream a world where man
 No other man will scorn,
 Where love will bless the earth
 And peace its paths adorn
 I dream a world where all

Will know sweet freedom's way,
 Where greed no longer saps the soul
 Nor avarice blights our day.
 A world I dream where black or white,
 Whatever race you be. (311)

This poem shows the future world of the blacks. Hughes imagines the beautiful world where there will be no scorn, greed and avarice. There will be love, peace and freedom and no people discriminate one another in the name of race. Powerful images of beautiful world for the blacks are presented in the poem. By using the dream, a fantasize world is created where the positive vibes spread among the blacks. Though their voice is not listened, the words of a poem work as a voice of the blacks.

Similarly, Hughes also dreams for the world where there will be no discrimination based on the race. There will be single world where both the whites and the blacks have equal rights and freedom. They will share the similar ethnic values and beliefs. Moreover, this poem also focuses upon the alternative history inaugurated by Hughes during the era where racism, poverty and slavery highly affected the life of the blacks.

Similarly, "Dreams", one of the symbolic poems of Langston Hughes, encourages the blacks to hold and catch the dreams even in the worst moments of life:

Hold fast to dreams
 For if dreams die
 Life is a broken-winged bird
 That cannot fly.
 Hold fast to dreams go
 Life is a barren field
 Frozen with snow. (32)

In this poem, the author talks about how important the dreams are. Hughes communicates the strong desire of not letting out the dream. Until and unless the persona sticks to the desire of achieving dreams, it is not possible to get the dreams. Hughes in this poem dedicates this poem to the blacks' readers and asks them not to stop dreaming. Hughes encourages and motivates the readers to hold the dreams and also opines that if they are not able to tie the dreams together life will be like a barren field and broken-winged bird. Dream, here, is a way to boost up the blacks for their better life. The life of the blacks is also like a barren field and broken-winged bird because they live their life is exiled under the racial discrimination, slavery and poverty. To get rid out of the exiled life, the blacks need to get the knowledge and lesson of the rights. Therefore, Hughes, in his poems, includes the issues of the blacks and creates the idea of dreams. The dreams of the blacks are viewed from the eyes of Hughes. Similarly, this poem of Hughes is seen from the new historicists' perspective as the text cannot go apart from the history. The background of the poem lies in the cultural and social context of 1900 to 1960s. This poem also offers an idea of alternative history where the issues of dream are included in the poems.

The alternative history of the blacks is one of the important histories in the history of the world. As the blacks are excluded from the culture in the then era, they feel more biased and humiliated because of their color. Even though the color doesn't shape the identity of the people but the lack of knowledge and emerging capitalism highly recommend the need of racial discrimination. Through discrimination one can make other the salve. When talking about the history of the blacks, they are dominated in the society by the whites as the whites are in the mainstream of establishing social norms and values. Also the whites pretend to be the genius and controller of the society. To perform the everyday tasks in everyday life, the whites

need the blacks. So, it is important for the whites to keep blacks under some of the superstitious beliefs. When the life of the blacks goes through the miseries, poverty and starvation, the whites begin to ask them for household works. The need of survival forces them to work under the whites. Later on, the blacks are kept as a slave and their life is useless for themselves. This sort of very pity life of the blacks is seen by Langston Hughes from very near. Hughes, himself lives such life being born in the African American family. As well as, the undeserved pains of the blacks become the history and their real feelings, emotions and desires hide under the white American dreams.

In response to the things occurs in that time, Hughes decides to rebel. Hughes knows that his voice alone doesn't work while resisting. So, he begins to write poems based on the issues of the blacks. Hughes's poetry leads people to think life of the blacks from new perspective. These poems are not only written in order to slap the white American society but also to create the new position of the blacks in the society. The poems are simple and short but carry strong and powerful meaning as well as powerful position of the blacks. The selected poems for this research work are also short and simple, but they do carry everlasting messages and powerful response to the white American society.

The speaker in the poem "I Continue To Dream", understands the value of dream and also presents how the speaker makes beautiful imagery:

I take my dreams and make of them a bronze vase
And a round fountain with a beautiful statue in its center
And a song with a broken heart and I ask you:
Do you understand my dreams?
Sometimes you say you don't.

Either way it doesn't matter.

I continue to dream. (111)

This poem also dedicates the positivism of Hughes. Despite of several conflicts and racial tensions, Hughes teaches his people to dream beautifully and constantly. The way Hughes combines the words and phrases in this poem; he wants the same changes in his community that even with the broken heart he asks them to dream for colorful life. Even in the hurdles, hustle and bustle of life, Hughes never stops to dream. Taking this poem from the perspective of New Historicism, this poem carries an intellectual history of African Americans. The blacks often stop for dreaming and hope for colorful life because they cannot tolerate injustice and discrimination. They feel weak and begin to believe on their fate. As a result, they are treated more violently and cruelly. Thus, 'dream' becomes the prior agenda for Hughes to encourage and motivate the blacks to get justice and what they want. Dreaming subjectivity becomes the hot trend for the blacks later on and they begin to resist through dreaming that cannot be interfered and judged by the whites. So, the 'dream' constantly and gradually occupies the space of movement against the racial injustice, inequality and discrimination.

Nonetheless, racial discrimination is one of the major issues in the then era to talk about the American dreams. Negro character is always important for him in order to address the issues of the blacks. Similarly, the role of the blacks is justified in Hughes work because they represent the real life of the blacks. These lines also show Hughes as a protest and revolt one who claims and fights for the rights for the American dream of the black. Hughes, by creating the new character 'dream keeper' in the poem "The Dream Keeper", asks the blacks to dream in order to secure their present and future life. Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt define New

Historicism as “a belated act of recognition” (1). The act of Hughes in literary field has great influence upon the then era and the blacks. The act of asking for dream is the best act of Hughes because this act doesn't only makes the literary act great also helps to tackle the concept of dream in the mind of the blacks:

Bring me all your dreams,
 You dreamer,
 Bring me all your
 Heart melodies
 That I may wrap them
 In a blue cloud-cloth
 Away from the too-rough fingers
 Of the world. (45)

The poem “The Dream keeper” is very closely tied to the idea of importance of dreams. Hughes, in this poem, asks the dream keeper to protect the collective dream of the blacks. The poet talks about the bad forces who are trying to harm and destroy the dreams. He suggests the dream keeper to be aware about the bad forces.

Indirectly, Hughes is signaling to the whites as the bad forces who are not letting the blacks to get their rights and freedom. This poem highly leads to the past life of the blacks where they are tortured and discriminated physically and emotionally. While looking this poem from the new historicist perspective, it carries the dark history of the blacks. To get rid out from the dark history, Hughes creates the dream keeper to keep the dream of the blacks. Through the dream keeper, Hughes tries to enlighten his community. The act of revolution through the poems is really adorable. The dream keeper is none other than the blacks themselves. The dream keeper is the representative of whole black community who tends to keep dreaming.

In the poem, “Dream Deferred”, Hughes talks about the shattered dreams. Here, Hughes mentions that the dreams of the blacks are taken as the controversial issues by the whites. The whites are not in the favor of providing the blacks their rights and equality. These lines from the poem describe the shattered and deferred dreams of the blacks. It also tells how the dreams of the blacks dry up, fester, stink, and explode in the then era:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

Like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—

And the run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

May be it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode? (426)

This is an analytical poem which carries the dozens of questions about dream deferred. Dream deferred refers to the frustrated and long postponed dream of African Americans. The dream of African Americans is the dream of freedom, home, fraternity, dignity, equality, opportunity and success. But their dream is hidden under the power as well as their voice becomes voiceless. The speaker of the poem is black poet. Thus, the blacks are given the dreams of equity and equality. But these dreams never come true. Through this poem Hughes examines the possible effect caused by the dream. When the dream is postponed, deferred or delayed, it brings frustration; it

dries up like a raisin in the sun. This poem is critical in the basis of history. The blacks already have the dream but their dream is undermined and not listened. Moreover, Hughes tackles an attention of the whites through the choice of words, poems and his literary works.

In the poem, “Dream Variations”, Hughes wants a carefree life free of racial discrimination and color prosecution. The poem also shapes the form of history within the wide range of concept of dream. There are variables in dreams. It is determined according to the self of the persona but for the blacks they have communal dreams they have seen under the single shadow of the sky. The blacks are persuaded to live the life exiled on their own community. They are always back dropped because of lack of education, wealth and knowledge. In this poem, Hughes signals the blacks to dream through the everyday work and everyday life because he thinks that the only way to encourage them for resist is by acknowledging their self and their position in the society. Hughes also points out the difference between the day or white and black or night or dark. Day refers to the whites who have hustle and bustle on their lives. Similarly, night or dark refers to the blacks where people take rest forgetting the hustle and bustle, tensions and so on. So, the actual meaning of the black self refers to the peace where people get solace from every sort of tensions:

To fling my arms wide
 In some place of the sun,
 To whirl and to dance
 Till the white day is done.
 Then rest at cool evening
 Beneath a tall tree
 While night comes on gently,

Dark like me-

That is my dream! (40)

Apart from the succession of Langston Hughes, there is the story of his struggle in his literary career. A black boy wants to reveal out the injustice and racial discrimination that he suffers from it since his childhood. Hughes has seen hurdles, ups and downs in his life and mostly because of being a black American boy he has to suffer a lot. The story of the Hughes's struggle is storied by Arnold Rampersad in *The Collected poems of Langston Hughes*. Similarly, Kenny J. Williams also talks about the struggle phase of Langston Hughes. Williams quoting from Arnold Rampersad states that, "The place of Langston Hughes in American literature now seems assured. But it was not always so. As Arnold Rampersad continues the story of the poet, the second volume opens with a lonely Hughes in California, sick and struggling to protect himself from various assaults" (522-523). During the literary career of Hughes, he has to suffer a lot from various assaults. He is even sick and struggling to protect himself from the casualties that enter into his life because of being a black man. Within the dark phases of his life, Hughes comes up with the light of knowledge and light of hope for the blacks. American cultural history has the name of a great literary figure who highlights the black American literature in the mainstream literature. This work of Hughes does not resemble him as a poet or great literary figure but also great black activist. The history of the Hughes elaborates the cultural contexts of the then era. Williams mentions how Hughes becomes the great black activist and become renown with all the people in his article that:

Throughout the biography—which succeeds in its evocation of a particular era in American cultural history—there are enough names of people, places, and things to give the reader a sense of the multifaceted

Hughes. Yet the irony of the poet who was too black and too racially motivated for some during the 1940s becoming too mild for the black activists of the 1960s is not lost on the reader. (523)

Moreover, Hughes is recognized through his literary works. Mainly, he introduces Harlem and the people living around there. It is not only an introduction of Hughes but also an intro of the blacks. The readers know Hughes through Harlem, people living around there and the facts he collected for his literary works. The biography of the Hughes not only introduces about him but also relate the things of Harlem, his life and the issue of dream. Thus, the readers are aware of the intention of the Hughes about writing poem. Hughes initiates the way for the blacks to see the dream and view the world form new perspectives. The history of Hughes and the history of the blacks are not lost on the readers mind. Even today, Hughes is worshipped in literary field because he introduces the new world for the blacks.

The poem “Dreams Boogie” is also addressed under the issues of the blacks. Langston Hughes is trying to show how the blacks are not understood in the American society. Hughes protests in the poem the challenges African Americans face. The whites need to listen to the blacks and their dreams as well as the voice of the blacks need to be fixed. The poet is emotionally attached with the small things of the blacks. So, Hughes mentions beating of feet which shows that the smaller things can also be the reason behind change. This poem also carry out the history of the blacks where they eagerly waiting for the new morning with new life and freedom. It also suggests that the voice of the blacks is muted but the words are not muted. The words have great power to tackle the attention of others. Hughes uses jazz voice in the poem. Also through the speaker, Hughes tries to get his audience to recognize the metaphorical discontent that lies beneath the lyrics:

Good morning, daddy!
Ain't you heard
The boogie-woogie rumble
Of a dream deferred?
Listen closely:
You'll hear their feet
Beating out and beating out a—
You think. (388)

Hughes addresses the issue of dream and how a dream deferred. Simply, the world of dream is also presented here in the poem silently. This poem raises the voice against the white American society that is unfair and bias towards the blacks. Every people have right to live in the society with full rights and justice but the blacks are excluded from the society not physically but socially and culturally. Because of their color, they have to face and fight for the life. This poem also has the historical connotation of African Americans life. So, through the poem, Hughes raises the voice and signals about the alternative history in the poem. Mostly, metaphorical languages are used in the poem to address the issues of the blacks. The metaphorical languages satirize the so called American society and show how important it is to dream for the blacks.

Throughout the research, the theme of dream as an alternative history combines with how the blacks are represented in the then era of Hughes. The representation of Harlem tackles with issues of violation and mainly with the issue of racial discrimination. Hughes' idea of 'Dream' as an alternative history is based on the fantasy or virtual world. While talking about the word dream, it is all about imagination and fantasy. Hughes, through dreaming tries to heal the inner and outer sufferings. The blacks are suffered a lot from different situations such as racism,

poverty, slavery, injustice, biasness, and so on. Their sufferings are beyond the level of tolerance. So, Langston Hughes determines to inaugurate the world of dream through his literary career. Hughes's poems mostly deal with the issues of the blacks. Though, Hughes himself is an African American man who has lived his life with the several tensions. Hughes has seen distinctive problems in the everyday life of Harlem and the people around there.

The selected poems present the dreams that are celebrated by the blacks is inaugurated by Hughes. Similarly, the world of dream is appreciated by the blacks as they feel safe and protected in the world of dream and imagination. The dream works as a healer for them because the world of dream is free of problems, biasness, slavery, and mostly racial discrimination. They feel free from the everyday problems when dreaming about their life in a positive way. Dream substitutes the pains and sufferings of the blacks. It also minimizes the psychological frustration of the blacks. Each of the poems elaborates the dream based on the problems that the people face in the Harlem.

This research work deals under the framework of New Historicism, Hughes celebration of dream is celebrated in the literary history of African American. New Historicists think of culture as a text. The culture of African American is bounded under the racial discrimination and poverty. The selected poems "Harlem: A Dream Deferred", "Dream Variations", "Dreams", "Dreams Boogie", "I Continue to Dream", "I Dream a World" and "The Dream Keeper" opine the culture of the blacks and also these texts or poems are analyzed within the periphery of New Historicism. The history of the blacks is misrepresented and they are under the intolerable sufferings in the then era. Hughes' work to represent the blacks as dreamer, dream keeper is highly appreciated. The researcher also shows the connection between the history and the story of the blacks. The insufficient pains and sufferings of the blacks are healed

because of the inauguration of the dream of world. The depth and root meaning of the poems center to the issue of dreaming whereas alternative history helps to achieve the dreams of the blacks.

To sum up, Langston Hughes plays pivotal role to help dreaming the blacks forgetting their pains and sufferings. Hughes inaugurates the world of dream for the people who are socially and racially discriminated. 'Dream' comes as a silent movement or literary movement just to avoid the injustice, biasness, racial discrimination, inequality, and so on. Dream is also connected within the then cultural context and social context. It has great emphasis to elaborate the history of 1900 to 1960s. Historically, it plays subtle role to interpret the black movement and succession of that movement. As I have mentioned before, dream is just an imagined phenomenon, it carries people towards fantasize or fictional world. But the fantasize world becomes the ladder for those people to grab new life, new rights and their wishes. The selected poems also have in-depth meaning about dreaming. They are more concern about the dream and kinds of dreaming. Along with the poems, the meaning and the messages are more reliable because Hughes alone cannot construct the dreamland. Hughes needs his poems which are crafted with simplicity and simple languages. The more simple the poems, the more they are read and understand by the audiences. The simplicity in the poems also makes the world of dream of Hughes more successful in the then era. Similarly, the poems of Hughes's connote self realization and self fashioning because Hughes has created the characters in the poems based on the Harlem society. The blacks are the characters in the poems. The choice of the characters also makes the dream movement successful in American society.

There is the connection between the selected poems for this research work and the world of dream. The poems are highly dedicated to explore the issues of dream and the alternative history. The researcher tries her best to analyze the poems, show connection between the critics and the reviewers and the poet. The poems highly dedicated to the fantasize world for the blacks. The world of the blacks is more miserable and their pains and sufferings are incurable. But Hughes shows the possibilities for new home and new world where the blacks can confine their dreams and live in fantasize world. As the dream is an imaginal phenomenon, it highly dedicates a person to live with carefree and boredom life. In the dream, people imagines for the beautiful and pleasurable things. We try to ignore the real and painful things and imagine for the colorful life. Thus, dream is an alternative phenomenon that is based on the human fantasy and feelings. The person designs his/her dreams according to his/her wish. So, the blacks dream for the colorful life, freedom and justice apart from the miserable life, pains and sufferings.

Thus, this paper not only looks after the efforts of Hughes' but also celebrates the succession of achieving dreams. The dream of home, fraternity, colorful life, freedom, peace, and so on are at first rely only on the words and poetry. But later on, slowly and gradually it takes place on the mind and soul of the people which helps them to raise voice and resist against the so called white American society. This research work combines the idea of dream based on the framework of New Historicism. By connecting the history and texts together, this research work tackles the issue of dream as an alternative history. It is an alternative history in a sense that it helps the blacks to live life peacefully. This is the golden history of the blacks because apart from the real history, they feel more secure and protective in this alternative history. The alternative history carries out the world only for the blacks where they

achieve their every dream and live carefree life without slavery and poverty. So, dream is not only a word for the blacks, it is a new world where they live, enjoy and fulfill their desires compressed on the pains and sufferings. Finally, with the rise of knowledge about dreams and rights, the blacks enjoy their life within the periphery of alternative history i.e. dream. Hughes restructures, rearranges and reorganizes the history of the blacks through his poems that carry dream as a major theme. This paper also establishes how the dream or imagination or fantasy let people to express their hidden desires and live communal life.

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