

Presented with Gratitude to the Collection of

Tribhuvan University Central Library

M.A. (English) dissertation on

Racial Memories in Langston Hughes's Selected Poems

from

Krishna Chandra Acharya

Of

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

November 2007

Tribhuvan University

Racial Memories in Langston Hughes's Selected Poems

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, the Faculty
of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, in the Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Krishna Chandra Acharya

November 2007

Tribhuvan University

Letter of Approval

This thesis titled, "**Racial Memories in Langston Hughes's Selected Poems**," submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in English, by Krishna Chandra Acharya, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

(Krishna K. Bista)

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

(Hriseekesh Upadhyay)

Head, Department of English

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Kathmandu, Nepal

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly indebted to my respected teacher and advisor Mr. Krishna K. Bista of Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, for his insightful and scholarly guidance in order to complete this research. I sincerely remain grateful to him and will remain so for ever.

I am equally grateful to my guru Mr. Hriseekesh Upadhyay, Head of Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, for his invaluable support and encouragement. I am in his debt.

Similarly, I am also thankful to my friends, Komal Prasad Phuyal and Pashupati Pandya, for their constant support to accomplish the research. My brothers also deserve my sincere thankfulness for their continual support and inspiration to accomplish the research.

My friend Mr. Gautam Ranjitkar also deserves my thanks for his technical help by typing the manuscript of the research.

Above all, I am indebted to my parents who have enabled me to pursue my goal of higher studies and complete this thesis.

Finally, I am grateful to all who have directly or indirectly supported in bringing this research to the present form.

Krishna Chandra Acharya

November 2007

Abstract

The present research attempts to inquire into one of the supposedly inherited faculties of sub-conscious memories of events in history and pre history, particularly the racial memories present in the black descendents. For this purpose, the manifestations of racial memories are analyzed in detail, selecting some of the best poems of Hughes. In fact, racial memories signify the transferred memories of the race and its traditional and cultural domains as portrayed in the literary works. These are the long-lived memories obliged to the race and racial properties.

In the first two chapters, the research deals with the black race and its historical and social position in America together with the relation between race and literature. The third chapter, particularly, deals with the racial memories manifested in Hughes's poems. It also discloses the unexcavated territories hidden in each black descendent with emphasis on the nostalgic expressions towards the land of origin, Africa and racial traditions. The final chapter concludes the research by exploring the major issues and the causes of manifestation of racial memories in Hughes's poems. Therefore, the research has, more importantly, explored the impact of the racial past and racial traditions emerged as racial memories in the black descendents.

Langston Hughes's selected poems are shaped by the theme of racial memories on the part of the black descendents. They have been haunted by the racial past and racial traditions of the black predecessors. The diminishing cultural treasures and invaluable traditions of the black ancestors have been recollected as racial memories in Hughes's selected poems. In gist, the American experiences of the black descendents with reference to the black forerunners, and their racial traditions have also been assembled as racial memories in Hughes's selected poems.

Table of Contents

Letter of Approval	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Chapter 1. Racial Composition of America	1-13
African Slaves: Historical Beginning to Build a Viable Nation	8
Hughes as an African American Poet	11
Chapter 2. Racial Depiction in Literature	14-28
Race and Literature	18
Black as a Race	21
Harlem Renaissance: A Window to Black Culture	24
Chapter 3. Racial Memories in Hughes's Poems	29-59
Expression of Nostalgia: Longing for the Lost Culture	36
Reminiscence of African Scenes in Hughes's Poems	39
Christianity: Prejudice to Blacks	42
Harlem Renaissance as a Symbol of Black Platform	46
Hughes's Dream: Equality, Liberty and Fraternity in America	51
Color as a Measuring Rod	55
Chapter 4. Affirmation of Marginal Voice: A Recreation of Racial History	60-62
Works Cited	