

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

**(Mis)-representation of the Blacks in
Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English**

By

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. **Keshav Raj Sharma** has completed his thesis entitled **(Mis)-representation of the Blacks in Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*** under my supervision. He carried out his research from **May 2008 (A.D.)** to **December 2008 (A.D.)**. I, hereby, recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled "(Mis)-representation of the Blacks in Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Keshav Raj Sharma has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

The Emperor Jones dramatizes the socio-political, cultural, and racial turmoil of American society during the 1920s. On the surface observation Eugene O'Neill seems to be positively influenced from the racial riots and movements of Harlem Renaissance. But on the core level he cannot come up from his white psyche, which leads him in reaffirming imperialist and repressive attitudes of whites towards blacks. Though some white critics praise O'Neill for giving the role of protagonist to African American for the first time in American theater, his attitude to Brutus Jones, is not positive from his ascension to the Emperor's throne to his assassination. Brutus Jones, the ex-Pullman porter and convict, becomes emperor in an unknown Caribbean island. But his corrupt and exploitative nature leads to the end of his rule and life. Smither, a white cockney trader and factotum of Jones, gets his success in every aspects of his action. His achievement in capturing all wealth and assets of Jones' palace and his success in manipulating rebellious native group is to be noted. Behind the surface intra-racial conflict between Brutus Jones and Lem, the play dramatizes the hidden interracial turmoil of Jones and Lem with Smither which resolves with the victorious glory of the white over the blacks. Thus, the play imposes the discourse of superiority of the whites over the blacks.

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