



## RACISM IN THE PLAYS OF LANGSTON HUGHES'S MULATTO AND SOUL GONE HOME

MASKE GANPU RAMBHAU

Assistant Professor,  
Department of English,  
Jamkhed Mahavidyala Jamkhed,  
Dist. Ahmednagar. (MS) INDIA

### ABSTRACT

*Racism is a kind of power, which deals with the ego of race. Race has been played a predominant role in the society. Racial discrimination is one of the most important themes in the African American literature. In province of African American literature, these are prominent Black authors such as Toni Morrison, Richard Wright, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Claude Macky, Jesse Faused and Wallace Thurman etc. Their writing is the outcome of exploitation, racial discrimination, slavery, plantation, race, poverty etc.*

**Keywords:** Racism, Discrimination, Agony, Mulatto, exploitation, humiliation, soul.

### INTRODUCTION

Racism is one of the most important themes in African American literature. When racial ego awakes agony comes into existence. In fact, Langston Hughes is a wide user of this concept to determine and designate the realities of Blacks in the southern America. He gives various examples from black community which is related with the racial discrimination. Langston Hughes shows agonies of racism into his dramatic works. He His strong feeling for the black race and for the past and present condition of the blacks in South. Langston Hughes shows racial discrimination into his dramatic works. He has transformed his own experiences into his dramatic works. This concern is strongly reflected in his first full length play Mulatto. The blacks are rejected, exploited, humiliated on the basis of racial discrimination. The Racism is defined as follows:



*“Racism is the belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another race is superior or inferior to another that a person’s social and moral traits biological characteristics, Racial separatism is the belief, most of the time based on racism, that different races should segregated and apart from one another”.*

Its history traces back to during the past 500-1,000 years, racism on past of Western Powers toward non-Western has had a far more significant impact on history than any other form of racism such as racism among western groups. The most notorious example of racism by western has been slavery, particularly the enslavement of African in the world. In 1930s on African-American human being, the white and woman have control and authority over all. Langston Hughes was not an average African-American for those times.

Langston Hughes was a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance and a pusher for equal rights. Through his literary works he showed his disappointed and disbelief with the behavior of North and South African American. In 1934, he wrote and published a book called, “The Ways of White Folks”, the play Mulatto is a version of one of the stories in that book. Mulatto is compelling, courageous plays where the subject of race and identity can be understand a little through a historical approach.

Hughes has written many tragedies, among them Mulatto and Soul Gone Home are very popular in the decade of 1930s. In Mulatto there are a number of characters. There are the white plantations owner, the housekeeper, and their children. The racial discrimination is found in their children. The racial discrimination is found in this particular play. The Racial conflict is between the father and son in the Mulatto. Robert is a leading character from Mulatto, who always opposed to his father for the purpose of freedom, equality, but his father rejected him on the basis of color, race, appearance etc. Then, agony of racism burst out through Robert’s behavior. This play is around with three characters like, Robert, Norwood, and Cora. The real agony in the play takes place with the arrival of Bert, Colonel’s rebellious son, who refuses to live under old Southern system. This rebellious nature doesn’t permit him to bend like other Black slaves on the plantation. Bert is a new wave of liberty and freedom.

The following dialogue deals with the agonies of racism between Norwood and Bert. Thomas Norwood calls him Cora’s child. But here Bert replied, ‘I am not only Cora’s son but also you too’. Here argument starts, “Women don’t have children themselves”. The agonies have increased into the mind of Norwood, and he replies that, “Nigger women don’t know the fathers, you’re a bastard”.



Another event takes place in the same play. The whole country has been facing to impudent blacks; therefore, you have lost the chance of committee man. Here Norwood expresses his agony through the following dialogue, “everything turns on Blacks, Blacks, and Blacks no wonder Yankees call this the Black Belt”.

Here is one more incidents takes place between two Norwood and Robert. As Bert starts toward the main door, Norwood drew his pistol and tried to shot him, due to he is screaming hysterically, “Why don’t shot me papa”. It is also quite interesting to note that though Colonel then, Robert snatches pistol and killed him. Eventually, Bert did suicide and Cora got the madness. This is destruction of Racism, no one win the war of Racism.

‘Soul Gone Home’ is another most important one act play of Hughes. It also focuses on the agony of racism. There are two important characters such as Ronnie and his mother; they are playing a crucial role in this particular drama. There is scene of mother and son, mother is lamenting on the death of his son Ronnie and she is requesting to Ronnie come out through spiritual world. His appearance like very dark boy whose white shirt torn. Ronnie thinks that his mother nothing done for him; he used the crossword or abusing to his mother. Ronnie is rejected on the basis of black color. He becomes the victims of malnutrition as well as poverty.

Soul Gone Home creates a depressing experience exposing the exploitation of the blacks in the white world. It leaves certain questions in the mind of readers about the existence of a deprived minority group in America.

### WORK CITED:

1. Georgia, Hole and Sara, Hawker, ed., “The Oxford Dictionary”, oxford University Press, 2004.
2. Berghe, Pierce L.Van, “Race and Racism: Comparative Perspective”, U.S. A.: John Willey and Sons, inc.1967.
3. Smalley, Webster, “Introduction: Five plays by Langston Hughes”, Bloomington and London. Indiana University Press, 1968.
4. [www.adl.org/hate-patro/racism.asp](http://www.adl.org/hate-patro/racism.asp).