

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

After I have finished analyzing the three poems by Langston Hughes, I conclude that Hughes delivers his poems with words that are simple and easy to be understood. The poems bring up the theme about encouragement and empowerment against social discrimination, as we can see from the words that are used by Hughes.

The first poem “As I Grew Older” is about a person who tells about his life and what he has been through. He says that he had a dream but then, there is an obstacle that comes to his life. Hughes uses the word “dream” to refer to something that the persona wishes to have or to be. He compares his dream with the “sun”, the word which he uses to symbolize his hope. The word “bright” in “bright like a sun,” also indicates that his dream is something positive that enables him to have a good life. Hughes later writes that there are obstacles which block him from his dream. There are four dictions that are used by Hughes to represent

these obstacles; “wall,” “darkness,” “night,” and “shadow.” These four words indicate something negative that holds him back from his dream leads him to have uncertainty in his life. Hughes uses the sentence “I am black” is to emphasize the racial discrimination that the persona receives, and makes him not free to do anything.

Hughes also shows that black people have power to change this condition. They cannot blame the situation; on the other hand, they should fight for their life. He uses the words “my hands” and “my dark hands” to emphasize the belief in their selves. Then he describes the persona has power to change their condition, which is revealed through the diction: “shatter”, “smash,” and “break.”

From the diction that is used by Hughes, I can see that this poem is about a black person who experiences racial discrimination. The theme is **“black people should use their own strength to overcome the obstacles in life in order to get a better life.”**

“The Negro Mother” is the second poem that I have analyzed. It is about a black mother who tells about her hard life and experiences. Through her story, she encourages the next generations to fight against slavery or racial discrimination against the black people.

Hughes begins the poem by telling the persona’s condition. The persona is a free black woman who was kidnapped from her native land and sold to become a slave in another land. He emphasizes all the unfair treatments experienced by the woman through the phrases such as “beaten and mistreated,” “children sold away,” “no safety, no love, no respect.” Hughes uses the diction to describe the condition of black people’s life when they became slave.

Despite her condition, the persona strongly believes she and the next generations of her race are free people as in the words “through my children, young and free” and “I was the seed of coming Free.” This belief encourages her to fight and endure the unfair treatment, as can be seen from the diction such as “trudging,” “keep on,” and “no stopping for me.” She encourages her own self and the next generations not to give up as shown by the phrases “but march ever forward,” and “breaking down bars.” She makes herself an example in her fighting, as shown through the diction: “remember my years,” “heavy with sorrow–,” “and make of those years a torch for tomorrow.”

Hughes shows to the readers that despite all her sufferings, she never complains. She does all her works and she still can sing. Moreover, she still fights for what she believes and encourages others. Hughes wants to raise the black people’s awareness that if they believe in their dreams, they will be able to fight the obstacles. The theme I can conclude from the second poem is **“black people’s long history of suffering should be an encouragement to fight for freedom and have optimistic attitudes in their life.”**

The last poem that I have analyzed is “Mother to Son.” The poem is about a black mother who encourages her son not to give up easily when facing obstacles in his life. This poem has a similar meaning to the second poem.

Hughes uses the word “stair” to symbolize the rough path of the persona’s life. The phrase “no crystal stair” is to show the persona’s life is not as smooth as other’s because there are “splinters,” “boards torn up,” and “places with no carpet on the floor.” Hughes uses those words to describe the persona’s life and

emphasize the obstacles. The diction “bare” is also used to show that the persona has nothing in her life in facing the obstacles.

Yet, he shows that despite the hard life, the persona still fights to keep on living, which is represented by the diction “been a-climbin’ on,” “reachin’ landin’s,” and “turnin’ corners.” The phrase “but all the time” emphasizes how persistent she is in fighting the obstacles in her life, in order to keep on living her life.

The persona’s fighting is not for nothing; on the contrary, there is something that she knows worth fighting for. Hughes does not mention what it is that makes the persona fight, but we can conclude from the diction that she fights to keep on living her life. Later, the persona encourages her son to fight like her and not to give up: “I’s still goin’,” and “I’s still climbin’.”

Hughes describes the spirit of a mother in facing her hard life. He emphasizes how the persona encourages her son and others to keep fighting to overcome the obstacles in life. The theme that I get from the diction used by Hughes is **“parents’ spirit can encourage young black people to fight and not easily give up in spite of their hardship of life.”**

From the three poems, I can see the similarity of the poems from the diction used by Hughes. Besides, Hughes uses similar pattern in writing his poems. He tells the condition and the obstacles that each persona faces; then, he describes that in every poem, there is hope or dream or something that the persona wants to achieve; and the last, Hughes describes how the persona keeps fighting despite all the difficulties. The backgrounds of the poems are racial discrimination and slavery because the persona in every poem is a black person. The obstacles or

the hard life the persona faces are followed by the encouragement, hope, and fighting spirit. Hughes shows that it is our own self that can help us fight to overcome the obstacles.

I also conclude that although Hughes describes the racial discrimination, he does not use his poems to attack white people or to spread animosity to them. He wants to encourage and remind his fellow black people to do something in order to make changes in their life, and that they have the power to change their destiny.

