

CHAPTER III

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ON LANGSTON HUGHES POEM “NEGRO”

This chapter attempts to analyze the expression of Langston Hughes tell in his poem. The main analyze about experiences of racial discrimination black American who describes in Langston Hughes poem “Negro” (kinds, how people discriminate, and the effect of that racial discrimination). Meanwhile, to answer statement of problem the writer uses expressive approach and racial discrimination theory.

3.1 The Expression of Langston Hughes Tell in his Poem

"Negro" by Langston Hughes (1922)

Expressions used by Langston Hughes in this poem:

I am a Negro:
Black as the night is black,
Black like the depths of my Africa. (Stanza 1)

I've been a slave:
Caesar told me to keep his door-steps clean.
I brushed the boots of Washington. (Stanza 2)

I've been a worker:
Under my hand the pyramids arose.
I made mortar for the Woolworth Building. (Stanza 3)

I've been a singer:
All the way from Africa to Georgia
I carried my sorrow songs.
I made ragtime. (Stanza 4)

I've been a victim:
The Belgians cut off my hands in the Congo.
They lynch me still in Mississippi. (Stanza 5)

I am a Negro:
Black as the night is black,
Black like the depths of my Africa. (Stanza 6)

As I told before that, in this analysis the expressive theory is used to find the perception, feeling, and thought of the author depicted in his poem. In expressive approach by M.H. Abrams summarizes the expressive theory in this way: "A work of art is essentially the internal made external, resulting from a creative process operating under the impulse of feeling, and embodying the combined product of the poet's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings"(20). In this explanation, the writer tries to describe each stanza with expressive approach reading which was explained before.

In stanza one, the author begins with telling his identity. In his poem, in line one (I am a Negro) he says that he is a Negro, its mean that the author wants to declare about himself and his people community is Blackman American (Negro). Hughes as Negroes or black poet tells about Negroes to show his identity. Hughes proud be Negro, he comes to speak for a whole group of individuals rather than just one person. It means Hughes want show to the reader his personal experiences about condition of his community.

The use of "black" and the invocation of Africa were defiant back in the days when many blacks described themselves as brown with "I am a Negro, / Black as the night is black, / Black like the depths of my Africa" ("Negro") Hughes

challenged the black middle class with his absorption in slave heritage. He describes that the skin of Black American people is Black and their origin is from Africa.

Black American is origin came from African continent. According to Robert Asher even said the story of Africans coming to America is not like that of any other immigrant group. Unlike other immigrant groups, most Africans did not come to America by choice. They were kidnapped, enslaved, and brought to North America against their will. The story of Africans in America is primarily the story of these involuntary immigrants and their descendants. (qtd in Worth12)

In this sentences in line 2 & 3 in the first stanza "*Black as the night is black, Black like the depths of my Africa*" The author could be using the image of Black color for sadness. Black's skin of Black American is being compared with the night which dark color. It is showing us what a dark of Black American. Perhaps through the night the same color as its surroundings with the Black American sadness. Then the black is being compared of the depths of Africa. The comparison of the Black with the depths of Africa creates a strong impression of darkness condition in Africa.

Many Africans were sold into slavery. More workers were needed in the colonies. The number of African slaves being brought to North America increased. Slaves were brought by African slave catchers who captured them, chained them together in long lines and marched them to the coast. The slaves brought from the interior of Africa. The African slave catchers exchanged their captives for goods brought by the English and other Europeans. The Europeans, however, were shrewd

traders and regularly tried to cheat the Africans by adding water to the brandy or shortening the bolts of cloth. One of the European slave traders said:

The broad linen [fabric] serves to adorn them. The copper basins to wash and shave from the iron bars the smiths forge out all their weapons and country and household tools and utensils. Muskets and cut laces [swords] they use in war. Brandy is most commonly spent at their feasts. (19)

Once a deal had been made, the slaves were kept at a factory until a ship was ready to leave for the New World. After a cargo of slaves was collected, they were packed aboard the Royal African Company's sailing ships and brought to English colonies in the Caribbean and North America. The slaves' journey across the Atlantic Ocean in a sailing ship was called the Middle Passage (19).

For the Africans, the journey from their homes was a brutal experience. Many of them were so upset at leaving Africa and at their dismal future that they jumped into the sea and drowned themselves. Others became so depressed that they refused to eat. They sometimes starved to death before reaching America. Some of the slaves caught diseases and died. Indeed, slaves who became sick might be murdered to prevent other Africans from being infected. Many slaves did die, however, both from disease and by jumping overboard and never reached America.

From this statement above, the writer argues why the author Langston Hughes writes *black like the depths of my Africa* because the author wants to express himself as a Negro and his community (Negroes) derived from the darkness of condition in interior Africa. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," provided a personal credo and statement of direction for the poets of his generation, who, he says, "intend to express our individual dark skinned selves without fear or shame . . .

We know we are beautiful and ugly too." His forthright commitment to the Negro people led him to explore with great authenticity the frustrated dreams of the Black masses. (qtd in Kennedy1042). It shows a value of expressive approach which the reader insights into the mind and heart of the poet himself. Then, by employing a person with multiple identities, Hughes shows the diversity of the black experience nationally and internationally like describes in the next stanza.

I've been a slaves

Caesar told me to keep his door-steps clean.

I brushed the boots of Washington.

In second stanza, line one the author says "*I've been a slave*" its mean that the author describes the history of African American people who have been a slave since the time of Julius Caesar. The author showed the status of Black American as slaves at the time. Of course as slave, their job was not a noble one, because many of them at the time worked as boots cleaner. Some slaves to be carpenters, blacksmiths, or coach drivers for their masters. Women often worked in the master's house as cooks and house cleaners. Not only that but also slaves were necessary to the southern economy, which depended on the tobacco, rice, and indigo crops from large plantations. The demand for slaves continued to increase especially in the South as the number of plantations expanded. Slavery had become a part of everyday life. As a result, more and more Africans were brought to America as slaves.

In the huge plantation of South Carolina, George, Mississippi and Louisiana, they have been really dark they had no contact with White man, who always looked at Negro as animals. The condition of the slaves was almost barbaric. (Muhsonati 23)

It is mean that White Americans refused to work with African Americans. They did not want to compete with them for the same jobs. "When African Americans tried to obtain the same jobs as whites, they were often met by angry protests" (Worth 53). Black Americans are very close to the life like that working hard without any appreciation at all the part of their life. Black American often ran away to that condition, but because of their skin which easier to identify they were fond of coming back.

Then, in second stanza in lines 2 & 3, *Caesar told me to keep his door steps clean and I brushed the boots of Washington*" The author describes the era about history of Black American in the time of Julius Caesar until George Washington. Julius Caesar and George Washington which is in history books they are great leaders and their names will forever be recognized in history African Slave.

The history of George Washington is depicted by the author in his poem. Of slavery, George Washington is the first president of the United States, wrote: "Among my first wishes is to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished" (Field 29). Then, George Washington is president of the Constitutional Convention held at Philadelphia in 1787 and establishing the rules including complete secrecy concerning its deliberations that would guides the proceedings. The delegates who met at Philadelphia to write new constitution for the new nation came to build a stronger and more united country, not to solve the question of slavery. And the results of that constitution divide three separate sections to retain the loyalty of slave holders and slave traders in the South and North. The

decision by the delegates at the Constitutional Convention not to end the slave trade until 1808, the forced immigration of Africans continued. The three results are:

Firstly, they gave the small African slave trade 20 years in which to cease operations. After 1807 it would be illegal to import any further slaves into the country. Secondly, via passage of the Fugitive Slave act of 1793 they provided that all runaway slaves be return to their owners. Thirdly, because slave holders were to be taxed for their slaves, as property, they were permitted three votes for every five slaves they owned (29).

Here, the author wants to express the history of black American as a slave since in Julius Caesar until George Washington era. The slaves faced the discrimination because of their race at that time. Hughes shows as slave, Black American were forced to live, work, eat and travel separately from their white counterparts, had few civil or legal rights. Hughes describes are the real events and his ancestors experiences suffered in his poem. It is related with T.S Eliot (qtd Abrams 25) comments about the only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.

I've been a worker:

Under my hand the pyramids arose.

I made mortar for the Woolworth Building.

The next, in third stanza the author describes the Black American history as a worker, but they are still poor people. In line one in this stanza: "*I've been a worker*" the author shows the status of Black American as a worker. Black American learns another skill like be a Blacksmith to build the great building in the World.

In line 2 and 3 in third stanza “*Under my hand the pyramids arose, I made mortar for the Woolworth Building*” In the word “pyramids arose” and “Woolworth Building” Hughes describes the time of Black American as worker from the era of pyramid arose until the Woolworth Building. Not only that, but also Hughes shows the large role of black American played through the history of the Era. In Landmark Preservation Commission, April 12 1983 explain that:

Woolworth building is one of New York’s best known tall building, is among the most famous skyscrapers in the United States. The tallest building in the world on its completion in 1913 and become the most potent image of twentieth century urban America. According Philip Sutton and Schwartzman, Stephen said The Woolworth Building (1913) was the last of the great early skyscrapers built before the First World War. Construction of these tall buildings would not fully resume until the 1920s, with the golden age of skyscrapers, culminating in the construction of the Chrysler Building, and the 102-story Empire State Building (1931).

In this poem, Hughes depicts the Black American take apart in built the Pyramid in Egypt and Woolworth building in New York. Hughes also tries to show the black American achievements through their works. Even though they were slaves, they were proud to be able to build pyramids in Egypt. And they are also proud for their skills and strength to build Woolworth Building.

Black American also faced types of discrimination in their society especially in job. Black American’s job is not same with White position. White man refused work with Black American because White regards the slaves is inferior position. Thomas Bailey clearly described what whites wanted to accomplish by their treatment of African Americans: “The white race must dominant...The Negro is inferior and will remain so...No social equality” (qtd. in Worth 67).

I've been a singer:

All the way from Africa to Georgia

I carried my sorrow songs.

I made ragtime.

Only in this stanza, it consists of four lines. All of those are related to each other, so it is like in a long sentence. It seems easy to understand for every readers that the author depict the Black American have contributed a lot in this music history while at the same time they faced hardships in that era.

“African Americans still faced discrimination that often prevented them from voting, holding well paying jobs, or getting an education that would help them compete in a white dominated society. Despite these hardships, African Americans made important cultural contributions, especially in the areas of music and literature.” (Worth 13)

In the first line said *I've been a singer* is means that the author depict the history of Black American's music. Then, in second and third lines “*All the way from Africa to Georgia I carried my sorrow songs*” is tells about the era when slaves' journey across the Atlantic Ocean in a sailing ship or Middle Passage. For the Africans, the journey from their homes (Africa) to United States (Georgia) was a brutal experience. African slaves were treated cruelly aboard slave ships and crowded into cramped, dirty quarters during the long voyage. They slaves sang very sad songs, recalling their lives in African villages” (21). It means that the author describes the struggle of slaves African American in middle Passage. They still can dance, sing and laugh to spend life in moroseness. Of course, they just want to set aside their bitterness.

The last line "*I made ragtime*" is describes the author show us the origin music from Africa. The author and his community created ragtime music which is now becoming Jazz music. One of the few areas in which African Americans were able to freely express themselves was the arts. In New York City, which had a large African-American population, black musicians and artists began a cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance, named after the predominantly African-American section of New York City in which it was born. Langston Hughes and other African-American writers as well as actors were also part of the Harlem Renaissance. The cultural outburst of the Harlem Renaissance would be followed by descendants of the original Africans brought to the United States. In this era, they would achieve prominence not only in the arts but also in many other areas of American society.

"The African-American participant in the Harlem Renaissance inherited a legacy of expression from an earlier generation and, in using that legacy, transformed it into a powerful, relevant statement that would greatly influence succeeding generations."(Casement 160)

In Harlem Renaissance, Jazz music world thrived, with an important common trait being the influence they had on one another. Jazz arrived at a brilliant solution emphasizing independent but harmonically linked and simultaneous lines (Jeff 80). Jazz musicians such as Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington and singers such as Bessie Smith and Josephine Baker drew both white and black people by the thousands into clubs in Harlem to hear their music (Worth 72).

In this poem the author depicts the Black American expression with laughter and sings a song. We all know the tribulations of a Black American very long time. And this poem shows us they should not morose all days. But Black Americans have soul to solve their sadness of racial discrimination in their society.

With sing a song is makes their live was alive to turn away of suffer at the time.
Then, the result of the creativity of Black American is ragtime or jazz music now.
Jazz is origin music from Africa, which popular in Harlem Renaissance era. That is
all describes by Hughes in this poem especially in the four stanzas.

I've been a victim:

The Belgians cut off my hands in the Congo.

They lynch me still in Mississippi.

In stanza five line one, the author depicts that the Black American is sometimes unlucky. Because they are often become victims in their community. They are treated unfairly. This may be caused by racism. The White man regards their own race is the superior race and Black American is an inferior position. "The supremacy of the white race of the South must be maintained forever, and the domination of the Negro race resisted at all hazards because the white race is the superior race." (Jim Crow laws in 19th century by a white performer named Thomas Rice in Worth 64)

Jim Crow laws were passed to ensure that African Americans would “know their place”. Under the Jim Crow laws, black and white people were kept separate. This law made the discrimination of race between Black and White American in all aspect, like in schools, transportation, workplace and social life.

"The Belgians cut off my hands in the Congo": During the rule of King Leopold of the Belgians as sovereign of the Congo Free State (1885-1908), a labor tax of 10 percent was instituted. According to F. Scott Babb (Historical Dictionary of Zaire [London and Metuchen in Rampersad 620), "Failure to pay the tax was punished by flogging, execution, and occasionally destruction of entire villages. Soldiers were required to produce the right hand of villagers who had been executed for not paying the tax and the procurement of hands became an end in itself, reportedly leaving thousands of maimed victims. Then, *"They lynch me still in Mississippi"*: It is tells about the history of Black American who lynching by Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi. Mississippi is the most notorious of killing Black American. (620).

According Richard Worth 70-71 said that actually African Americans who returned from World War, they found that little had changed for them in the United States. Although they had fought to defend the principles of democracy, these same principles did not seem to apply to them in their own country. In the South, African Americans still faced Jim Crow laws. In the North they faced resentment from whites, who saw African Americans competing for jobs and moving into white neighborhoods.

One organization that tried to prevent African Americans from improving their position in society was the Ku Klux Klan. They prevented them from voting, lynched black farmers, and burned their homes. To intimidate blacks, Klan members burned crosses in front of their homes and sometimes brutally beat them. In the summer of 1919, the Ku Klux Klan was responsible for several lynchings and other acts of violence against African Americans in Mississippi.

Racial hatred toward African Americans reached the crisis point in 1919 when race riots occurred in both northern and southern cities. In these riots, fueled by racial prejudice, violent clashes occurred between whites and blacks and leaving 38 people dead and more than 500 injured. The Klan carried out 78 lynchings of African Americans. James Weldon Johnson called the period the "Red Summer."

White lynch mobs continued to murder African Americans throughout the 1920s. Many African Americans during this time felt that the best way to avoid trouble was to keep them, so as not to invite the unwanted attention of racists, especially in the South. But this often meant missing out on opportunities for jobs or schooling.

From this history, the author writes "*They lynch me still in Mississippi*". In this sentence the author wants to show that Black Americans were treated from a violently racist organization "Ku Klux Klan". Ku Klux Klan lynched Black Americans in Mississippi. Furthermore, the author also shows that the laws at the time made the Black American a victim. They faced discrimination in their society, black and white were kept separate in all aspects.

I am a Negro:
Black as the night is black,
Black like the depths of my Africa.

In the last stanza, the author rephrases the first stanza. This means that he emphasizes about black experience history. Hughes describes himself and his race as having been a slave, worker, singer and victim who suffered discrimination in several different ways from several different people in several different places. Even though their hardship is lighter from year to year because of modernization but sometimes they still get unfair treatment in their community until now.

From the interpretation above, the writer reveals that the author wants to express his experience feeling. "When a poet successfully frames his or her personal experience so that the reader can feel an extreme emotion from the inside, the result can be powerful" (Kennedy 934). The reader knows the destiny of Negro at that time. Moreover, Hughes is Negro people and he is proud to be a Negro. The writer knows it when Hughes identified himself by saying "I am a Negro", then he describes himself and his race as having been a slave, worker, singer and victim who suffered discrimination. They feel depressed and uncomfortable life in their community. This poem is well expressed poem and makes us touched with what Hughes describes all about Africa. He expresses his emotional experiences and makes the reader think about what exactly it was like to live his life during that time.

Black Americans got bad treatment of White American people. This poem contains a touch story of Negro. It is remembering us the case of discrimination between Africa and American, between blacks and whites. Through this poem,

Hughes expresses his emotions to be poetry which content of his experiencing feeling. It seems like that “when the poet’s act of utterance is not itself, by the feelings he himself expresses, to work upon the feelings, or upon the belief or the will, of another... when the expression of his emotions is tinged also by that purpose, by that desire of making an impression upon another mind, then it ceases to be poetry” (Abrams 25).

By doing this poem Langston Hughes shows himself, one black man, as the entire black race throughout history. This poem resonated with African people because the events he describes are the real events black ancestors suffered, and enlightens me to how far African-Americans as a people have come. Finally, the reader can feel extreme pain suffering in Hughes words as he describes the different roles of a Negro. It reminds us where Black American came from and the things black’s ancestors had to face in their society, so that they could have the freedoms they have today.

3.2 Racial Discrimination Describes In This Poem

The topic of Langston Hughes' "Negro" deals with an extremely general description of the history of African Americans or blacks from the pre-1922 era until 1922. Hughes expresses his emotional experiences in this poem and makes the reader easy to understand what happened in Black American during that time. Hughes uses simple and understanding for diction in his poem such as Julius Caesar, George Washington, and Woolworth Building, Mississippi to show the history role of Black American at the time.

This poem describes the destiny of Black American "Negro" which they got treatment of White American at the time. Hughes describes himself and his community being discriminated in so many places and by so many people, and he shows how horribly he and their community have been treated because racism as what Rothernberg said that an action limits opportunities available because of their race, sex, or rational origin the problem the discrimination arise (9-14). Hughes describes himself and his race "Negro" as having been a slave, worker, singer and victim who suffered discrimination in their society.

According Liliwery (219) said "Discrimination is an unfriendly attitude from majority group or its member of minority groups, racial discrimination is an attitude or acts certain race to people or group that came from another race". Meanwhile, it's happened in history discrimination between Black and White American in United States of America.

Black American as minority faced much discrimination in more aspects of their society. They are discriminated by their education, occupation, employment, public facilities including health care, religion, law and housing (Marger 167). It is portrayed when White American reaps considerable advantages when buying and selling a house, choosing a neighborhood in which to live, getting a job and moving up the corporate ladder, securing a first class education, and seeking medical care because of their Whiteness. Whites accumulate more property and earn more income than members of minority populations in society. Meanwhile, Whites have accumulated many opportunities due to racial domination people of color have suffered from dis-accumulation (Massey and Quillian in Desmond, Matthew and Emirbayer, Mustafa 345).

The Black American group faced discrimination that often prevented them from voting, holding well paying jobs, or getting an education that would help them compete in a white dominated society. Some African Americans were frustrated by the conditions they found there. Exactly, patterns of perceived discrimination are important findings in their own right, as research shows that those who perceive high levels of discrimination are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and other negative health outcomes. Furthermore, perceived discrimination may lead to diminished effort or performance in education or the labor market, which itself gives rise to negative outcomes.

The experiencing of racial discrimination between Black and White American was expressed by Langston Hughes in his poem "Negro". His poem depicts the history experiences of Black American at that time. Here, the writer

wants to describe kinds of discrimination, how people discriminate, and what the effect these are expressed by the poet.

Like tells in poem “Negro” while at that time under the Jim Crow laws, black and white people were kept separate. In practice, “separate but equal” almost always meant separate and unequal. The Jim Crow laws were applied to many parts of Black American society (Worth.65). Not only have that but also in section of the Qur’an 26, Al-Hujurat versed 13 said:

Oh mankind! Surely we have created you from a single (pair) of a male and female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty). Surely, Allah knows aware.

But, in the real condition especially between Black and White American the discrimination of race happened on Slavery era. These some examples of experiencing racial discrimination in America which expressed by Langston Hughes

3.2.1 Education

Education is one of important sectors in our social life. We need education for our better life in the future. Because of education, we can learn many things in our life. It makes our knowledge boarder than before. But in this case, there is no justice to black American as an inferior in the society. Like Marger said that “on the basis of their genetic inheritance, some groups are innately superior to others”(27). They cannot get same opportunity to take good education like white as a superior in society. This explanation can be shown by the history of Black American who tells in meaning “Negro” poem.

When the status of Black American as a slave. Some colonies passed slave codes that greatly restricted the lives of Africans. According to the codes, slaves were not permitted to learn to read or write. To prevent them from planning a rebellion, they were forbidden to assemble together. Slaves had none of the human rights that white immigrants to America were likely to enjoy (Worth 24).

Under Jim Crow laws forced African-American children into separate schools that were usually inferior to white schools. In practice, “separate but equal” almost always meant separate and unequal. Furthermore, African-American children were prevented from attending the same schools as whites. It includes in type of discrimination is *Individual racism* which closest to race prejudice and suggest a belief in the superiority of one’s own race over another and in the behavior enactment that maintain those superior and inferior positions (Jones 13-14).

Many politicians sincerely believed that African Americans were inferior to whites and that trying to educate them was a waste of time. Not only that, but also separate schools for African-American children were established, but the buildings were inadequate, the equipment and supplies inferior, and the teachers under qualified. According to historian Leon Litwack, white political leaders did not want to educate African-American children for fear that they might no longer accept their inferior place in society (65).

It includes racial discrimination because in practice which puts people of a certain race at a disadvantage compare with other people. Like Black Americans had been disadvantageous with Jim Crow Laws, because Black cannot achieve the

same position like white to get good education, good facilities. Education regarded as right of all people without any exception, even for the racial causes. Like the example of this case in history of Black American in education aspect (Ron Field 48-49):

The principle of “separate but equal” was extended to education following the closure of Ware High School by the Richmond County Board of education, in Georgia in 1897. Named after Edmund Asa Ware, a Freedman’s Bureau set up to assist former slaves began an effort to build schools for African Americans. In the face of protest that blacks students in the district were denied a high school education in the public sector following its closure, the board of education argued that it could educate more African American children at the primary level with the funds subsequently made available. In response three black citizens of Augusta, Georgia, J.W Cumming, James S. Harper and John C. Ladeveze brought a case against the board based upon 14th Amendment guarantee of equal protection under the law.

In this case of *Cumming v Board of Education* of 1899, the plaintiffs claimed that the board was using the funds in its hands assist in maintaining a high school for white children without providing a similar school for Blacks. As a result, they demanded that the white high school in Richmond County be closed as well. However, the Supreme Court ruled that closing a white school would not help black students, and allowed the Ware High School closing to stand.

Following the decision in *Cumming v Broad of Education*, the flood gates were open for school boards throughout the South to reduce the education of black students to a bare minimum. Governor James Vardaman of Mississippi insisted that education is ruining our Negroes. They are demanding equality. In 1912 a white school superintendent in the South observed:

There has never been any serious attempt to offer adequate educational facilities for the colored race (some school have) as many as 100 students to the teacher ; no attempt is made to do more than teach the children to read, write, and figure and these subjects are learned imperfectly.

William Edward Burghardt DuBois In his book *The Souls of Black Folk*, published in 1903, DuBois wrote: “Negroes must insist continually . . . that voting is necessary to modern manhood, that color discrimination is barbarism, and that black[s] . . . need education as well as white[s]”(68).

This racial discrimination in this subject has some effects in life. Most of it happens in our ordinary activity like in education. It is depicted by the author in his poem when he said “*I’ve been slave*” and “*I’ve been victims*”. The author wants to declare if Black American faced discrimination in their life for example in education.

2.3.2. Workplace

African Americans who returned from World War I found that little had changed for them in the United States. Although they had fought to defend the principles of democracy, these same principles did not seem to apply to them in their own country. In the South, African Americans still faced Jim Crow laws. In the North they faced resentment from whites, who saw African Americans competing for jobs and moving into white neighborhoods. They were frustrated by conditions in the

United States that kept many of them from applying for good jobs, receiving the same education as whites, or living in the same communities.

Under the Black Codes, in some states, African Americans were not permitted to own land or to carry a weapon. They could not leave a farm and look for work somewhere else because any African American not currently working could be put in prison. These laws were extremely unfair, but they kept whites in control of African Americans throughout the South. Whereas, in the North, Some African Americans were frustrated by the conditions they found there. Black workers faced discrimination in labor unions, which had been formed to represent employees in the workplace. Many unions refused to admit black workers. It is includes in *Cultural racism* which defined as the individual and intuitional oppression of the superiority of race's cultural heritage over that of another race (Jones 13-14).

Black Americans are exploitation of minority labor, exclusion of minorities from full participation in the economy and exploitation of minority consumers. And the governments who are supposed to protect and help its citizens equally do not always give its advantages to the blacks as much as the white are given. Although many African Americans had been trained as artisans on plantations in the South, they were forced to work at lower-paying, unskilled jobs upon reaching the northern states. White artisans refused to work with African Americans. They did not want to compete with them for the same jobs. As a result, African-American men were forced to work as porters, buggy drivers, barbers, and waiters, while women worked as cooks, dressmakers, and house cleaners. When African Americans tried to obtain the same jobs as whites, they were often met by angry protests.

One leading southerner, Thomas Bailey, clearly described what whites wanted to accomplish by their treatment of African Americans: “The white race must dominate. . . . The Negro is inferior and will remain so. . . . No social equality. . . .” (qtd in Worth 67). This meant African American being second-class citizens and putting up with discrimination. It is suitable with Marger (22) statement “Those who are more powerful, more wealth are called the dominant or superior, while those who do not have a great power as the superior and do not have wealth as inferior do called the subordinate or inferior. It is includes in harassment of racial discrimination. This occurs when a person feels intimidated, humiliated or offended by another person’s conduct regarding their race. Harassment at work could be happen in some case in other work. It is against the law for the employer or a colleague to racially harass other race people.

This discrimination describes in Hughes poem *Negro*, when Hughes said “*I’ve been a slaves*” and “*I’ve been worker*”. It shows us, Black American slave is not get noble job in their society. Black American also show the status as a worker is very dark although under their hand the great icon like Pyramid and Woolworth Building arose. The example is became Blacksmith or porter to build it. Black American faced discrimination in workplace because their race.

2.3.3. Public Place

As we know that Black people is as inferior to white, they always become part of society who cannot take a part in some social sectors in society. Not only in education and workplaces, but also in public facilities such as in restaurants, hospital,

toilets, segregate housing and transportations. That is all can be seen in this case. African Americans also faced other types of discrimination in the North. They were required to sit in separate cars on railroads and in separate sections on steamboats. They were prohibited from eating in most restaurants and from staying in most hotels. African Americans could not even be buried in white cemeteries.

The Jim Crow laws were applied to many parts of southern society. In railroad stations, there were separate entrances marked “For White Passengers” and “For Colored Passengers.” Parks, theaters, water fountains, and public toilets were marked in the same way. Some hospitals would not accept African-American patients, no matter how sick they were.

Under the Jim Crow laws, black and white people were kept separate. “If groups are effectively portrayed as inferior, they can be not only denied equal access to various life chances but in some cases enslaved, expelled, or even annihilated with justification”(Merger 29). On trains, for example, African Americans were forced to sit in separate cars away from whites, who generally did not want to have any contact with them. Any African American who violated the Jim Crow laws was immediately corrected or punished. As a child in Memphis, Tennessee, in the 1870s, Mary Church Terrell, an African American, mistakenly sat in a railroad car reserved for whites. She was confronted by an angry conductor. “Whose little n_____ is this?” he asked crossly. Mary was immediately removed from the car and taken to the one reserved for African Americans. “I could think of nothing I had done wrong,” she later (64)

Although Jim Crow laws unfair, were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in a landmark decision in 1896. The case involved an African American named Homer

Plessy, who had been forced to leave a railroad car for whites and sit in a black's only car. The Supreme Court ruled that "separate but equal" facilities were legal for American citizens. As the Supreme Court explained, "If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United State cannot put them upon the same plane" or bring about "an enforced commingling of the two races."(65)

It portrayal the Black as minorities still does not received a same position like white. For example in public facilities is includes type of discrimination because treating someone less favorably because their race or color. It also describes by the author in his poem. The author wants to show through his poem racial discrimination faced by Black American at that time.