

## **ABSTRACT**

The contention of my thesis is that Zora Neale Hurston's stance as a feminist is not very obvious yet there is no doubt that she stands for the rights of the women. She asserts the femaleness of her own self as a writer and of her female characters as human beings with body- mind-spirit: self. Writing with the gender discrimination issue in mind, she can rightly be claimed a precursor of the feminist movement of the coming decades.

Approaching from the Harlem Renaissance angle, Hurston's contribution to the Afro-American literature and the unbiased projection of coloured people as holding their cultural heritage with pride is remarkable. But limiting a writer like Hurston within the racial and ethnic boundaries is unjust. Undoubtedly with the passage of time, her outlook about life and her treatment of narratology and characterization developed. The stylistic techniques such as the occasional use of symbolic mode and an in-depth philosophy of life that runs deep without showing itself is discussed. The Humanism is expressed in the detailed psychological study of almost every character major or minor the breathing, heaving, laughing, shouting as demonstrated in real life — life lived by real Black people; not imagined or visualized.

The novels to be studied for these traits are *Jonah's Gourd Vine* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. A few short stories by Hurston are also to be considered for the purpose of relevance. Her autobiography *Dust Tracks On a Road*, provides a revealing information about how she felt about these universal problems of gender and race and how she celebrated the human values in all. She is seldom angry or judgmental in her expression.