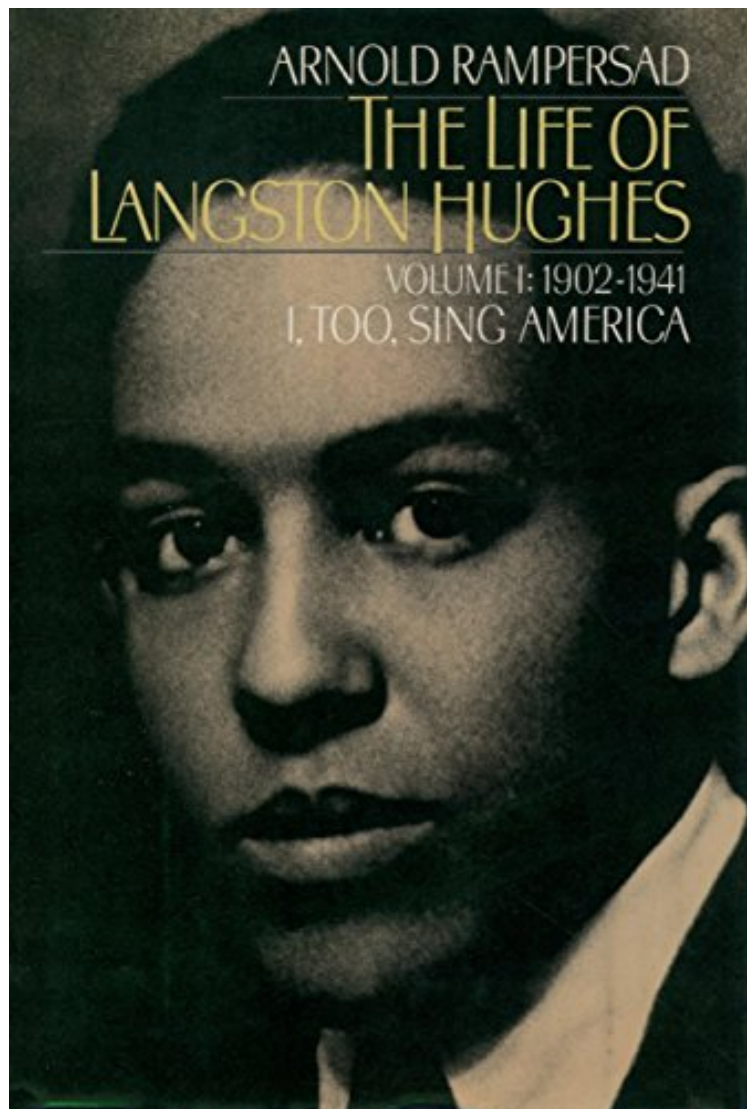


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## **The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume I: 1902-1941, I, Too, Sing America (Life of Langston Hughes, 1902-1941)**

*Arnold Rampersad*

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**Arnold Rampersad : The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume I: 1902-1941, I, Too, Sing America (Life of Langston Hughes, 1902-1941)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume I: 1902-1941, I, Too, Sing America (Life of Langston Hughes, 1902-1941):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. One of The Best Biographies I have Ever ReadBy FCD117This is,

without question, one of the best biographies that I ever read. I learned so much. Of course I learned about the life of Langston Hughes. And, in that context, this book is very well written just standing on its own. But, for me, this is just the beginning. This is so much more than a biography. This is a story about America in general and also race relations in particular. There are many, many references to other writers and other works. I made a point of studying these people and works. This turned this one book into an entire course on literature and history for me. Correspondingly, it took me a great deal of time to make my way through Volume One. Just one of many examples; there is mention of racial strife and violence when Langston Hughes was a youth. Then there is mention of a poem "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay. I looked up that poem and loved it. I then obtained and read more work of Claude McKay... In Chapter 4 the author describes a trip to Africa by Hughes as a crewman on a tramp steamer. To me, although a true story, it read like a short story by Joseph Conrad or W. Somerset Maugham. I followed the narrative while reviewing a map of Africa. Really enjoyable... At the same time the description of the injustices of colonialism are vivid and painful. I have been to college, but have no formal education in literature except the typical freshman year "intro" type course. Having said that, I truly feel that one such as I can easily turn this fine work into a core text book for the equivalent of a college course. It is impossible for me to overstate how much I appreciate this work. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Marvelous biography By Joan Lester Well researched and well written, especially interesting to me after having just read Langston Hughes's own two volumes of autobiography. I strongly recommend this--with one caveat. I believe Langston was probably gay or bisexual, and I wonder if the author, through the screen of today's social awareness (this book was published in mid-80s) might agree. If so, LH was certainly deeply closeted, but the clues abound. The man was a genius who is well served by this perceptive biography. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read By Gerard H. Great book about one of the most interesting writers in American history. Like most other biographies of famous African-Americans of the early 1900s, the book is not only a great look into Hughes' life, but also into some of the darkest times in the history of the United States. Being that this takes place before integration and in the era of Jim Crow, the book will upset at times, but Hughes is a fascinating character and it will keep you pulled in from start to finish. If you want to know about Langston Hughes, this is it.

February 1, 2002 marks the 100th birthday of Langston Hughes. To commemorate the centennial of his birth, Arnold Rampersad has contributed new Afterwords to both volumes of his highly-praised biography of this most extraordinary and prolific American writer. In young adulthood Hughes possessed a nomadic but dedicated spirit that led him from Mexico to Africa and the Soviet Union to Japan, and countless other stops around the globe. Associating with political activists, patrons, and fellow artists, and drawing inspiration from both Walt Whitman and the vibrant Afro-American culture, Hughes soon became the most original and revered of black poets. In the first volume's Afterword, Rampersad looks back at the significant early works Hughes produced, the genres he explored, and offers a new perspective on Hughes's lasting literary influence. Exhaustively researched in archival collections throughout the country, especially in the Langston Hughes papers at Yale University's Beinecke Library, and featuring fifty illustrations per volume, this anniversary edition will offer a new generation of readers entrance to the life and mind of one of the twentieth century's greatest artists.