

# ANTI-FASCISM: LANGSTON HUGHES

## Racism and Fascism



In "Love Letter From Spain," Langston Hughes highlights the parallels between fascism in Spain and racism in the U.S. The line "Fascists is Jim Crow peoples" collapses the distinction between the ways oppression takes form in different parts of the world ("Love Letter From Spain"). In the U.S., oppression takes the form of Jim Crow laws, which institutionalize racism and enforce segregation. In Spain, oppression takes the form of Franco's fascist military committing acts of total war against civilians. Hughes states that America's racists are no different from Franco's fascists because racism and fascism both utilize an unjust societal structure to exploit certain individuals and prop up others to positions of dominance. Similarly, Virginia Woolf draws a parallel between fascism in Spain and the patriarchy in England in *Three Guineas*. She often draws parallels between familiar concepts and more complex, foreign ideas in order to make her work more accessible to her audience, such as her use of the metaphor of adultery in *Three Guineas*. She provides two statements from newspaper articles about the role of women in a patriarchal society, and then asks, "Are they not both saying the same thing? Are they not both the voices of Dictators, whether they speak English or German?" (*Three* 2006 65). She states that this Dictator, a symbolic manifestation of fascism, "is here among us" (*Three* 2006 65). Similarly to Hughes, she collapses the distinctions between German fascism and English patriarchy in order to demonstrate the universality of oppression. Both authors recognize the fact that all forms of oppression are interrelated, and solidarity among all of the oppressed can create a stronger opposition to the world's injustices. Hughes and Woolf collapse the distinctions between each form of oppression in order to make a universal call to action against fascism and inequality.

"Love Letter From Spain"

Lincoln Battalion  
International Brigade  
Old cold rainy day, 1937

Sweetie listen:

I'm writin' this  
In a front-line trench  
Somewhere in Spain.  
I'm sittin' in a dugout  
Out of the mud and rain.

I can hear the bullets whining.  
Sometimes I hear 'em crack.  
But if they hit our dugout  
They just smack a sand sack.

I'm thinkin' about you, baby,  
Way down in Alabam.  
Are you thinkin' about me, honey,  
Over here where I go!

I hope you're, sugar,  
And I want you to know  
That I'm crazy about you, baby,  
No matter where I go.

Just now I'm goin';  
To take a Fascist town.  
Fascists is Jim Crow peoples, honey-  
And here we shoot 'em down.