Three Blues: A Study of Sterling A. Brown’s Select Poems

B. Sivakamasundari,
PhD. Research Scholar,
Department of English, Annamalai University.

Dr. K. Muthuraman,
Professor of English,
Dean Faculty of Fine Arts, Annamalai University.

ABSTRACT

Sterling Allen Brown was a pivotal figure in African American literature. From relative obscurity early in his career, he was, in the words of Brown himself, “rediscovered, reinstated, regenerated, and recovered” later in his life, and went on to become “The Dean of American Negro Poets.” His first collection of poems Southern Road (1932) brought rural folk to life with poignant integrity in the rhythms of ballads, blues, and jazz. From section two of Southern Road, in “On Restless River,” the musical form Blues can be found in “Memphis Blues,” “Riverbank Blues,” and “New St. Louis Blues,” trilogy. The Blues mood is a sorrowful one; the word “Blues” is part of the American vocabulary, now a synonym for melancholy and for unhappy moodiness. Brown’s poems reflect the understanding of the often tragic destinies of African Americans in the United States.