movie

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Movie Review

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"***The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross***"

The film many rivers to cross is an African American documentary that explains the lives of African Americans from their origin up to their current state and lives in the United States. This documentary is an actual depiction of the African American lies and experiences from the time of slavery. For instance, the film is divided into episodes, and these episodes are dated with the main events taking place at that time of the year. For instance, the first episode is named the black Atlantic. This is because this episode looks at the lives of the Africans during the time of slavery and how these Africans reached Europe. For instance, the African leaders were enticed with sugar traded triangularly between North America, Africa, and the other state. These slaves were given away by the African leaders in exchange for sugar and ferried in ships across the Indian Ocean to Europe. In Europe, the Africans are now slaves, and they are now sold to different slave owners. For example, in the film we see, Priscilla, a young girl, being sold to Elius Ball, who we are told that he owns four thousand slaves working in his rice plantation. These slaves are overworked and underpaid.

In the film, the white slave owners are seen as the oppressors, and therefore, Henry Louis Gates uses the whites such as Vincent brown to be an object of dehumanizing the slaves. We see how Vincent Brown calls the slave's ciphers to mean that they have no power and are useless. During this time, there was a lot of racism going on. For instance, we see how Michael, a food nutritionist rejects African delicacies. This episode looks at the lives of the role played by both the Africans and the Americans, and we can see that the whites are the oppressors while the Africans are the workers, building America.

The second episode is named the second middle passage. This was the age of slavery. This was around 1800-1860. This was the tie after the American revolution. The American process was thought to change the whole idea of slavery, but this affected the lives of the African Americans in America. For instance, in the film, we see the many experiences of the African Americans in the united states, both the free and the slaves. This phase was also characterized by the introduction of the cotton Gin, where the cotton plantations caused the displacement of the enslaved African Americans. The experiences of the slaves were hostile also as the work on the farms increased and therefore, the slaves were being shifted from one place to another. This caused strain to the slaves as the laborers had to walk long distances to Mississippi. In the movie, we see that men work for long hours as men plow the farm and women hoeing.

After the second middle passage, the African American slaves went into the end of slavery phase. This was between 1861-1890, and the African American race was starting to liberate themselves. In the film, we see the slaves fleeing from the foundations, taking up arms to serve in the united states colored troops, rebuilding the families that had been shuttered during the slavery period, and demanding the rights of the African Americans to vote. These actions characterized this phase, and this sensitized the slaves about their rights.

Between the years 1897 – 1940, the African Americans were now in the quest to find ways to deliver themselves from the bondage of slavery, and this phase was characterized by a lot of racism. This was, in other words, termed the Jim crow era. During this era, the American Americans were also trying to rebuild their lives after the pacification of slavery. In the film, we see the African Americans fleeing from the south to the north to escape racial violence and search for new opportunities in the north and the west. To achieve this, the African American intellectuals began to organize movements to find the rights of the African Americans. For

example, in the African pan movement, pan Africanists like buka t Washington, W.E.B Dubois, and the others came up with a slogan, "black is beautiful," to help give the black race a voice in the united states. The Harlem renaissance was the movement that peeked.

In the years 1940- 1968, there was still racial discrimination in the united states, although the movements had already kicked off. The actions continued as many pioneers continued to rise. For instance, we had Martin Luther King Junior, who was trying to fight for the rights of the African Americans, who unfortunately was imprisoned and later assassinated. Black lives matter was a compelling movement, and it was this movement that saved the African Americans. In 1963 – 2013, there was a perfect union between the two races in the united states; the black Americans and the whites. The civil rights movement victories characterized this phase. Things started to change for the African Americans as they were given the right to enjoy privileges such as the right to vote; for example, the first black president in the united states of America was Barrack Obama. This gave a sign for the end of racial disparity and the division of the races in the united states of America.

However, there were still the potholes, such as the growing class disparity in the united states. This resulted from the poor black race that was neglected and isolated in the inner black cities, vulnerable to social evils. This aspect shows that the class difference between the poor blacks and the other whites would still last for a long while. However, the triumph was on the attempted bridging of the racial gap. The African Americans could now experience the rights such as the right to vote and enjoy some other privileges.

Henry Louis Gates's documentary was outstanding and very impactful to the African Americans living in the united states. He had given the history of the African Americans from

when they were taken from Africa and made slaves in Europe. Louis Gates has also documented and captured the struggles that the African Americans went through during the time of slavery, during the period of world wars, and during the black race liberation movement. He then finishes up with the hope of the end of racial discrimination in the united states. I like how he documented these events from the time of the suffering to the time of victory, which shows that there is hope for a brighter future in the united states. He completed the documentary by stating that there is still an inequality gap. Still, from the structure of his documentary, there is hope that there will be an end to the inequality in the united states.

In summary, it was worthy for the readers and the audience to perceive these events and go through the depiction of the painful experiences that the African Americans went through before they gained their freedom in the united states. This film is to make both the African audience and the white audience to appreciate the changes that have happened and be able to perceive the American nation differently and not on the basis of the slavery and racism.

movie

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