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AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDY

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Task 1

Alain Locke published his essay *The New Negro* in 1925, and it was all about changing the thoughts and perceptions of the old negro. Therefore, for long African Americans have faced slavery and being controlled on what they should do. However, the New Negro by Locke is a black man who is more assertive and is confident than the old negro¹. The new negro transforms man and understands oneself; therefore, they do not lack any self-respect or self-dependence. Furthermore, the new negro is prouder of their African culture and identity.

Locke explained how African Americans obtain social, artistic, and partisan variations. Apart from the new negro accepting the position in the society, they are working to ensure they get civil rights. There are differences between the new negro and the pre-WWI negro. The Pre-WWI negro was an individual with ethical arguments and historical controversy. Therefore, they were limited by the inhumane situations of slavery and were forced to live in. this made them traumatized due to the events they face and how society views them as something that must be pushed and informed what to do. Furthermore, it was a stereotype product and judgment of the old negro². On the other hand, the new negro has understood themselves. This has developed an active negro spirit repressed by the Wesleyan song accord, private and humiliated until the bravery of being ordinary carried them out.

¹ Alain Locke, "The New Negro," Pages 478-490

² Alain Locke, "The New Negro," Pages 478-490

According to Garvey, he hassled on the pride of the blacks, racial unity, and the requirements to remove the blacks from the white authority³. Therefore, I could classify Garvey as a new negro because he concentrated on the possible role of the American negro and the future growth of Africa as one of the constructive and international assistance missions could claim. For example, Locke speaks about constructive participation and group incentive as a method of integrating the contentious and irrefutably pertinent speech into the significance of African American leadership.

Task 2

DuBois have used the poem the criteria of negro art to present to the African Americans how they can use their artwork to promote their race and help support an understanding among the blacks and whites. Nevertheless, since the Harlem renaissance, most African American artist used their art to support the Negro movement, which resulted in the formation of the new negro. The new negro created a transformed black man who understands their rights and gets an equal opportunity with the white man⁴. Moreover, during this time in 1926, DuBois, in his essay criteria of negro art, explained several issues.

The first issue that DuBois had in the essay was the concept of beauty. Of course, Beauty varies with what one can understand; however, the author stated that "after all, who shall describe beauty." This statement explains how African Americans are better positioned to their work because DuBois says that Black Americans are discriminated against while in America and

³ Marcus Garvey, "Declaration of the Rights of Negro Peoples of the World," 468-477

⁴ Alain Locke, "The New Negro," Pages 478-490

hence lack the vision of how the world could be beautiful. Also, the criteria of negro art have concentrated on how Black Americans and the art they underwrite to the society will be judged. DuBois understands that resemblances will always be available among art generated by the black and the non-black in the U.S. however, DuBois is concerned with the differences in how African American art can be identified and the artists' humanity developed it.

DuBois states that "all art must be propaganda" by arguing that he does not care for any art that is not utilized for propaganda⁵. This means that African Americans can use art to elevate and enhance their social and racial situations in America. Moreover, art as propaganda mirrors the beauty and should act to secure individuals' rights. Langstone Hughes and Claude McKay have lived up to the criteria for negro art because Hughes stood up for black artists, and McKay used art to indicate graphic images of lynching, denial of citizenship, and unwelcoming America. Nevertheless, Countee Cullen did not live to the criteria for negro art because his artwork seemed to support whiteness despite enunciating a unique vision of the joys of a trial of being black.

McKay used his poetry art during the Harlem Renaissance movement. Therefore, McKay concentrated on the struggles of African Americans in America and especially the prejudices they were facing. The author uses his life experiences to express to other African Americans the issues they face and take action. For instance, the poem "if we must die" was written during the increase in race demonstrations, abhorrence conducts, and ferocity to African Americans,

⁵ Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt. "Criteria of Negro art." *The Crisis* 32, no. 6 (1926): 290-297.

making most of them lose their homes and others dying⁶. The message presented to the black was to fight back and die with dignity in the battles. Also, Hughes supported the black artist's program by flouting limits in poetry and created universal experiences. For instance, in the poem "The Negro-Art Hokum," Hughes explained that the black American artists had shared European inspirations, thus generating the same type of work⁷. Also, another poem, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," explains an African artist that abandons their racial identity⁸. Therefore, Hughes was thoughtful in the earnestness of African Americans to occur in art regardless of their social status. Hughes claimed that his poems are tactless the same way life is, and thus, they must face critiques from other individuals and artists.

On the other hand, Cullen concentrated his art on race and other African American poets, which resulted in more concern. For instance, Cullen's poem "Incident" indicates how the young black man is called a nigger saying that America is not thoroughly American for blacks⁹. However, the poem practice seems to support the white and not the criteria for negro art.

⁶ Claude McKay, Pages 491-498

⁷ Langston Hughes, Pages 499-508

⁸ Langston Hughes, Pages 499-508

⁹ Langston Hughes, Pages 499-508

Bibliography

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