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Enhancing the Revolutionary Spirit and Black Consciousness in Selected Poems by Nikki Giovanni

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ABSTRACT

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The research sheds light on the revolutionary inclinations of Nikki Giovanni through the analysis of her works because she manages to stir and motivate the emotions of the blacks in order to regain their rights and liberate their minds from the white hegemony. People who grow up in a racist environment are the nucleus of revolutionaries and effective human rights activists in their societies who mirror the state of resentment and outrage of the persecuted people. Therefore, Giovanni efficiently seeks to reflect the suffering of her black society through her militant poetry. Giovanni urges the black men to carry their guns in defense of their usurped rights from the white man who intentionally dehumanized and marginalized them. She addresses in her fervent poetry the marginalized black women in order to empower them and participate in the renaissance and advance of their black society. Additionally, she discusses important issues from which the black community suffers such as race, gender, bad economic and social status, class discrimination and inequality.

Introduction

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope... and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

(Robert Kennedy 1966)

As history has taught us, tyranny and repressive practices towards any group of people are the main engine for any uprising or revolution. The authoritarian groups do what they can in order to humiliate these people exploiting their weakness, insignificance, ignorance and lack of self-confidence. The despot seeks in various ways to obliterate their identity, erase their culture and eradicate their history. These downtrodden groups continue to suffer extreme poverty, oppression, inequality, discrimination, loss of their legitimate rights until they lose their innocent lives. This unmerciful persecution continues until the zero hour in which those repressed persons depart from their silence and

passivity even if the price is their souls in order to bring down this brutal authority.

In this regard, the researcher cannot ignore the opinions of numerous writers and activists who have devoted their life to enhance the principle of revolution, violence and resistance against all forms of enslavement such as Frantz Fanon, Nelson Mandela, Guevara, etc. Frantz Fanon was a French West Indian philosopher, psychiatrist and anti-colonial activist. He is known for his influential works that have discussed critical theory, postcolonial studies and Marxism. As a symbol of resistance, he supported the Algerian War of Independence and was a member in the liberation movement. Fanon wrote many important books including *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961).

All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same object: man.

I want that the enslavement of man by man cease forever. That it be

Possible for me to discover and to love man, wherever he may be.

(Fanon 183)

The quote is taken from Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* that was an indication of the beginning of his revolutionary career. Fanon focused on a significant premise in which he sought to emancipate all the humanity. He was interested in spreading love among people and stopping the exploitation and oppression of one group of people to another.

Fanon is a prominent figure and a great symbol of violence and resistance as he believes in 'what was taken by force can only be regained by force', so he follows the philosophical notion that stipulates that "It is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained. Thus, reality-in-itself for –it self can be achieved only through conflict and through the risk that conflict implies" (Fanon 218). It is known that the black or any oppressed man is dehumanized, so he is insecure, anxious, abandoned, devalued and feels worthless. Therefore, many activists argue that people should not be led like a herd.

For Fanon, violence is a purging force that can liberate the oppressed person from the inferiority complex and regain his self-respect. Marx also embodies a symbol of violence and resistance against capitalism and society's division into different classes or social groups

igniting worker's revolution to increase their standard of living. Like Marx, Fanon points to the importance of people's solidarity together and the use of violence as a mean to terrorize the oppressor. Incidentally, Rap Brown's view of the revolution must be mentioned as he says: "The only politics in this country that's relevant to Black People today is the politics of Revolution... none other". In an attempt to motivate those persecuted people, Che Guevara, another outstanding symbol of resistance also says "The revolution is not an apple that falls when it is ripe. You have to make it fall".

I believe that there will ultimately be a clash between the oppressed and those who do the oppressing. I believe that there will be a clash between those who want freedom, justice and equality for everyone and those who want to continue the system of exploitation. I believe that there will be that kind of clash, but I don't think it will be based on the color of the skin.... (Malcolm X)

Malcolm X is a Muslim minister and African American political activist who advocated for the legitimate rights of the blacks and discarded racism. He is a prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement and known for his bravery and advocacy of the Black Nationalism. He

states powerful statements and the last quote reflects his revolutionary doctrine and faith. He asserts that clash, often transformed to revolution, is an inevitable result for achieving freedom and justice whatever your skin color. His writings reflect his full faith in revolution as an essential step for ending the struggle between the parties of the dispute.

Malcolm's life was a series of calamities as when he was little, his father was murdered by a white racist group. Malcolm's family also experienced the worst forms of racism and persecution from the white government. Therefore, this long series of suffering affected his personality and revolutionary path in which he accused the white Americans with committing inhuman crimes against the blacks. Accordingly, Malcolm's thoughts and principles remained a role model among all the political activists.

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals. Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability but comes through continuous struggle. (Martin Luther King Jr.)

Martin Luther King Jr., an African American activist and Christian minister, is a prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement who protested against the blacks' oppression. In his words, he seeks to motivate the blacks and asserts on the importance of sacrifice, fight and suffering. He also advises the black people that change does not come on a golden platter but through persistent struggle. Influenced by Ghandi, he recognizes that the civil disobedience is like a weapon for change and resistance. Martin Luther King's thoughts showed the intellectual aspect of the American Black Power Movement and how the extent of Consciousness increased in the Black community. Therefore, the blacks felt grief and bitterness over the loss of that revolutionary leader as they regarded him as a major source of guidance and enlightenment.

In the same footsteps as Martin Luther King's historic speech, "I Have a Dream", Giovanni utilizes her poetry as a tool to motivate the blacks in order to defend their usurped rights. Giovanni acquires a wide fame because of her tough and militant writings which are highly classified as violent works such as in 'The True Import of Present Dialogue, Black vs. Negro' addressing the blacks "can you kill, can you

splatter their brains in the street”. It refuses the submissiveness and self-satisfaction of the black middle class and motivates an adoption of a disgruntled reaction towards the whites in an attempt to liberate the black society from their hegemony. Therefore, Giovanni appreciates the importance of deepening the black awareness to struggle and gain all their full rights by her saying for example “We are strong enough to stand tall tearlessly, we are brave enough to bend to cry, and we are sad enough to know that we must laugh again”.

Giovanni condemns the social and political American actions that are crudely marred by racism and mirrored the blacks’ suffering, daily violence and race prejudice directed against them. She also refuses the standard language replacing it with the vernacular of the inner city to create forms and diction more expressive of black suffering. She greatly utilizes ‘allusions’ especially musical allusions to songs such as “You Make Me Feel Such as A Natural Woman” by Aretha Franklin. She often uses it as in ‘The Great Pax Whitie’ to reinforce the black’s trust in religion and vindicate truth.

Music represents a central part in Giovanni’s poetry in order to evolve statements about gender such as her poem ‘Dreams’ that was

published in 1968. The poem corresponds with a recurrent theme through the Civil Rights Movement as in Martin Luther Kings' speech 'I Have a Dream'. Giovanni is inspired by the long history of resistance of her parents and ancestors therefore, she resists against apartheid in order to achieve their dream. Her poetry discusses many issues and themes for the black women such as the image of the black female in which she is described as a whore or ape to dehumanize her. The quest for identity is also a recurrent theme in her poetry in order to raise their consciousness of the blacks and fight the whitewashing of their minds.

The research therefore answers such questions as; what are the compelling reasons that lead the masses to revolutions all over the country? How does the black consciousness appear through her poetry? How does the hegemony of the white man in society lead to Giovanni's powerful and militant works? Does Giovanni create inner strength to ignite the revolutionary spirit among the black citizens? How do her works handle the issues of racism and marginalization? What are the perfect solutions to end the blacks 'crisis for Giovanni?

Furthermore, the research attempts to reflect the amount of cultural and political consciousness for the leaders of Black Arts Movement at that time represented in the poet Giovanni as she is a civil rights activist, a major force and a prominent voice in that Movement. It aims at focusing foremost on how Giovanni manages in raising consciousness of the black people in order to resist all forms of humiliation and suppression. It also seeks at displaying how that black woman has the power to employ her vigorous poetry to depict the systematic racism towards them. Giovanni has been praised for her profound and militant writings as well as being able to confront that racist society and awakening the blacks of their inattentiveness. She is considered one of the most leading black poets of the new black renaissance. Furthermore, one of the leading critics Roderick Palmer calls her “the poet of the black revolution” because of her powerful poetry (213). Therefore, the study explores how Giovanni manages to enhance the Black Consciousness in the African citizen to instill a sense of pride with his color, heritage and identity. The researcher hoped that what might produce from analyzing Nikki Giovanni would provide a

large opportunity for understanding the issues, suffering and burdens of the African American citizens.

Giovanni is known for her vigorous character and writings because she is influenced by important characters in her life such as her grandmother Emma Louvenia, her language teachers and the dean of Fisk University. From the beginning, the family escaped from Albany because of Emma's provocative behaviors. Giovanni inherited from her grandmother the strength of character and hatred of the white supremacists as Louvenia didn't tolerate with any white people. Her grandparents represented a good sanctuary from the suffering of life and quarrels between her parents at home. Although the role of her grandmother was great and priceless, Giovanni was lucky to obtain another interest from other women such as her language teachers who realized her intellectual capabilities and stimulated her.

The revolutionary spirit and courage arose in Giovanni from a young age in every detail of her life. Giovanni had a strong personality since her childhood as she defended her older sister Gary and fought her enemies. The authority of the students' dean didn't intimidate her and

she went to her grandparents' house in order to see her sick grandmother without the dean's permission, bearing the serious consequences of that behavior which made the University separate her as a response to violating University regulations. Thanks to the emotional support and encouragement of the dean Cowan, she could subtly pass her matriculation at Fisk.

According to social and political science, the term revolution describes sudden, rapid, major and often violent changes in a government and related structures. Revolution occurs when the aggrieved people protest against the autocratic and oppressive regimes and can result in dramatical changes in social, political, cultural and economic aspects. Jack Goldstone (1993) defends that revolutions occur as a result of environmental crisis when social, political and economic institutions were incapable to cope with restricted resources available to an increasing population. It is commonly accepted that there are essential causes that stimulate the revolution's outbreak: oppression, dissatisfaction, racism, tyranny, corruption and inequality.

Black Consciousness is the necessity for a black man to give up a feeling of inferiority, restore his self-confidence and pride of his

skin color as a first step or as a condition for his self-liberation. The term Black Consciousness is taken from American sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois' valuation of the American blacks' double consciousness in order to refute the alleged lies about the weakness of their heritage and cowardice of their race. Steve Biko defines it as an attitude of mind and a way of life that emerge from the black world for a long time. It includes the realization by the black people of the importance to congregate with their brothers and cooperate together in order to get rid of the manacles that make them in perpetual servitude. It involves black man's rejection of all values that endeavor to isolate him as a foreigner in his country and decrease his human dignity (Denis 166).

Giovanni tackles the theme of Black Consciousness in many of her writings as she recognizes that raising the black awareness is the most important goal in this brutal struggle with the racist whites in order to make the blacks avoid the whitewashing of their minds. She also touches the definition of racism describing it as the subjugation of one nation by another according to their race as what the blacks do to the whites would be based on what the whites do to them. Even the Bible demands them to do with others as they do with them. Blackness issue

should be a cultural entity in order to lead a revolution. She attempts to discover a black aesthetic that is obviously different from the American aesthetic. R. Roderick Palmer described her as ‘the most polemic’ poet who call the blacks to unlimited violence as it obviously appears in one of her militant poems “The True Import of Present Dialogue Black vs. Negro” (144).

Giovanni’s famous poem *The Great Pax Whitie* is from her second volume *Black Judgment*. These words reflect Giovanni’s sadness about the daily racist practices against the black people whom the white people judge to die just because of their color nothing else. The racist whites decide to murder what they called ‘nigger’, to kill life, to kill everyone, nevertheless, the rumble of peace still echoed here and there in this atmosphere imbued with racism. Giovanni demonstrates that how the racist whites classify people according to their color, race, sex and class to the point that they call the blacks ‘Negroes’ as a form of degeneration, humiliation and submission to them.

Nigger

Can

you

kill

killing someone means refusing his decadent values, actions, distorted habits that have made the blacks enslaved. It also means challenge of the economic, religious and behavioral practices that force black people to kill in order to emancipate themselves from the continued racism and persecution by the white majority. Therefore, the repetition of some phrases like “can you kill” clarifies Giovanni’s harsh language which reflects her insistence in delivering her powerful message briefly at the end of the poem: “Learn to kill niggers/Learn to be Black men.”

Giovanni declares that her poem is a war and protest against attitudes. The first eight lines depict the generic white persecution of African American people. The following twelve lines demonstrate specific methods of murder and specific victims by using tough phrases: drawing blood, poisoning, stabbing, murder by a ’68 El Dorado and most frightfully, beheading. The question “Can You Kill” repeats with variation throughout the poem that emphasizes the inevitability of killing the honkies, as she says, even by violent methods.

The question “A nigger can die” in the poem transforms to an affirmation that “A nigger can die/We ain’t got to prove we can die”; the challenge becomes the assertion on the black’s ability to kill the white

people because “They sent us to kill/Japan and Africa/We policed Europe.” The next lines states that what is required is to “kill a white man”, “kill the nigger /in you,” also to “make your nigger mind/die, and “kill your nigger mind”, that will liberate your black hand in order to strangle them. The African American should kill the embodied sense of self in the term “nigger” that enables them to be black and, finally, kill the white power. The matter that makes the poem very ‘angry’ is the poem’s style and its clearly violent expressions when she says “Can you splatter their brains in the street”, repetitive questions in the phrase “Can you Kill” which is mentioned thirteen times in the poem that consists of 51 line.

*Dykes of the world are united
Faggots got their thing together
(Everyone is organized)
Black people these are facts
Where's your power (Giovanni*

41)

This quote is taken from the poem “of Liberation” one of the most powerful literary works written by Nikki Giovanni. The poem expresses

a big amount of discontent, resentment and protest against Giovanni's racial society. The black citizens are underestimated, humiliated and degenerated in the American society. Therefore, this poem is full of angry feelings towards all the forms of marginalization and suppression of the blacks. In this quote, she attempts to stimulate and stir their emotions by mentioning an example; all people in world are united and organized even faggots.

Moreover, she makes a direct call for a powerful black revolution in order to uproot the racial discrimination from which they always suffer. She repeats an important question in the poem to ask them about their power in order to confront the white oppression. Giovanni is upset because the whites "honkies" rule the world and control the fate of blacks. Therefore, she motivates the blacks by saying "3/5 of a man" to urge them about the importance of change as US constitution consider any slave as three fifths of a man not like any normal person in an attempt to degenerate the blacks and circumvent their full rights.

Giovanni writes '**My poem**' that is taken from her second volume *Black Judgement* and considered one of the powerful poems which emphasizes the irrelevance of the individual's behavior to the

continuity of the revolution. The poem represents the speaker's epiphany with her irrelevance to the cycle of the revolution and hasn't any impact on its continuation. The poem presents a preference of the ideology than individuals and assumes a life longer than any individual. Giovanni manages surprisingly to portray the inevitability of the revolution and the immense freedom for the individuals. The poem doesn't have a specific role for women. Giovanni assures that if she doesn't see a peaceful day nor does a significant black thing, the revolution won't stop. The last two lines in this section are repeated in each stanza through the poem in order to confirm an occurrence of revolution as an inescapable thing. Giovanni's recognition in this poem perhaps demonstrates why many poems of her first three volumes grasp less militant or political themes. Public events that are embodied in occurrence of revolution or its demise become much stronger than a poets' words.

Nikki Giovanni is one of the renowned African American poets who utilizes four letter words, small letter "I", the fused word, elimination of capital letters and specific punctuation marks that are

considered revolutionary experiment and suitable to the revolutionist writers like Giovanni whose poetry depicts the quest for identity.

The slogan of “Black is beautiful” in 1960s gives a vivid embodiment in the poem “Black Beautiful Men” which celebrates the supercilious new haughtiness of Black men “walking down the streets” (Giovanni 21). The researcher here reminds the reader by the poem of “Woman Poem” that the new ethnic pride isn’t constantly liberating Black women like Black men because “it’s a sex object if you're pretty/and no love/ or love and no sex if you're fat” (71).

In her poem “A Litany for Peppe”, she addresses the Black boys in order to revolutionize and protest against the white people who assassinate Martin Luther King and conspire to kill innocent black people. Therefore, she specifically calls the Black boys not girls as they can carry the guns and confront their enemies to devastate them. She blesses the blacks who kill and defend their full rights promising them of mastering the earth: “Blessed is he who kills/ For he shall control this **earth**” (52). Through her poem “Poem for Black Boys”, the reader can also observe her hope for change at the hands of the young African American generations. She encourages them to take violent steps against

the white people and not follow the peace policy of King as it becomes useless with their despotism and repressive practices.

The white racist society practices classism against the blacks as a form of discrimination in an attempt to deteriorate their financial situation and degrade them. The whites aimed at creating class differences in which the blacks suffer from extreme poverty but the whites are luxurious. Giovanni indicates to this point in her writing when she mentions the problem of his father with the bank which refused to lend him money to build a house. Accordingly, her father gave up his dream and had to sell his stock as she writes in “Nikki Rosa” that “your biographers never understand /your father's pain as he sells his stock/and another dream goes” (53).

She also repeats the word ‘poor’ more than 10 times in her first three volumes to illuminate the white’s policy of impoverishing the blacks and destroying their morale. She mentions that although the reader can deduce her difficult life and childhood, she is very satisfied and happy. Giovanni is not indignant at the difficulty of her financial situation or the poverty of her family, but rather at the racist society that

treats the blacks as second-class citizens and deprives them of their rights as normal human beings. Therefore, she writes this powerful line “Black love is Black wealth” (53) criticizing people who write about her childhood without understanding her satisfaction as well as happiness with her life.

Many feminist activists present several powerful definitions concerning the oppression of the women to reflect their suffering. The feminist writer Gloria Watkins, known as bell hooks, defines it as a system of oppression that can extremely harm women (48). Marilyn Frye, feminist philosopher, also defines it as a cognitive, conceptual and orientational complex of male chauvinism, male supremacy and misogyny (41). Giovanni presents this issue through her writings to closely deliver her message, so most of her early poems touch this point to demonstrate the suffering and burdens of the women in the white racist society.

Many poems in the first three volumes of Giovanni display various exemplifications of the issue of Black Consciousness and female gender identity. Giovanni’s poems present a depiction of specific women in her own life. Globally, Women haven’t opportunities like men in the daily life and are exposed to sexual violence and exploitation. The word

gender depicts the socially traditional responsibilities and roles that societies regard suitable for men and women. Gender equality argues that men and women should have the same power and opportunities for education, financial independence and personal development. Gender issues include all concerns and aspects related to man's and woman's life and situations inside community, in the differences in use or access to resources, the way they interrelate, their activities and reaction to interventions, changes and politics.

Concerning the gender issue, Giovanni writes an eventual celebration of women as the maker of the universe and civilization in "Ego Tripping (there may be a reason why)," that first appeared in 1971 on her album *Truth Is On Its Way*. It first appeared in print in 1973 in children volume entitled "Ego Tripping and Other Poems for Young Readers". It becomes later a signature poem (Rambsy 83-84). The poem utilizes hyperbole to create an accomplished, intelligent, exuberant and powerful female entity that is the creator of the universe. Giovanni's aim from writing the poem is to challenge the silly songs such as "Little Sally Walker" that taught the little girls to be passive observers without any will to change or determine their fate. It has been recounted by various

generations of girls, performed in many places and media and sampled by different musical performers. The last lines “I mean...I ... can fly/like a bird in the sky...” reflect the strength and the robustness of the poem and its speaker. In her claim, Giovanni portrays a representation of the black woman who exceeds all gender restraints. “Ego Tripping” is a powerful poem that shows unprecedentedly self-pride and self-confidence emphasizing that women are the creators of the whole universe.

*what i need to do
is sit and wait
cause i'm a woman
sit and wait
what i gotta do
is sit and wait
cause i'm a woman
it'll find me* (Giovanni 111:10-17)

Giovanni accomplishes a remarkable poem ‘**All I Gotta Do**’ as a person sailing in a sea of emotions. The work displays a woman waiting and the reader doesn’t realize what she awaits. Giovanni’s creativity is

embodied in her tonal shift. These shifts manage to portray a development of feeling that commences with patience, passes through rage and finishes with hopeless resignation-all confirmed by diction and her repetitive words. Giovanni expresses the need for recognition of her race and gender. She speaks about two truths 'all I gotta do is sit and wait' and 'cause I'm a woman' stating that her waiting is endless unlike her patience. In the next lines, the lack of education for their race and gender attributes to lack of capitalization; the phrase 'if I can learn how' increases the message of need in the poem in a tone of impatience that turns into despair. The reader can notice the beat of the verse as if percussion instruments drive the poem's rhythm. The researcher can deduce that Giovanni depicts what she feels as a woman in a male society. The poem describes that she becomes disappointed of waiting in a submissive manner and couldn't take any energetic role in her life. The reader can imagine that the world comes closer to women's equality since Giovanni writes this poem and published in 1975.

The poem emphasizes that the feminist literature is very important in reflecting the positions of women in the racist societies. The colored and persecuted women need brave writers like Giovanni in order

to express their depression from their treatment as a second-class citizen. Giovanni criticizes the idea that women have to wait things until happen. Therefore, she seeks to change some views of people that consider women 'passive' beings. The ultimate goal is to determine this assumption confirming that things don't search or simply 'find us' but women should actively look for them.

Giovanni is famous for her diction and figurative language that make her poems influential and powerful. Firstly, she uses lexical repetitions such as "and, I, to", secondly, using more than literary device such as anaphora as in the repetition of beginning words like 'cause' and finally epiphora as in the repetition at the end of lines like 'wait, it'. She also uses another literary device called anadiplosis that exists in two or more connected lines as in 'waiting, wait' to compose a powerful rhythm that strengthens the message of the poem and support her thoughts. Briefly, if women aspire to change, they must work hard in order to make things occur and achieve their goals.

*Where are your heroes, my little Black ones
You are the Indian you so disdainfully shoot*

*Not the big bad sheriff on his faggoty white horse
You should play run-away-slave*

or

Mau

Mau

These are more in line with your history (45:1-6)

Giovanni believes that people must embrace their heritage, although they are permanently being restricted and judged. The poem is about black boys who confront racist stereotypes. It presents the will for uprising and insurrection after the Civil Rights Movement. It is a poignant work that presents many issues about the young male in America who has to choose from the conflicting views in the Civil Rights Movement and peaceful movements led by Martin Luther King and his contemporaries. The racist society regards the black male as uneducated, blemish upon society and trouble making person.

Therefore, it stimulates young African Americans to ‘grow a natural’ and accept themselves, heritage and culture by standing against racial prejudice. This poem is so profound because of the use of imagery and familiar images from visual “the big bad sheriff on his faggoty white horse” to “Back-to-Black Grow a natural and practice vandalism”. It demonstrates the speaker’s suggestion that makes the black boys rebel

against the mistreatment and humiliation of their society. The word 'CULLURD' in the third stanza means colored that explains Giovanni's wonderful style of writing. She also advises them to be 'run-away-slaves', as their ancestors who were clever at it, in order to free themselves from the imposed restrictions upon them. The most important case _that Giovanni seeks to_ is the blacks' uprising toward obtaining their rights in the society. It can instruct the young generation to accept themselves and heritages as a first step to gain their liberation. Therefore, she uses two historical references as the black boys have two options: to avoid problems and be a run-away slave or rebel and protest like Mau Mau. Accordingly, Giovanni utilizes the motif of color and anger in order to enhance the equality and justice among the blacks in America.

To conclude, Nikki Giovanni proves that she is one of the most powerful revolutionist black poets whose poetic talents are born out of brutal racism, oppression and harsh discrimination against their color or race. She is known for her militant and strong African American perspective as a poet of the Black Revolution. Therefore, she has received several accolades and awards for her great work such as seven

NAACP Image Awards, Langston Hughes for Arts and Letters, Rosa Parks Women of Courage and about twenty honorary degrees from universities and colleges around the country celebrating the power of her poetry. Giovanni's works have excelled because of the strength of her language, phrases and powerful literary devices that manage to clearly depict the status quo. She avoids commas, periods and all forms of punctuation; the reader can't find any pause or places to stop or catch a breath. Giovanni's style is an individualistic, original and simply accessible to all readers. She also obviates capital letter for formal names or the first words of the lines. She refuses all traditional rules for format and punctuation of the poetry, delivering message only by language. This departure from the poetic traditions is due to an attempt for conveying the discontent's feeling against the racist society in which she lives a bitter struggle. Therefore, her works are regarded as "polemic and incendiary" as she vigorously advocates for change and rebellion in most of her poems and manages to portray the suffering of the whole black society reflecting all the efforts of the whites to dehumanize the black men and revenge from the poor black women.

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