



Alain Locke: Establishing New Frontiers for African Americans in the Harlem Renaissance

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China.

INTRODUCTION

The 1920s in the United States was characterized by remarkable improvements in the standard of living, as Americans enjoyed the benefits of consumerism, a booming economy, increased leisure time, and a celebration of art following the first world war. Therefore, this period is also called the Golden Age or “The roaring twenties”.¹ However, the benefits from this flourishing age did not impact all communities equally, and groups like African Americans faced serious racism in segregated communities across the United States.²

Constant racial oppression and violence in the south and new opportunities in the North, such as job vacancies that formed when thousands of men left for the war, eventually led to the Great Migration, a demographic shift whereby thousands of black Americans migrated to the Northern part of the United States in the period 1910s-1970s. Many blacks settled in cities, where there was ample work, and soon cultural movements began to take shape in these urban areas. The most famous of these movements was the Harlem Renaissance, which was a far-reaching intellectual revival of African American culture led by artist, educator, and philosopher Alain Locke and his milestone work, *The New Negro*. Locke established social and cultural frontiers for African Americans as artists, authors, and black intellectual leaders reflected on their heritage and created within a movement that celebrated their lives and experiences.

MIDNIGHT: RACISM AND SEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

Over the course of United States history, African Americans have experienced harsh racism, especially in the South. After the end of the Civil War in 1865, the Supreme Court ruling of

1 History.com Editors, “The Roaring Twenties,” History.com (A&E Television Networks, April 14, 2010), <https://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties/roaring-twenties-history#the-jazz-age>.

2 Wadelington, Flora Hatley. “Segregation in the 1920s.” NCPedia. Tar Heel Junior Historian, 2024. <https://www.ncpedia.org/history/20th-Century/segregation-1920s>.

“separate but equal” in *Plessy v. Ferguson* legalized segregation, leading to more oppression for African Americans.³ Despite federal legislation, thousands of Jim Crow laws allowed segregation to continue in black communities. In addition to the legal obstacles, blacks faced economic disadvantages that negatively affected their wages, job opportunities, and potential for land ownership. Sharecropping, for example, was a common career for freedman who “borrowed” land from white merchants and landlords to harvest. In return, sharecroppers allocated a percentage of their crops toward the landowners. Failure to deliver the agreed amount would leave sharecroppers indebted to the merchants and landlords.⁴ All too often, sharecropping turned into chronic and cyclical debt and became a new kind of slavery.⁵ In sum, African Americans in many parts of the United States, especially in the South, struggled in multiple ways that affected their day way of life as well as future possibilities.

Even worse, from the 1910s to 1940s, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a right-wing terrorist and white supremacist hate group that primarily targeted African Americans and homosexuals, saw its highest membership rates ever recorded.⁶ The main goal of the KKK was to maintain white supremacy in the south and they accomplished this objective through violence. More than 4400 racially motivated lynchings took place in the United States during the period between 1877 and 1950, and this figure signaled the hostility African Americans faced in

3 “Separate but Equal,” Legal Information Institute (Legal Information Institute), accessed December 18, 2022, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/separate_but_equal.

4 Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (1866). Sharecropping contract dated Dec 5, 1866, Cameron Family Papers #133. Southern Historical Collection.

5 “Sharecropping, Black Land Acquisition, and White Supremacy (1868-1900).” n.d. World Food Policy Center. <https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu/north-carolina/durham-food-history/sharecropping-black-land-acquisition-and-white-supremacy-1868-1900/>.

6 Rothman, Joshua. 2016. “The Rise and Fall of the Second Ku Klux Klan.” The Atlantic. The Atlantic. December 4, 2016. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/second-klan/509468/>.



this period.⁷ Under these circumstances, most black people in the south during the 19th and 20th centuries were struggling merely to survive.

For decades, African American culture was ignored and black people were seen as the “background”. The concepts of “black” and “beauty” were separated, and it was hard for much of American society to connect a black figure with beauty.⁸ In the majority of artwork and literature before the 1960s, black people were often missing.⁹ Even when they did exist, the roles they played were stereotypically evil or inferior. In contrast, Northern cities, unlike the South, were places where African American culture and art could be expressed and even celebrated. Away from the Jim Crow laws and long traditions of racial oppression, blacks flocked to Northern cities where jobs were plentiful and opportunities to express their art and heritage existed. Therefore, soon, in northern urban areas, a new frontier for black culture began to grow.

DAWN: THE GREAT MIGRATION

As one of the largest movements of people in United States history, the Great Migration is not only a story about a race of people moving from one part of a country to another, but also signaled for the first time that African Americans had begun to take control of their own lives, identities, and destinies.¹⁰ After generations of abuse and oppression, “They did what human beings looking for freedom, throughout history, have often done. They left.”¹¹ As the Great Migration took place, the quality of life for African Americans started improving and more African Americans had the freedom to explore and pursue their artistic talents. Although racism and discrimination still existed in the Northern states, black people were having more working opportunities and less restrictions than before in the Jim Crow South.¹²

MORNING: HARLEM--THE BLACK MECCA

Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City with stately

7 Bryan Stevenson, “Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror,” *Lynching in America* (Equal Justice Initiative), accessed January 3, 2023, <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.

8 Collier-Thomas, Bettye, and James Turner. “Race, Class and Color: The African American Discourse on Identity.” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14, no. 1 (1994): 5–31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27501932>.

9 “The Outrageous Neglect of African Figures in Art History | Art UK.” n.d. [artuk.org](https://artuk.org/discover/stories/the-outrageous-neglect-of-african-figures-in-art-history). <https://artuk.org/discover/stories/the-outrageous-neglect-of-african-figures-in-art-history>.

10 Wilkerson, Isabel. 2010. *The Warmth of Other Suns: the Epic Story of America’s Great Migration*. New York: Random House.

11 Ibid.

12 Delano, Jack, “In the Perfect Eat Shop, a restaurant on 47th Street near South Park, owned by Mr. E. Norris (Negro). Chicago, Illinois,” April 1942. Courtesy of Library of Congress

houses, grand avenues, and magnificent amenities, was the destination for many black migrants during the years of the Great Migration. Gradually, Harlem had gained “a symbolic significance for blacks” which caused it to be referred to as a “mecca of the New Negro” and “another statue of liberty on the landward side of New York.”¹³ Later, many famous African-American artists, musicians, and authors also arrived in Harlem. These ambitious people gathered and encouraged each other, laying the foundation and creating fertile ground for the later emergence of the Harlem Renaissance, which was a new frontier for the development of black culture and creative expression.

Within Harlem, black life, which had been ignored and limited, was now exposed and on display. During this period, jazz, which was developed from the foundation of black folk music, became popular throughout the country, and black people had a new understanding of their artistic creation ability.¹⁴ As Langston Hughes wrote in Harlem, blacks started having the courage to “express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame.”¹⁵

MIDDAY: ALAIN LOCKE AND “THE NEW NEGRO”

The Harlem Renaissance, also called “The New Negro Movement”, was an intellectual and cultural revival of African American culture spanning from the 1920s to the 1930s. This period was considered a golden age in African American culture, manifesting itself in literature, music, stage performance, and art.¹⁶

One of the founders of the Harlem Renaissance was Alain LeRoy Locke, an influential African American philosopher, pioneering writer, and patron of the arts. As the godfather of the Harlem Renaissance, Alain Locke helped thousands of African American writers and artists by proposing ideas that strongly influenced later art, literature, and value systems. Locke’s influence established frontiers in multiple fields, including literature, art, politics, and philosophy.¹⁷

Alain Locke was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on September 13, 1885, to parents Pliny Ishmael Locke and

13 Locke, Alain (March 1925). *Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro*. Survey Graphic. ISBN 9780933121058. Retrieved 17 February 2012.

14 Missouri MPS 18th and Vine Area of Kansas City MPS. 2013-2017. NAID: 63817609. Ref ID: 1.1-4.3-201701.52597. National Archives. Located in Jackson County, Missouri.

15 Langston, Hughes (1926). “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”. *The Nation*.

16 “Harlem Renaissance.” HISTORY. A&E Television Networks. October 29, 2009. <https://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties/harlem-renaissance>.

17 Kirsch, Adam (March–April 2018). “Art and Activism: Rediscovering Alain Locke and the project of black self-realization”. *Harvard Magazine*. Retrieved March 6, 2020. review of Jeffrey C. Stewart, *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

Mary Locke. His academic passion and impressive intellectual abilities were apparent at a young age. In 1902, he graduated from Central High School in Philadelphia, second in a class of 107.¹⁸ In 1907, he became the first African-American Rhodes scholar from Oxford and in 1918, the first black person to get a PhD in philosophy from Harvard University.¹⁹

An impressive scholar with rich academic achievements, Locke wanted to influence and help minorities through actualizing his ideology and advocate new perceptions toward the African American culture, shattering stereotypes and carving out new frontiers. Locke aimed to create an environment where black writers and artists could also be recognized and remembered. This idea was related to his conception of race-building, which considered race as primarily a matter of social and cultural, rather than biological, heredity. As Locke writes, “[r]ace in the vital and basic sense is simply and primarily the culture-heredity.”²⁰

Alain Locke’s most influential work was also the founding work and manifesto for the Harlem Renaissance: *The New Negro*. While guest-editing the March 1925 issue of the *Survey Graphic* for a special edition titled, “Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro”, Alain Locke explored the emergence of a new Negro figure and how the racial identity of African Americans changed from “a perennial problem” into “the progressive phases of contemporary Negro life.”²¹ This shattered racial stereotypes many Americans had of African Americans and began a new area of interest on this topic.

In December of 1925, Locke expanded the issue he wrote into *The New Negro*. This publication was an anthology of writing and art from the 1920s and was the first thoroughly interdisciplinary and inter-genre work. It including paintings reproduced in color by Win old Reiss, poetry, short stories, and critical essays, which offered a new platform for African Americans to express their identities and cultures.²²

The theme of self-expression played an extremely important role in Locke’s anthology and it was the first step for the African American writers and artists to be seen and recognized. For example, Cullen’s poem, “Heritage”, which was selected in *The New Negro*, demonstrates how one can express themselves while grappling with their own history

18 Gates, Lacey. Biography: Alain Leroy Locke Archived September 1, 2006, at the Wayback Machine, Pennsylvania State University Center for the Book. Retrieved October 10, 2008.

19 Ibid.

20 Locke, Alain, 1989. *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond*, L. Harris (ed.), Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 192.

21 Locke, Alain. Enter the New Negro: Harlem: Mecca of the New Negro.” *Survey Graphic* Vol. III 1917-1968 (March 1925). National Humanities Center Resource Toolbox.

22 “Alain Locke’s Historical Influence on Society” Video. YouTube. Posted by Oxford Academic, Feb. 8, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLt9VoIqUNO>

as African Americans who were transported to America as slaves.²³ Despite the history of racial discrimination toward African Americans from the whites and racial segregation, the writers still express what they believe to be right without worrying about others’ judgement.²⁴

The book was not only significant for its unique structure and form, but because it also included revolutionary ideologies and fundamental meanings. Alain Locke believed that art should focus on aesthetics and not propaganda, and that Negro art should be thoroughly self-expressive of the individual artist instead of merely representing aesthetic, cultural and social possibilities.²⁵ Locke broke the common assumption that African American art is a disputable term that causes conflicts and problems. Instead, he pioneered a new way of thinking, calling black culture an aesthetic resource that society should pay attention to. In this way, Alain Locke changed the conversation about the meaning and life of being black in the United States from being a ward or problem into actually an asset.²⁶

In addition to spiritual and ideological contributions, Alain Locke also built infrastructure to support African American artists physically. It was not until 1965 that national endowments were created for the arts and artists struggled to find an income source that would allow them to focus on their creative aims. Recognizing this, Alain Locke secured private patrons in the form of wealthy white intellectuals, to earmark funding for artists.²⁷ Even though he was a leader and well respected figure in the arts, Locke encountered obstacles and suffered discrimination due to his sexual orientation. According to a friend of Alain Locke, there were “different names on the doorbell” every time he went to Locke’s place, and Locke “would never let anyone he did not know into his house.”²⁸ This account suggests that Locke experienced high personal costs on the path to building and fulfilling the goals of the Harlem Renaissance despite his impressive perseverance.

23 Locke, Alain (1997). *The New Negro*. New York: A Touchstone Book. p. 130.

24 Hutchinson, G.. “Harlem Renaissance.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 26, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Harlem-Renaissance-American-literature-and-art>.

25 Carter, Jacoby Adeshei. 2012. “Alain LeRoy Locke” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. March 23, 2012. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/alain-locke/>.

26 “Alain Locke’s Historical Influence on Society” Video. YouTube. Posted by Oxford Academic, Feb. 8, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLt9VoIqUNO>

27 Story, Ralph D. “PATRONAGE AND THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE: YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR.” *CLA Journal* 32, no. 3 (1989): 284–95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44322029>.

28 “Alain Locke’s Historical Impact on Black and Gay Culture” Video YouTube. Posted by Oxford Academic (Oxford University Press), Feb. 14, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZPOKpxnmWc>

Most scholars agree that the "philosophical basis" of the Harlem Renaissance originates from Alain Locke.²⁹ His work, "The New Negro" reshaped people's perceptions toward African American culture and opened new routes for African American artists, musicians, and writers. The ideas revealed through Locke's critical essays, such as value pluralism and relativism, namely "as derivative aspects of the same basic reality, value orders cannot reasonably become competitive and rival realities", meaning that every individual's beliefs should be equally respected despite their diversity and no single value is "universal" or "ultimate", created brand new frontiers waiting to be explored and broadened.³⁰

AFTERNOON: SHATTERING EXPECTATIONS

When Alain Locke's *The New Negro* was published, some young black individuals began to reevaluate their artistic creativity and aimed to create an image of a "new Black". Older generations of African Americans in the south were often accustomed to behaving in passive, docile, and submissive ways to avoid retaliation and to protect themselves, which reinforced the old Uncle-Tom image of African Americans.³¹ During the Great Migration and the Harlem Renaissance, many black teenagers challenged this characterization and rose up, desiring to follow Locke's conceptualization of an independent and resilient "new Negro" personality.

African American literature and artworks, in turn, also attempted to break the traditional expectations and established a new frontier for black expression. Soon in the press, a debate over "Art or propaganda" emerged.^{32,33} While some people insisted that art, especially black art, held the obligation of fulfilling political purposes and acting as collective representation, many writers from the Harlem Renaissance desired free, apolitical artistic expression. As Alain Locke claimed in his essay, "Art in the best sense is rooted in self-expression and whether naive or sophisticated

29 Calo, Mary Ann (2004). "Alain Locke and American Art Criticism". *American Art*. 18 (1):88-97. doi:10.1086/421311. ISSN 1073-9300. JSTOR 10.1086/421311. S2CID 194127630.

30 Locke, Alain, 1989. "Values and Imperatives", in *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond*, Leonard Harris (ed.), Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 34-50.

31 Sue, Derald Wing; Monica McGoldrick (2005). *Multicultural social work practice*. John Wiley and Sons. p. 56. ISBN 0-471-66252-6.

32 Mallocci, Martina. 2018. "All Art Is Propaganda: W.E.B. Du Bois's The Crisis and the Construction of a Black Public Image". *USAbroad - Journal of American History and Politics* 1 (1). <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.2611-2752/7177>.

33 Carter, Jacoby Adeshei. 2012. "Alain LeRoy Locke" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. March 23, 2012. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/alain-locke/>.

is self-contained."³⁴ Essentially, Locke was aiming to break racial stereotypes and advocate racial equality, supporting black artists and writers with the rights to also express their personal emotions and ideas, instead of forced upon by political and ethnic expectations. "In the reaction the vital inner grip of prejudice has been broken".³⁵

Alain Locke's role in the Harlem Renaissance inspired new developments in black literature and art, from which a number of outstanding black artists, poets, and novelists emerged. Locke's work had profound impact on promoting the development of black culture and for the first time, black artists dared to step out of the "background plate" and emerged in American mainstream culture.³⁶

Additionally, Alain Locke's traveling art exhibitions of African American artists and mentoring helped many black artists, musicians, and writers in the Harlem Renaissance gain attention and respect.³⁷ In places like the Cotton Club, African American culture flourished and encouraged by the Harlem Renaissance, patrons enjoyed 'authentic black entertainment'.³⁸ The venue imposed a strict policy on the audiences to stay quiet during the performances, offering the black artists and musicians a position of power and sense of respect that was rare for black members of society at the time.³⁹

SUNRISE: SHATTERING STEREOTYPES--LASTING LEGACY

Alain Locke's innovations and bold attempts in philosophy and aesthetics were the main drivers of Harlem Renaissance, a movement that changed the lives of African American artists, musicians, and writers, but also influenced the world.⁴⁰ The

34 Locke, Alain. "Art Or Propaganda?". *Harlem*, Vol. I, No. 1 November 1928. <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai3/protest/text10/lockeartorpropaganda.pdf>. Valade III, Roger M., "A Black Literary Guide to the Harlem Renaissance." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 11, 1996, p. 102, 10.2307/2963328.

35 Locke, Alain (1997). *The New Negro*. New York: A Touchstone Book. p. 4.

36 Rhodes, Henry. "The Social Contributions of The Harlem Renaissance." *Yale New Haven Teacher Institute*, September 1, 1978. <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/1978/2/78.02.08.x.html>.

37 "Alain Locke." *National Museum of African American History and Culture*, May 31, 2020. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/alain-locke>.

38 "Vialma." n.d. *Www.vialma.com*. Accessed December 3, 2022. <https://www.vialma.com/en/articles/338/The-Jungle-in-Harlem-The-Cotton-Club>. The beginning, golden age, and closure of the Cotton Club.

39 Ibid.

40 "Not Just a Harlem Thing" 2020. *Rediscovering Black History*. July 15, 2020. <https://rediscovering-black-history.blogs.archives.gov/2020/07/15/not-just-a-harlem-thing/>.

Harlem Renaissance was not only a new frontier for African American culture and artistic production, but also brought a lasting change to people's perceptions toward African American culture. Alain Locke's ideas in *The New Negro* created a radically innovative route for African Americans to pursue their artistic talents and explore their identity, and these ideas fueled the movement that provided a space to redefine the black figure.

The Harlem Renaissance brought international attention to African American art and influenced future generations of African American artists and intellectuals. The self-portrait of African American life, identity, and culture that emerged from Harlem was transmitted to the world at large and offered a direct challenge to the racist and disparaging stereotypes that had been formed in the Jim Crow South. In doing so, the Harlem Renaissance radically redefined how people of other races viewed African Americans and understood the African American experience and it was Alain Locke and his pivotal works that shifted the stereotype of blacks as rural and under-educated to that of a more civilized, sophisticated, and urban image.⁴¹

Without Alain Locke, the Harlem Renaissance would not have instilled its greatest contribution to African Americans across the country: a new spirit of self-determination and pride, an acute sense of social consciousness, and an interest in political activism, which provided the foundation for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.⁴² This new identity and spirit proposed and advocated by Alain Locke and revived through the Harlem Renaissance eventually helped African Americans to be exposed and play roles on the world stage, carving out a brand new frontier for both the African Americans and the globe's development and future.

APPENDIX 1



"Roaring 20s." n.d. Aesthetics Wiki. https://aesthetics.fandom.com/wiki/Roaring_20s.

41 Suggs, Ernie. 2016. "29 Reasons to Celebrate Black History Month: No. 20, the Harlem Renaissance." *Ajc. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. February 18, 2016.

42 Ibid.

This picture vividly depicts people's cheerful life in the Roaring Twenties. However, there are only white faces shown in the photo, indicating the segregation and lack of opportunities for African Americans to participate in cultural and leisure activities.

APPENDIX 2



"Ida Leveled the Karnofsky Shop, Louis Armstrong's Second Home." Georgia Public Broadcasting, www.gpb.org/news/2021/08/31/ida-leveled-the-karnofsky-shop-louis-armstrongs-second-home. Accessed 3 Dec. 2022.

This is a photo of the American jazzman Louis Armstrong playing trumpet in his dressing room before a show in 1947 in a New York jazz cabaret. He was born in Louisiana and migrated to the Illinois Central Road in Chicago where he built on his musical talent. Armstrong epitomized both the movement of African Americans in the Great Migration as well as black cultural production in the Harlem Renaissance.

APPENDIX 3



William Lovelace. *Colored Only*. J147306601. Getty Images, May 25, 1901. Hulton Archive.

This is the photo of a sign in Jackson, Mississippi which reads "Waiting Room For Colored Only by order Police Dept." It was taken in 1901 and shows the severe racism at the time that inspired the Great Migration. This provides primary visual evidence of the oppression African Americans at the time faced.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

1. Delano, Jack, "In the Perfect Eat Shop, a restaurant on 47th Street near South Park, owned by Mr. E. Norris (Negro). Chicago, Illinois," April 1942. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

This photograph shows African Americans eating at a local, Black-owned Chicago restaurant in 1942. Most diners and employees are African American, and several small businesses in this area of Chicago were owned and operated by African Americans who had migrated north during the Great Migration, which reflects how the Great Migration provided African Americans with more opportunities and freedom.

2. Langston, Hughes (1926). "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain". *The Nation*.

In this article, Langston Hughes, one of the leaders of the Harlem Renaissance, advocates the importance of blacks accepting themselves despite their race or skin color, especially for young Negro artists. This shows how the Harlem Renaissance contributed to pioneering ideas and broke stereotypical assumptions toward African Americans.

3. Locke, Alain. "Art Or Propaganda?". *Harlem*, Vol. I, No. 1. November 1920. <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai3/protest/text10/lockeartorpropaganda.pdf> Valade III, Roger M., "A Black Literary Guide to the Harlem Renaissance." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 11, 1996, p. 102, 10.2307/2963328.

This primary article clearly presents Alain Locke's stand in the discussion about art or propaganda and provided adequate information for me to understand his opinions on this question, which explains his actions and arguments in restoring the aesthetic and artistic value of African American art and culture instead of covering them with political meanings. This is one of many important leading theories of the Harlem Renaissance.

4. Locke, Alain (March 1925). *Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro*. Survey Graphic. ISBN 9780933121058. Retrieved 17 February 2012.

This essay discusses the importance of Harlem as an African American cultural center, people's changing viewpoints toward the concept of "negro", and increasing opportunities for African Americans to explore their talents with more freedom. These arguments are Alain Locke's direct reflections of society at the time, which allowed me to peek into the actual transformation, problems, and newly raised ideas during the time period, as well as Locke's personal attempts as a social activist.

5. Locke, Alain (1997). *The New Negro*. New York: A Touchstone Book.

This book was the milestone and basis of the Harlem Renaissance, and has influenced my writing in multiple ways. Many of the works it selected reflect innovative ideas such as the archetype of the new negro, race-building, and the equally impressive aesthetic value of African American art. By reading the actual works of the African American authors at the time, I was able to develop a more realistic, comprehensive, and detailed sense about the essence of the Harlem Renaissance and its lasting impacts.

6. Locke, Alain, 1989. *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond*, Leonard Harris (ed.), Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

This is a collection of Alain Locke's essays edited by Leonard Harris that makes readily available (for the first time) Locke's pioneering arguments about cultural pluralism, value relativism, and critical relativism. Through reading these primary works about the philosophical concepts raised by Alain Locke, I was able to better understand how Locke's philosophical ideas supported and led the Harlem Renaissance, as well as how this event cultivated new ideas, shattered racial stereotypes, and left lasting legacy in multiple fields of humanities.

7. Missouri MPS 18th and Vine Area of Kansas City MPS. 2013-2017. NAID: 63817609. Ref ID: 1.1-4.3-201701.52597. National Archives. Located in Jackson County, Missouri.

These files vividly portray the historical significance of jazz on the eight city blocks that comprise Kansas City, Missouri's 18th and Vine area. This area had the highest concentration of buildings featuring jazz music in the city and cultivated many new jazz styles. This provides specific evidence and examples for the spread of African American culture and the significant influence of the Harlem Renaissance.

8. Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (1866). Sharecropping contract dated Dec 5, 1866, Cameron Family Papers #133. Southern Historical Collection.

This shows the actual contract between the landlord and the laborers in the sharecropping relationship, which provided me with insights into the actual situation and burdens that the sharecroppers faced. This also vividly presents the unfairness and endless consequences of the sharecropper system, which provided an essential reason for what fueled Great Migration.

Secondary Sources

9. "Alain Locke's Historical Impact on Black and Gay Culture" Video YouTube. Posted by Oxford Academic (Oxford University Press), Feb. 14, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZPOKpxnmWc>.

In this video, Jeffrey C. Stewart talks about how Alain Locke, as a black, gay man, navigate his life and the fun anecdotes that he has experienced. This helped me to learn more details so that I can vividly imagine the picture of Alain Locke's actions and experiences when he attempted to spread African American culture as both a social activist and a scholar.

10. "Alain Locke's Historical Influence on Society" Video. YouTube. Posted by Oxford Academic, Feb. 8, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLt9VoIqUN0>.

This video introduces how Alain Locke, along with his innovation of ideas and historical and social influence, had lasting impacts on our current society, specifically focusing on his revolutionary anthology *The New Negro*, which helped me understand the significance and impressive value of this work's form and structure, despite its content and cultural meaning. This interview has its reference value because the guest, Jeffrey C. Stewart, is the author of the most comprehensive biography of Alain Locke and therefore has a relatively strong understanding about him.

11. "Alain Locke." National Museum of African American History and Culture, May 31, 2020. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/alain-locke>.

This article introduces Alain Locke's contributions to cultivate young black artists, authors, and musicians during the Harlem Renaissance, such as organizing traveling art exhibitions for negro artists, which helped me to understand one of many factors that motivated respect and attention toward African American art and culture.

12. Bryan Stevenson, "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror, Lynching in America (Equal Justice Initiative), accessed January 3, 2023, <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.

This website introduces the lynching events, how its representation shifts from "popular justice" to racial terror, and the trauma left by lynching. This information helped me to better describe the historical context, specifically racial oppression against African Americans, and why they were motivated to migrate to the North on an enormous scale.

13. Calo, Mary Ann (2004). "Alain Locke and American Art Criticism". *American Art*. 18 (1):88-97. doi:10.1086/421311. ISSN 1073-9300. JSTOR 10.1086/421311. S2CID 194127630.

This essay introduces Alain Locke's contributions as a cultural theorist and aesthete genuinely moved by art and culture, which proves Alain Locke's irreplaceable role in leading and starting the Harlem Renaissance, specifically in providing the philosophical and theoretical basis for the cultural revival.

14. Carter, Jacoby Adeshei. 2012. "Alain LeRoy Locke" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. March 23, 2012. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/alain-locke/>.

This is a systematic and informative article about Alain Locke as an individual, specifically about his philosophical propositions and aesthetic views. Understanding these views significantly helped me to understand the trigger, process, and legacy of the Harlem Renaissance and Alain Locke's role in this event.

15. Collier-Thomas, Bettye, and James Turner. "Race, Class and Color: The African American Discourse on Identity." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14, no. 1 (1994): 5-31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27501932>.

This article discusses the topic of heritage and finding one's own identity for African Americans. It includes the absence of black figures and the separation of black and beauty, which relates to the African American identity, heritage, and self-expression. This source helped me to better understand the manifestation of African American identity in the field of art, and how it triggered Alain Locke to change that status quo through the Harlem Renaissance.

16. Gates, Lacey. *Biography: Alain Leroy Locke*. Archived September 1, 2006, at the Wayback Machine, Pennsylvania State University Center for the Book. Retrieved October 10, 2008.

This book contains abundant details and information about Alain Locke's early life. I used it specifically to investigate Alain Locke's education experiences and details about his early academic performance and school life. This helps me to narrate his entire life as a whole and connect his individual development to a broader sense. It also shows the impressiveness of Alain Locke's intelligence and skills from a young age, foreshadowing his future leadership and founder of new frontiers.

17. Gibson, Campbell; Jung, Kay (September 2002). *Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States (PDF) (Report)*. Population Division Working Papers. Vol. 56. United States Census Bureau.

This file provides information about the distribution of population according to race during the time periods near and during the Great Migration. This shows the sharp contrast between the population percentage of African Americans before and after the Great Migration, which provides a basis for further discussion about the appearance of the intellectual and cultural revival.

18. "Harlem Renaissance." *HISTORY*. A&E Television Networks. October 29, 2009. <https://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties/harlem-renaissance>.

This website contains general and basic information

about the Harlem Renaissance, which helped me to develop an initial overall understanding about this event and aided my future deeper research.

19. History.com Editors, "The Roaring Twenties," History.com (A&E Television Networks, April 14, 2010), <https://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties/roaring-twenties-history#the-jazz-age>.

This article introduces the background, social conditions, and impacts of "The Roaring Twenties" in detail, which helped me to develop an overall figure of the historical context before the Harlem Renaissance.

20. Hutchinson, G.. "Harlem Renaissance." Encyclopedia Britannica, January 26, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Harlem-Renaissance-American-literature-and-art>.

This article explains how the Harlem Renaissance refreshed the concept, purpose, and value of negro art, and how it acted as an aesthetic form as a basis for innovation and self-expression. It also gives specific examples of impressive Black intellectuals who stood out. This helped me to see the actual impact of the Harlem Renaissance on African American individuals.

21. Joseph, Paterson. "The Outrageous Neglect of African Figures in Art History." 31 Oct 2019. Artuk.org.<https://artuk.org/discover/stories/the-outrageous-neglect-of-african-figures-in-art-history>.

This article portrays the problem in the field of art that black people are often ignored or oversimplified, their name being replaced by "a Negro" or "a servant". This clearly shows the challenges that black artists and the ethnicity as a whole faced, which further emphasizes the importance of the Harlem Renaissance in the field of art production and cultural revolution.

22. Joshua Cain. "Not Just a Harlem Thing." 2020. Rediscovering Black History. National Archives in College Park, MD. July 15, 2020. <https://rediscovering-black-history.blogs.archives.gov/2020/07/15/not-just-a-harlem-thing/>.

This article explores how the Harlem Renaissance influenced not only Harlem, but also other cities and streets across the continent. It also discusses how regions other than Harlem also played important roles in African American cultural revival, and gives some specific examples with detailed descriptions. This helps me to learn the beginning and spreading impacts of the Harlem Renaissance.

23. Kirsch, Adam (March–April 2018). "Art and Activism: Rediscovering Alain Locke and the project of black self-realization". Harvard Magazine. Retrieved March 6, 2020. review of Jeffrey C. Stewart, *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

This article includes full information about Alain Locke as a complex individual and the significant meaning of black self-realization beyond, including Locke's significant influences in the Harlem Renaissance, and his own works and contributions to philosophy and aesthetics. This helped me to know about Alain Locke as an individual more comprehensively, and I was more able to recognize his significance on motivating and triggering a brand-new frontier in black self-realization and self-expression.

24. Mallocci, Martina. 2018. "All Art Is Propaganda': W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Crisis* and the Construction of a Black Public Image". *USAbroad – Journal of American History and Politics* 1 (1). <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.2611-2752/7177>.

This essay explores Du Bois' *The Crisis* writings (1910s-1930s), specifically how his thoughts on art expression, which includes the discussion about art as propaganda, contributed to his aim to build a black public image for political purposes. This is one of many examples that discuss the question of "art or propaganda", and is an almost opposite view toward Alain Locke's aesthetic viewpoint, which allowed me to learn about the discussion of this topic through multiple angles.

25. McLeod, Saul. 2022. "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." *Simply Psychology*. April 4, 2022. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.

This article introduces the pyramid that shows human's hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow in details and explains the relationship between the five different needs. This information supports the idea that African Americans in the South did not even have the opportunity to explore their artistic talents, which belong to the needs of esteem and self-actualization, because they did not fulfill the more basic needs of physiological and safety needs.

26. Rhodes, Henry. "The Social Contributions of The Harlem Renaissance." Yale New Haven Teacher Institute, September 1, 1978. <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/1978/2/78.02.08.x.html>.

This set of teaching material focuses on the social contributions of the Harlem Renaissance, specifically on encouraging African Americans to express themselves as capable individuals and increase their overall confidence and self-evaluation. It is important for me to understand the changes before and after the cultural revival.

27. Rothman, Joshua D.. 2016. "When Bigotry Paraded Through the Streets." *The Atlantic*. December 4, 2016. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/second-klan/509468/>.

This article includes information about the number of members in the Ku Klux Klan and how it fluctuated

through time. This helps me to learn that Ku Klux Klan was at its highest popularity in the 1920s, which contributed to the historical context and is one of many factors why the Great Migration happened.

28. "Separate but Equal," Legal Information Institute (Legal Information Institute), accessed December 18, 2022, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/separate_but_equal.

This website informs the readers about the background of the proposition of "separate but equal" and the aftermath of this decision. This helped me to better understand the actual historical meaning of *Plessy v. Ferguson* so that I can describe the overall effect of all the different forms of oppression that the African Americans faced at the time more realistically.

29. "Sharecropping, Black Land Acquisition, and White Supremacy (1868-1900)." n.d. WorldFood Policy Center. <https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu/north-carolina/durham-food-history/sharecropping-black-land-acquisition-and-white-supremacy-1868-1900/>.

This article describes the history of sharecropping from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century, its influences on the society, and how it reflects white supremacy and oppresses the African Americans' rights with details and data. These information helps me to better understand the historical context and one of multiple restrictions on the southern African Americans at the time.

30. Stewart, Jeffrey C. Feb. 1, 2018. *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke*. Published by Oxford University Press.

This book is the most informative and detailed biography of Alain Locke. It explores his impacts on the African-American intellectual and creative community through multiple perspectives. Through making use of primary sources of Locke's life as well as interviews with those who knew him, Stewart discusses Locke's education and his role as both a student and an educator. The biography then goes on to explore such themes as race, politics, economics as well the arts and how this all contributed to the Harlem renaissance, which is essential information for me to connect Alain Locke and the Harlem Renaissance, and explore the lasting legacy and frontiers of both of them.

31. Story, Ralph D. "PATRONAGE AND THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE: YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR." *CLA Journal* 32, no. 3 (1989): 284-95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44322029>.

This essay informed me of the patronage-artist relationship at the time in the United States and how the patronage system works. This helped me to understand the overall story of how Alain Locke and other important figures in the Harlem Renaissance helped African American writers and artists present their talents without worrying about funds and investments.

32. Sue, Derald Wing; Monica McGoldrick (2005). *Multicultural social work practice*. John Wiley and Sons. p. 56. ISBN 0-471-66252-6.

This book provided specific definitions of multiculturalism, cultural competence, and multicultural social work, and closely examined how social work theories, concepts, and practices are often rooted in and reflective of the values of the dominant society. I used the part of it where it talks about the Uncle Tom archetype of the old African American figures to show how the Harlem Renaissance and other social movements shattered racial stereotypes.

33. Suggs, Ernie. 2016. "29 Reasons to Celebrate Black History Month: No. 20, the Harlem Renaissance." *Ajcs*. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. February 18, 2016.

This article discusses the impacts of the Harlem Renaissance on current society, which indirectly portrays its lasting legacy. It shows that this event has shaped our current understandings about African American culture and perceptions about this race, which emphasizes the importance of this intellectual and cultural revival.

34. "The Great Migration and the power of a single decision | Isabel Wilkerson." Video. YouTube. Posted by Ted, Apr. 6, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3qA8DNc2Ss>.

This video gives information about how the Great Migration, the first time, allowed African Americans to discover, explore, and show their innate talents. She also includes specific examples of African Americans gaining freedom and new opportunities after migration, which helped me to understand the cultural and spiritual significance of the Great Migration and how it provided a fertile soil for the Harlem Renaissance. This speech video has its reference value because Isabel Wilkerson is one of the most well-known journalists and authors that investigating and analyzing racial issues related to the Great Migration.

35. "Vialma." n.d. www.vialma.com. Accessed December 3, 2022. <https://www.vialma.com/en/articles/338/The-Jungle-in-Harlem-The-Cotton-Club.The-beginning-golden-age-and-closure-of-the-Cotton-Club>.

This article introduces the history and development of the Cotton Club, as well as some basic information and interesting details about the venue. This information helped me to use the Cotton Club as an example to show that African American artists and musicians were receiving more attention and respect as the Harlem Renaissance started.

36. Wadelington, Flora Hatley. "Segregation in the 1920s." *NCpedia*. Tar Heel Junior Historian, 2024. <https://www.ncpedia.org/history/20th-Century/segregation-1920s>.

This article depicts the influences of segregation on the African Americans' lives during the 1920s and how segregation was a prevalent phenomenon in society, which portrays the racial oppression and the difficulty of the black life even during the flourishing era of 1920s.

37. Wilkerson, Isabel. 2010. *The Warmth of Other Suns*. New York: Random House.

This book describes how the Great Migration unfolded with vivid historical details through the experiences of three unique and representative individuals. This information and details portrayed how the Great Migration acted as the trigger for African Americans to start taking control of their own life and identity, which is an essential foundation for the Harlem Renaissance.

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