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The Black Arts Era will go into the annals of history as one of the most contentious in American history. The era was heralded by the establishment of the Black Arts Movement (BAM) in Harlem in the decade of the 1960s. Many historians view this movement as the artistic arm of the Black Power movement, representing one of the most significant periods in the growth and blossoming of African-American literature (Pitney 23).

The 1960s was a period of black rediscovery. The black American wanted to assert his cultural and social identity, having realized that he had been subject to racialism and subjugation for far too long. Most of the movements that emerged during this period used various forms of art to pass their message across that time has come for the blacks to take full charge over their lives and destiny (Mike 280). It was during the Black Arts Era that many blacks were inspired to start their own publishing houses, theaters, magazines, novels, and art institutions, aimed at instilling a voice of demanding their rights from a society that was overly biased towards the whites. According to Mike, the era is "notable for its sophisticated and politically inflected drama, theater, and performance" (278). Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. adhered to the overall philosophy of this era by fighting for the injustices presented to blacks through engaging their strong oratory prowess as a form of art to appeal to blacks to be strong in the face of adversity and demand what is rightfully theirs. Luther's 'I have a dream' speech is still remembered to date for rallying the black American community to espouse their identity and willingness of both mind and character to fully take charge of their own destiny (Pitney 47).

It is imperative to note that both King and Malcolm fought against the injustices from the confines of Civil Rights movement. Both King and Malcolm were young and charismatic leaders, exuding a lot of confidence in the public gatherings they attended, thereby drawing huge, almost fanatical following. Despite their common goals of demanding for equality, the styles of the two men were interestingly divergent, and their philosophies for achieving the stated purpose of fighting injustices equally different. King was a staunch campaigner of employing non-violent demonstrations and civil disobedience as a means of triggering social change in the white-dominated society (Mike 282). On the other hand, Malcolm X was a firm believer that all methods, including violent actions, should be used to wage a spirited war on the perceived oppressors, with the explicit aim of changing the status quo which equated a black person to someone who could not be in control of his own destiny, and therefore required to be led. The activists employed the above styles to achieve their purpose - equality and independence of the minority black community.

Their strong oratory prowess ensured the sense of purpose and financial independence were also engrained in the mindsets of the black populace. According to Mike, the leaders' "...saw the situated, communitarian, and traditionalist implications of the spoken word as the best way to articulate a critical philosophy anchored in everyday activism" (278). Their purpose of ensuring equality was realized, but not before both of them paid the ultimate prize of death for waging the campaign to free the Black Americans from the chains of racism and subjugation. The audiences targeted by King and Malcolm were personalities in authority as well as members of the black

community. To those in power, mainly from the mainstream white society, King and Malcolm wanted to see them enact legislation that would eventually recognize the blacks as human beings with similar fundamental rights as members of the white community (Pitney 64). Both King and Malcolm also appealed to the blacks themselves to stand up to the occasion and be counted as Americans rather than as members of a minority group. It was an uphill task to instill confidence in Black Americans that they should stand up for their rights especially after undergoing many years of subjugation, but the movement of the 60s swept across America like a volatile hurricane, delivering blacks from a myriad of social and political problems that existed before

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