

Warmth of the other suns – george swanson assignment



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It takes place around the center of the twentieth century American history and in some ways, its still an unfolding story. American cherish the idea of freedom, however that same idea wasn't for everyone throughout the country's history. The Great Migration had slaves and their descendents escaped the racial system and oppression they faced of Jim Crow, in look for something better, equal and fair. This movement definitely transformed the e American culture since it had “ 90% of blacks in this country living in the south.

By the time the mass movement ended in the sass's, roughly half of America's blacks resided in the North” (Stauffer) The Great Migration transformed American culture which Wilkinson goes a great job on describing or reproducing a national story that recognizes and explains the African American culture at that time as well as society based on a racial system. Wilkinson rigorously researched, and made an amazing job of a written historical narrative that has much to teach us about the American past as well as suggesting how America may do a better job Of confronting its present problems.

Wilkinson focuses on the live of three people who left the South in different decades for different destinations and different reasons which were: Ida Mae, George Swanson and Robert Foster. However, in this essay I will focus just in one, George Swanson. In 1945, George Swanson left Florida, for New York City to escape a lynch mob consisted of plantation owners and the police. He was an ambitious young man whose dream was to attend college. Swanson was forced to work on orange fieldstone make a living after he was kicked out of schools since he couldn't afford it anymore.

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When he attempted to organize a strike with his fellow workers in order to have or demand better working conditions and fair play, he made the decision to migrate to New York when he learned that the orange plantation owners were planning on giving him “ a necktie party” (Wilkinson, p. 156). The author tells the story of her three main characters with deep historical attention to how the black life was in the South at that time and how they lived under a racial system where black were at the bottom of it.

To illustrate the depth of white supremacy at that time over black in Florida, Wilkinson portrayed the struggles and the reasons that led George Swanson to migrate to New York City. In describing George Swanson as an older man in New York City, she writes: “ His face is long, and careless. He was handsome in his day, a basketball player in high school, good with numbers, a ladies’ man. He holds out a crate of Florida oranges like the ones he used to pick and offers you one, says, even after all the picking and all that it cost him. They’re better than the ones from California.

A smile lifts his face at the absurdities of the world he left, and which, in some ridiculous way, he still loves. Then his eyes well up over all that they have seen” (Wilkinson, p. 48). The Great Migration was a social event of such magnitude and duration that it shaped the entire nation at that time. When the migratory escaped the South to look for a better life whether in the North or West, they might have escaped Jim Crow but they did not escape the racial prejudice and deep structural inequalities they encounter there as well that was built into the American society at that time.

Many researcher have blamed the migrants of the problems that faced the North and the West cities when t hey moved there since they were considered poor or illiterate, which it was claimed, brought the social ill of joblessness or welfare dependency. However, moving to the North or the West didn't promise anybody land but it " did" promise higher wages were when they did migrate over there, they would find economic inequality in the sense of the offset of rent being higher and other economic factors that would replace the segregation and lynching that were enforced by the whites in the South.

Swanson, even though he got shucked in an dead end job for 40 years since he didn't had the education to continue going forward, he reached levels of economic and social stability that would have been impossible in the South. Willpower's book demonstrates tit discussion of political and social history and sociological studies of cities and migration routes the profound courage by million of migrants in their decision to leave the South. By them living their home, they were in the pursuit of freedom, citizenship rights that had being theirs all along as well as a better living.

Wilkinson says by the end Of the book that the Great Migration " was a step in freeing not just the people who fled, but the county whose mountains they crossed" (Wilkinson, pig. 538). Usually, the black migrants that went to the North would return to their mentors on the South for holidays like the Fourth Fuji or Easter. They w loud bring rolls of cash, dressed in a fancy manner and even bragged about how the black was treated in the North. This visits gave hope to people like Ida Mae, George Swanson and Robert Foster.

They would realize that there were places where they could say to white man “ yes” rather than “ yes sir”. However, what they most people didn’t realize was that the North wasn’t like the paradise that was pictured. This migrants would live in bad, high crime Northern cities and making more money they could afford. Because of many black migrating to the North, whites were becoming alarmed with their cheap work force leaving. Some cities started prohibiting North bound trains from taking black passing errs while other sharecroppers were telling blacks that their working conditions would improve.

However, neither of those two proved to be effective on keeping black migrants from leaving. Swanson arrived in New York City in 1945 where he found work as a porter on a railroad which run up and down the East Coast. It could be said that he played an alternate role as an ambassador of black migrants that were going to the North. He would help newcomers get off the right stop, usually accepted their gifts that consisted of fried chicken and ignored their ignorance of how Northern tip a porter.

George married a girl called Inns Cunningham but they were struggling in their home life. George was usually all day away on the railroads working and rarely spent time with his wife or kids called Gerard and Sonny. His wife, Inns was concerned as well that their son would become a drug addict or that their daughter got pregnant at the age of 13. Furthermore, George cheated on Inns with another omen, breaking her heart when she found out that he fathered another son with another woman.

After the civil rights legislation was invalidated in Jim Crow, George encourage the black passengers he encounter at the train to remain in their seats when the white conductor asked them to move to the Jim Crow cars. Even though the legislation was passed, whites still tried to be as dominant as they were and preserve their Sense Of “ hierarchy’ or “ superior race”. George escaped to New York because he wanted to ensure that his children had a better future and lifestyle than he had growing up. However, his children didn’t value the sacrifices he made and they fled back to the South.

His son Gerard blamed his drug problem with the crime in New York and moved to Miami to deal drugs. On the other hand, Sonny found refuge from going to Guests, her father’s hometown. At the age Of 60, George had worked in the same dead end job since he was 25. He was too smart and too qualified for any other manual labor. But being in the train, he was able to see everything first handed of the Great Migration. George passed away in 1998, once the beautiful Harlem had fallen to drug crime. The Great Migration change the face of the North for several factors.

The first one being that it gave rise to the civil right movement by raising the expectations of Black people which at the same time it also spread Black culture. Being from music, cuisine, literature, art, or theater all across the country. Finally, the Great Migration was an expression for freedom which the civil rights movement created and the inspirational stories, like the one Wilkinson talks about with George Swanson, which makes “ The Wrath of Others Suns” a valuable and inspirational read.