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**Kendrick Lamar; Challenging Racism, Oppression and White
Supremacy through Hip-hop Music**

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfilment of the Requirements for Master's degree in Literature and Civilisation

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Dedications

To my parents and my siblings

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Abstract

This study tackles the multiple struggles and hardships that faced African Americans throughout history. Harmful treatment under slavery, racial discrimination, oppression, and White Supremacy resulted in the black's political and cultural revolts. Politically, it was the Civil Rights Movement by many famous black figures such as Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X, and culturally, the Harlem Renaissance movement. Hip-hop, as well, was a significant means by which rappers like Kendrick Lamar discussed several issues that face the black race in the United States, such as white Supremacy, oppression, and police brutality. The methodology used to answer the research questions is the analytical approach. This research work tries to identify the contribution of Kendrick Lamar to contest issues of racism, oppression and White Supremacy in the African American community.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The life of African Americans in the United States has been challenging for ages. Upon their initial arrival, the blacks were met with many challenges and issues that differentiated between races. White Supremacy, an act of superiority committed by the whites against African Americans in all aspects of life, resulted in the composure of the black race from oppression, racial discrimination, and all types of segregation. In the face of these brutal acts, African Americans confronted both violent and nonviolent political movements and protests to defend their rights and freedom. Later, the blacks craved to reveal their distinct identity, so they started to resist the whites culturally through literature, fashion, and Cinema, while the main was music.

Historically, music was a sense of joy for African Americans. They used to sing during their working time to communicate so that the whites would not understand their plans. Nowadays, black music is the number one source of empowerment and resistance. Black artists use it to entertain the audience and defend their rights, identity, and culture. One of the most prominent rappers in the Hip-hop field is Kendrick Lamar. The reason behind this choice is to depict the bitter reality of being black in the United States through Kendrick Lamar's lens. This African American rapper spent his whole career describing his community's daily struggles and defending them by any means.

This extended essay targets two main questions:

- What are the struggles that faced African Americans?
- How did Kendrick Lamar's lyrics display African Americans' struggles?

Subsequently, the following hypotheses are set:

- African Americans reacted violently and non-violently against these obstacles
- Kendrick Lamar reflects the bitter reality of the black community

This research work is divided into two chapters. The first one will introduce the concept of racism and the black Americans who were enslaved by the whites. Next, it will discuss the hardships that were faced by blacks historically, such as racial persecution, Jim Crow laws, and the Ku Klux Klan. This chapter also provides historical insight into the resistance of African Americans by launching nonviolent movements led by "Martin Luther King Jr." and "Malcolm X," plus the appearance of hip Hop music. While, the second chapter discusses the African American rapper Kendrick Lamar by providing information about his early life, records, and accolades. This chapter also tackles Kendrick Lamar's lyrics defending the black race from their daily obstacles, instilling a lifelong impact on the next black generations.

Chapter One

The History of African American Struggles and Reactions in the United States

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1.1 Introduction

African Americans has faced numerous challenges and hardships in the United States. They were considered enslaved people, so they struggled with all types of Racism, oppression and police brutality committed by both the white community and the system. This chapter sheds light on the issue of slavery back when the United States became an independent nation, which was a nightmare for the lives of the Black race. Moreover, it discusses the violence and racial segregation committed by the Whites against the enslaved people. However, the second part of this chapter reveals the political and social revolutions made by African Americans to regain their identity and prove themselves as American citizens. The first is mainly the American movements and political activists; the other is social, concerning the Harlem Renaissance and music.

1.2 Definition of Racism

Racism is a concept that divides human beings into distinct and unique biological sub-groups called "races." It can also be a belief that addresses racial disparities; it involves discrimination and bigotry against individuals because of their ethnicity. The history of Racism does not include its definition, but from a description of this conceived as conceived in the historian's own time and life circumstances, resulting in white Supremacy against Blacks, African Americans, and Muslims (Banton 81-95).

Racism is the outcome of a clash between an oppressor and an oppressed; It leads to all forms of prejudices and discrimination from the dominator against the oppressed people. For instance, in the United States, the Whites are the dominant group; they are ultimately supported by institutional power and authority. Here, the concept of Racism is more than racial prejudices. Racism is a macro-level system that consistently puts Whites at the top of the domination hierarchy compared to other races with different origins and cultural history (DiAngelo 108-110).

The concept of Racism was never a natural primitive phenomenon but a socially well-constructed one. It is the use of biological differences to satisfy the colonizer's irrational needs and marginalize the submissive colonized people. Racism can also involve attributing stereotypes to other groups based on their race or ethnicity; these stereotypes can result in discrimination and prejudices against individuals because of their racial background (Memmi ch02).

According to Gluckstein, Racism led to many historical manifestations in the history of the United States. He also stated that Racism has been intertwined with the country's democratic ideals and practices, revealing that the concept of Racism is ultimately used as a tool to maintain authority and power and to magnify inequalities within American society (2012).

1.3 Enslaved Black Americans

In 1492, the world witnessed the discovery of a new continent called America by the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus. This navigation attracted many explorers from Europe, leading them to settle there. Initially, they focused on agriculture since that place was heavenly and blessed by natural resources; thus, they sought working hands. Here, one may conclude that racial prejudices have been deeply found in America for ages.

The history of slavery in the “New Continent” started in British North America when the Europeans exploited the Native Americans. This process failed to reach its goal since the challenging work conditions did not fit with the physical genetics of the Native Americans. Next, Europeans started to enslave Africans; this operation was better than the first one because Africans at that time already had the needed experience in agriculture (O’Callaghan 04-07).

Millions of Africans were brought to the “New Continent” for the sake of cruel, pitiless jobs in the harshest conditions. Enslaving Black People boosted wealth and prosperity for a lot of American businesspeople. However, enslaved Africans

suffered a lot during that period, from the point of sale, separations from family members and the white, savage and brutal treatment across generations. Moreover, racial inferiority was ubiquitous; it led the Whites to exploit the enslaved Blacks economically by stealing their efforts and skills for low wages. Despite all the cruel hardships and struggles that the Blacks have been through, they were still resisting escapes and rebellions, looking for freedom (Schermerhorn 03-14).

1.3.1 Abolitionism in the United States

At the beginning of the second half of the 18th century, the abolition movement commenced in the Northern parts of the United States. Its main aim was to stand against slavery at all costs. This movement was the true definition of valuing freedom by believing that all men are equal. By the 19th century, the United States was divided into two parts. The Northern states supported freedom and rejected slavery, while the laws of the Southern slave states banned Africans from freedom, education, and health care (Kachur 17-27).

The process of Black Americans demanding their rights and seeking freedom continued; it came as a result of the cruel White's treatment against the Black community. The Blacks made revolts, manifestations, and rebellions to get their rights and freedom. On January 1, 1863, the president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, signed an edict known as the Emancipation Proclamation that freed enslaved people all over the country (Blackiston 227-277).

1.4 Racial Persecution

From the post-slavery era, the United States witnessed another problem, which was Racism; this issue was a result of the ideologies made by Whites spread in American society in which they considered themselves superior to Blacks. One of these ideologies was to separate the colors since the Whites could not neighbor the Blacks. In this case, they thought about racial segregation, which led to the implementation of segregation laws.

Racism against African Americans in the United States sheds light on two major brutal concepts that are oppression and marginalization. Economy, politics, and society all were aspects of lives that the African Americans suffered from. In society, African Americans were neglected; they did not have equal rights with whites. Moreover, they were granted a lower level of education because they did not access high-level schools. Lastly, they did not even have the right to vote for the president or the parliament, so that change would be challenging.

1.4.1 Racial Segregation Laws

The African Americans were marginalized in every aspect of life. They suffered publicly; they were ultimately inferior to the Whites. Socially, they were separated from the other races regarding social services like restaurants, parks, and institutions such as schools and churches. The Jim Crow Laws caused this process, a racial system aimed to maintain the superiority of the dominant race in every field and aspect of life (Tikkanen).

1.4.1.1 Jim Crow Laws

Jim Crow Laws, a series of racial laws in the Southern States, lasted from 1877 until 1965. These laws targeted separating the Whites from the Blacks in all public facilities such as schools, libraries, restaurants, and transportation. Furthermore, the Jim Crow Laws spread inequality and Injustice between the two races. These laws were applied because whites believed in superiority, power, and authority. However, this operation automatically put the Blacks as the inferior, oppressed and poor group (Probyn-Rapsey 108- 137).

The Jim Crow Laws restricted African Americans in every path they were taking. Insisting on such laws by the Southern States made the Blacks suffer from the poor way of living. For instance, Florida prohibited marriage between a black person and a white one; what about Georgia, a state that imposed restaurant owners to only serve Whites or Blacks; it means that owners should not serve both races within the same room.

1.5 Oppression; White Supremacy

As a result of the Jim Crow Laws, the Southern parts of the United States became a yard for racial altercations. It ended with the rise of White Supremacy, an oppressive system that affirms the superiority of the Whites over other races. This system allows white people to gain authority, dominance, and control over colored people. White Supremacy, in a way, can be Blackness, a violent belief by white supremacists that can lead to hurting Blacks to achieve their missions and objectives. This belief supported all kinds of separations: religion, social campaigns, and many others.

In McLaughlin-Stonham's view, the historical evolution of white Supremacy influenced the segregation of streetcars. He noted that the racial segregation in public transportation came because of the policies that were shaped by white supremacists' ideologies. For him, the Southern governments' support for those ideologies led to the implementation of discriminatory practices within the city's transportation system. Moreover, McLaughlin-Stonham revealed the change in the white supremacist environment after being just an ordinary paternalistic nature. This shift explains how White Supremacy succeeded in splitting races and oppressing black Americans, leading to segregation policies on public transportation (03-18).

1.5.1 The Ku Klux Klan

The post-Civil War era was a period of equal rights for both races. The realization of this fact comes when we see many colored people getting the same rights as Whites. Here, the white people, especially Southerners, refused to accept the new situation, leading them to the creation of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Ku Klux Klan is a white terrorist organization that was framed in Tennessee in December 1865. It is a white supremacist group composed of white Christian Americans. The main aim of this organization was to overthrow the Blacks since they thought that they were the chosen dominant people over the other races. The group activists considered the Blacks as the top enemy, and they believed that black

people were primitive and unconscious in that they were the cause of daily crimes happening in the United States (Heinrichs 8-9).

The Ku Klux Klan is an organization that was framed from a sense of social class and diplomatic and economic insecurity. Their interpretation of Christianity matches their anti-black sentiment; this Protestant belief explains their desires to enslave the Blacks once again, this time for eternity. Furthermore, the history of the Ku Klux Klan witnessed three different movements. The first one was established shortly after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in December 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee. Its preeminent aim was to restore white dominance, sovereignty and superiority in the post-Civil War era, so it targeted the new political freedoms that were given to black people. They wore masks to cover their faces and went for rides to cause violence and brutality against the Blacks. Starting in the 1870s, it was considered a terrorist organization by the government, so it fell (Easterling 128).

In 1915, William Joseph Simmons established the second Klan, a well-reformed organization compared to the first; some historians considered it less violent since its activists were politicians. By the 1950s, the third Klan was launched in Birmingham, Alabama, a corrupted terrorist group that worked closely with the Southern police divisions. Its essential vision was opposing social progress and change so that the Blacks would be inferior forever (Easterling 129-130).

1.6 The African Americans' Reaction to Racism

Recalling the period of slavery, it is evident that the Whites did the impossible for the sake of changing the identity of the black race, including rights, morals, and culture. Even in the post-slavery era, the Blacks had limited freedom compared to the Whites. These brutal white acts were more than enough for the African Americans to start their political and cultural revolution to regain their rights and identity.

1.6.1 The Harlem Renaissance Movement (1920-1930)

The Harlem Renaissance was a black cultural movement in the early 20th century in Harlem, New York City. It was an African American period where the black race celebrated traditions, lifestyles, literature, and music. It can be considered the most significant in the history of blacks with pivotal figures like W.E.B Du Bois, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, and Alain Locke. The emergence of the Harlem Renaissance movement renewed the silent Spirit of the blacks in society. By that time, African Americans started to express their black pride publicly, resulting in the demand for social and political rights (Dickey 48-53).

In northern Manhattan between 110th and 155th Streets, Harlem is a neighborhood in New York City's region. It is a significant and productive area for black Americans, and it became known as The Race Capital of America. Harlem gained notoriety from its location in New York, regarded as the most influential American city. Harlem also played a significant role in the history of Black Americans, particularly in the development of African American music, art, and culture. It also served as a birthplace for numerous black associations and organizations and the emergence of many black leaders (Robertson 186-191).

Initially, Harlem was developed as a wealthy, expansive suburb of New York City. Still, regrettably, many homes collapsed at the start of the 20th century, and several owners of “The African American Realty Company” began to assist black migrants from the Southern states by purchasing and leasing apartments for them. By the 1930s, Harlem had approximately 200,000 residents from all social groups, accounting for two-thirds of New York’s black population. As a result, the rise of the Harlem Renaissance was influenced by the high density and diversity of the black population (Singleton 29-31).

At the beginning of the 20th century, black social status declined. Although many blacks had attempted to migrate north, their only obstacles were unemployment, social discrimination, and poverty. They explored various cultural fields in response to society's negative portrayal of African Americans. This movement marks the period in

African American literary development when black writers could express their creativity in a new way. Despite starting in Harlem, the Harlem Renaissance had a considerable influence on music, literature, and art throughout the country, resulting in the change of perception of African Americans by the start of the 1920s (Singelton 34-37).

1.6.2 The Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement in the United States was a non-violent movement against racial segregation and discrimination from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s. This movement aimed to overcome racist laws that denied them their freedom; it also aimed at getting political Justice for African Americans. The Civil Rights Movement was a reaction to the Whites considering the other races as inferior, resulting in the looting of their social and political rights as American citizens.

The reason for calling for the Civil Rights Movement was the organizations formed by blacks in the first half of the 20th century to reach their goals. These anti-racist organizations included “The Congress of Racial Equality” in 1942, “The Student Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, and “The Students Non-violent Coordination Committee” in 1960 (Karson 19-35).

The Civil Rights Movement Rose a century after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. It was the point where blacks needed to stand against the racially oppressive white policies in the United States. However, many essential causes led to the emergence of the Civil Rights movement. Starting with Linda brown, a black figure who wanted to attend a white school for an optimistic future. She became a milepost figure known as brown against the World of Education in 1954, leading the Supreme Court to abolish school segregation of schools. Moreover, “The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955” was a response to the arrest of a black woman called Rosa Parks. She was arrested because of her rejection to give her seat to a white person, leading the black people to boycott the buses until segregation was declared illegal on December 21, 1956 (Glennon 62-65).

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, which abolished racial segregation and discrimination, including Jim Crow laws, and fought discrimination in courts. By the following year, blacks got the right to vote thanks to the Voting Rights Act, which rejected the idea of a “white vote” (Karson 11-15).

1.6.2.1 Martin Luther King Jr

Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister, social activist, and the number one leader in the Civil Rights Movement. Born in Atlanta, U.S.A., on January 15, 1929, he was the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize winner for promoting peace, non-violence, and equality between races.

Martin Luther King Jr was the son of a pastor father in a Baptist Church and a mother who worked as a teacher. In 1948, he graduated from Morehouse College with a degree in sociology. After that, he earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1951 before joining Boston University to work on his doctorate. In June 1953, he married Coretta Scott, and the two had four children. Finally, King became the priest of Montgomery's Church in 1954 when he received his degree in 1955 (Lewis).

Martin Luther King's life was entirely of purposeful events. He was considered the turning point in segregation in public buses in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama. At that period, buses were divided into two sitting parts where the back part was specified only for the blacks, so he and others from the same race decided to boycott the buses as a protest to stop segregation. In 1956, the United States Supreme Court declared the freedom for both races to sit wherever they wanted on buses. Moreover, Dr. King carried on his peaceful battles against all kinds of racial discrimination. He insisted on equal rights no matter the color of their skin, leading him to become one of the most vital figures in the history of the black race (Newman 01-06).

Martin Luther King Jr was ultimately known for his non-violent protests, a peaceful way to join the Civil Rights Movement and gain racial equality within generations in American society. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

1.6.2.2 Malcolm X

HâjjMâlik Al-Shabazz, or Malcolm X, was one of the most crucial black figures in the American Civil Rights Movement. He was a human rights activist, a Muslim Minister and one of the most American heard orators in the United States. Born on May 19, 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska, when the Ku Klux Klan ruled it, he spent his childhood as an orphan since a group of racists murdered his father. In his school career, Malcolm was excellent until the day a white racist teacher told him that he should become a carpenter instead of a lawyer, leading him to quit his formal education in 1946; he got arrested for theft for 6 years. He invested in those jail years, so he joined the Nation of Islam, a step where he quit smoking and gambling and only focused on reading books (Mamiya).

After Malcolm X was released from prison, he played a notable role in the growth and influence of the Nation of Islam. As the leader of the Nation of Islam and an activist in the Civil Rights Movement, he did not believe in peaceful protests as Martin Luther King Jr did; instead, he supported the idea of treating whites reciprocally. Malcolm X preached violence against white oppression, so he called the blacks to separate themselves from the whites and build their own identity, mainly nation. After he visited Mecca, his beliefs about racial separation wholly changed, becoming more peaceful and accepting to live in a mixed community. On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was killed in the Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan, where he was delivering a speech (Clasby 18-34).

1.7 The History of Black Music

African American music originated in the 1700s when enslaved people sang traditional songs while working. They took the music from Africa and used it to communicate with themselves, which was hard for the white owners to understand.

Between the 1800s and 1860s, a new genre of music called spiritual music originated. It consists of religious hymns sung calmly in churches with hand clapping,

moaning, and groaning, occasionally accompanied by tambourines, drums, guitars, and harmonicas. Later, in the 1870s and 1880s, orchestrated spiritual and Ragtime music emerged, followed by folk gospel music in the 1890s. This music carries messages and clues for enslaved people seeking freedom and encouragement to escape (Southern 213-229).

Blues and Jazz, a well-known genre of black music, first emerged in the 19th century. When entertained, performers would play the guitar or banjo to express their discontent and regret. They would also discuss other topics, including racial prejudices, Injustice, and mistreatment. However, they used instruments such as saxophones and trumpets in the second category (Southern 231-232).

African American music evolved, including "Rhythm and Blue" (R&B) in the 1930s, Rap in the 1970s, and hip-hop, which emerged in the 1980s, in response to urban challenges such as crimes, drug dealing, poverty, and Racism in American society (Ruehl).

1.7.1 Rap Music and Hip Hop

Rap is a musical style in which rhythmic and rhyming speech is rapped over music backing. This supporting music, which may incorporate digital sampling, "music and noises derived from other recordings," is also known as Hip Hop, a term used to describe a broader cultural movement encompassing rap, graffiti paintings, and break dancing. Rap, which began in African American communities in New York City, gained national attention with the Sugar Hill Gang's "Rappers Delight" in 1979. Some early rap music icons were the Beastie Boys, L.L. Cool J, Public Enemy, and Run- D.M.C, who promoted a robust political agenda. By the late 1980s, "Gangsta Rap" first appeared, and its lyrics frequently promoted drugs and violence or were misogynistic (Tate).

Rap music has dramatically impacted the African American population in the United States. The fact that it has made young black Americans feel a strong sense of nationalism is what makes it so significant. Hip Hop, more than Jazz, serves as a medium for African American culture. With its polyrhythmic syncopations, the latter

could embrace both the intricacies and jagged edges of the collective black experience. However, it did not self-consciously fuel the nationalist Spirit as much as the more lyrically focused hip Hop. For instance, Jazz required the poet's unwavering poetry to portray these sharp edges, and poets in Black America relied on music to express the ethos of struggle, resistance, and exploitation. Finally, hip hop, combining poetry and Jazz, is the most influential genre in African American culture (Henderson 309-310).

1.8 Conclusion

All the efforts made by African Americans to regain their political and social rights paid off. These efforts, such as the Harlem Renaissance movement, music, and the Civil Rights movement, played a significant role in shaping the new identity of African Americans. This identity symbolizes black color as pride and Glory, leading them to develop their own culture, which differed from that of the other races.

Chapter Two

*“From Section.80 to Damn.”: Kendrick
Lamar’s Revolution Against Racism,
Oppression and White Supremacy*

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2.1 Introduction

For Hip-Hop artists, music is a lifestyle. It is a powerful source that helps them show the beauty of their culture, glorify their black morals and defend their race from sensitive topics such as Racism, colorism, and White Supremacy. One of these hip-hop artists who challenge these issues is Kendrick Lamar. This second chapter will delve into four parts. The first one will provide information about Kendrick Lamar, his early life, and his background of growing up in Compton, California. Next, Kendrick Lamar's albums, awards, and achievements will be explored. The third part will comment on the rapper's lyrics, facing issues like the marginalization of African Americans, police brutality and the racist, oppressive white system in the United States. Finally, Kendrick Lamar’s influence and legacy on African Americans and music will be discussed.

2.2 Kendrick Lamar

Kendrick Lamar Duckworth is an American rapper, record producer and songwriter. Born on June 17, 1987, he is considered one of the greatest rappers of all time because of his quickest and most powerful impact on the history of Hip-Hop. Duckworth grew up in a high-crime neighborhood of Compton, where his parents had relocated to escape the violent environment in Chicago. He started writing rhymes as a teenager and published his first mixtape, "Youngest Head Nigga in Charge," in 2003 under the name of K.Dot. After that, Anthony Tiffith, the head of the newly created record label top entertainment, was impressed by the musician’s work and signed him. After releasing “Training Day 2005” and ‘C4 2009’ as K.Dot, Duckworth released “Overly Dedicated” in 2010 as Kendrick Lamar. He became a popular guest performer on other rappers' records and formed the hip-hop collective Black Hippy with fellow Top Dawg musicians "Ab-Soul, Jay Rock, and Schoolboy Q (Bauer).

2.3 Early Life and Background

Kendrick Lamar’s origins and background can be linked to his childhood in Compton, California, a famous community for its chaos and gang culture. Despite the presence of violence and gang activity, Lamar managed to avoid gang affiliation, a decision that would affect his destiny and music. Here, one may say that Lamar's music and storytelling were influenced by the hardships and intricacies of urban life, which were depicted against the background of his father's affiliation with the Gangster Disciples Gang (Hooper).

Kendrick Lamar's career commenced early, mainly after he graduated from Centennial High School in Compton in 2005. After that, he published a series of mixtapes under the name of K. Dot, which showcased his early musical aptitude and devotion. Moreover, Lamar's experiences in Compton, where he witnessed the consequences of gang violence and social inequity, gave him a unique perspective on life, society, and the problems many members of his neighborhood confront. This setting affected his music, propelling him to become a voice for his community and a beacon of hope for people facing similar challenges (Hopper).

In addition, Kendrick Lamar's roots refer to significant musical forebears such as Sly and the Family Stone, a San Francisco-based group credited with creating the genres of psychedelic soul and funk. These musical inspirations and his personal experiences in Compton have formed Kendrick Lamar's artistry, allowing him to draw on a diverse cultural and musical history in his work (Moore-26).

2.4 Records and Awards

Kendrick Lamar is one of Hip-Hop's best rap producers and storytellers. The secret behind his unique ability to produce albums and songs is his inspiration from Hip-Hop legends such as Tupac, Eminem, Snoop Dogg, Jay-Z, Nas and Biggie. In many interviews, he revealed the fact that he would not have reached the level he is at

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without those rappers; these inspirations can be considered as a milepost in shaping his ideas and way of thinking as a black artist, in which his main aim was to speak louder for his culture on his albums and songs.

2.4.1 “Section.80”

Kendrick Lamar's debut album is named “Section.80.”. Released on July 2, 2011, by Top Dawg Entertainment in Carson, California, this album was the first project dropped by the name of “Kendrick Lamar” after the release of many mix tapes by the name of K.Dot. The main reason that led Kendrick Lamar to create the album is the post-traumatic experience of witnessing his friend's arrest to jail for twenty-five years. He stated that the album tackles his generation.

Kendrick Lamar started working on the album by the end of 2010. He declared that the album was written in his mother's kitchen or on his tour bus. These two places were angelic and inspirational for him to think of other themes he wanted to target while writing the album. Musically, “Section.80” is a melodic album that contains many different genres such as Jazz, Pop, R&B and boom Rap. However, its lyrics delve into Racism, Ronald Reagan's presidency and the 1980s crack epidemic.

After the album's release in July 2011, Kendrick Lamar received positive feedback from critics. Although the mid sales of the album started at number 113 on the U.S. Billboard 200 after selling only 5000 copies in the United States, the albums were praised by many journalists who cover the musical field. For instance, "Pop Matters" presenter David Amidon said:” He is telling us what he sees, and while he might not offer solutions as often as Ice Cube did, he undoubtedly able to paint us a vivid picture” (Amidon). Moreover, "New Musical Express", a British music and culture website, put the album at the third spot on their list of “Albums to Hear Before You Die” in 2014, placing “Section 80” as one of the most storytelling albums of the decade. On April 14, 2017, “Section.80” reached 500000 units in sales, certifying it gold by the “Recording Industry Association of America”.

2.4.2 “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City”

On October 22, 2012, Kendrick Lamar released his second album, “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City”. This album was made by three labels considered the biggest in Rap music: Top Dawg Entertainment, Aftermath, Entertainment and Interscope Records. Kendrick Lamar's album features many rappers and R&B artists like Dr.Dre, Drake, Anna Wise and Jay Rock.

According to Kendrick Lamar, the title “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City” has two distinct meanings that reflect the whole concept of the album. The first is "My Angry Adolescence Divided," which refers to the paradox between Kendrick's innocent childhood and the violent, marginalized environment of Compton, where he grew up. However, the second meaning for Kendrick is “My Angels on Angel Dust”; it is acronymized as M.A.A.D. and refers to the drug "P.C.P." that was killing his hometown people in Compton. The title displays the main themes of the album, which tackles the conflict between Kendrick as a "good kid" and Compton as "M.A.A.D. City," a city that made Kendrick suffer from both races, the Whites when it comes to racial differentiation and police brutality while the Blacks when it comes to the violent environment he was surrounded.

“Good Kid M.A.A.D. City” by Kendrick Lamar was recorded in several studios in California, and it was supervised by many influential Hip-Hop music producers, such as Dr.Dre, Pharrell Williams, Hit-Boy and T Minus. It is an album of twelve songs that tackles themes of Kendrick's Adolescence, Racism, the oppressive system against the Blacks and the violent life of Compton's streets. For the hip-hop audience, this album was first considered an autobiography of Kendrick Lamar during his teenage years since it deals with issues in his hometown. Later, they discovered more themes that were important to the marginalized Blacks. Moreover, the albums' songs address gang violence not only between Blacks but Whites too. Here, Kendrick Lamar used different voices to display the whole scene.

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The release of “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City” was a turning point for Kendrick's career. The album debuted at the second spot on the Billboard 200 Charts with a new record for Kendrick Lamar, selling 242000 copies in the United States. In April 2018, the album was certified triple platinum by the “Recording Industry Association of America” after selling 1720000 copies (Caufield). Furthermore, “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City” received many critical reviews. For example, Jayson Greene, a journalist for Pitchfork, declared that “the miracle of this album is how it ties straightforward rap thrills” (Greene). However, All Music's presenter David Jeffries noted, "Besides all the great ideas and life, this journey through the concrete jungle of Compton is worth taking because of the artistic richness, plus the attraction of a whip-smart rapper flying high during his rookie season” (Jefferies).

“Good Kid M.A.A.D. City” earned Kendrick Lamar many accolades that have some influence on rappers' careers. Starting from getting named by Complex as one of the 25 classic Hip-Hop albums of the previous 10 years, it also put the album's cover on the first spot in December 2012. Moreover, “Good Kid M.A.A.D. City” won the album of the year at the 2013 Bet Hip-Hop Awards. It also nominated Kendrick Lamar for five Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year, Best Rap Album, Best New Artist, Best Rap/ Song Performance and Best Rap Performance for “Swimming Pools (Drank)”.

2.4.3 “To Pimp a Butterfly”

Kendrick Lamar released “To Pimp a Butterfly” on March 15, 2015. It was his third studio album, and Top Dawg Entertainment, Aftermath Entertainment and Interscope Records supervised it. The album was produced by many top-tier producers in the Rap field, such as Dr.Dre, Anthony “Top Dawg” Tiffith, Sounwave, Thunder cat, Pharrell Williams and Boi-1da. This album features many artists, including Snoop Dogg, Thunder cat, Anna Wise, Bilal and Rapsody.

One year before the official release of “To Pimp a Butterfly,” Kendrick Lamar planned to produce an album that could delve more into Black Nature, an album that

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reveals black pride and Glory. During that process, he traveled to South Africa to be influenced by the Black culture, so he wanted his next album to be black, not only by tackling the culture but also by pointing out its beauty. In the beginning, Kendrick Lamar thought of titling the album “To Pimp a Caterpillar” as an acronym for T.U.P.A.C., the Hip-Hop legend as an illusion to him; then, he decided to alter Caterpillar to Butterfly. Later, he explained the title in an interview for MTV:” I just really wanted to show the brightness of life and the word 'pimp' has so much aggression and that represents using my celebrity for good. The industry is not pimping another reason through my celebrity" (Lamar).

Kendrick Lamar's album “To Pimp a Butterfly” engages with the black music tradition with various styles such as funk, soul and avant-garde elements, plus contributions from the West Coast Get Down Collective, where they mixed Jazz and progressive Hip-Hop sounds. Lyrically, To Pimp a Butterfly was characterized by Billboard as a politically purposeful rap album. Race, culture and discrimination are themes in the album's songs. Moreover, Kendrick Lamar called on the government to stop all kinds of marginalization, oppression and discrimination against the black community. He also called on the black community to stand against gang violence by believing that they should be united instead of battling, an act that would put the lives of blacks in danger from both races.

Kendrick Lamar's album “To Pimp a Butterfly” had big sensation and effect. After its official release and 2015, many critics have praised it for its socially conscious themes, which resulted in considering it not only a source of entertainment but also an album that pushed the limits of rap music. Kyle Anderson regarded the record as twice as significant as Lamar's debut major labor album and more comprehensive of African American music cultures, with extraordinary "cinematic" production qualities yet “the freedom of a mix tape” (Anderson). Jim Carroll, an Irish Times journalist, called it “a record for the times we are in, "in which Lamar moved from his previous narratives about Compton to passionate but precise thoughts on “Black America” (Carroll).

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In terms of accolades, “To Pimp a Butterfly” can be considered Kendrick Lamar's most successful album since its release had met worldwide welcome and acceptance all over the hip Hop audiences. The album nominated Kendrick Lamar for seven Grammy awards in 2016, winning four: Best Rap Album, Best Rap Song and Best Rap Performance for “Alright”, and finally, Best Rap/Sung Performance for “These Walls”.

2.4.4 “Untitled Unmastered”

“Untitled Unmastered” is a compilation of unreleased songs by Kendrick Lamar that were produced during the recording of “To Pimp a Butterfly.” Released on March 4, 2016, it was supervised by Top Dawg Entertainment, Aftermath Entertainment and Interscope Records. Hip-hop artists like Bilal, Anna Wise, Ceelo Greene, Mani Strings, Jay Rock and S.Z.A. were also featured on the album.

Kendrick Lamar's album “Untitled Unmastered” is a combination of demos and unfinished tracks from 2013 until the official release of “To Pimp a Butterfly” in 2015. It is an album of eight tracks produced by top-tier producers such as Anthony “Top Dawg” Tiffith, Dr.Dre, Sounwave, Thundercat, Cardo and Frank Dukes. In the world of music, the album “Untitled Unmastered” was described as "filled with the free Jazz, funk, politically charged lyrics and experimental sounds that made “To Pimp a Butterfly” such an instant classic and as “pulling listeners right back into a web of Jazz-soaked, funk-drunk internal conflict and social commentary (Tan).

“Untitled Unmastered” is an album about the African American community. It discusses topics and themes that defend the rights of Kendrick Lamar's community, such as slavery, Racism, freedom of individuals, and White Supremacy. Evan Rytlewski of “The A.V. Club” noted that “While Untitled begs to be graded on a curve, it does not have to be” (Rytlewski). Moreover, Greg Kot of "The Chicago Tribune" noted that his songs “openly struggle with issues of race and racism, identity and self-worth” (Kot). By April 2016, Kendrick Lamar secured his second chart-topping in a year after “To Pimp a Butterfly.”

2.4.5 “DAMN.”

Kendrick Lamar's journey continued; on April 14, 2017, he dropped his fourth studio album named "DAMN." As usual, the album was supervised by Top Dawg Entertainment, Aftermath Entertainment and Interscope Records, and it performed courageous appearances from R&B and Rock superstars such as Zacari, U2 and Rihanna. Kendrick Lamar's album “DAMN” witnessed the gathering of many artists and producers to record it; Mike Will Made It, Bekon, Sounwave, DjDahi, Pluss, Teddy Walton, Yung Exclusive and The Alchemist were among the producers who worked for the success of the album.

Kendrick Lamar's album “DAMN” is a combination of three genres Rap, R&B and Pop. Its concept explores Kendrick Lamar's inner struggles against the conflicts within himself and black society. Although the album tackles the challenging life that made Kendrick Lamar suffer, themes of marginalizing and oppressing African Americans were also addressed. Moreover, “DAMN” does into themes of weakness, humility, love, loyalty, corruption and personal struggles. The album also explores "Good and Evil," in which he displays the conflicts between the evil "The White Supremacists" and good souls "African Americans." Here, Kendrick Lamar targets the systemic Racism that is found in the United States.

After the official release of “DAMN” in 2017, the album received countless criticism, comments and tweets. According to Andy Kellman of "All Music," “The album "DAMN” contains some of Lamar's best writing and performances, revealing his evolving complexity and versatility as the soul-baring lyricist and dynamic rapper” (Kellman). Additionally, Eric Renner Brown of “Entertainment Weekly” stated, “After delving into the personal on 2012's "Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City" and going broader on To “Pimp a Butterfly," Kendrick Lamar has found a middle ground on “DAMN," that yelled some of his most emotionally resonate music yet” (Brown).

Commercially, Kendrick Lamar's album “DAMN” performed well. One week after its release, the album debuted at number one on “the Billboard 200”, selling

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604000 album units. By the end of 2018, “DAMN” had sold over a million copies in the United States. Later, the album was certified triple platinum by “the Recording Industry Association of America” for combined streaming and sales of 3 million units. The album also earned Kendrick Lamar five Grammy award wins, including Best Rap Album, Best Rap Song and Best Rap Performance for "Humble." And Best Rap/Sung Collaboration for “Loyalty.” With Rihanna.

2.5 Kendrick Lamar's Lyrics against Racism and White Supremacy

Kendrick Lamar is a political rapper who is always known for his resilience against Racism, White Supremacy and police brutality. With conscious delivery and impressive storytelling ability, Kendrick Lamar's albums and songs aim to raise consciousness against the daily harsh realities African Americans experience. As an artist, he obtained the inspiration from people of his race. These people were defending the Black culture at all costs as "Martin Luther King Jr." Kendrick Lamar shouted out “Martin Luther King Jr” in his song “HiiiPoWeR” by rephrasing one of his most famous quotes: "A man who won't die for something is not fit to live” into “Stand for something or die in the morning” (Lamar 0:06-0:09). It shows how passionate Kendrick Lamar is about defending his race, culture and ethnicity through his music.

2.5.1 “Fuck Your Ethnicity”

“Fuck Your Ethnicity” is the first song on Kendrick Lamar’s first album” Section.80". It was produced by T.H.C. and written and performed by Kendrick Lamar. The song targets issues of racial divisions, raising awareness against this inhumane issue and urgent people to embrace unity. When Kendrick Lamar said:

“Now, I don't give a fuck if you
Black, white, Asian, Hispanic, goddammit
That don't mean shit to me
Fuck your ethnicity, nigga” (Lamar 0:54-1:03)

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In this song, Lamar also confronts the existence of Racism, which led the Whites to segregate African Americans socially and politically when he says:

“Racism is still alive, yellow tape and colored lines” (Lamar 1:18-1:23)

2.5.2 “HiiiPoWeR”

“HiiiPoWeR” is the last track from Kendrick Lamar’s album "Section 80". It was produced by the famous producer and rapper J. Cole and written by Kendrick Lamar. The song also features AloriJoh, who performed the vocals and the chorus of the beat. This song serves as a reminder to the black community against all the marginalization they were witnessing from the American system, which is built on Racism and oppressing the Blacks. In “HiiiPoWeR," Kendrick Lamar said:

“Every day, we fight the system just to make our way
We've been down for too long, but that's alright
We were built to be strong, 'cause it's our life, na-na-na” (Lamar 2:57-3:08)

In this verse, Kendrick Lamar targets the racist, oppressive system that makes African Americans suffer in all aspects of life. However, we still recall the fact that blacks were born to overcome such hardships as their ancestors did during the slavery era.

2.5.3 “Good Kid”

“Good Kid” is a song from Kendrick Lamar’s 2012 album "Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City," produced by Pharrell Williams, written and performed by Kendrick Lamar. The song discusses themes of racial violence and police brutality, which Kendrick Lamar faced when he was young. In this song, mainly when he said:

“Gang files, but that don't matter because the matter is a racial profile

I heard 'em chatter: "He's probably young, but I know that he's down

Step on his neck as hard as your bullet-proof vest

He doesn't mind, he knows we'll never respect” (Lamar 2:01-2:12)

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This bar reveals Kendrick Lamar's story against some racist policemen when he was hanging out with his friends in Compton Streets. He narrates the story with emotions in his tongue that show empathy for the black community, a community that challenges police brutality with morals of wisdom. Here, Kendrick Lamar exposes the brutal strength the racist police used to shock his neck, not only by using his hands but also by stepping on his neck.

2.5.4 “Sing About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst”

“Sing About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst” is another track from Kendrick Lamar's “Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City” album. It is a song of 12 minutes composed of three parts with three different producers, Like Skhye Hutch and Sounwave. The song argues against issues of police brutality and racial persecution, which leads to the differentiation of society due to skin color. In this song, Kendrick Lamar raps:

“Just promise me you'll tell this story when you make it big

And if I die before your album drop, I hope— [Gunshots]” (Lamar 1:53-2:00)

in this verse, Kendrick Lamar narrates what happened to his friend's brother, whom a white cop killed. The victim's last words were for Kendrick to reveal them to the world when he becomes famous, but sadly, he was shot down before making his last wish. This accident led Kendrick Lamar to name the song as it is, comparing the voiceless black community to “thirst” since no one was going to feel their pain if no media, celebrity, or rapper spoke for African Americans.

2.5.5 “Wesley’s Theory”

“Wesley’s Theory” is the first song on Kendrick Lamar's 2015 record “To Pimp a Butterfly”. Flippa, Sound wave, and Thunder cat produced the introduction of this album, which featured George Clinton and DrDre. The song discusses White Supremacy in the United States and how a white organization tried to manipulate Kendrick Lamar to tax him the maximum. He started the song by sampling the famous

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song of Boris Gardiner, "Every Nigger is a star", in which the Jamaican singer referred to the Glory and pride of a black-skinned individual. The sample sings:

“Every nigga is a star, ayy, every nigga is a star

Every nigga is a star, ayy, every nigga is a star

Every nigga is a star, ayy

Who will deny that you and I and every nigga is a star?” (Lamar 0:08-0:45)

By playing the sample, Kendrick Lamar hinted that black people are primitive stars, so they do not need to be a figure or a celebrity to be praised. On this song, he also said:

“What you want you? A house or a car?

Forty acres and a mule, a piano, a guitar?

Anythin', see, my name is Uncle Sam, I'm your dog

Motherfucker, you can live at the mall

I know your kind (That's why I'm kind)

Don't have receipts (Oh, man, that's fine)

Pay me later, wear those gators

Cliché? Then say, "Fuck your haters"

I can see the baller in you, I can see the dollar in you

Little white lies, but it's no white-collar in you

But it's whatever though because I'm still followin' you” (Lamar 3:17-3:41)

In this verse, Kendrick Lamar criticized the white supremacist system, which exploits more from the blacks by taxation laws. At the beginning of the verse, "Uncle Sam,"

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which is the government for Kendrick Lamar, tries to tempt him by providing things they are glorified by the blacks in their culture, seeking and increasing the buying power of the black community, which contributes to high tax revenue.

2.5.6 “Alright”

“Alright” is the seventh track on Kendrick Lamar’s album “To Pimp a Butterfly. It was written by Kendrick Lamar and produced by both Sound wave and Pharrell Williams, who also performed the song's chorus. This track tracks racism and police brutality against African Americans. In this song, Kendrick Lamar raps:

“Wouldn't you know

We been hurt, been down before

Nigga, when our pride was low

Lookin' at the world like, "Where do we go?"

Nigga, and we hate po-po

Wanna kill us dead in the street fosh

Nigga, I'm at the preacher's door

My knees gettin' weak, and my gun might blow

But we gon' be alright” (Lamar 1:10-1:29)

Through these bars, Kendrick Lamar first let the black audience recall the period of slavery when their pride was not glorified as it is right now. Next, he points out the racial violence committed by the police against his community by claiming that all they want is black corpses in the streets. The last bar of the verse shows that Kendrick Lamar was ultimately done by just getting on his knees and praying for a better future with better conditions. Instead, he revealed that he will carry on speaking for the marginalized blacks by comparing his bars to a gun which is going to pull the trigger.

2.5.7 “The Blacker the Berry”

“The Blacker the Berry” is another track from Kendrick Lamar's third studio album, "To Pimp a Butterfly." It was written by Kendrick Lamar, produced by Boi-1da, K.O.Z., and Martin and features Assassin and Lalah Hathaway. The song explores themes of Racism, colorism, and hypocrisy. In this track, Kendrick Lamar started the song by saying:

“Everything black, I don't want black (They want us to bow)

I want everything black, I ain't need black (Down to our knees)

Some white, something' black, I ain't mean black (And pray to the God)

I hate everything black (We don't believe)

Black, I want all things black

I don't need black, I want everything black

I don't need black, our eyes ain't black

I own black, I own everything black” (Lamar 0:01-0:20)

In this part, Kendrick Lamar wanted to introduce how being Black can result in struggles and hardships for the one. Plus, he finished it by owning everything black, which does not mean just the skin color but also the morals and principles of pride and Glory. Furthermore, mainly when he said:

“You hate my people, your plan is to terminate my culture

You're fuckin' evil

I want you to recognize that I'm a proud monkey

You vandalize my perception but can't take style from me” (Lamar 1:15-1:25)

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Here, Kendrick Lamar targets the white supremacists who want to destroy what the blacks have built throughout time from culture and identity. He also reveals his pride when whites call him a monkey, which is a racist slur directed towards black skin individuals who are perceived by whites to be primitive. However, Kendrick Lamar turns the term into a sense of pride just as the term “nigga”, making it a source of empowerment. Moreover, when Kendrick Lamar sings the pre-chorus:

“The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice

The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice

The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice

The blacker the berry, the bigger I shoot” (Lamar 1:37-1:48)

Here, he is referencing the novel “The Blacker the Berry: A novel of Negro Life” by the Harlem Renaissance novelist Wallace Thurman. In the verse, Kendrick Lamar exposes the fact that the more the person is skinned, the more likely that person is going to get murdered by the white police. Additionally, “The Blacker the Berry” discusses Kendrick Lamar's desire to stop gang violence between Blacks, he raps:

“It's funny how Zulu and Xhosa might go to war

Two tribal armies that wanna build and destroy

Remind me of these Compton Crip gangs that live next door

Beefin' with Pirus, only death settle the score” (Lamar 3:59-4:10)

In this verse, Lamar calls out the blacks to stop violating each other; he compares the gang violence that is happening in Compton, and even all across the United States to the one South Africa had been witnessing between "Zulu" and "Xhosa" since ages. These are two tribes of South Africa that they have been beefing for ages; they remind Kendrick Lamar of the violence between gangs, which kills the blacks while the whites happily prosper.

2.5.8 “Untitled 03”

“Untitled 03” is the third track from Kendrick Lamar’s compilation album “Untitled Unmastered”. Kendrick Lamar, produced by Astronote, wrote the song and features Mani Strings. The track narrates the perspectives of people of different races, "Indian, Asian, Black and White," advising Kendrick Lamar to have a stable life. However, the white man aimed to manipulate Kendrick Lamar's way of thinking to obtain the most significant percentage of profits from him. In this song, he raps:

“(What the white man say?) A piece of mine's

That's what the white man wanted when I rhyme

Telling me that he selling me just for \$10.99

If I go platinum from rapping, I do the company fine

What if I compromise? He said it don't even matter

You make a million or more, you living better than average

You losing your core following, gaining it all” (Lamar 1:12-1:29)

Here, Kendrick Lamar reviews The White Man's advice, which he considers fake advice that shows the white interest in prospering from black talent coming from Black culture. Next, \$10.99 is the introductory price of any Hip-Hop album. This explains the white intention, which sees Kendrick Lamar as "Money," so the more he goes platinum, the more they will benefit from him.

2.5.9 “Fear.”

“Fear.” is the twelfth track on Kendrick Lamar’s 2017 album "DAMN." The Alchemist and Bekon produced this song, which features Dale Warren. "Fear." delves into the complexities of being black-skinned and how it can turn to pain. Kendrick Lamar started the song by singing:

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“Why God, why God do I gotta suffer?

Pain in my heart carry burdens full of struggle

Why God, why God, do I gotta bleed?

Every stone thrown at you restin' at my feet

Why God, why God, do I gotta suffer?

Earth is no more, won't you burn this muh'fucka?” (Lamar 0:37-0:56)

The verse shows Kendrick Lamar's struggles in life. For him, although the color black symbolizes power, pride, and Glory, he still hates the racist world he lives in. This leads him to complain to God about the racist complexities he faces in his daily life.

2.6 Kendrick Lamar's Impact and Legacy on African Americans

Kendrick Lamar's artistry in Challenging Racism, the legacy of slavery and police brutality, is mind-blowing. Despite the other rappers’ focus on gaining only money and fame from rap music, Lamar spent his whole career confronting the birth of racist issues that touched black culture's morals. His records resisted the negative stereotypes imposed on blacks by the White society, and his success proved that African Americans could overcome prejudices and obstacles. Kendrick Lamar's influence on blacks can be thoughtlessly compared to famous black activists who defended their race non-violently, such as Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X. He became the first rapper ever to win the Pulitzer Prize for music, which is specified for Non-Classical and JAZZ artists after dropping his album "DAMN."

Kendrick Lamar is known for his deep storytelling and meaningful lyricism, representing Black culture. He asserts it in his song "Poe Mans Dreams" when he said: “I penetrate the hearts of good kids and criminals” (Lamar 2:21-2:24). This bar shows Kendrick Lamar's efforts to defend the Blacks "good kids" and to criticize the white supremacist system "Criminals" in the United States. Moreover, in his song "Sing

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About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst," Kendrick Lamar explained that once he retires or dies, he would like his legacy to be carried on by other rappers; he wishes that his influence will live on his music when he raps:

“When the lights shut off and it's my turn

To settle down, my main concern

Promise that you will sing about me

Promise that you will sing about me” (Lamar 0:13-0:24)

Kendrick Lamar's influence and inspiration did not target only the black audience but also Hip-Hop artists. Many new-generation rappers praised Kendrick Lamar's records and considered him their role model. For instance, an African American rapper, Tyler, the Creator, an African American rapper, was inspired by Kendrick Lamar's "The Blacker the Berry" when he said, "I want you to recognize that I'm a proud monkey." As a result, at the 2020 Grammy Awards ceremony, Tyler, The Creator, imitated a monkey sound while performing his song "New Magic Wand" live: "Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah, whoop!" (Lamar 1:29-1:34).

2.7 Conclusion

Hip-hop has shaped what being a black artist means. This genre had the privilege of introducing rappers, like Kendrick Lamar, who have been defending Black culture at all costs for more than a decade. From this chapter, readers display a whole cover of Kendrick Lamar's main lyrics, which depict African Americans' struggles with racial discrimination and the marginalization of black skin people, leading them to represent the harsh truth that makes individuals suffer because of their skin color.

General Conclusion

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Over the centuries, African Americans were suffering in all aspects of life. From their first day in the United States, they were considered enslaved people, and they experienced various types of segregation and discrimination committed by the whites. After the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, issues of racism and white Supremacy continued; in fact, African Americans were met with social and political marginalization in the United States. By that time, blacks were harassed physically by the Ku Klux Klan and police brutality.

As a response to the racist and oppressive discrimination, the Blacks started to protest, escape, and rebel. One of the most prominent reactions was the civil rights movement in the middle of the 20th century, led by Martin Luther King Jr, who supported nonviolent protests such as "Segregation in Public Buses, 1955". Next, Malcolm X played a significant role in the 1960s. He supported violent reactions so that Whites would have more respect for his community. Despite the difference in methods between the two figures, both aimed at regaining rights and freedom. Moreover, African Americans built their own identity; they started to present the Black Spirit culturally through language, literature, fashion, Cinema, and music. By the 1920s, the Harlem Renaissance movement was introduced, setting African Americans' position in American society.

Black music is considered a lifestyle in African Americans' daily lives. The second chapter focused on Kendrick Lamar's lyrics in which he fought racism, oppression, and the white Supremacy committed by whites against his race. During his career, he consistently targeted racial discrimination through his powerful rhythms and displayed the hardships of how being black can result in marginalizing individuals. Through his solid and meaningful lyrics, Kendrick Lamar stood against the racist, oppressive White supremacists and defended them at all costs, resulting in tracing his legacy in hip Hop and, why not, the best of all time.

Hip-hop culture played a massive role in shaping the black identity. Thanks to rappers like Kendrick Lamar, African Americans are well respected. Through his songs, he instilled pride and glory in the spirits of blacks, creating a new identity that would ultimately be free and proud.

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