



Identity, Migration, and Trauma in Georgia Douglas Johnson's Poetry

Suchismita Sarkar

Assistant Professor,

Department of English,

Dinabandhu Mahavidyalaya.

suchi.suchismita85@gmail.com

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Abstract:

One of the eminent female poets of the Harlem Renaissance to attain recognition after Frances Harper was Georgia Douglas Johnson, who is highly appreciated in recent years for addressing problematic issues, such as identity, memory, and Migration, under the subterfuge of her feminine, genteel writing, defined as “compensatory conservatism” (Tate xxxiii). In the eponymous poem, “Hegira, she delineated the Great Migration, the demographic shift of the African American population from the rural South to the urban North and painful memories associated with it. Her poems in the collection of poetry, *Bronze*, apart from being replete with references to racial injustice, also comment on the painful circumstances under which the black population was compelled to undertake the northward journey. Likewise, “Sonnet to the Mantled”, “Sonnet to Those Who But See Darkly”, and “The Passing of the Ex-Slave” are poems that poignantly encapsulate the memory of injustice that propelled the African American community to migrate to safer places. For them, the Great Migration was not only an external process of relocation and resettlement but also perpetually scarred their minds and identities, which often resurfaced in glimpses of memory. This research article aims to demonstrate how the Great Migration impacted the poet's identity and literary works by critically analysing several relevant poems by Georgia Douglas Johnson in this context. The article will focus on the poet's biracial identity and how she redefined it, forged under the influence of ancestral memory and trauma, which played a crucial role in Georgia Douglas Johnson's poetry.

Keywords: Identity, Migration, Memory, Trauma.

Introduction

One of the eminent female writers of the Harlem Renaissance was Georgia Douglas Johnson (1880-1966), who left an indelible mark on the history of women's writing in African American literature. According to James Weldon Johnson, Georgia Douglas Johnson was the first negro woman, after Frances Harper, to gain recognition as a poet. Initially, she started writing with the sole purpose of emphasising the duress imposed on women in a racially divided society. Georgia Douglas Johnson was a mixed-race woman who, through her work, addressed issues of racism and intensely personal feelings, as well as explored the challenges of being a wife and mother, and how they became obstacles to her wish fulfilment. Her first publication, *The Heart of a Woman* (1916), speaks volumes about women's condition and the duress imposed on a woman of colour in the intersectional milieu. Her subsequent collection of poetry, titled *Bronze* (1922), explicitly addresses the issues of gender and racial discrimination. She responded to the issue of racial disparities with vivid pictures of the helplessness experienced by black women. Georgia Douglas Johnson's poetry can be interpreted from multiple perspectives. Race, gender, ethnicity, and feminist theory can be applied to analyse her first two famous volumes of poetry: *The Heart of a Woman* and *Bronze*. The poems express the poet's agony of being isolated by a predominantly white society. The poet's overlapping identities find expression in her poems. Along with untangling problematic issues of dual identities, Johnson also referenced the Great Migration and Migration memories.

The Memories and Trauma of The Great Migration

The term Migration has assumed a different meaning over the years. As the meaning of the term was in flux for decades, nowadays we understand Migration as the relocation of people from one place to another, which can be permanent or temporary, voluntary or forced, and is caused mainly by social, political, or economic circumstances. In my paper, I would like to talk

about forced Migration and the pain as its consequence, the trauma and memory that haunt the immigrant. I would analyse some poignant verses by Georgia Douglas Johnson in this context. The Great Migration was the mass relocation of a large African American population out of the rural Southern United States to the Urban Northeast, Midwest and West that occurred in two sequences – the first in 1910 and the second in 1940. I would like to discuss the first wave of the Great Migration in this article. About this Migration, Isabel Wilkerson writes in her famous work, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*:

Over the decades, perhaps the wrong questions have been asked about the Great Migration. Perhaps it is not a question of whether the migrants brought good or ill to the cities they fled to or were pulled or pushed out to their destination, but a question of how they summoned the courage to leave in the first place or how they found the will to press beyond the forces against them and the faith in a country that had rejected them for so long. By actions, they did not dream the American Dream; they willed it into being by definition of their own choosing. They didn't ask to be accepted but declared themselves the Americans that perhaps few others recognized, but they had always been deep within their hearts. (538)

The era of Jim Crow laws witnessed the birth of the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Art Movement, and the emergence of a considerable body of African American literature, as well as the rise of extraordinary African American writers. Although the Black Art Movement was the outcome of the deprivation caused to them by the enforcement of the Jim Crow Segregation laws, the Great Migration also worked as a stimulus. During the First World War, the African and American communities fought side by side on behalf of their country, which was promising to them, as it also indicated the end of racial segregation. They fought with utmost patriotic zeal on the battlefield. After serving the nation, they returned as war veterans and claimed their share of respect, citizenship, and a place in society. This demand was not well received by

white people. They started to feel the urgency to reinstate the previous model of society, where white people were privileged, and Black people were deprived of their fundamental rights. To make that happen, they realised that Black people should return to their previous place. What ensued was the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and numerous events of lynching, torture, and homicide. These tortures culminated in later years, evidence of which can be found in the occurrence of atrocious crimes like the Red Summer (1919) and the Tulsa Massacre (1921). There was also a socio-economic factor working behind the Migration. Only menial jobs were available for black people in the South. The wages of black people in the South were seventy-five cents a day, whereas the average wage for unskilled work in the North ranged from three to eight dollars per day. Multiple job opportunities and a decent, secure lifestyle were a temptation for the migrating black population. About the state of the mind of an immigrant, Jay Winter aptly puts it: "The result is the presence among us of a very large silent population, silent because they are not supposed to be there" (Ch. 1). He adds: "Their status is neither here, nor there, but in between; they live in a kind of cultural and political no-man's land (ch.1).

Against the backdrop of the Great Migration, the mass Migration of African American people from the rural South to the northern cities during the First World War, the Harlem Renaissance flourished. Alain Locke encapsulated the essence of the transformation, perceiving the Migration of Black people to urban centres as "a deliberate flight not only from the countryside to the city, but from medieval America to modern" (Locke 6). However, Georgia Douglas Johnson was fortunate that she never had to undertake the troublesome journey towards the North; she vicariously experienced its toil when she composed the poem "Hegira".

In her 1922 collection of poetry, *Bronze*, the trauma of bondage is manifested in her lines. Evening Star praises her poem in the following lines: "serious throughout, uplifted at times, rarely bitter, deeply sorrowful, *Bronze* is an unmistakable cry of the human who is still in

bondage, not physical bondage, true, but bondage of the spirit in many manifestations”(qtd in Hull 163). Georgia Douglas Johnson’s poetry is steeped in her memories of African American roots; however, the themes of memory, migration and identity are often camouflaged under the translucent cover of womanhood, race and racial injustice. In some of her poems, she explicitly refers to those themes that are otherwise introduced covertly. Migration plays a crucial role in reshaping the identity, whether actual or metaphorical. Migration memories have been infused in her poems, especially the eponymous “Hegira”, published in *The Crisis* magazine in 1917. ‘Hegira’ refers to the Prophet Muhammad’s Migration, although Johnson uses it to indicate African American exodus from the South. The point of commonality in both cases is the shared experience of being compelled to leave a familiar place, home, out of the fear of persecution. It is ostensible in the poem that the population was motivated to migrate to access a better life, income and respite from incessant threats of lynching and execution and to escape the stridency of the Jim Crow Laws and atrocities of the Ku Klux Klan. “Hegira” is Johnson’s quintessential poem where she manifests a notable attempt in technical innovation.’ The initial stanza of the poem questions black people about their northern migration; the remainder answers the query in detailed and passionate language. Most of the time, she used tender words to deliver a compelling message in her poems. However, in “Hegira”, she took a different approach incorporating elements of memory, migration and trauma. The initial stanza poses a question to the migrating Black people, and the rest of the poem is an answer to that question, delivered in passionate language (161). I would not remember, yet could not forget, how the

Hearts beating true to your own,

You’ve tortured, and wounded and filtered their blood

‘Till budding Hegira has blown. (lines 25-28)

Johnson included the biblical allusion of the “Calvary’s hill”(where Jesus was crucified) to emphasise the suffering of the African race which is no less than the passion of Christ. The word "unstrange" indicates that for African American residents of the South, lynching, torture and execution were common. The "tree" metaphor draws a parallel between the biblical cross and the literal horror of lynching and hanging bodies from trees. The “tree” embodies the trauma and the ghastly memories of torture. Johnson vicariously tries to alter the outcome of the tragic catastrophe by declaring that she will cut down and “dissever” her own people from the tree. By assuming the role of a saviour, Johnson is demonstrating resistance and altering the future of the African American population.

There is a reference to the awfully tragic memories of Migration which is unforgettable. The memories of chattel slavery, murder and lynching are imprinted in the mind of the poet as diasporic memories of her ancestors. In the poem, she traces the reason which led to the Migration, repaints the traumatic memories of "self- rejected" sons who " impotent stand", daughters, "unhonoured", "feed to the lust of the dominant land" and their exodus "to the land of the north". The poem successfully integrates ancestral roots, shared memory of displacement, and cultural history as Stuart Hall referred to it "presence/absence of Africa (nowhere to be found in its pure, pristine style’ but always already fused, syncretised with other cultural elements, and underlines the ‘dialogue of power and resistance of refusal and recognition’ with and against the dominance of European cultures "(qtd. in Selden et al.239). When Johnson reimagined the northward journey of her clan, it was also conceived as a symbolic quest for a new identity. By refusing the existing identity given by the oppressor, the oppressed African people are forming their new identity as a means of counter-colonial resistance.

In the first segment of *Bronze*, titled *Exhortation*, two poems exhibited traces of Migration memory. In both cases, Johnson painted a vivid picture that resurrects the memory of Migration. They are “Sonnet to the Mantled” and “Sonnet to Those Who But See Darkly”. In

“Sonnet to the Mantled”, she writes: “Like joyful exiles, swift returning home-/The rhythmic chanson of their eager feet (lines 9-10). In “Sonnet to Those Who But See Darkly”, Johnson writes:

The gaze uplifting from shoals of despair
Like phantom groping enswathed from the light
While voices strange to ecstasy, long dumb,
Break forth in major rhapsodies. (lines 1-4)

She perceived the Migration not as a sad affair but a joyous homeward journey. Thus, she eliminates the negative connotation associated with the event.

The word "mantled" is used by Johnson on numerous occasions. She deliberately used the word to refer to the biracial identity of the African American people. The word may be influenced by W.E.B. Du Bois's term "Veil", which he introduces in *The Souls of Black Folk* to describe the invisible psychological and social barrier between Black and white Americans (4).

Another poem, “The Passing of the Ex-Slave”, paints a gloomy picture of Migration. Johnson’s use of the phrase “The mantled millions softly go” is emblematic of the inherent resilience of African people. She further writes:

Winding into the silent way
Spent with the travail of the day,
So royal in their humble might
These uncrowned pilgrims of the night! (lines 13-16)

“Contemplation” is another poem that resonates with the same tone.

We stand mute

No words can paint such fragile imagery,

Those prismic gossamers that roll

Beyond the sky-line of the soul. (lines 1-4)

The silence of the humble people migrating in the middle of the night not only indicates the pensive mood of the migrant crowd but also displays their resilience and indomitable spirit. No other African American poet has been capable of capturing the essence of the Great Migration. Robert T. Kerlin aptly writes eulogising Georgia Douglas Johnson's exceptional talent in *Negro Poets and their Poems*, published in 1922:

Perfect lyrical notes, the most poignant pathos... For the heart that speaks here is a heart that has known its garden of sorrows.... out one word or hint of race in all the book there is yet between its cover the unwritten, unwritable tragedy of...a truly homeless race in soul...a sadder book could hardly be. (151)

The "Mulatto" and "Other" Status of the Poet

Georgia Douglas Johnson was born into a family of African American, Native American, and English descent. With a lighter skin tone, she was easily distinguished from African Americans and, as a result, was treated differently. It is evident from her literary works, as mentioned several times, that she was aware of the discrimination she faced because of her mixed-race ancestry. Georgia Blanche Douglas Camp was born on 10th September, 1877 in Atlanta, Georgia to Laura Douglas and George Camp, who were half-African American and native American and half-black and white. Although little is known about her early life, in one of her autobiographical sketches, Johnson recalls that her first school days were in Rome and that she later relocated to Atlanta with her mother (Tate xxviii). In order to comprehend the

complexities of multiple identities Johnson had, and the intersectionality of those identities, one should have a clear notion of what identity actually is. In his essay, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, cultural theorist Stuart Hall writes,

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as already accomplished fact, with the new cultural practices they represent, we should think, instead of as a 'production' which is never complete, always in the process and constituted within, not outside representation. (222)

In his essay, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" (1984), published in the collection of essays *The Location of Culture*, Homi. K. Bhabha wrote about the desperation on the part of a non-white race to become "almost the same but not quite" (or more precisely, "almost the same but not white") (Bhabha 89). Moreover, during their tenacious efforts to emulate the perceived superior culture, they unwittingly activate a certain process often defined as hybridisation. The concept of Hybridity was also used by British sociologist of culture Stuart Hall, who identified Hybridity as 'an enabling metaphor which assists theorisation of 'black experiences as diaspora experience' and brings to the fore the doubleness or double-voiced structures which he sees as constructive of this experience. 'Hybridity signifies the complexity of the 'presence/absence of Africa (nowhere to be found in its pure, pristine style' but always already fused, syncretised with other cultural elements, and underlines the 'dialogue of power and resistance of refusal and recognition' with and against the dominance of European cultures (qtd. in Selden et al.239).Homi. K. Bhabha, in his *The Location of Culture* (1994), also proclaims that there is no pure culture or nation. The idea of a stable identity is non-existent. The process of colonisation not only left an indelible impact on a nation's economic, military, and political structures, but it also had ramifications for the culture and the formation of the identity of the colonised people. Hybridity is the notion promoted by Bhabha, which suggests that identities are composed of the various cultures with

which they come into contact. Identities are created between different cultures and ideologies. The attempt to create a division creates an “Other”, a process that refuses its identity (Bhabha 28).

Georgia Douglas Johnson's mixed-race ancestry influenced her writings, particularly her collection of poetry, *Bronze*, which stands out in this context. It is important to note that Johnson was writing during a period when African American Literature was in transition. The "new Negro" writers were determined to deconstruct the derogatory, stereotypical images of "Uncle Remus" or "Jim Crow" projected by white Americans. These Black writers of the Harlem Renaissance were not only accepting their dark-skinned identity but also celebrating their unique beauty. However, Johnson had a different take on identity as she was a mulatto. She was tormented by the classic dilemma of a mulatto, the question of whether they belong in the black population or in the white population. Most of the time, mixed-race people were not accepted by either community. Due to their hybrid identity, they were categorised as what Bhabha called the “Other” (28). Johnson, however, manages to overcome this dilemma by celebrating her unique 'alien' identity. She was a "tragic mulatto" (Dover 634), and she reconciled herself to the bitter truth. This reconciliation with the truth of her hybrid identity and the status of "Other" is a form of resistance. To implicate her status of the "Other", she used words such as "alien," "commingle," and "mantled" in her poems. In the early stages of her literary career, she was immensely influenced by William Stanley Braithwaite. She even mentioned that in the brief autobiographical sketch, she wrote for Countee Cullen's *Caroling Dusk*, describing herself, “a little yellow girl in Atlanta, Georgia, came across a poem in the current newspaper that depicted a rose struggling to bloom on a window of the New York City (Tate xlv). The double-voiced structure is also evident in the poems of Johnson, in which she assumes two identities: a black lady poet, and another, a half-caste mulatto poet.

As a lady poet, she was praised for her feminine sensibility. As a lady poet, she was praised for her feminine sensibility. African American critic William Stanley Braithwaite praises Johnson's commendable qualities in the introduction to the collection of poetry *The Heart of a Woman*, writing: In the very first line, he said, "The poems in this book are intensely feminine, and for me, this means more than anything else that they are deeply human"(Braithwaite vii). Overall, Johnson's poems in *The Heart of a Woman*, focus on the female experience and condition in a male-dominated society, often oscillating between female anguish and unfulfilled. Her poems predominantly address pain, pleasure, love, suffering, silence, solitude, memory, the evanescent nature of the human mind, and a fear of sinking into oblivion, exhaustion, and shattered dreams. While composing these poems, she wrote from the consciousness of a black woman poet. The changes in her poetic style, diction, and tone intensified in her second poetry publication, *Bronze*. Johnson herself wrote about her gradual transformation in her creative writing in a letter to fellow poet, Arna Bontemps in 1941: "My first book was *The Heart of a Woman*. It was not at all race-conscious. Then someone said- she has no feelings for the race. So, I wrote *Bronze*. It is entirely racial, and one section entirely deals with motherhood that motherhood has as its basic note: black children born to the world's displeasure." (qtd. in Tate xxviii)

The shift in her perspective is plausible in her second publication of poetry, *Bronze*, where she accepted her in-between status (as Bhabha referred to it as "almost the same, not white"), the status of a "half caste" (qtd. in Stetson 30). According to Cedric Dover, Johnson's second publication of poetry unveils the heart of a colored woman" aware of her social problem and the potentiality of the so-called hybrid"(qtd in Stetson 30). Cedric Dover also testified to this aspect of Johnson's life: "She has faced and resolved the psychological and social complications of being a near-white while retaining enough traces of 'tragic mulatto' feeling

to stress the merit of her conquest...she is the first, still the most prolific poet of the half-caste"(qtd. in Stetson 30).

There are some extraordinary poems by Johnson that encapsulate the complexities of her African American identity within a racially stratified society. The in-between status of her identity is also expressed in her poems. Simultaneously, she tried to unravel her internal conflict and societal pressure in poems like "The Octoroon," "Aliens", "Cosmopolite", and "Fusion". With adroit use of phrases such as "alien", "earth's frail dilemma", "estranged but not estranged" in the poem, "Cosmopolite", she referred to her status as the "Other". In "Cosmopolite", she again refers to her alien identity, as she writes:

Not wholly this or that,

But wrought

of alien bloods am I

A product of interplay

of traveled hearts (lines 1-5)

The poem, "The Octoroon", is the best instance of Johnson's direct reference to her hybrid identity, in which she categorised herself as "alien". She used other words like "insular," "strange", and "riddle" to highlight the complexities of her mixed-race identity. She writes: "Marks her an alien from her kind, a shade amid its gleam."

In "Aliens," she called herself "the fretted fabric of dual dynasty" (line 4). The pain of being categorised as the "Other" is evident in phrases like "a single drop, a sable strain", or "They are alone," and "consumed the morsel of their heart." The pain of alienation emanates from every line of the poem. In the poem "Fusion," she used the word "commingle" in the same context. In "Fusion", she writes:

I trace within my warring blood

The tributary sources

They potently commingle

And sweep

With new-born forces! (lines 7-11)

However, in the poem "Fusion," Johnson celebrates her unique identity, referring to it as "a new creation, /More gorgeous and more beautiful/Than any parent potion. "The celebration of her new, unique identity is a sign of the poet's resistance.

This fierce spirit of defiance is manifested in two other poems composed by Johnson, "Laocoon" and "Calling Dreams". However, there is no direct reference to Johnson's hybrid identity, but the indomitable spirit is palpable. In "Laocoon", she defied stepping into a servile role, as she writes:

My every fibre fierce rebel.

Against this servile role

And my being broods to break

This death-grip from my soul (lines 21-24)

Johnson dissociated the negative connotation attached to the word "Other" by showcasing the unique and extraordinary qualities of a person who embodies the traits of two wonderful races. In a way, she deconstructed the negative implications associated with the term "tragic mulatto", which involves a sense of self-depreciation. Instead of being "tragic", she displays her "gorgeous" hybrid identity with a sense of pride

Ancestral Memory and Trauma

“Calling Dreams”, published in *Bronze: A Book of Verse*, in the segment *Supplication*, can be interpreted as her struggle for identity encumbered by external oppression. She writes:

The right to make my dreams come true

I ask, nay, I demand life,

Nor shall fate’s deadly contraband

Impede my steps, nor countermand (lines 1-4)

With this unfathomable spirit, Johnson used her identity as a form of resistance against racial oppression.

Apart from multiple references to her hybrid identity, memory, and trauma for the past are themes explored in Georgia Douglas Johnson's poetry through vivid images. "Memory", "What Need Have I For Memory?" and "Omega" are poems published in *The Heart of a Woman*, in which Johnson simultaneously meditates on memory and forgetfulness as she reminiscences the painful memories of long lost, unrequited love. In "What Need Have I for Memory?", Johnson writes:

What need have I for memory?

Whose burning eyes have met

The course of unborn happiness

Winding the trail, regret? (lines 1-4)

She used images like "burning eyes", "unborn happiness", and "winding the trail" to express the intensity of her sorrow.

“Memory” is another poem in which Johnson mourns her lost love yet remains optimistic about her future dreams. Therefore, amid the tumult of tempest, she remains optimistic and dreams about the advent of spring, indicating a prosperous future. She writes:

Love’s roses I gathered, all dewy, in May,

My heart holds the breath to their alter to-day;

And now, while the blasts of the winter winds ring

I hear not the tempest; I am dreaming of spring. (lines 1-4)

This preservation of fond memories (in the form of gathered roses) while navigating a harsh, wintry landscape that represents her present state reveals the poet’s robust optimism. Moreover, dreaming of an ensuing spring indicates her resilience even in the face of adversity. The internal duality of the Great Migration lies in the agony of forced displacement, which compels the migrant to undertake a symbolic quest for her true identity and home. Conversely, in “Omega,” Johnson vacillates between remembrance and oblivion, comparing her unfulfilled dreams to a “fragile fabric.” Her reluctance to recall her past dreams is efficiently delineated in the lines: “A desert ever broods my eye— / Since you have utterly forgot / God grant that I remember not” (6-8). Upon a cursory reading, Johnson’s reference to memories and pain may refer to her personal experiences in unfulfilled romantic affairs or the pain of alienation. During the Harlem Renaissance, the sole purpose of Black literary artists was to reflect racial pride through their works. Therefore, even if Johnson seems to be writing about intensely personal feelings, it was never subjective. She referred to the collective memory and sorrow of the entire race. To support the claim, I would like to quote from the introductory note she wrote for *Bronze*: “This book is the child of a bitter earth-wound. I sat on the earth and sing_sing out, and of, my sorrows. Yet, fully conscious of the potent agencies that silently work in their healing

ministries, I know that God's sun shall one day shine upon a perfected and unhampered people” (3).

When she wrote about remembering or forgetting, she meant her inherent ancestral Memory. The pain and sorrow she expresses in those poems refer to the trauma experienced by her race. According to Stuart Hall, for the African diaspora, the actual "home" (Africa) can never be recovered in its pure form; it resurfaces only through glimpses of memory and always remains fused, syncretised with new realities (Hall 233). When Johnson writes in "Omega" about wanting to forget ("God grant that I remember not"), she is responding to the collective trauma of the diaspora, the painful memories of forced separation, and the psychological burden of a terrible past. During the Harlem Renaissance, millions of African Americans were compelled to leave their homes and move from the rural South to the urban North to escape the cruelties of Jim Crow and the Ku Klux Klan. They were looking forward to a glorious future while lamenting the loss of their actual home. In the poem "Memory", Johnson envisages the mindscape of the migrant ("And now, while the blasts of the winter winds ring/I hear not the tempest; I am dreaming of spring") who is processing his present deplorable condition alongside cherishing the sweet memories of home and pondering over his future possibilities.

Apart from multiple references to her hybrid identity, memory and past trauma are themes Johnson explores through vivid imagery. "Memory," "What Need Have I for Memory?" and "Omega" are poems published in *The Heart of a Woman* in which Johnson meditates on memory and forgetfulness as she reminisces about the painful memories of long-lost, unrequited love. Johnson's deep preoccupation with lost origins and the pain of remembrance transcends personal romance, directly reflecting the collective trauma of the African diaspora that Stuart Hall postulates, in which "home" is a fractured space accessible only through memory.

Conclusion:

While Georgia Douglas Johnson is praised and her poems are celebrated for subtle feminine sensibilities, her poetry encompasses a myriad of themes, among which the memory of Migration, racial injustice, and a quest for identity stand out. Migration, for her, is more like a symbolic, psychological quest for identity and a sense of belonging, rather than a physical endeavour. As mentioned earlier, the poems demonstrate that the impact of historical and social forces on an individual and the collective African American experience can be so profound that it can haunt them till death. Johnson's calibre lies in transforming the traumatic memories of the Great Migration into a victorious quest towards a new destination. Johnson offers a fresher perspective when she upholds her hybrid identity as a means of resistance, when she shows that suffering made African American people resilient, and when she elevates the status of The Great Migration by comparing the event to the passion of Christ. Unfortunately, her contemporary critics overlooked these remarkable qualities of her poetry, never offering her literary talent enough credit. Instead, they typecast her as a literary muse.

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