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CH 202

Response 3

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**Group 1, Question C**

In Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* he writes “People always desire what is good, but they do not always see what is good” (Rousseau 3). This concise statement explains what Rousseau thought about the opposition between individual wills and the general will. He did not believe that there was an inherent right and wrong, and in fact felt that this opposition could work to keep a balanced government. He thought that “[A man’s] own particular interest may suggest other things to him than the common interest does” (Rousseau 1), but that for every benefit he lost entering a civil state, he had gained more than enough to justify him staying.

**Group 2, Question C**

Olympe de Gouges’ *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Woman-Citizen*, was a direct response to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man.* It provided a sort of satire of the text, along with a preamble and postamble. In the postamble de Gouges really expressed her main point, a plea to all women of her time to “cease to be blind” (de Gouges 3). This text represents the failures of the enlightenment intrinsically. What I mean is that if the enlightenment had done what it essentially promised to do, this satire-response would not exist. That is not to say that the enlightenment was not a truly important era in history, or even that the enlightenment did not start the trickle that might have lead the way to the roaring river that the feminist movement today is today. Time moves slowly. For Olympe, she might have been happy if she could have seen the feminist movement 150 years later.

**Group 3, Question A**

Ourika’s life was very complex. She was a “negress” for a wealthy woman and her grandchildren. The time during which she performed her duties as a negress was during the same time in which the colonies were shipping slaves over from Africa. This context is important because Ourika feels as though she would rather be a “… slave of some rich colonist; burnt by the sun, [she] would have farmed the land for another, but [she] would have had [her] own humble hut to go to at night. [She] would have had a companion to share [her] life and children of [her] color who would have called [her] “Mother!”” (De Duras 16). She felt that due to her up-bringing, education, and skin color she fit in with nobody. Because her skin was black she could not marry a white man (unless he was undesirable and received a large dowry), and because she was educated and raised in France she could not move back to Africa and fit in there. In these ways, Ourika could have been considered “doubly-damned”.

**Group 4**

*The Toilet of Venus* by Francois Boucher epitomizes the rococo art style. The soft white of the woman’s skin contrasting with the red-pink of the soft cloth she sits upon is what drew my eye immediately. At the bottom of the scene you can see various flowers strewn about, an iconic aspect of rococo. The strong presence of gold in this painting produces a graceful feeling, which along with the outward and unapologetic nature of the naked woman’s posture bring to mind a quality of playfulness. This playfulness is another integral part of the rococo art style.

Works Cited

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