



UNIVERSITE
Abdelhamid Ibn Badis
MOSTAGANEM

PEOPLE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

MASTER IN

Literature and Interdisciplinary Approaches

The Afro-American and the Issue of Identity

Submitted by: BOUDOUARHalima

Members of the Board:

Chairperson: Mr. Boudjellal

Supervisor: Dr. Larbi Youcef

Examiner: Mr. Djamel Sebbah

Academic Year: 2017-2018

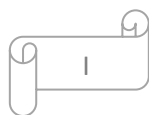
Dedication

I dedicate this work to

My parents and my family

My supervisor Dr. Larbi Youcef for his guidance to do this research correctly

My friends who helped me to achieve this work



Acknowledgements

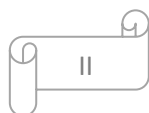
I am glad that this has allowed me to acknowledge my teachers; and with the great honor I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Larbi Youcef for his great help, pieces of advice, and his insightful helped to achieve this work

A special thanks to all my teachers for their honesty in doing their job. With all my respect and honor to be your student

I would like to thanks my parents for their moral and financial supporting

It is appropriate that time round should be able to express my appreciation of all at the head of department of English

Thank you



Abstract

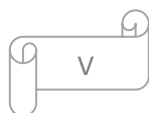
Identity plays an important role in identifying an individual or a group who belongs to common community in this world. The African American identity is the most significant task that attracts scholars' attention. Over centuries the issue of identity was and still their standing point in which the later makes them digging on its concepts and dimensions. The black identity or the African American identity is the transformation of blacks from the status of an object to a subject. After living in very difficult conditions of life under the mercy of the oppressed man as slaves or rather as animals, even they did not have a proper name to identify with; neither Africans nor Americans, the white race deprived them from their authentic heritage. With this inferior life Negroes -like the white used to call them, regarding to their color of skin- wanted to leave it. Thus, their freedom's conscious was rise they rebelled against the despotic Americans. By the time, in the path to freedom that characterized by the harshness and sufferance; in 1833 the declaration of abolishing slavery came and was declared by the president Abraham Lincoln Blacks' hopes to liberty were heightened and the racial conscious and proud was rise too. They challenged to regain their freedom and wanted to break the stereotype of black race is inferior, and being as American citizens equal to the white. The African descents tried to assimilate within the American society. The African American leaders inspired Black Americans for requesting for more freedom to prove their political, cultural, and social identity as they demonstrate.



Contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements	II
Abstract.....	III
General Introduction	1
Chapter One: Identifying Identity	
Introduction	4
I.1.The Concept of Identity.....	4
I.1.1.The Construction of Identity.....	5
I.1.2.The Characteristics of Identity.....	6
I.2.Racial Identity.....	6
I.2.1.Race as a Concept.....	7
I.2.2.Racial identity development (Black Americans)	7
I.3.Political Identity.....	8
I.4.Cultural Identity.....	10
Conclusion	11
Chapter Two: The Afro-American and the Loss of Identity	
Introduction.....	13
II.1.Who is the Afro-American?	13
II.2.Slavery definition.....	14
II.3. Slavery in America.....	16
II.3.1.Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage	18
II.4.Stolen People and Stolen Lives	20

II.5.The End of Slavery.....	26
Conclusion	23
Chapter Three: Regaining Identity	
Introduction.....	25
III.1.Searching for New Freedom, Community, and Identity	25
III.2.Racial Consciousness and Pride	27
III.3.The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1935).....	28
III.4.The Civil Rights Movement 1965.....	32
Conclusion.....	33
General conclusion	34
Works Cited.....	36



General Introduction

The very interesting term identity makes many scholars delve in its meaning and figure out definitions. In the globe there are various communities, each community has its represent identity. The identity of the Black American is the controversial issue that makes researches and scholars discussed it from its different angels (cultural, political, social, and racial...). This research will highlight on the black people who broke the dogma of blacks always stay in the inferior position serving the white man as slaves contributing in their economic development and get rid of the idea of “white superiority”.

The motivation to choose this topic “The Afro-American and the Issue of Identity” is that first, it attracted me during lectures, and it is a very interesting topic in which it was a desire to figure out who are the Afro-American and where did they come from and how did they use to live during and after slavery. Then, what are the measures do they followed to be free in the United States. This topic aims to enrich and bring something new to our specialty. So, this research will reply on my question, how did the Blacks to regain their identity as Afro-American in the United States?

The hypothesis of this research is that may be the quest of identity of black people changed through time and they will regain their origin identity and cope with the American one, and being biracial people.

The first part of this research will be about the identification of the concept of identity from its large corner, in which identity is meant for some scholars that who we are? And our belonging to such community people shared common values, traditions, heritage, language, and religion. It is what distinguishes the individual from others in possessing the personal sense (individuality). Moreover, the identity is constructed by different elements, such as our friction with others, or our experiences of life; in addition we cannot build nor have an identity without specific characteristics that helps in identifying the person, race in one of the important characteristics that presents identity.

Besides, identity is wide, that the later has different aspects. Racial identity is the potential construct in which the community shared in common race characteristics and common norms. Also we can develop a racial identity abroad like the African Americans who develop their identity in the United States. On the other hand, political identity is the political affiliation that the person presents his/herself with a political belonging. In relation to the cultural identity is the most important part, the individual has unique features to differentiate him from others and by proud.

This work seeks to define who are the African-Americans; show how the blacks had lost their identity in the New World because of slavery. This chapter will figure out the meaning of the notion of slavery from different scholars that it is the exploitation of human beings in labor and hard work. Describing slavery in America how it was, how the white men captured the Africans from their mother land across the Ocean beast with their cruelty. This part aims to give a clear image to the African lives within the harsh white society as oppressed people, until they got their freedom as subjects (they were treated as objects or merchandise) and the slavery was abolished.

The third chapter will shed the light on the beginning of blacks in questing for their equal right and freedom to live as human being within a recognized particular community among the diverse of communities in the United States; then, their racial consciousness rising, and the multiple measures that they followed to regain their identity as African Americans. The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1935) which clarify that the African Americans had culture and they were contributed in constructing the American culture (by some prominent figures like W.E.B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen). In addition, Black Americans were resisted to get their superior right to give them the life's privileges, political participations (vote). In which the later regained by the Civil Rights Movement 1963 that led by the activist and preacher Martin Luther King Jr.

Identity is the most important thing that the human need to have, because it is the entity of the individuals, without it they became stayers. Thus, the Black Americans strived to gain there identity to draw their lives and reshape it.

Chapter One

Chapter One: Identifying Identity

The term identity is a controversial issue that makes many researchers and scholars delving in its meaning and discusses it from different angles. This chapter will tackle the definition of identity from the Oxford dictionary and how other researchers define it with referring to its basic characteristics and how it is constructed. Also this part will shed the light on defining some aspects of identity such as racial identity and its development of a specific category (Afro-American racial identity development), and will deal with the political and the cultural identities.

I.1.The Concept of Identity

According to the Oxford dictionary the definition of identity is who or what a person or a thing is. According to Wikipedia, identity is about who are you and how you make a sense of yourself and others; it is about belonging to such people or community and what you have in common with them, and what differentiates you from them. Basically, it gives you the core or the central to your individuality, the social relationships. It is also about belonging to a specific geography place in this world, with your specific or personal characteristic such as tradition, customs, religion, race and ethnicity. It certainly changes in different geographic skills and different contexts.

Despite the great interest in "identity", the concept itself brings something ambiguous for that the scholar Philip Gleason: *Identifying Identity* (1983) observed that the meaning of "identity" as we use it now is not well captured by the dictionary definitions because it reflects another senses of the word. He claims that the present idea of "identity" is a new social construct and also is a complicated one. Even though everyone knows how to use it properly in everyday discourse, it shows a difficulty to prove its present meaning.

The scholar James D. Fearon in *What Is Identity* (1999) argues that identity has two related senses labeled with "social" and "personal" "Identity in its present incarnation has double senses. It refers at the same time to social categories and to the sources of an individual's self-respect or dignity." In the first meaning, identity means that it is asocial category, as a group of persons marked or characterized by a label and differentiated by

rules deciding membership and characteristic features. In the second meaning the personal identity is characterized by some characteristics in which a person takes a special pride or views on his social status.

But even identity refers to the social category and to the sources of the person self-respect, Fearon says that there is no necessary relationship between these things, because anyone can use “identity” to refer to personal characteristics and cannot use it to express his social category, because in some context certain categories can describe identities. In its present image identity reflects that the social category is related to the self-respect.

Hogg and Abrams (1988) in James F.D. “Identity is people’s concept of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others.” Hence, according to the mentioned quotation, identity is the identification of the individuals to themselves and to others.

I.1.1.The Construction of Identity

According to Britannica there are different components to construct identity. They could be experience that we had and experimented in our lives through successes we have had, memories we have made, even we made it alone or with our peers. These factors certainly can contribute in constructing the identity, emotions. It is a kind of general feelings about certain things that help to determine who we are and how we see and identify ourselves. Our connections also can be a part from the aspects that build identity. Hence this means that our connections with whom we spend most the time, where we engage in social media, what connections do we have with others that help to shape and frame who we are. In addition, the rejections that we faced also have a role in shaping identity. For instance, sometimes our furious can shape as much as anything else in life, it becomes a characteristic of a person, so it is a part of identity.

And then, sometimes we identify ourselves, that we figure out things in our life in which it can help us to show who we are and we define ourselves in posing terms; we look at things that we are not like that, this means identifying against. Basically, it is based on looking at things or something and says we are not, this can help us to know who we are, because often is hardly to know who we are and who we are not.

I.1.2.The Characteristics of Identity

Some scholars in Wikipedia states there are four basic characteristics of identity. First, race as a racial category, based on physical characteristics, how people look different such as the color of skin, hair and eyes, which is the visible aspect of that. For instance, the Black race is distinctive from the white one. Then, ethnicity is also socially defined, but instead of using physical appearance between groups of people. These groups are defined by shared language, religion, nationality (having the same country), history or some other cultural factors like traditions and customs. Besides, these important features, there is another characteristic which is gender the social construct, which differentiates between the biological sex man or woman, each one identify him/herself according to his/her sex. Finally, sexuality is also related to the physical sex, sexual preference and it is associated to the nature of some bodies' sexual activities or desires.

I.2.Racial Identity

Some scholars in Wikipedia define racial identity as an important construct because it is a meaningful concept. According to Wikipedia racial identity is a dynamic sociopolitical construction that helps people of different races understands other different groups. Racial identity gives the perspective view of a person of his/herself regarding to his/her racial group and other racial groups.

There are many researches that tried to define racial identity. Janet E. Helms *An update of Helms's White and People of Color Racial Identity Models* (1995) describes it as a sense of collective identity in which it based on having a common heritage with a racial group. Helms integrate perceptions of self and others in this definition of racial identity. In addition racial identity development is how a person interprets messages about racial groups during the process of life. Racial identity described as the significant and meaning of race in the life of the individual.

A racial identity is a socially constructed system in which it helps to classify or separate individuals, according to physical appearance and to the observable specific characteristics that are genetically determined. The word racial is derived from the word race, that this later means that the most physical appearance like skin color, eye color and to whom a person belongs to such group or community.

I.2.1.Race as a Concept

The dictionary of Merriam Webster define race as:

- a) A family, tribe, people or nation belonging to the same stock
- b) A class of kind of people unified by shared interests, habits or characteristics
- c) A category of human kind that shares certain distinctive physical trails

Ian F. Haney Lopez *The Social Construction of Race: Some Observation on Illusion, Fabrication, and Choice* (1994) defines race as the physical divisions among humans that are popular and hereditary. Race is a biological construction, based on genetic physical divisions between people reflected in morphology, but it is not correctly captured by terms black and white. He views that one ancestors' skin determines membership genetically defines a racial group. Haney states that the relation between human's face characters and racial status are concrete. And every individual's race has been print or created by nature.

I.2.2.Racial Identity Development (Black Americans)

To develop racial identity there are many stages. In this part we choose the stages of the Black Americans racial identity development, because our dissertation will be about the construction or the formation of the Black people of their racial identity in the United States of America. The theses of Godfried Agymen Asante, *Becoming "Black" in America: Exploring Identity Development of African Immigrants, 2012* claims that the African Americans transverse when they experience a major shift in their racial self-identification. This model involved five stages which are:

The first stage is the pre-encounter in which the individual tries to assimilate and be accepted by the dominant race and absorbed many of their beliefs and values including the notion of "white is right" and "the black is wrong" and actively or passively distances his/herself from other persons of their own race, this de-emphasis and dislocated one racial group membership.

The second stage, encounter that is the individual forced by event or series of events to recognize the impact of racism in the life of somebody, the reality that one cannot be truly be white for instance when the individual is rejected from his/her white friends, this will derive the person be aware that he/she is not view equal like them.

The third stage immersion/emersion: this stage is characterized by the immediate desire to surround with visible symbols of the racial identity of the individual and an active avoidance of symbols of whiteness. Everything has value in life must be relevant to blackness. In this stage the individual seeks out opportunities to explore aspects of their own history and culture with the support of peers from their own racial background, and re-searching black history and from of ideology that was linked or related to blackness or to their blood.

The exploration of the previous stage creates a security for the new self-determination, and leads to the fourth stage, that is the internalization stage; blacks are still maintaining their connections or relations with black peers, the individual internalized is ready to build strong or meaningful relationships with whites who acknowledge and respect their self-definition. The attribute of the white race becomes more acceptable toward black self-identification.

Finally, the fifth stage, the internalization-commitment, in this stage the individual finds ways to translate or express their personal sense of blackness into a plan of action or a general sense of commitment to the concern of their race as a group, which is fixed over time. According to *Cross Nigercence Theory: Current Status and Challenges for the Future(2001)* the process of internalization permits the individual set in a positive sense of racial identity and achieves a new sense of self and a motive to help and improve the image of black community.

To conclude, these stages present a useful way or measure for the Blacks to improve their existence and their racial identity in the United States of America in order to reach their goal in identifying themselves by the African Americans.

I.3. Political Identity

According to Wikipedia identity politics is also called by the identitarian identity. Political identity is the expression of an individual's beliefs system and social affiliation. Different factors can construct an identity including race, nationality, where a person lives and a person's gender and sexuality.

Political identity is associated with a group affiliation and describes the ways, as being a member of particular group might express specific political opinions and attitudes. Political identity means the affiliation of an individual to a political group or a political party, in

which it presents him among other different political groups and distinguishes him from them; and also it means the belonging to specific states or province.

In his thesis “Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community” Chantal Moufee defines political identity by saying: “I do agree that the question of political identity is the crucial one, and I consider that to attempt to construct “citizens” identities should be an important task of democratic politics.” The citizenship is the steppingstone to shape democratic policy or political voice; moreover, it is intimately linked to the kind of society and political community we want.

The scholars Beanmont et al., 2006; Calby et al., 2007 describe political identity as a type of political self-model through which it is the extent that being politically interest and the important of the involvement of a person in another core self.

According to Tenelle J. Porter *Moral and Political Identity and Civic Involvement in Adolescents* (2013), political identity is concerned about, international issue, being politically involved, and being concerned about government decisions and political. He claims that political identity is the moral identityⁱ that relates to civic actionⁱⁱ, but some other civic lives are not necessarily moral. For instance, a person may not follow the political debates, being informed about usual events, for that many scholars supposed that identity construction focused on citizenship and labeled political identity. It may fulfill moral identity in expecting civic action.

Tenelle influenced by Erikson’s identity theory (Erikson, 1968), argued that this definition this is shared by other understanding of political identity like the meaningful development of personal political commitment. Hence according to him political identity differs from political science research, in which it is the same as political party or ideological identification. If being political is important and essential part of a person to take up political values, goals, beliefs, and behaviors. Finally, political identity increased along with their political interest and political action after participating in a citizenship course

i: moral identity refers to the act of being a moral person, this characteristic is important to some persons’ identity.

ii: civic action is the engagement of a broad range of civic attitudes, beliefs, skills, and behaviors

I.4.Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is the expression and the feeling of belonging to a specific cultural group. “The concept of cultural identity refers to familial and cultural dimensions of a person’s identity, and how others perceive him or her.” So, there are several notable factors to the person’s identity, all these elements are perceived by an individual and how others see the person’s identity (Ibrahim, F.A. 2016. P15).

According to Ibrahim, F.A. *Cultural and Social Justice Counseling* (2016) the conceptualization of cultural identity is began with the publication of the scholar Cross (1978) theory of Nigrescence, this is a new term before identity was perceived a changed unit, express a meaning or sense of belonging to a social setting. Moreover, for him the strength cultural identity within a primary cultural context of expression includes ethnicity, gender and gender identity, spiritual assumption, age and life stage, ability and disability status, family, community and nation. He claims that culture influences all these dimensions, but the effect differs cross different dimensions such as life experience time.

Furthermore, other scholars define culture by “culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.” This definition considers culture as a collective phenomenon, there are various perspective can be within each shared individuals, and it used for tribes and ethnic groups or nation (Hofsted. G. 2001)

Vivian, Hsueh-Hua Chen,*Key Concepts Intercultural Dialogue, Cultural* (2014) claims that cultural identity refers to identification of a person or a sense of belonging to a particular group on different cultural categories, contains nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion. It is constructed through the process of sharing the same knowledge such as traditions, language, heritage, norms and customs

According to her cultural identity means the affiliation of an individual to more than one cultural group, it is complex and multifaceted. While some scholars assumed identification with cultural groups to be clear and stable. Cultural identity is the fixed continually characteristics in which negotiated, maintained and challenged through communicative practices. It stills the most useful model by any person to express him/herself.

According to what is mentioned in this chapter, we conclude that the term identity and its models always are still interesting topics for research to many scholars and researchers despite their complexity and ambiguity. Identity in general is the representation of any person who perceives his/herself and how others may view him/her.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: The Afro-American and the Loss of Identity

One sign of the interest of this work is the focusing on the Afro-Americans and their loss of identity. This chapter aims to identify the Afro-Americans and where do they come from and give the definition of slavery. The purpose of this part of the dissertation will tackle the institution of the American slavery, the transatlantic slave trade, and the status of slaves during the middle passage; it will explore the beginning, describing the life of slaves how they used to live under the oppression of the dominant race until the arising of their freedom from the institution of slavery.

II.1. Who is the Afro-Americans?

In the United States the Afro-American hold several of identification names, such as the Afro-America. In her thesis *“African-American Nomenclature: The Label Identity Shift from “Negro” to “Black” in the 1960s”* (2013). The scholar Zenobia Bell defined Afro-Americans as the American of African descent brought to America as slaves. She focused on label identity of the Blacks, and said that there was a shift of terms “Negro” to “Black. She stated that Blacks wanted to change their name from Negro to Afro-Americans, because of its negative connotation, it refers to slavery and it created by the dominant race especially white masters. So, they demanded to change their label and name themselves by themselves, in this shift there was what called by the “Black Power Movement”. Blacks wanted to get rid of slavery, because even they get their freedom, the term Negro still has a close relationship with it and being oppressed people.

Additionally, the Americans of African descent tried to eliminate the term of “Negro”, they believed that the notion Negro has no relation to the black. The scholar Bell assumed that many of the Blacks preferred the term Afro-American than Black or Negro, due to the relation to the past and present. Hence, Afro refers to the black blood and African heritage. Whereas, America reflect to the land where they brought to and refers to their nationality, because the Afro-Americans wanted to assimilate and integrate in the American society. (Bell, 2013)

According an article in Wikipedia *African-American People, Racial or Ethnic in the United States with African Ancestry, (2018)*, define the Afro-Americans that they related to the black people whose live in the United States, speak English and have American citizenship. But their origins descent from the African ancestors, the first African who brought to America as slaves. They cope with the cultural diversity in the U.S. and stick on their African blood. They are mixed races because of the raping and the sexual abuse by the white man.

II.2. Slavery Definition

According to Merriam Webster dictionary slavery means:

- The state of being slaves
- The practice of owning slaves
- Submission to a dominating influence:
 - a) The state of a person who is a chattel of another
 - b) The practice of slave holding

Scholars and historians tried to define the term of slavery from different angels, in the work of James D. Torr, *Slavery, 2004*. Slavery is a truth of human history; it is a common practice to enslave people and used them as properties “chattel slaves” to serve them without any payment or rest. “Where two races of different origin...are brought together, the relation now existing in the slave holding states between the two, instead of an evil, a good _a positive good.” In his inaugural address the senator of the United States (1930) John C. Calhoun according to the previous quotation, he claimed that slavery is something positive and good, because since there are two different races in all societies there must be one class under the dominant of the other class and ought to hive as labors. Calhoun warned the northern abolitionists that they are threatening the division of the U.S., and proclaimed that the southerners masters have to care their slaves better than to freed them and let them to go and to work in the industrial north. Besides he assumed that all societies each upper class benefits from the lower class -slaves-, fueled their economic system, and create a stable social. (Torr, 2004, p. 23)

The abolitionist Theodore Dwight Weld an effective record against slavery “there is no a man on earth does not believe that slavery is a curse.” Weld, et al. *American Slavery as it*

is (1839), Weld came against slavery and described it as an evil and depicted the cruelty of the slaveholders. He claimed that many have the same judgment to the case of Human rights against slavery, in which that decision is “Guilty”. Weld argues that humankind have the same sentence “Let it be accursed” that it had an echo in all over the world. He assumed that slavery is a curse, because slaves lived in conditions, families were separated, working in plantation, captured from their mother land to America by force and put in fear, deprived from their liberty. The historian Weld considers slavery as a crime in human being rights. Through the cruelty that the slaves were treated by, it is a robbing of somebody’s freedom and life. (Torr, 2004, p. 28)

Moreover, according to Wikipedia slavery is a system that permits to possess individuals and considered them as properties to buy and sell them in the auction block to other owners. These properties were as a Chattel Slave in which owned a slave forever and his/her generation will be enslaved hereditary- born and live as slaves-. Also slavery means that it is a situation or a status in which a human being is forced to work against his will. Hence, scholars used different terms to refer to slavery such as “unfree labor”, “forced labor”. Slavery is dehumanizing of humanity and stealing of liberty.

The article of *What is Slavery* in the web site Quora defines slavery that it is an old practice of selling and buying humans as slaves and being under the dominant of any authority, it is an oppressive situation since it goes against freedom of choice. Slavery refers to the loss of liberty, honor, and dignity as human being and it might be broke the principles of equality of humans. Additionally, in her article *Slavery: A Question of Definition*, Suzan Miers regarded slavery as the most bad and the useless word in the English language. It became a metaphor for the great unfair for the depriving of lives and freedom, and for discrimination. She claimed that it is used in different contexts, so it has two other identifying notions “classic” or “chattel slaves”. She assumed that scholars, explorers, missionaries, human rights activists...etc. created national laws and international conventions to get an exact meaning to the term.

Moreover, the scholar Miers states that other scholars were against the illegal institution of slavery and questioned to give an appropriate definition to it. If slaves were property, what kind of property must be defined? They were able to sell and transferred and were under a complete control of the owners for long time and till die. Slavery is a way of

mobilizing labor, also it is a method to incorporate other overseas people to form a particular social, while eliminating and depriving them to integrate into such social or one membership of one group.

Furthermore, the scholars Jean Allain and Kevin Bales, *Slavery and its Definition* (2012) presents that there is a challenge on the term slavery to precise a definition, in spite of the international agreement for the definition that is existed since 1926 which is “slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercise.” They argued that from 1930 to nowadays the general point of view of slavery is negative and it is an illegal practice against human being, and it is not used in the cases of slavery appropriately.

II.3. Slavery in America

Through studying the history of the United States, we have to link slavery to it. Scholars and historians have studied the American history especially slavery. By the 1619, the first twenty Africans were brought to America or to the British colonies by a Dutch ship to the territory of Jamestown, Virginia. These Africans were sold as indentured servant _for few years_ they presented the forced African immigrants to America. American slavery started with these twenty indentured servants, they became slaves serving the white man. It spread very fast as a cancer in the colonies. In its beginning it was in a slow and in unnoticed way. With the interest of wanting more handwork, the colonist imported uncountable number of Africans to work in their fields; slavery became fixed and widespread in many colonies. Slaves tasted and saw the other side of the American dream in which it became a nightmare during the eighteenth century. (Kolchin, 1993, p. 3, 4)

Between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries slavery spread slowly and helped the colonies’ economic transformation, especially Great Britain. American slavery was a system of labor. It was a new system emerged to face the lack of labor in order to help the landholders to develop their crops (sugar, cotton, tobacco...). The bonded labor was linked with the spread of the productive principle unit of plantation. American slavery was a commercial agriculture competition; the southern states were the most producers of the plantation than the north thanks to the blacks. (ibid.p.4) Kolchin presents that the majority of Africans were slaves, while the most of the whites were masters; this is a significant of

the white supremacy, because the white thought that they are supreme race than the black one and they have to rule the world. As a result, the new world slavery characterized with the inequality relationship between the white and black. The white men decided to make the black people the essential part in the economic order (agriculture). (Op. cit.p.5, 6)

The author states some statistics about the emergence of slaves in America. By the 1680 America witnessed a great shift from indentured to slave labor. For instance, between 1680 and 1750 the population of the blacks increased from 7 percent to 44 percent in Virginia, and from 17 percent to 61 percent in South Carolina, so the blacks were presented the half of population. Hence, the Virginia planter William Byrd II wrote in 1736 "That I fear this colony will some time or other be confirmed by the name of New Guinia."(Op. cit, p.11)

According to Kolchin (1993) American landowners were calculated for bring replacement of the European servants. In the late of seventeenth century there was an availability of Africans, in the 1672the British naval established the royal African company for the slave trade, and all the received slaves went to work on plantation. Their prices were highest than the one of servants, because they held for ever unlike the servants; the population of the blacks was increased to 21.4 percent in 1770s in the hole colonies. Slave traders were conscious of the origin and ethnic composition of that slaves whom captured from their land to America across the Atlantic Ocean, they tried to avoid the contact with the hostile Africans and their environment, the traders established factories on the coast in which the Africans rulers and merchants helped them to buy and sell human property by force. These properties were influenced by the behaviors of their masters, but their customs, beliefs, and values were distinguished from the white one, because of the common share their history.

Black and white societies were two distinctive environments, the rate of white was high than the one's of black. The slave owners renamed slaves from African to African - Americans, and gave that transformation to other slave societies in America. According to this transformation and before 1750 African slaves gave to their new born slave's pure African names it reached to 14 percent. But during the civil war years the rate decrease from 9 percent to 5 percent the African-American slaves received Christian American names. (op.cit. p.44, 45)

The historian Kolchin (1993) stated that after the war of independence (1776), American slavery witnessed a tremendous expansion, especially in the south. In 1790 it increased more than 70 percent to 1.191.354 by 1810 after two years from the abolition of the legal slave trade. The population of slaves was tripled during the next fifty years, it reached 3.953.760 in 1860. (op.cit. p.93)

The antebellum slavery was a contrasted institution from the previous one. Slaves were faced different conditions, some of them were still lived in plantation toiling fields, while others were on small farms close to their masters+ few number of blacks were belong to free slaves. Their work changed through time some of them became preachers helping the dominant race to spread Christianity such as Nat Turner who was a child slave, after he learnt the bible and became a preacher spread the American religion among his community. (op.cit. p.99)

II.3.1. Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage

In the Encyclopedia of the scholar Junuis P. Rodriguez *Slavery in the United States* (2007) Trans-Atlantic slave trade is the trading of enslaving Africans abroad. It took place from the 15th c to the 19th c. The Africans were shipped by force to other places in the world, especially to the New World. Trans-Atlantic slave trade also has a famous name which is the Triangular Trade. Because the trip was in between three continents, it began from Europe shipping weapons, textile and other forms of commodities were exchanged by the Africans who sold for slavery in America.

Furthermore, the road of the captured people from Africa to the American continent label by the Middle Passage to describe the journey of the slaves in the slave ship across the miles of the ocean, this forced voyage took 11 million people from their home land. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the trip took months and it was worst. The author Rodriguez reported that the historians and the abolitionist used to describe the treatment that the slaves received in the ship, they were dealt by cruelty, harshness, and terror way by the white men. The ship was very crowded because of the high number of slaves. These people had been experienced slavery by African rulers and traders, because these African merchants used to sell slaves to the European traders instead of robbing them. Hence the

majority of slaves were prisoners and victims of the political disorder. (Rodriguez, 2007, p.382)

During the voyage the slaves spent six months at least from their land to shores the ships anchored to transport the slaves cross the Atlantic Ocean. Regarding to the hardship of the slaves during the middle passage, they saw the ocean and the strong waves for the first time, and the mysterious white men with different characteristics and different language. They faced difficult conditions; they were chained into tows from their necks, hands, and feet too in order to not move especially men, women and children had some freedom to move. The white traders preferred men than women because they need them to work in plantation labor, the number of men were doubled the one of women. Captains allowed slaves to stay on the deck during day, but at night they faced the harshness of weather. Slaves were spent days and without well fed, care condition was rare (in the slave ship there was one doctor), some of them get sick and some others died because of the diseases, hunger, starvation, and punishment. (ibid, p. 382)

Olaudah Equiano born in African in the eighteenth century, he enslaved in his mother land when he was a child, and experienced horrible and different experiences. In his Narrative (1789) Equiano described slave status in the slave ship across the Atlantic. He was captured by the age of 11. He saw that white men deprived his life and there is no hope to retune to his land. He preferred to live in his previous life to the present one. In the slave ship he was put on the below deck and there was a bad odor (stench). He was sick and was not able to eat. Olaudah preferred to die than living in that grief situation. He said that there two white men forced him to eat and by his refusing one of them held he by force and the other one was beating him on his feet. He reported that he never experience something like that before. Since there was no using of water, slaves wanted to jump over the sea, but they were controlled, they were punished for not eating. (ibid, p. 382)

Equiano was informed that they carried to be servants to the white men. Consequently, he realized that the white men characterized with the brutal and cruelty. The white people have no mercy; they threw the death slaves over the sea without blessing them. Olaudah continued the description of the status of the slave ship; the stench was very dangerous because of tightness and the closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, the number of the slaves was very crowded, and there was a difficulty to move this created a lack of

respiration which made some slaves sick and made others died. Because of the terrible conditions slaves preferred to die than to live in this misery. (ibid, p. 382)

II.4. Stolen People and Stolen Lives

In the work of Deborah H. Deford, *Slavery in the United States, Life under Slavery* (2006) describes slavery in the United States. By the arrival of the Africans to the New World, they received as indentured servants before their shift into slaves; the European masters wanted to possess these human beings forever and considered them as properties or objects. Slaves were segregated and separated from the whites in regarding to their African origins, because whites thought that Africans are backward and uncivilized, color of skin (blackness is a bad sign) they have to learn and to be civilized; their families were dislocated for good, the white men used to deprive children from their mothers and sold them to other owners far from their families. Slave women were oppressed and their bodies belonged to _harassment_ their masters. Slaves used to live in cottages made of straw and clay, constructed in a circle shape in a specific area; they were prevented to mix with the white men's houses. They built their villages like the style of their houses which they left in Africa, in order to not feel strange.

In addition, slaves were worked for long time during a day in plantation without enough rest or well fed "the slaves worked up 20 hours a day during harvest season. They had to fell trees with axes, then clear brush to make fields for the sugarcane. After harvesting the cane, they crushed it to extract the liquid it contained. Then came the boiling process that clarified the liquid and finally crystalized it into sugar."(op. cit. p. 25) when the Africans being alone they informed each other that they pretended that did not understand their masters to avoid much more work and punishment. The status of the slaves in the South of America was very difficult to the Northern one, the climate in the south was hot and harsh and it was adequate for plantation (cotton, tobacco, sugar...). Unlike in the North, it was not support plantation. Slave population in the South was outnumbered than the North. But it was influenced by slavery as well as South, northern merchants invested in selling and buying slaves and goods for their profit. (op. cit. p. 26)

Slaves in the North had less tired, because they worked as housekeepers and in small farms _served the wealthiest white people_ but even they worked in less sufferance, they

never feel that they are free and superior. Due to the kindness of the northern masters, they let the slaves to learn religion and behavior in order to not rebel as the southern slaves. Slaves were as objects, had no citizenship, the right to own property or to make legal contracts, including marriage contracts. They could not file sue against the white people or defend themselves. Also, they prevented to possessed weapons and they must have a piece of paper to pass among the colonies without committing crimes. Although the slave codes which made by the white men against slavery, slaves did not stop to rebel against it, their resistance characterized by the killing of their masters by poison, stealing and devastating their tools. But they were punished by the authorities by hanging and whipping them. They also were segregated by the terror organization Ku Klux Klan¹, the Jim Crow rules which were against the Blacks in the South, and children were too separated from whites' schools. (op. cit. p. 44, 45)

In spite of the sufferance of racism that the slaves faced in the house of bondage; they were lived within Africa by singing their traditional songs and practicing some African activities like cooking, traditional medicine which based on herbs. African Americans continued to rebel to get their freedom and equality similar the white people. (op. cit. p.26)

II.5. The End of Slavery

Slavery had a tremendous impact on the American society mainly in the South colonies; it contributed in the economic development. The 19th century was a period of rise in the abolitionist movement, where the federal leaders, writers, and preachers felt empathy towards the slaves; they contended that the institution of slavery must be abolished in America (Kolchin, 1993.p. 200).

At that time United States was divided into two, Free states in the North and slave states in the South; southern economy was based on forced labor. By the election of the president Abraham Lincoln² 1860, the southerners became fear because he was against the practice of buying and selling human being _slaves_ he decided to remove the system of slavery, so

¹ Ku Klux Klan is terror organization appeared in the United States seek for the white supremacy; they were against variety of people especially Blacks. It appeared three times after Civil War –revenge to the people in the Civil War- it revived in 1915, the third Klan revived and disappeared in 1950. w.w.w.wiki.com

² Abraham Lincoln: the president of the United States elected in November 1860, he was the one from the abolitionist who had a major role to freeing Slaves. He was assassinated by in April 14, 1865 by a Confederate supporter John Wilks Booth. w.w.w.wiki.com

the southerners opposed his opinion thus they wanted to separate politically from the Union they formed a group which called the Confederates led by the leader Jefferson Davis³. Lincoln decided to fight against the Confederates. This led to the Civil War 1861 between the North and the South because southerners claimed that they still need slaves to work in plantation and they are free to be Free states or slave states, they considered this decision as aggression against them. But Abraham Lincoln and the new Republican Administration attempted to stop the expansion of slavery, and the preservation of the Union, he said “My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union” August 1862, his belief was that slavery is an evil it must be get rid of it (op. cit. p.202).

During the wartime Lincoln and the abolitionists for emancipation of the slaves with the Republican Party began to think about strategies to freed slaves because this would weaken the Confederacy by preventing the labor force, and gave to the Union strength. In 1863 the president released the Emancipation Proclamation and declared that all slaves are free. The Emancipation Proclamation was a tactic of war. After that the Republican Party presented the 13th Amendment⁴ in 1864 to the Congress, until 1865 it passed in the House of Representatives and adopted officially by the American Constitution.

According to Wikipedia Despite the fact that slavery was abolished, it remained the American political issue, and most of the African Americans were asking for their equal rights as well as the whites from the Reconstruction era till the Civil Right Movement (1950, 1963). The Afro-Americans felt that they lost their identity and they hoped to regain it with different measures. W.E.B. Du Bois (*Black Reconstruction, 1935*) in the work of Peter Kolchin *American Slavery, 1993* argued that freedom did not take it into granted, they had a principle role in the uprising for abolishing slavery. Blacks’ freedom was not a matter of charity from the whites but it was achieved through strivings, rebellions in order to be a subject _social component_ in America. Since, right from the beginning they were excluded from the Declaration of Independence which was issued by Tomas Jefferson “life, liberty, pursuit of happiness”.

³ Davis Jefferson: is the leader of the Confederate South during the Civil War. www.youtube.com

⁴ 13th Amendment: is an amendment sought to ban slavery from the United States; it adopted by the Constitution in 1865. w.w.w.wiki.com

As a final point, slavery was the cause of losing identity of the Blacks in the United States. Yet, it was a departure point for the rise of their conscious to redefine themselves and quested for equal rights and self-determination similar to the dominant race, and assimilate with them and being a part to contribute in constructing the American society.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three: Regaining Identity

Although the shifted status of the Blacks from an object to a subject. Thus, they still had asked for their full rights as well as the whites. In the shade of the Emancipation Proclamation 1863 they had other aspirations to achieve their target through adopting various measures in order to strive for place and /or prove their existence and strengthen the Black community by searching for other doors of freedom, the rise of the racial consciousness and the pride of their origins, reaffirmed the authentic cultural identity that would reflect on the American culture, and defending and questing for their political rights in America. This chapter aim to capture the strategies which the Blacks followed to regain their identity in United States.

III.1. Searching for New Freedom, Community, and Identity

In his work, Alton Hornsby, *A Companion to African American History* (2008) states that after the emancipation the free Blacks had found themselves living in the same previous life conditions. They became homeless, had not the right to own a land, and remained as workers without taking their profits, the free blacks deprived from the right to vote. The federal government gave more protection to the South. Unfortunately, the emancipation proclamation betrayed the African American. So, they had to overcome the walled segregation “Jim Crow” rules, most of the southern states remained as slave states implementing segregation and discrimination system.

On the other hand, the African American sought to give their perception of freedom in which it was deferent from how the whites perceived it. They asked for their civil and human rights such as high education, self-determination, they were fighting for equality and justice between the two races. The former slaves assumed that being free without possessing life privileges is not enough; they wanted more freedom with autonomy and self-reliance (Hornsby, 499). According to the Article of Gene Allen Smith *fighting for Freedom* (2014) African American wanted to be asocial part participating in the social construction for instance participating in political actions (vote), because this is the primary tool protect him, as Frederick Douglass argued in his essay 1866 “a property.” By the publication of this essay and after four years blacks asked to obtain the right to vote, but it was confronted by violence and brutality in the south.

Moreover, Booker T. Washington believed that in order to open the opportunity gate for full freedom and respect from the white man, Blacks must be honest, worked hard and flourished; he stated that the melting point between the two races would be the production of something to the white man by the Blacks, and by education and practicing skills Black would construct themselves with the self-reliance. The scholar Allen Smith added that the Black intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois's famous theory "Double Consciousness" (*Souls of Black Folk*, 1903) had to be recognized by the African elite who wanted to define themselves as African-American people "dual identity". He said "an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings..." hence, Du Bois wanted from his fellows to be a Negro and at the same time being American with self-development (Allen, 2014).

In his work Yael Tamer, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 1996 considers the quest for identity is the most important and basic human need, it is the element to construct the personal identity in relation to others, quest for identity is the emergence of national feeling that permit the individuals redefine their affiliations and a cause to hope and fight to find a home. The quest for identity by the African American is the attempting to awaken a dead past and broken humanity; they tried to regain the feeling of belongingness to a specific community represented and distinguished them from the other. As a result of the ignorance and social exclusion which received by the Blacks within the white community, they tried to create a "new Black man" with a social position.

For their demands and due to the emergence of their consciousness blacks were ready to redefine their affiliation and make drastic changes to the way that they were perceived with, and they knew that identity is not a matter of destiny, it is a matter of choice and discovery. The African Americans had the choice to remain their authentic identity or assimilated with the new one "renew their identity" and adopted the national, cultural identity of their ancestors (Yael, 176)

According to the author Robert E. Birt, *The Quest for Community and Identity* 2002, claims that in order to get their identity, the African Americans decided to collect and change the White vision towards them, this belief based on the interpretation that anything come from the White identity is wrong and suspicious, not only the Black people always suspect the other. Their rise was a tactic to distinguish them from the White, as a reason of a desire to have a peculiarity in terms of culture, traditions, customs, and Black ethics. This

broken humanity tried to get rid of their past” slavery” and regarded their community as an acceptable one among the White with an insight way, because the oppressor concealed the Black identity and deemed them as inferior people while they strengthen their identity. The African Americans were questing for their identity to regain their human dignity and make an end the Black stereotypes

III.2. Racial Consciousness and Pride

According to what have been said in the Article of Rajabali Askarzadeh Toghabeheh *African American and the reconceptualization of Identity: Black Participant in the World War I and the Rise of New Negro Consciousness*. Since, the people of African descent were seen as natural inferior race, by the beginning of the nineteenth century they faced a continuing challenge of race and racism in the United States. Through the Darwinism Evolution which appeared and created by Charles Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century, that claimed that the original of man was animal species. This theory was implemented on human societies. This latter developed in the Western civilization, unlike in the East (Africa). As a result the Blacks became the goal of the social implication of Darwin Theories and became the victim of the diversity of races in America, which they were segregated because of their race.

So, the New Negro became aware that their race does not differ than other races especially the White race. This issue was the standpoint in the Blacks’ identity problem; their conscious by the equality between human being “all men are born equal” made them proud of their race and attempted to eliminate the stereotypes of black men. In the early of the twentieth century, there was an era of Africanism which the African descendent wanted to revived their African blood, and the emergence of the movement of Marcus Garvey “back to Africa” that encourage also the African Americans to remember their race root and being proud, by this factor the Black Americans tried to recapture their self-confidence. At that time, they moved from the rural South to the urban North (1916-1930) this period marked by a mass exodus _ more than one million_ it known as the Great Migration where they opened their eyes and rejected all kinds of racism, weaken the old black concept, and encourage themselves to redefine their identity. They aspired to be part in the mainstream ⁱⁱⁱ of the United States society (Torgabeheh, 38).

The author Robert E. Birt stated in his book of *The Quest for Community and Identity* 2002 that African descent were slaves and their race was denied and discriminated for that reason they aimed to redefine and construct their race politically and socially equal as the whites and claimed that they share a mixture blood. The Dorinta J. Cater presents in her theses *Cultivating Critical Race Consciousness for African American School Success*, 2008 that from slavery to the freedom education was the wonderful opportunity to practice freedom in the United States; the educational Black achievements presented the success of the Black race and rejected the perception of the dominant vision that African Americans are failed. The Black students were conscious and proud of their Blackness. They confronted the ideas of Black intellectual inferiority; they collected together to create a positive Black racial identity in the American society and make it visible.

According to what have been said before, the fruitful path to reach to the goal of equality the African American has to follow three aspects. First, the African American must be collective has a share memory about their racial group. Then, being aware about the racism and the degradation, and finally, they produce a positive perception to oneself to succeed the racial group member. Black students' accomplishment helped the Black race to be equal as the white and eliminated the separatism schools in America, their awareness and proud of the Black racial history allowed them to overcome race's struggles.

III.3. The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1935)

According to the work of scholar Alton Hornsby, Jr., *A Companion to African American History* 2008, The Harlem Renaissance refers to; Harlem is a street which situated in New York City where the black intellectuals meet there to express their skills by arts, literature, and theater...etc. Renaissance means renew or rebirth. Harlem Renaissance or Black Renaissance was a successful African American cultural movement (1920-1935), it focus on arts, African American literary history, music, theater, visual arts, in particular. It sought to redefine the Negro, damage the white vision against them and their heritage, and tried to waken the dead culture.

iii: mainstream is the widespread belief to be included in the stream of WASP(White Anglo Saxon Protestant) also known by the American Canon, white-male-heterosexual-social class.

It occurred when the blacks moved from the rural segregated harshest South (segregation age the Ku Klux Klan) to the industrial North looking for job and freedom, this period witnessed a great exodus, it known as the Great Migration. The African Americans were aware about their race and proud of it “Uplifting” the race. They wanted to express their culture and identity and give an appropriate image to the black. The black population in Harlem was the largest population in the globe; it refers to the Negro capital. Harlem Renaissance was a means of integration to the African American, because they wanted to melt in the American culture and society (Hornsby, 479).

This movement associated with the civil right and reform organization such as the NAACP (The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People 1910), in which the latter was fought for the Africans civil rights in general and to win repeal (abolish) of the Separate-but-equal doctrine, because the majority of blacks were living in the south. Harlem gathered most of the African intellectual and leaders to redefine and discover their souls; it helped them because it was an economic city and the largest one in America. For instance they could publish their books and magazines because of its availability of the different culture institution, the publishing of the crucial magazine of *Crisis* in 1910 (ibid, 479).

Despite of the great effect of the Harlem Renaissance on the literary production sphere (poetry, stories, plays, and novels), also it had a contribution on the history and the American culture. This influence was great and remarkable, thus the scholar Nathan Irvin Huggins (1971) in Hornsby (2008) noted that the Harlem Renaissance “left its mark as a symbol a point of reference for everyone to recall...the very name continued to connote a special spirit, new vitality, black urbanity, and black militancy. Through the activities, the writings, the promotion of Negro in the 1920s, Harlem had become a racial focal point for the knowledge black men [and women] the world never ever.” (Op. cit. 480)

Furthermore, Killy King Howes in his Encyclopedia *Harlem Renaissance* (2000), mentioned that the prominent figures of the Harlem Renaissance who contribute to create it and Harlem their starting point to express their skills and prove themselves those are, W.E.B. Du Bois the significant leader of the Harlem Renaissance, a leader of NAACP which aimed to achieve equality to the Blacks, an editor of the month journal *Crisis*. His full name is William Edward Burghard Du Bois born in 1868 in Great Barrington,

Massachusetts. He wrote his famous book *“The Souls of Black Folk”* in 1903 about the African American problems, he stated that the African American should be balanced with the American culture and not melted, they to come against the discrimination and violence, they have to reshape themselves and being proud of blackness at the same time be Americans. Du Bois called the most African American accomplishment and high-achieve the Talented Tenth an expected from the other Blacks to take them as an example and get a place in the American society.

The Jamaican poet and novelist Claude McKay born on September 15, 1890 in Sunny Ville, Jamaica, died on May 27th, 1948 in Chicago, Illinois. He arrived to Harlem in 1914 and became the best-known poet of the Harlem Renaissance; of the most McKay’s publishing poems are *“Harlem Shadows”* and *“Invocation”*. In his woks McKay depicted the alienation feelings of the African American when the racism fixed its claws on the blacks and broke them. He also wrote a poem of *“The Tropics in New York”* that described his nostalgia and the beauty of his homeland Africa in which he named it by the Tropical home (Howes, 240).

Other Symbol of Harlem Renaissance poets Langston Hughes the Black poet born on February 1st, 1902 in Joplin Missouri. Died on May 27th, 1967 in New York, short story writer, novelist, play writer autobiographer, nonfiction writer, and the most celebrated African American poet, his themes were about, the search for freedom and truth. He used the dialect English in writing his poems. Mostly, Hughes wrote about the black working class black popular culture like his experience life, in his first book *“The Wearing Blues”* (1926) and the poem *“Fine Clothes to the Jew”* (1927) he portrayed the needs of the Blacks and the spirits of the black heritage. Hughes had a racial pride, his poems about beauty and blackness; he glorifies his race (Ibid, 203)

We younger artists who create now intend to express our individual dark skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn’t matter. We know we are beautiful and ugly too. The tom-tom cries the tom-tom laughs. If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not their displeasure doesn’t matter

*either, we build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know
how and we stand on top of the mountain, free within
ourselves (op. cit. 35)*

Black women poets were rarely to appear in the Harlem Renaissance, Helene Johnson the only female of Harlem Renaissance poets used to write with the English dialect. She was from the promised figures, published her first poem “*Tree at Night*” and the other poem “*My Race*” in which she issued the senseless of blacks about their race, «*The Road*” that was about racial identity, through which have the blacks choose. Helene lost strength in 1930 (ibid).

Harlem Renaissance fiction marked by the concentration on the black modern life and the instable culture, Nella Larsen born on April 13th, 1891 in Chicago, Illinois, she died on March, 30th, 1964 in New York, New York. She was a significant novelist icon of the Harlem Renaissance, from her experience life Nella Larsen wrote about the biracial people, because she to live in a self-conflict to choose her belonging to the black world or to the white. Due to her mixture blood (she was mulatto) she faced the problem of belonging, she tried to delve in black women’s belonging dilemma to reach her target. In her two famous books *Quicksand* 1928 and *Passing* 1929 in which she gave an image about the self-struggle that the biracial people faced (especially women) to pass as white or to stich on her blood and being proud of blackness and behaved as a black woman (op. cit. 227)

The American philosopher, educator, and writer, Alain Lock born on September 13th, 1886, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he died on June 10th, 1954. New York. Alain was the father of the New Negro Movement, wrote about the Harlem Renaissance’s aims to the overseas to gain support. In 1925 he published the celebrated book as an anthology “*The New Negro: An Interpretation*” which represents the African American contribution in the progressing of racial consciousness, self-confidence, and cultural identity. Lock looked for a new black talent (op. cit. 233)

The African Americans were striving for freedom, self-reconstruct and social justice in America. This helped them to be the heart of the American Culture. The African American music spread rapidly; there were two well-known types’ blues and jazz which were source of self- expressions, it was as mirror of the black working class. Langston Hughes considered the blues as the black arts, and then jazz came as a result of the blues. It became

widespread among white and attracted them. In the late 1920th jazz became a real depiction about the blacks' experiences (Howes, 71).

The Harlem Renaissance had a profound effect on the American culture; it was the optimistic place for the African American to redefine their cultural identity and give a positive image to the black and blackness. By their pens, arts, and ideology the African American could regain their cultural identity.

III.4. The Civil Rights Movement 1963

The book of *An Illustrated History of the United States* (1990) of Bryn O'Claghan refers to the Civil Rights Movement that was the uprising of Blacks in America especially who were lived in the south against the Jim Crow Laws "Separate-but-equal" they were deprived from the right to vote because they were not registered. The modern Civil Rights Movement supposed to start in 1955, by the incident of the black woman Rosa Parks in the Montgomery boycott bus, she used sit in the black row as usually do, she refused to leave her place to a white man. She was arrested, but Montgomery black people support her with the NAACP to release from the jail; that organization was led by the leader, preacher, and activist Martin Luther King (1928-1968).

They wanted make an end to that doctrine and segregated buses. In November 1956, the Supreme Court declared that the boycott buses are illegal, they must be stopped; from that time Montgomery boycott bus was banned. This event was a boost to the other blacks in other counties to ask about their racial equality and freedom. By the presidency of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, he had empathy towards the blacks to be equal; Kennedy sent his request to the Congress to pass as a law. Unfortunately, he murdered in 1963 before the acceptance of his demand. His successor Lyndon Johnson became as a president and issued it an American issue and his first aim. In 1964 the Civil Right Act passed as a law. But the African American were disappointed, because racism was fixed in white's minds and rooted, it was difficult to solve this problem (ibid, 113)

The scholar Fredrik Sunnemark, *Ring Out Freedom*, 2004 states with his rhetoric language Dr. King could change a nation and the world's vision, and with his peaceful thinking and ideology he galvanized the American authorities and reached his target, in which he wanted melted and assimilate within the American society, live with them side

by side and sit in the same table of brotherhood as he delivered in his inaugural speech “I have a dream”1963 that inspired a nation. King preached the non-violence, and by demonstration, negotiation, resistance, and black consciousness Negroes could gain their civil rights. Due to the march that he organized in August 28th, 1963 from Alabama to the capital Washington, Black cross miles by feet asking for their rights peacefully, in which that there were victims injured, and some others died because of the violence of the whites; three months later the president Lyndon declared that blacks had the right to vote, and the black old man Coger Lee was the first registered in his family who could vote at the age of 64.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out of these truths that all men are created equal. I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveholders will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character (O’Callaghan, 1990. p. 113).

On the other hand, the militant Malcolm X (1925-1965) oppose Martin Luther King and wanted separation, his ideology was to separate from the white nation and built a Black nation inside, he informed his fellows that with the violence they could gain their rights. “The Ballot or the Bullets” by this famous sentence, he asked for their rights by violence, if the authorities did not give them their right to vote, he will rise other violence movement. Malcolm asked the Blacks to control themselves and their communities to express nationalism and regain freedom (Junuis, 2007, 193).

To be free, the African Americans adopted different measures, because they faced difficulties, and experienced bitter life from slavery ages to their freedom. They were dehumanized and deprived from their human rights. The oppressed people considered them inferior and will never treat them equal; blacks are still suffering racism and segregation. But they will never give up they will resist as their ancestors resisted to get rid of slavery and gained their liberty, the African American are proud of their heritage and always hope to return to their homeland Africa. Yet, their paths to freedom were different but their target was one.

General Conclusion

To conclude we can say that the African Americans passed through series of events and wars for freedom. They were struggling to change their lives and schematizes for a better future's generations. They faced the key problem of humanity, racism because they were marginalized from the American society.

In the first chapter this research defined the term of identity by different scholars, and figure out that it is the self-image of a person and it is the most important thing that need. Identity had a potential role in defining individuals in referring to their belonging to such communities; also it is the one's unique characteristics that distinguish him/her from others and who other is perceived you. This concept has particular components in which it helps to construct it for example our experiences' life that mean with our friction with others allow us to learn new things that help to shape the identity. On the other hand, this later has characteristics that differentiate the person with visible trait like race that include the color of skin, hence we can distinguish the individuals by their color of skin as we can differentiate the Blacks (African race) from the whites (American and Europe races). As we attempting to work out to define that concept, identity has aspects that represent the person's identity, cultural, political, and racial identities. Human must have an identity to prove his existence.

The second chapter had dealt with the identification of the African Americans that they had African ancestors who were brought to the U.S.A by force as slaves cross the Atlantic Ocean by less care and protection from 1619. The cause that makes the Africans lose their identity in America is slavery that is the savage inhuman behavior against humanity had done by the white Americans. Described the life during slavery that it was very harsh and difficult to adapt with, in which they had received bad treatment from the dominant race, they were inferior and used in plantation without rest, this research finds out that the Slaves were discriminated and marginalized and their lives were deprived. Then, as a result of uprisings against slavery and in the under the government of Abraham Lincoln, slaves were free and this declaration was their starting point to ask for their full rights as American citizens.

As a result of the second chapter, the third chapter presented the deferent ways that the African Americans used in questing to get their identity. Because of slavery had a tremendous impact on the Black people, who are get rid of it, and looked for other sufficient strategies. They were searching for full freedom to live as well as the white men. The conscious of the blacks was rise they get aware about what the dominant race used them for. The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1935) was the artistic movement in which the African Americans used it to express their culture. The African American literary prominent figures could regain their original culture; they described their blackness beauty, depicted Africa in their verses of poems, plays, and novels..., with arts Blacks expressed themselves and proved their existence within the diverse American society. With the arts Blacks became famous and had an influence on the white man, in which the later admired by the black culture, through this movement the black could redefine their race.

To achieve their political rights the Black leaders implemented various path to reach their target, they organized movement and demonstrated to get the full rights. The Civil Rights Movement 1963 was led by the activist Martin Luther King Jr. it was a period of political changes in the history Blacks where the leaders contended to political inclusion. Consequently, The African American regained their civil rights and being as American citizens, they participated in the political activities. Although, the Black struggled for their freedom in the United States and get it, they are still living in segregation and racism.

Works Cited

Articles

- Abbott, Philip, *Major Concepts in of Politics and Political Theory*, International Academic Publisher, (1999).
- Alain, Jean & Bales, Kevin, *Slavery and its definition*, (2012).
- Barkely, Elsa Brown, *Negotiating and Transforming the Public Sphere: African American Political Life in the Transition from Slavery to Freedom*. University of Chicago. USA, (1994).
- Bell D. J. Zenobia, *African American Nomenclature: The Label Identity Shift from “Negro” to “Black” in the 1960s*, University of California. Los Angeles, (2013).
- Carter J. Dorinta, *Cultivating a critical Race Consciousness for African American School Success*. Educational Foundations, (2008).
- Fearon. D. James, *What is Identity (As we Use the Word)*, Stanford University. (1999).
- Gleason, Philip, *Identifying Identity: A Semantic History*, (The Journal of American History Vol. 69No. (1983).
- Gogfried Agyman Asante, *Becoming “Black” in America: Exploring Racial Identity Development of African Immigrants*, Minisoto States University Mankato. (2012).
- Helms E. Janet, *An Update of Helms’s White and People of Colored Racial Identity Model*. (1995).
- Hsuch-Hua Chen Vivian, *Key Concepts in Intercultural Dialogue*, Nangang Technological University, Singapore, (2014).
- Ibrahim, F.A., *Cultural and Social Justice Counseling*, (2016).
- Lopez Haney F. Ian, *The Reconstruction of Race: Some Observation on Illusion, Fabrication, and Choice*. (1999).
- Miers, Suzanne, *Slavery: A Question of Definition*.
- Mouffe Chantal, *Democratic Citizenship and Political Community*. Miami Theory collective.
- Tilly, Charles, *Political Identities in Changing Polities*, (2003).

Books

- Eyerman, Ron. *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*. Cambridge University press. New York. USA. (2003).
- Bryn, O'Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the United States*. Longman. (2004).
- Birt E. Robert, *The Quest for Community and Identity*. Rowman and Publishers. Inc. USA. (2002).
- Breitman, George, *Malcolm X Speaks*. Grove press, New York. USA. (1990).
- Deford H. Deborah, *Slavery in the United States, Life Under Slavery*. Chelsea House, New York. USA. (2006).
- Gary S. Selby, *Martin Luther King and the Rhetoric Freedom: the Exodus Narrative in America's Struggle for Civil Rights*. Baylor University Press. (2008).
- Hornsby, Alton. *A companion to African American History*. Blackwell Publishing. Australia, (2008).
- Howes, K. King. *Harlem Renaissance*. Gale Group. USA, (2001).
- Junuis, P. Rodriguez. *Slavery in the United States*. ABC-CLIO, Inc. (2007).
- Kolchin, Peter. *American Slavery*. Penguin. New York, (1993).
- Lacy K. Ford. *A Companion to the Civil War and the Reconstruction*. Black-well Publishing.
- Roman C. V. *American Civilization and the Negro*. Bibiliolife. Philadelphia. (1921)
- Shelby, Tommie & Lionel. K. McPherson. *Blackness and Blood: Interpreting African American Identity*. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing. (2004).
- Tenelle, Porter. *Moral and Political Identity and Civic Involvement in Adolescents*. Stanford University. (2013).
- Torr D. James. *Slavery*. Greenhaven Press. (2004).
- Yael, Tamer. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherland. (1996).

Web Cited

- www.youtube.com/results?search_query=what+is+identity
- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/identity_\(social_science\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/identity_(social_science))
- www.historyinanehour.com
- www.quora.com
- www.britanica.com/identity-politics
- www.wiki.com

Dictionaries

- Oxford Student's Dictionary of English © Oxford University Press, 2007
- Merriam Webster Dictionary©2018 Merriam-Webster, Inc.