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The Significance of African American Spirituals in The Civil Rights Movement

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dearest mother **Naima DJEBALI**, my father **Hacen MESGHOUNI**, my only brother "**Said**", my sisters and their families, the dearest and adorable uncles, aunts and nephews with sincere gratitude for their love, support and encouragement. As well as, their moral support that strengthened and kept me going all along.

KAOUTAR MESGHOUNI

This dissertation is dedicated with a special feeling of gratitude to my beloved parents **N.Mohamed HAMDI** and **Salima DJELALI** for being the ones to walk me in every step along this way with their words of encouragement, support and unconditional love. As well as my special sister, my little Angel **LouLou**, who has never left my side. I dedicate this work to the dearest and adorable grandmother **MESOUDA**.

Finally to my sweet partner **Kaouter**.

NOUR ELHOUDA HAMDI

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Abstract

This study aims at highlighting the significance of African American spirituals in the civil rights movement through shedding light on its active role in promoting and preserving the original cultural identity of enslaved Africans. In this respect, both aspects of spirituals and the movement were inspected via reevaluating the existing body of literature, in the theoretical chapter. That proceeds with practical chapter; wherein, the underlying correlations between the nature of spirituals and the movement have been investigated using analytical techniques along with Du Bois' theory of double consciousness. Those results yield to the significance role of African American spirituals as creative means of expressing their struggles and addressing their issues through encoded signals within the movement. Consequently, these spiritual practices have a profound impact on African Americans who have endured years of suppression and persecution of their black identity.

Keywords: African Americans Spirituals- Civil Rights Movement- Cultural Identity- Du Bois' theory

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

US	United States
CRM	Civil Rights Movement
MIA	Montgomery Improvement Association
ID	Identity

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Introduction

Background of the study

The history of struggle and suffering in American culture dates back to the 17thC. A legacy which comprises tragically of African American spirituals. In addition to, the Civil Rights Movement's Liberty spirituals that capture the turbulent of the 20thC's shift from black spirituals to politically and socially conscious spirituals so as to inspire some of the most moving fervent performances and compositions in history of the former. Those core elements, despite being utilised in deferent genre such as soul and gospel, were modified at the time to achieved the desired impact. Among of which, desegregation, fairness, equality, and survival were the objectives guaranteeing rights to all Americans. (Stefanie, A. 2015).

Subsequently, both religious and historical aspects of these spirituals were the two major focus of the movement. For, they had not only strengthen the activists' sense of cultural expression and group identity. The combination of activist and organizational concerns was what made the movement successful. This well-known spiritual would denounce social inequities and foreshadow governmental actions. The artists would go on to become celebrities and prominent activists in the black community for using their platforms to support or promote groups working to emancipate the African American cultural identity.

African Americans had debating the definition of cultural identity for generations. To defend slavery and the slave trade, a number of white individuals contended that all African Americans were barbarians devoid of culture. They disparaged the African American identity in various ways, which they adamantly denied. As a result, many black people tried to repress their blackness and denied their African ancestry out of shame. They were always looking for

methods to discredit themselves, whether it was by bleaching their skin, straightening their hair, or wearing in white. Malcom X stated in 1965 that "we have been a people who hated our African characteristics." Malcom X was fully aware of this. We detested having black heads and the way our nostrils looked and we detested our skin tone. (Runice ,2009).

Odette, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Sam Cooke, Nina Simone, and John Coltrane all produced spirituals in response to the civil rights movement. These spirituals were a potent tool in the fight for independence because they effectively communicated the moral imperative of the freedom struggle. The use of African American spirituality as a tool of repression during the civil rights movement will be examined in this dissertation. It will examine some of the era's most notable and well-remembered anthems and look into the meaning of the spiritual to determine its functions and efficacy.

African American have always been interested in history and culture. But what really interest was the desire to understand what drove black artists to use the spiritual as defense and whether such a strong form of expression might be a potent means of reuniting African Americans with their true identity. One's self-confidence will not grow if they do not understand their history and culture. And community bonds will only be strengthened once black people around the globe are aware of the cultural ties that bind them and the challenges they may face in the contemporary world. A crucial means of cultural expression for African Americans has been spoken language, especially spirituality.

Another aspect of this endeavour is cultural expression, which was essential to the spiritual civil rights movement. For many years under slavery, black people were unable to freely express their cultural identity, but they found a way to use spirituality to make their voices heard. They sang gospel music, ancient spirituals, and other tunes while labouring in the fields. When these spiritual s reappeared, they helped African Americans reconnect with their history. To understand how far they have gone and how far they still have to go, it is critical to keep in

mind where they started. This notion of distinguishing the past from the present is reflected in the black national anthems of the civil rights movement.

Statement of the Problem

Preserving the cultural identity of human societies is one of the most difficult challenges faced by inferior ethnic groups through human civilization. A so often unsuccessful quest that failed under the oppression and persecution of the superior ethnic groups who robbed them their homelands and deprived them of their roots to conceal their identity for protecting interests and ambitions. Those were historically replicated while establishing the American civilization save for the case of African Americans who, unlike the Indigenous people and Europeans pioneers' and African deportees, were not able to maintain their roots and origins, only. But, they were able to extend their ethnic distinctiveness deep within America. A historical fact that still shrouded in ambiguity, especially in light of their experience with American institution of slavery and their primitive origins as well as the distance from their homeland making them the most vulnerable minority group to lose this ID and recognition's survival battle who won it eventually after the Civil Rights Movement. Basing on these premises, the following research and hypothesis are addressed in the following sections to unravel the means by which African Americans' met their desired ends in this foreign land.

Research Questions and Research hypotheses

Reflecting on the above statement, this dissertation addresses the question of to what extent did the African American Spirituals contributed to help preserved African slaves' original ID. And this is through investigating their significance in the Civil Rights Movement as cultural identity sanctuary for defending, liberating and affirming African Americans' legacy in civil rights' struggle. Subsequently, this inquiry is investigated, reflecting on the assumption that

provided African American spirituals were not crafted by slaves; African Americans ID would be long-lost and forgotten, in the light of the following hypotheses:

1. Provided African American Spirituals had neither inspired nor bonded African Americans, Civil Rights Movement would not possibly secure unified voice for its cause.
2. Civil Rights Movement's anti-racial and anti-oppressive cause could not be met any way better than with African Americans Spirituals' attribution in cultural identity's defence.
3. African American spirituals offered a venue for expressing feelings and spreading messages of resilience while acting as a form of protest and resistance against racial injustice.

Research Methodology

A historical and analytical methods in addition to the double consciousness theory have been used to address these concerns. The theoretical basis of this work will be based on a single major hypothesis. This concept is based on historical research technique to gather information from primary and secondary sources, and then evaluate how the evidence helps us comprehend a historical era or event. Primary and secondary sources are employed in historical research techniques. It characterized by carefully examining and analysing information concerning historical occurrences. It is a critical examination of events, their progression, and historical experiences. The goal is to better comprehend how previous experiences affect current and upcoming occurrences that are related to the course of life. While the practical basis on analytical method which is a structured and systematic procedure employed to examine and evaluate a particular problem occurrence or system. It encompasses the utilization of analytical principles, techniques, and tools to collect and interpret data with the objective of acquiring significant insights, reaching conclusions, and making well-informed decisions. In addition to

W.E.B. Du Bois' "double consciousness," which describes the difficulty of improving one's sense of self when one has many social identities. He wrote about race in his 1903 book *The Souls of Black folk*. It was coined by W.E.B. du Bois to illustrate how oppressive society affected African Americans. African Americans preached grandeur and equality at the same time. The African Americans found it challenging to combine their African American subculture with their fundamentally American identity because they were forced to perceive themselves from the perspectives of the two cultures. Du Bois makes the case that his longstanding status as a black person, demonstrating the difference between being a negro and an American, exacerbates the issue of black people in America. According to Du Bois, complete freedom did not follow the end of servitude (Jamali, 2021).

The freedom, spirituality, and identity of African Americans. All of these subjects have piqued the curiosity of numerous researchers during the past ten years. Spirituals have a purpose, according to the majority of authors who have written about them; some would claim that they helped the movement along while others would describe them as a way to pass the time on the freedom rides. This study differs from others in that it explores the additional benefits that spirituals provided for African Americans by viewing them through the lenses of both independence and cultural liberation.

The Aim of the study

This study aims to determine how African Americans' spirituals served as a cultural identity defense during the American civil rights movement, as well as how it mirrored the movement's core principles and promoted its message. Additionally, this research will look into which spirituals were the most popular, how spirituals were adapted and passed down to civil rights activists, and what role African American spirituals played in promoting awareness and the growth of the African-American cultural identity.

Significance of the study

This study contributes in the academic body of knowledge. The significance of studying African American spirituals as cultural identity defense during the Civil Rights Movement lies in its contribution to a comprehensive understanding of the movement's dynamics and the role of music in shaping cultural resilience. During the Civil Rights Movement, African American spirituals played a significant role as a form of protest and as tools for mobilization and empowerment. These spiritual s carried powerful messages of freedom, justice, and equality, serving as rallying cries for activists and providing a sense of unity and determination within the movement. By examining the lyrics, themes, and contexts of these spirituals, we can shed light on the strategies and motivations of Civil Rights activists. Studying African American spirituals during the Civil Rights Movement contributes to the preservation and documentation of an important aspect of African American history and culture. By recognizing their historical and cultural significance, we ensure that these spiritual s and their messages continue to be recognized, celebrated, and passed on to future generations. In summary, examining the significance of African American spirituals during the Civil Rights Movement provides valuable insights into the cultural, historical, social, and psychological dimensions of this pivotal period in American history. It helps us appreciate the power of music and expression as tools for social change and highlights the enduring legacy of the Civil Rights Movement.

Structure of the study

This dissertation contains two chapters, the first of which will examine the legacy of American institutions of slavery and their cultural identity also the events that led to the birth of the civil rights movement in America and the development of black spiritual as a genre, from scripted lyrics inspired by biblical tales to freedom spiritual. Then, briefly, consider the theoretical framework. The second chapter will have three sections. The first section will focus on the main singers and activists, who influenced the cause, then analyze the most popular

protest spiritual of the civil rights movement and will also examine the freedom spiritual or civil rights anthems, while making a case of multiple to see its role in delivering the movement's message. The second section will contain slave spiritual's linguistic perspective. The last section will interpret the African American spirituals basing in denotative and connotative approaches. In short, this paper will show how spiritual evolved into a vehement weapon for emancipating the African Americans' cultural identity in the United States, and how the civil rights movement was the catalyst for this quest by examining the most popular spiritual.

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Framework and the African American Voice

Chapter One : Historical Framework and The African American Voice

INTRODUCTION	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.1. The Legacy Of American Institution Of Slavery	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.1.1. From American Revolution To The Civil War	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.1.2. From Cotton Expansion To The Civil War	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.2. African Americans' Cultural Identity	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.3. African American Spirituals	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.3.2 African American Spirituals As Cultural Expression And Identity	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
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1.4.2.4. The Voting Rights Act (1965)	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
1.4.2.5. Selma To Montgomery March (1965)	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
CONCLUSION	Erreur ! Signet non défini.

Introduction

For understanding the relationship between spiritual, history and identity one must comprehend the bridge that African Americans had to cross and the constructing process of how their identity was and would be. The first chapter is titled by the African American voice in a social historical perspective. It will shed light on African American history, identity, and its meanings. It is also important to mention the beginning of the African American journey from their roots to their reformed faith, as well as the development of slave spiritual as a genre, from coded lyrics inspired by biblical tales to modern spirituals. To broaden our understanding of the subject, the first chapter will explore how black people from other nations used spirituals as a means of decolonization, defense, as well as the essential marches of the civil rights movement.

1.1. The Legacy of American Institution of Slavery

From its establishment in 1776 to 1865, the legal system of human chattel slavery, which includes the enslavement primarily of Africans and African Americans and was widespread in the United States through the European colonization in the American slave trade was introduced. It was practiced in Britain's colonies from 1526 to 1564, including the thirteen colonies that formed the United State during early colonial times. (Barbar.f & Hassani Mabrouki.H.2017).

The institution of slavery in the United States was intricately tied to the country's economy. It relied on racial discrimination and was deeply intertwined with the crucial economic framework. The American south was an agricultural area that depended on slavery to develop economy. With the increase of the settlement in the new land, the small farmers were not able to cover their needs, accordingly the farming of large plantations needed more Labour force. At the beginning they used the native people and the European. But they are hard to kept

by force because they were familiar with land. And as for the European they free with the end of their contract. As a new source of cheap Labour, the planters were interested in the African continent slaves. In 1619 the first ship from Portuguese arrived to the 13 colonies and a strong trade starts between Britain, Americas and the West Africans. It is called the triangular trade. (Barbar.f & Hassani Mabrouki.H.2017).

In the slavery era, the period before the civil war, an enslaved individual was considered as an object or property that could be bought, sold, or given away under statute. For the citizens slavery is an internal issue that the central government should not interfere in it. This was considered one of the reasons for the civil war in 1861. Slavery lasted from the 17th to the 18th centuries before United States President Abraham Lincoln abolished it with the 13 amendments in 1865. Many of slavery's social and economic functions were preserved by segregation, sharecropping, and convict leasing in the decades after the end of reconstruction (Barbar.f & Hassani Mabrouki.H.2017).

1.1.1. From American Revolution to the Civil War

From the Revolutionary War to the Civil War (1775-1865), America's era was a time of transformation, with nation-building, territorial expansion, and heated debates about slavery. This document provides a chronological overview of the major events and developments during this period (Middlekauff, 2005). The American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), also known as the War of Independence, was a conflict between her 13 colonies in America and Great Britain (Middlekauff, 2005). This led to the creation of the United States as an independent nation and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The Constitutional Convention led to the drafting of the United States Constitution, a key document that set the framework for the new government. He introduced the principles of federalism, separation of powers and individual rights (Maier, 2010).

In the early 19th century, the United States experienced significant territorial expansion. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 doubled the size of the country. The country's territory then expanded further west with the annexation of Texas in 1845 and land acquisitions during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). (Foner, 2015). During this period, the issue of slavery became increasingly controversial. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 and the Compromise of 1850 were attempts to resolve the problem of slavery spreading to new territories. However, these compromises only temporarily eased tensions between the northern and southern states (Fehrenbacher, 1981). The election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860 heightened domestic tensions. Fearing Lincoln's anti-slavery stance, the Southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. The 1860 secession of South Carolina marked the beginning of the Civil War (McPherson, 1988). The Civil War was a conflict between the Union (Northern states) and the Confederate States (Southern states). The main issues at stake were slavery and state rights. The war ended with a Union victory, and the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment abolished slavery (McPherson, 1988).

1.1.2. From Cotton Expansion to The Civil War

The rapid expansion of the cotton industry's rapid expansion in the Deep South following the invention of the cotton gin increased demand for slave labor, and the southern states continued to function as slave societies. The upper south sold more than a million slaves to the Deep South, owing to labor demands from new cotton plantations in the Deep South. The total slave population in the south eventually reached four million. 67 as the United States expanded, the southern states attempted to extend slavery into the new western territories to allow proslavery forces to maintain their positions in the region. The new territories seized by the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican cessation were the subject of major political crises and compromises. The newly rich, cotton-growing south was on the verge of dissolving from the union by 1850, and tensions escalated. In the Kansas territory, bloody battles broke out over

slavery. Slavery was defended as a "good thing" in the south, and the most prominent religious denominations split over the issue of sex slavery into regional groups of the north and south (Jones,2010).

The north and the south had been clashing over economic interest and cultural values. Southern political leaders resisted the attempts of northern antislavery political for that tried to block the expansion of slavery into the western territories. Seven slave states split to form the confederacy after Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 election based on stopping slavery expansion. The civil war began shortly after; when confederate forces attacked the US army's fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861. After Lincoln called forth on April 15, four more slave states joined the confederacy, urging "the militia of the various states of the union, to the total number of seventy-five thousand," to suppress" the rebellion. 9 during the war, some jurisdictions abolished slavery, and the war effectively ended slavery in most places, thanks to union laws such as the confiscation acts and the emancipation proclamation. Following the union's victory, the thirteenth amendment to the United States constitution was ratified on December 6, 1865, prohibiting "slavery and involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime."10 (Jones,2010).



Figure 1.1.1. Slavery became the economic engine of the south

1.2. African Americans' Cultural Identity

Black or African American identity is closely linked to music (Dixon et al .2009). Spirituals have been used as a tool of coded communication and resistance to slavery and oppression in recent history (Pyatak, Muccitelli 57). Bullock emphasized individual identity by referring to the verbal protest that developed in the early twentieth century and was shaped by literary efforts as African Americans "were to find a new conception of themselves and a deeper spiritual orientation." The new group aimed to reestablish the Negro's racial identity, but the Negro must rethink his past to shape his future. They wrote about African kings, black warriors, black leaders of slave rebellions, negro jockeys, and the challenges of being negro" (bullock. 2005). In literary interpretation based on the historical rejection of a past, the shift in identity definition was apparent. The shift was based on a worldwide movement among blacks to connect to their Zion in Africa. The new identity reflected the African continent's greatness, by redefining blacks' historical places. It was fueled by the rapid European exploration and exploitation of Africa's continent, which began in the late nineteenth century. Marcus Garvey

and W.E.B. Sullivan are the only two Americans to have a copy of the book in the United States. Dubois pushed blacks to discover their past (Marable. 2018).

Culture is a set of common characteristics of a group of individuals that include the place of birth, language, religion, cuisine, literature, social habits, art, and music. There are many cultures that are well-known to us, and they have many people who associate themselves with those values, origins, and beliefs. Some cultures are relatively small, with only a small number of people affiliated with them. Nevertheless, the cultural value cannot be overstated by its size. Regardless of the culture's size, age, or whether it has evolved over time or stayed the same, each culture has a way to inform us about ourselves, others, and the global community (Marable. 2018).

A researcher in the field of human communication, Michael L. Hecht, defines identity a perceived registry in a society that is standardized by the appropriate and effective use of symbols and cultural narratives, similar interpretations and meanings, and common ancestry and traditions. Identity refers to a sense of identity or personhood, while cultural identity refers to the individual sense of belonging to or belonging to a particular group of individuals. African American, French, and Hindu identities change in and through time and space, and are made up of a variety of components, such as geography, politics, economics, sociology, psychology, and history. Identity is, at any moment, what it was, is, is, and is evolving, and exists at individual, social, and societal levels across time and space (Michael L. Hecht et al. 1993).

Identity is shaped and constructed by the people, interactions, as well as the environments in which it has, does, or will exist. As individuals interact with one another and the environment, it can be defined by the individual and co-created by the environment. This co-creation process is also negotiated as individuals unite with various groups, meanings, and norms are modified and refined. Identity is therefore a characteristic of the individual, the contact, the relationship, and the collective (Martin et al 2013). The focus of this dissertation is on those who

are part of the African American tradition. For any individual there may be more than one identity, and each identity is in an insurmountable state of expansion and change. African Americans in the United States are now confronting a slew of challenges, including the potential conflicts between being African American and American, different ways of being African American, and being an individual and a group citizen. Members of this group are also confronted with in-group conflicts and out-group assimilationist, as well as fear and discrimination (Martin et al 2013).

“Culture,” according to Edmund d. Pellegrino, is “perhaps the most sluggish one in social sciences.” Kluckhohn and Kroeber published 164 definitions about a decade ago. In his sarcastic description of culture as a “collective cast of minds,” Pellegrino believes that Kuper best captures the meaning of the term. “. Pellegrino’s book “African American bioethics” includes a “collective cast of minds” that provides a sense of all those things that give identity to individuals, nations, organizations, and ethnic groups. He includes all the attributes that human beings value, which describe them as who they are, what they want to be, and what they perceive themselves to be. “They value these things enough to work for, live for, and die for.” According to Pellegrino, these are things that define their view of the good life and shape their morals, namely, their judgments of right and wrong, good and evil. As everyone and every group have its own conception of a particular set of values and convictions that reflect its own history, life experiences, as well as aspirations. Humans are classified into several “cultures” in this sense. To a nation family club or political party, for example (Pellegrino.2007).

1.3. African American Spirituals

African Americans who were held as slaves in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries created a genre of religious spirituals known as African American spirituals. African musical traditions were incorporated into the music, together with Christian hymns, to cr

create a distinctive sound that conveyed the spiritual beliefs and experiences of African Americans both during and after slavery (Jones, 2016).

Black American spirituals have their roots in West and Central Africa, where music played a significant role in daily life and religious ceremonies (Bonds, 2017). Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas during the historic slave trade and deprived of their cultural and religious practices. But by adopting some aspects of old traditions into their new life in the New World, like music, they were able to keep some of them alive. The African American spirituals developed into a way for enslaved people to communicate their difficulties and aspirations as slavery persisted in the United States. Those who sang and listened to the music found solace and inspiration in the hidden messages and allusions to biblical themes that were frequently found in it. (Bonds, 2017).

African American spirituals developed further after the Civil War and were welcomed by African American churches and communities. Spirituals like "We Shall Overcome" became anthems for the movement's fight for racial justice and music in general played a key part in the civil rights movement (Gates Jr., 2017).



Figure 1.2. *This Far By Faith: African-American Spiritual Journeys*

African American spirituals were important in enslaved communities because they were used as a form of resistance, solace, and communication (Dargan, 2019). These spirituals were written and transmitted orally from one generation to the next, frequently using biblical parables and metaphors to convey the feelings and experiences of the oppressed (Jones, 2019). In accordance with Dargan (2019), spirituals were utilized as a means of communication among slaves enabling them to exchange information and plan acts covertly. For instance, it was thought that the spiritual "Wade in the Water" included hidden meanings about escaping through waterways to find freedom (Dargan, 2019).

Individuals who were enslaved may find solace and hope in spirituals, which gave them a method to deal with the terrible reality of slavery. Jones (2019) points out that while also delivering a message of faith and perseverance, spirituals reflected the suffering and grief of slavery. Spiritual spirituals like "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" are an illustration of how people yearn for freedom and a better life outside of slavery.

Spirituals also promoted a sense of unity among enslaved people by expressing the longing for freedom and acting as a tool of resistance. Dargan, (2019) claims that spirituals were frequently sung at covert meetings and gatherings as a tool to plan and motivate resistance to enslavement. In conclusion, African American spirituals were essential in enslaved communities as a way of resistance, consolation, and communication. This spiritual s encouraged a sense of community and fight against oppression while giving enslaved people a means of self-expression and coping with the harsh reality of slavery.

1.3.2. African American Spirituals as Cultural Expression and Identity

African American spirituals serve as a vital cultural expression and a source of identification for the African American community in addition to reflecting the historical experiences of those who were formerly considered property (Marshall & Winston, 2017). These

spirituals are still performed and studied today and are a crucial part of African American cultural legacy. Spirituals were among the earliest types of African American music, according to Marshall and Winston (2017), and they laid the groundwork for other genres including gospel, blues, and jazz. They drew on African musical traditions and Christian themes and images, and were composed and performed by slaves (Marshall & Winston, 2017).

A distinctive and unmistakable sound that has remained a characteristic of African American music was produced by this special fusion of elements. Additionally, spirituals provided enslaved people with a sense of identity and community by enabling them to express their cultural background and connect with other people who understood their struggles. Spirituals were frequently performed in groups, as Marshall and Winston (2017) describe, giving enslaved people a chance to connect and bond over their common experiences. Even in the face of discrimination and injustice, the African American community's hope, faith, and resiliency were expressed through these spirituals. Spirituals are still studied and performed today as a reminder of the strength and imagination of the African American society. Spirituals continue to be performed by musicians of many backgrounds, as Schuller (2017) points out, and they have inspired a wide spectrum of musical genres. We can commemorate the African American community's significant contributions to culture by conserving and honoring these tunes.

In conclusion, African American spirituals are an important form of cultural expression and identity for African Americans. They also serve as a reflection of historical experiences. These spirituals are still cherished today as a representation of the African American community's tenacity and inventiveness. They are a special fusion of African and Christian traditions (Marshall & Winston, 2017).

1.4. The Civil Rights Movement

African Americans were the targets of racial discrimination and segregation during the American Civil Rights Movement, a significant social and political movement (Davies, 2018). The movement, which drew inspiration from a long tradition of fighting injustice and oppression, started in the 1950s and persisted until the 1960s (Davies, 2018).

According to Davies (2018), a more general battle for racial justice that had been going on for centuries was the root of the Civil Rights Movement. The legacy of institutionalized racism, including Jim Crow laws and other types of institutionalized racism, as well as slavery and the long history of prejudice and brutality against African Americans, were the origins of this conflict. But a significant civil rights movement, led by people like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X, did not start until the middle of the twentieth century (Davies, 2018).

The Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Greensboro sit-ins, and the March on Washington were among the significant occasions and actions that defined the Civil Rights Movement. These occasions helped raise awareness of the injustices experienced by African Americans and helped mobilize support the movement. Furthermore, the Civil Rights Movement did not focus solely on one problem or demand. Voting rights, desegregation, and economic justice were just a few of the many themes it covered (Davies, 2018). The movement was also distinguished by a variety of strategies, such as community organizing, legal challenges, and nonviolent protests (Davies, 2018).

To sum up, the Civil Rights Movement was an important social and political movement that aimed to eradicate segregation and racial prejudice against African Americans. The movement was characterized by a number of historic events and acts and came out of a long

history of oppressed resistance. The movement used a variety of strategies to accomplish its objectives since it was not constrained by a single topic or demand (Davies, 2018).

1.4.1. The Legal and Political Strategies During Civil Rights Movement

African Americans and their allies used a variety of legal and political tactics throughout the Civil Rights Movement to combat the system of racial discrimination and segregation that was ingrained in American culture. (Barnes,2018). The Civil Rights Movement was able to make tremendous progress thanks to these tactics. Using litigation to challenge discriminatory laws and policies was a crucial legal tactic. This included issues with voting rights limitations, challenges to school segregation, and discriminatory housing practices. (Barnes,2018). To prepare the path for additional legal challenges to discrimination, landmark court cases like *Brown v. Board of Education*, which found segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, were important (Barnes,2018).

The use of nonviolent civil disobedience to oppose unfair laws and practices was another significant legal tactic. This included strategies like sit-ins, boycotts, and marches that pushed Congress to act by raising awareness of the injustices experienced by African Americans. (Barnes, 2018). The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the March on Washington are two such instances.

Political tactics were also used to advance the Civil Rights Movement in addition to these legal strategies. While sympathizers in the federal government utilized their positions of influence to promote civil rights legislation, African American voters mobilized to demand more representation and influence in the political process. (Barnes, 2018). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were two major pieces of landmark legislation that were passed as a result of this (Barnes,2018). .

In order to combat racial discrimination and segregation in American society, the Civil Rights Movement used a variety of legal and political tactics. These tactics, which included legal action, nonviolent civil disobedience, and political mobilization, were crucial in helping the campaign make substantial progress (Barnes,2018).

1.4.2. Civil Rights Movement Important Events

The civil rights movement was a social and political movement aimed at securing the legal and constitutional rights of African Americans in the United States. The movement began in his 1950s and continued into the 1960s, marked by a series of non-violent protests, marches and other forms of civil disobedience.

The movement was driven by many factors, including persistent discrimination and segregation of African-Americans, and the influence of leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, who became emblematic of the movement's ideals and goals. A crucial time in American history, the Civil Rights Movement worked to ensure that African Americans had equal opportunities and rights. Here are a few of the movement's most important moments.

1.4.2.1. Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–1956)

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a political and social protest campaign that took place in 1955 and 1956 in Montgomery, Alabama. The boycott was organized in response to the arrest of Rosa Parks, an African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery city bus to a white passenger.

Parks' arrest on December 1, 1955, sparked a wave of protests and civil disobedience in Montgomery, led by the newly-formed Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) and its president, a young Baptist minister named Martin Luther King Jr. The MIA called for a boycott

of the city's buses, which required African Americans to ride in the back and give up their seats to white passengers if the white section of the bus was full.

The boycott lasted for over a year, during which time African Americans in Montgomery organized carpools, walked to work, and took other forms of transportation to avoid using the city's buses. The boycott put economic pressure on the Montgomery Bus Company, which relied heavily on African American ridership, and drew national attention to the issue of segregation and discrimination in the United States. The boycott was not without its challenges and setbacks. Protesters faced harassment, intimidation and violence from white supremacists, and many were arrested and jailed for participating in the boycott. However, MIA and its supporters continued to focus on non-violent resistance, and their efforts ultimately paid off.

On November 13th, 1956, the United States Supreme Court ruled that racism on public buses was unconstitutional, officially ending Montgomery's boycott of buses. The boycott marked a major turning point in the civil rights movement, sparking similar campaigns against racism and discrimination nationwide In Garrow (1986).

1.4.2.2. Little Rock Nine (1957)

The Little Rock Nine were a group of nine African-American students who entered Little Rock Central High School in 1957. At the time, schools in the United States were still segregated. Nine students were selected based on their academic performance and willingness to tackle the challenges they faced as the first African-American students to attend a previously all-white school.

On September 4th, 1957, on the first day of school, nine students were prevented from entering school by a mob of angry white protesters and Arkansas National Guard called by Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus. The event attract national attention and sparked a

constitutional crisis because it violated his 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of the Supreme Court, which declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional. The situation continued to escalate, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower eventually intervened by federalizing the Arkansas National Guard and deploying federal troops to ensure that the Little Rock Nine could attend school safely. The nine students faced immense hostility from both their white peers and the larger community, but they persevered and became symbols of the civil rights movement. The Little Rock Nine's bravery and determination played a significant role in the fight for racial equality in the United States and helped pave the way for the desegregation of schools and other public institutions. (Bates, 1962)

1.4.2.3. March on Washington (1963)

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom is a historic civil rights movement held in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963. Was held From across America, he led more than 250,000 people to the Lincoln Memorial to demand civil and economic rights for African Americans. Organized by a coalition of civil rights, labour and religious groups, the march was one of the largest political rallies in US history. Attendees included civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Bayard Rustin, John Lewis, and A. Philip Randolph. The highlight of the event was Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech, calling for an end to racism and achieving racial equality. The speech is widely regarded as one of the most important speeches in American history and has become an icon of the civil rights movement. This march was successful in drawing public attention to civil rights issues and spurred passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and his Voting Rights Act of 1965. He also played a key role in inspiring other social justice movements. Both in the United States and around the world (King, 1963)

1.4.2.4. The Voting Rights Act (1965)

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a landmark law that prohibits racial discrimination in voting. This law was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 6, 1965, and electoral discrimination against blacks was rampant, especially in Southern states. This Act was a response to the many obstacles black Americans faced in exercising their right to vote. This includes literacy tests, ballot taxes, and other forms of voter suppression. Provisions in the law include prohibiting voting practices or procedures that deny or limit the right to vote on the basis of race or color, and that certain jurisdictions with a history of discrimination have a federal vote known as "pre-approval." This includes requiring government approval. Change voting laws or practices. Since its enactment in 1965 and 1975 and 1982, the Voting Rights Act has been amended several times to strengthen its protections and maintain its relevance to topical voting issues. Despite these changes, the law has faced legal challenges in recent years, with some arguing that the preapproval requirement is no longer necessary. It remains an important law in the fight for equal access to boxes. (U.S. Congress, 1965)

1.4.2.5. Selma to Montgomery March (1965)

The Selma to Montgomery March is a major civil rights movement held in Alabama in 1965. The march was organized by civil rights activists to secure voting rights for African Americans in the state. This march began in Selma, Alabama, on March 7, 1965, but was met with fierce opposition from the National Guard and local law enforcement. The event became known as "Bloody Sunday" after police brutally attacked protesters with tear gas and batons, injuring dozens. The violence drew national attention to the issue, and two days later Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. announced another march to Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge. This time, the protesters were ordered to turn back by a federal court, but after kneeling and praying, they turned around and sparked more violence.

Finally, on March 21, his third march from Selma to Montgomery began, this time under the protection of National Guard and Federal troops. Protesters, including both black and white supporters, walked 54 miles to the state capital, Montgomery, where they arrived on March 25. The Selma to Montgomery March was a turning point in the civil rights movement. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed. The Voting Rights Act prohibited discriminatory practices used to discourage African Americans from voting, such as literacy tests and poll taxes. (Branch,1988).

Conclusion

The difficulty of expressing yourself as both an African and an American Rican can be difficult to solve because it is influenced by the individual African American's life. Over the years, the slave identity has been influenced by many factors. Nevertheless, they held their hold on their heritage from the moment they stepped into the trade ships of slavery until today. History, religion, and in particular music were all part of the same story. Africans retained these main elements in the new world, and even though the bulk of the population converted to Christianity, musical rituals were still an integral part of their faiths in the church. As time passed African American spirituals evolved into a strong foundation for many musical genres. They used the African spiritual not only as a weapon of resistance, but also by many black nations that were battling white expansion away from their territories and consciousness.

CHAPTER TWO

The Resilience of Slave Culture Identity in Liberty Struggle

Chapter Two: The Resilience of Slave Culture Identity In Liberty Struggle

INTRODUCTION	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
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2.2. Spirituals defensive cultural identity: value analysis	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
2.2.1. Pete seeger's we shall overcome.....	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
2.2.2. Odetta's oh freedom	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
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CONCLUSION	Erreur ! Signet non défini.

Introduction

The American civil rights movement saw highs and lows throughout the 1950s and the 1960s lows. On the one hand, there was a movement in how black people and other minorities were treated in America, but the change was overshadowed by racial violence and strife. Although the process was difficult and drawn out, with music playing at each stage. They were able to express their cultural identity through music, which was based on shared religious and historical experiences. This facilitated the organization and mobilization of black activists for social change. It is impossible to overlook the role that music plays in the movement, and it is hard to imagine the movement succeeding without it. The civil rights movement relied heavily on singers and their spiritual s since they were employed as a tool in the nonviolent fight to communicate years of racism in the diaspora of African Americans. More significantly, spirituals enabled them to liberate their culture and identity with the aid of movements like Black Nationalism and black power, as they recreated spiritual s about slavery for marches and embraced their authentic accents and hairstyles as well as their actual blackness singing with proudly their way to liberty and equality.

2.1. Methodology

The practical section of evaluating and analyzing African American spirituals goes through analytical method and Du Bois' theory of double consciousness .Utilize an analytical method refers to a systematic approach or procedure used to analyze and study a specific problem, phenomenon, or system. It involves the application of analytical techniques, and tools to gather and interpret data in order to obtain meaningful insights. In Addition, W.E.B. Du Bois popularized the double consciousness theory, which examines the psychological experience of African Americans residing in a racially segregated society. It was detailed by Du Bois in his influential book "The Souls of Black Folk," which was released in 1903. Double consciousness, according to Du Bois, is the internal turmoil that African Americans go through as they negotiate

their identities in a society that sees them through the prism of racial prejudice and discrimination. He said that African Americans have a dual awareness, or sense of "twoness," that is influenced by both their own internal perceptions and the exterior perceptions that the predominately white culture has placed on them. Du Bois focused on two essential aspects of split consciousness: The "inner self" is how African Americans view their own identity and self-perception. It includes all of their individual values, goals, and perceptions of who they are and where they fit in the world. And the "external world" refers to how African Americans are seen by the general public, particularly by the dominant white culture. It has to do with the prejudices, preconceptions, and preconceived ideas that affect how African Americans are perceived and dealt with by others.

2.2. Spirituals Defensive Cultural Identity: Value analysis

Slave spirituals, often referred to as Negro spirituals, were used by enslaved Africans in the United States to protect their cultural identities. These spirituals served as a medium for enslaved people to express their religious beliefs and cultural practices, which were frequently suppressed by their captors. Negro spirituals provided enslaved people with a means of communication and a vocabulary in which to convey their difficulties, sufferings, and hopes, as stated by (Johnson, 2020, p.5).

In a system that aimed to dehumanize them, enslaved people were able to keep their cultural customs and proclaim their identity through the words of these spirituals. The spiritual "Wade in the Water," for instance, was utilized as a code spiritual to indicate when it was okay to flee and go through waterways like rivers in order to avoid being apprehended. (Jennings, 2017). This spiritual functioned as a symbol of optimism and resistance to oppression in addition to offering useful advice.

As a whole, the safeguarding of enslaved Africans' cultural identities in the United States was greatly aided by slave spirituals. These spiritual s served as a kind of resistance and a way for people who were living as slaves to express their religious beliefs and cultural practices in the face of a system that wanted to exterminate them. "The survival and transmission of Negro spirituals are a testament to the resilience and tenacity of the enslaved Africans who created and sang them," stated by (Smith, 2018, p.12).

2.2.1. Pete Seeger's We Shall Overcome

The gospel spiritual "We Shall Overcome" was modified from the hymn "I'll Overcome Some Day" by Charles Albert Tindley, which was initially released in 1900. The Highlander Folk School was where the spiritual first emerged during the 1940s labor uprising (Redmond, 2013.p.18). Its music is considerably older, going all the way back to the days of slavery, proving that the spiritual's roots are in black culture (Turck , 2009,p.54). Young members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee were taught "We Shall Overcome" by Guy Carawan ,(2021) in 1960 when they were in meetings.

The like of this spiritual served as the protesters' anthem during the civil rights movement. They chanted it as they protested and marched, sat at segregated lunch tables, and were beaten, imprisoned, and jailed. They performed it at the funerals of individuals who passed away as a result of their efforts to advance civil rights and justice. One cannot adequately express the vigor and feeling this one spiritual stirs up throughout the Southland, according to Wyatt Tee Walker, executive director of King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. I have heard it sung in large gatherings with thousands of voices joining together to sing it; I've heard a handful of inmates in Hinds County Prison in Mississippi softly sing it • • behind bars; I've heard elderly women singing it on their way to work in Albany, Georgia; and I've heard students singing it as they were being led away to jail. It produces power that cannot be described (Carawan, 2021, p.11).

The Food and Tobacco Workers Union (FTWU) went on strike in 1945. At the conclusion of each day of picketing, one of the workers, Lucille Simmons, an African American woman with a background in gospel singing, modified the spiritual's lyrics.

The spiritual's lyrics were changed from "I will overcome" to "We shall overcome," which is significant. Redmond hypothesizes that the modification was made to reach out to non-Black cultures involved in the labor movement, for whom conceptions of the individual did not naturally conjure the collective, because the pronoun 'I' has long been comparable with 'We' in African American culture (Barker, 2016, p. 53). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on March 31, 1968. He included the message and lyrics from "We Shall Overcome" in his moving address, "Remaining Awake through a Great Revolution."

"We're going to win our freedom because our resounding demands embody both the revered history of our country and the unchanging will of the all-powerful God. So, despite the darkness, the intensity of the anger, and the ferocious explosions, I can still sing "We Shall Overcome." We will prevail because the moral universe's arc is long, yet bends in the direction of justice. Because Carlyle is correct that a lie cannot last forever, we will prevail. Because William Cullen Bryant was correct—Truth, Crushed to Earth, Will Rise Again—we shall prevail. James Russell Lowell is correct, and as we sang earlier today, we will prevail (Mieder, 2010, p. 213)"

About overcoming racial injustice is spoken in the spiritual. The phrase "We'll walk hand in hand" suggests that white people and black people will walk together and form a single society. "We shall live in peace" means that people of all races can coexist peacefully. Like the spiritual One day, Black and White will coexist a single society. "We are not afraid" refers to the fact that we are not afraid to demonstrate for justice. Many activists have sung We Shall Overcome, but the 250,000 marchers at the Washington for Jobs and Freedom march are among its most famous performers, according to Knight's book "anthem" (Knight, 2009, p. 295).

"We Shall Overcome" is a renowned spiritual and anthem closely associated with the civil rights movement in the United States. The song's repetitive structure underscores its message of perseverance and united action. By employing a future tense in its lyrics, it conveys a sense of optimism and unwavering determination, motivating individuals to persist in their fight for equality. The phrase "we shall overcome" serves as the central theme, representing the conviction in triumphing over adversity and oppression. It encapsulates the collective resilience and strength of marginalized communities, as well as their unwavering commitment to achieving justice and parity. This song embodies hope and resilience, acknowledging the obstacles faced by marginalized groups while asserting their ability to overcome through unity and unwavering perseverance. It serves as a powerful source of inspiration and encouragement during challenging times. The lyrics of "We Shall Overcome" convey the message of conquering challenges and prevailing in the face of adversity. The repetition of the phrase "We shall overcome" emphasizes the belief in eventual success and a better future. Unity and collective action are emphasized in the song, highlighting their importance in the struggle for justice. The phrase "We shall overcome" symbolizes the unwavering determination to overcome oppression and represents the belief in the ultimate triumph of equality and fairness. By repeatedly using this phrase, the song reinforces its symbolic power and serves as a source of inspiration and motivation for those facing injustice. "We Shall Overcome" promotes solidarity and togetherness among individuals striving for social change. The song elicits intense emotions, evoking hope, resilience, and determination. Its profound lyrics and melody inspire a sense of upliftment and encouragement, fostering a feeling of connection and motivation among those who sing or listen to it.

2.2.2. Odetta's Oh Freedom

Odetta has always been a representation of African pride and a mind free from colonialism. According to Seeger's account of their first encounter in her biography: Seeger

couldn't help but notice the young black woman who was sitting by herself, watching the other people with a friendly grin while maintaining a respectful distance. She was tall and heavy set, with short, kinky hair that wasn't straightened, as was the standard way for African American women at the time. With encouragement the moment she decided to start singing, the crowd fell silent as she got up with her guitar and collected herself. She sang "Take This Hammer" (Seeger,1989).

While leaning back and closing her eyes her emergence occurred at the height of the Civil Rights Movement, and her spiritual s about freedom, the suffering of prisoners, and the oppressed helped motivate activists as well as the general public (Evans,2008). She was a weapon, piercing racist black stereotypes and elevating young Africans' awareness while imparting non-school-taught knowledge on black history. "As I did those spiritual s, I could work on my hate and fury without being antisocial—through those spiritual s, I learned things," she remembered in an interview she gave to the New York Times. The historians in school had lied to us or had withheld information concerning the history of black people in our nation, according to Weiner.

One of several recordings she has made is the spiritual "Oh Freedom" by Odette. This particular spiritual gained rapid popularity nationwide due to its captivating rhythm and meaningful lyrics. During the 1963 March on Washington, she took the stage to perform "Oh, Freedom," a composition written by formerly enslaved individuals following the end of the Civil War. "Oh, Freedom" was a powerful anthem representing resilience and determination during a time marked by slavery. Moreover, it was a melody that inspired the creation of improvised verses and encouraged adaptation. Like expressed indicated in the following verses:

"No more weeping

No more shooting

No more tear gas

No more jail house

No Bull Connor" (Evans,2008).

Every line used to end with "Before I'd be a slave, I'd be buried in my grave" in the traditional version. And "home to my Lord and be free"; nevertheless, by the middle of the 1960s, some activists had amended the last line to "As I fight for my right to be free." The most well-known rendition was created by campaigners for civil rights.

Following these assertions, it is clear that "Oh Freedom" is a lyrical expression of the vocalists' greatest aspiration. Dr. Ellen Gunther, professor of church music at Wesley Theological Seminary, writes in page 117 of her book "Words: Slave Life and the Power of the Spirituals" that "A spiritual of resistance, defiance, and escape, it captures the determination of the slave's life." heart. As seen by the words, "Before I'd be a slave, I'd be buried in my grave," slaves did not naturally view themselves as being in physical bondage”.

The spirituals' celebration of the abolition of slavery and its subjects' freedom is the most obvious interpretation of the spiritual. A line from the spiritual, "Before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave," was used. Plainly a declaration of deliberate resistance. Stating that the former situation cannot be returned to. A significantly more militant kind of resistance than African Americans typically displayed during slavery is conveyed by the intensity of such imagery (they will die before they can ever be slaves again) (Matthews,2011,p.176).

The spiritual also conveys a sense of collective sadness, as evidenced by the additional verses included in the Carawan version, such as "No More Burning Churches" and "No More Jim Crow." Perhaps because slavery was such a universally repugnant institution, the spiritual message of "Oh Freedom" has been usually understood to be a ceremonial exclamation in the main.

The intricacies of the more current rendition, however, show some depth in the spiritual; it may both rejoice and demand freedom that has been denied. A study of black

spirituality According to the Foundation, "It is evident that the method in which they invite the human voice to add shape, rhythm, texture, and melody is what gives Negro spirituals their force. The words have rhythm, diversity, and emotional depth. It everything reverberates with the African-American experience (NSSF). The way this spiritual was performed ultimately determined whether or not it was received positively or negatively (Matthew ,2011,p.42).

The spiritual "Oh Freedom" pleads for freedom on two different levels: liberation from slavery and freedom in heaven, according to the department of American studies at the University of Virginia. The spiritual's refrain switches between "Oh Freedom" and "No More Moaning" and "No More Weeping" throughout. The narrator's liberation from prior racial persecution is the main focus of this passage. Eventually, the refrain switches to "There'll be singing," signifying that the spiritual's mood has changed from misery to joy. The spiritual encouraged African-Americans to band together and free themselves from their bonds in the 1960s, when racial prejudice was still a significant problem (Habib,2010). The lyrics' emotions reverberated throughout the country. The hymn is quite potent and sent a strong message to the oppressed African American community.

Frantz Fanon has recently gained recognition as one of the most significant and influential philosophers or theorists of the mid-twentieth century. His best-known work, "Black skin white masks" (1952), is regarded as an illustration of changes in decolonization ideology. Odetta was a symbol of decolonization, and this can be connected to Frantz Fanon's famous work "Black Skin White Masks" in which they have similar affects and motives. Fanon makes it plain that he wants equality and civil rights when he writes in "Black Skin, White Masks," "I, the man of color, demand just this: That the tool never possesses the man. That human enslavement to other human beings ends immediately. In other words, one by another. that I might be able to learn about and to love others no matter where they are. (Fanon,F, 1952) .

The lyrics of "O Freedom" reflect the challenges and hopes of African Americans during a time of significant racial inequality and oppression. The song expresses the longing for freedom and fairness, urging an end to discrimination and the realization of basic human rights. It embodies the desire to break free from the shackles of oppression and create a world where everyone is treated with dignity and honor. Odetta's rendition of "O Freedom" is characterized by her powerful and heartfelt vocals, which intensify the emotional impact of the lyrics. Her deep and resonant voice effectively conveys the pain, yearning, and determination of those who fought for freedom. Through her passionate delivery, she captures the essence of the civil rights movement and the collective struggle for justice. The song's interpretation lies in its ability to inspire and encourage individuals to take action and work towards a more just society. "O Freedom" serves as a rallying cry for justice and equality, reminding listeners of the ongoing battle for civil rights. It emphasizes the importance of standing against oppression and the strength of united efforts in bringing about meaningful change. Odetta's rendition of "O Freedom" is a poignant and moving tribute to the civil rights movement. Its analysis and interpretation reveal a deep longing for freedom, an urgent plea for equality, and a reminder of the ongoing struggle for justice in our society. The song remains relevant today, reminding us of the enduring significance of advocating for human rights and equality for all. The lyrics of "Oh Freedom" express a strong yearning for freedom and equality while condemning discrimination and oppression. The song gained popularity during the civil rights movement in the United States, a time marked by racial inequality and social turmoil. It became a significant anthem for activists striving for equal rights, symbolizing hope, resilience, and determination. Odetta's impassioned and soulful rendition of the song adds emotional depth to its lyrics, evoking feelings of pain, longing, and resolve. This emotional connection resonates with listeners, inspiring them to take action. Moreover, the word "freedom" itself carries profound connotations, representing not just the absence of physical and legal restrictions but also the pursuit of justice, equality, and human rights. Its repetitive use in the song reinforces its symbolic power and underscores the

importance of achieving freedom in all aspects of life. "Oh Freedom" emphasizes the collective struggle for freedom and equality by using inclusive language and referencing "brothers" and "sisters," emphasizing the need for unity and solidarity in the face of oppression. It conveys the message that true freedom can only be attained through standing together and supporting one another.

2.3. The Linguistic View beyond Slave Spirituals

Linguistically speaking, spirituals were used as means of communication and resistance. Another perspective that asserts once more the role that the lyrics of slave spirituals frequently carried subliminal signals that provided crucial information regarding safe homes, escape routes, and other elements of the network of the Underground Railroad (Dorsey, 2019). For instance The phrases "The riverbank makes a very good road" and "The dead trees will show you the way" in the spiritual "Follow the Drinking Gourd," for instance, were coded signals that instructed slaves to follow the North Star and walk along the river to attain freedom (Johnson, 2021).

In addition, the common -call-and-response- transaction and improvisation in slave spirituals reflects Africans' language as well as their musical traditions brought to America with the different groups of slaves (Hill, 2017). A fact that is possibly to be observed and tracked through the historical legacy of African American Spiritual like Swing Low, Sweet Chariot Call and Go Down, Moses Call. "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" Call: Swing low, sweet chariot Response: Coming for to carry me home Call: I looked over Jordan, and what did I see Response: Coming for to carry me home"(Jones, 2016, p. 123). This spiritual's functions name and singing reaction, as verified with inside the lines "Swing low, candy chariot" and "Coming for to hold me home" (Jones, 2016, p. 123). As well as the verses: "Wade in the Water" Call: Wade in the water Response: Wade in the water, children Call: God's gonna trouble the water

Response: Wade in the water"(Smith, 2010, p. 87). Whereby, the lead singer shouts "Wade in the Water" to which the group responds with "Wade in the Water, children", typical of many spiritual create a pattern of calls and responses (Smith, 2010, p. 87). As it is similarly observed in "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho" Call's lines: Joshua fit the battle of Jericho Response: Jericho, Jericho Call: And the walls came tumbling down Response: Jericho ,Jericho"(Miller, 2018, p. 56). The call-and-response format for "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho" is shown in the lines "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho" and "Jericho, Jericho". (Miller, 2018, p. 56).

Likewise, "Go Down, Moses" Call's lyrics that says, " When Israel was in Egypt's land Response: Let my people go Call: Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land Response: Tell old pharaoh ,let my people go "(Davis, 2014, p. 234). It invest biblical names and their impacts on the religious community to create an effective and symbolic spiritual. A connotative meaning that further confirmed with the unfold of the retold story in his words, such as; when Israel became in Egypt's land and let my humans go. Those all concluded the role of the linguistic perspective in emphasizing the significant contribution of spirituals in preserving the enslaved African Americans' cultural heritage through granting them a safe sanctuary for transmitting and communicating their distinctive and ancestral identity as free human beings .

2.3.1. The Evolution of Language in Communication of Slave spirituals

African Americans who were held as slaves in America gave rise to the distinctive musical genre known as "African American spirituals." Since these spirituals' inception, their language has undergone a significant evolution that reflects the social and cultural shifts that have occurred over time. This part will examine the language's development in African American spirituals, looking at how it has changed over time and the causes of those changes.

2.3.1.1. Early African American Spirituals

The enslaved Africans' native African languages had a significant influence on the language employed in early African American spirituals. The syntax and grammar of these spirituals were also affected by African language patterns, and many of the words and phrases employed in them had roots in West African languages. (Jackson, 2002). For instance, call-and-response forms, which were popular in African musical traditions, were used frequently in spirituals.

2.3.1.2. Post-Civil War Spirituals

The enslaved Africans' native African languages had a significant influence on the language employed in early African American spirituals. The syntax and grammar of these spirituals were also affected by African language patterns, and many of the words and phrases employed in them had roots in West African languages. (Jackson, 2002). For instance, call-and-response forms, which were popular in African musical traditions, were used frequently in spirituals.

2.3.1.3. Civil Rights Era Spirituals

African American spirituals continued to develop in the 1960s Civil Rights movement, reflecting the nation's shifting political and social climate. The vocabulary utilized in these spirituals emphasized the concepts of social justice and equality, which were prevalent in many of these spirituals. Spirituals like "We Shall Overcome" and "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around," for instance, made overtly political demands for action and social change in their words. (McGinty, 2016).

2.3.1.4. Contemporary Spirituals

The language of current African American spirituals has developed further, reflecting the constant changes in American society. The vocabulary utilized in these spirituals illustrates the stress on identification and self-expression that permeates many current spirituals. Spirituals like "Glory" by John Legend and Common, which was composed for the film *Selma*, use vocabulary that is both political and personal to portray a sense of both individual and group empowerment (McGinty, 2016).

2.4. Slave Spirituals Interpretation

African-American spiritual is a genre of religious spirituals that emerged during the period of slavery in the United States. These spirituals were created by enslaved Africans who used music as a mean to express their feelings, communicate with each other, and find solace in difficult situations. Analysis of African-American spirituality can be done with both a directive and an implication approach. (Michael L. Hecht et al. 1993)

A denotative analysis of African-American spirituality involves a literal interpretation of the words and phrases used in the spiritual. For example, in the spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" the denotative meaning of the word is that the chariot is the vehicle that carries the singer to heaven. Just like Michael L. et al. (1993) expressed in the verse ***Swing low, sweet chariot coming for to carry me home.*** This line indicates that the singer is prepared to go away this global and be part of God in heaven. However, the term "swing" conveys a rhythmic motion that can represent a feeling of comfort, freedom, or release. It can also symbolize the passage of time, much like a pendulum. The word "low" indicates a downward movement, potentially suggesting a descent from the heavens or a relieving of one's troubles or burdens. While this phrase suggests that the chariot is drawing near with the intention of transporting the singer to their "home." The concept of "home" holds various interpretations within this context. It can

signify a physical location like a heavenly realm or a spiritual sanctuary. Alternatively, it can symbolize a state of emotional or spiritual well-being, a haven of safety, peace, or a place where one can reunite with loved ones.

African-American spiritual connotative analysis involves interpreting the underlying meaning of words and phrases used in spiritual s. For example, the spiritual "Go Down, Moses" implies that the singer asks God to free them from slavery, just as God freed the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. (Michael L. Hecht et al. 1993) as illustrated in the following verses:

"Go down, Moses

Way down in Egypt land

Tell old Pharaoh

Let my people go"(Michael L. Hecht et al. 1993)

This is a cry for freedom and equality, and references to Moses and Pharaoh are metaphors for African-American struggles against oppressors. However, "Go down, Moses": This phrase can be understood as a call to action, urging Moses to travel or descend to a specific place, symbolizing his mission to deliver a message. It also conveys a sense of humility or surrender, recognizing Moses' role as a servant or messenger. The name "Moses" holds strong biblical associations, as he played a central role in the story of liberation and the Israelites' Exodus from slavery in Egypt. Then "Way down in Egypt land": This line highlights the setting of the narrative, Egypt, which symbolizes oppression and bondage. The use of "way down" suggests the depths of suffering or the considerable distance that needs to be overcome in order to achieve freedom. Also, "Tell old Pharaoh": Here, "old Pharaoh" refers to the ruler of Egypt during Moses' time, representing a figure of authority, power, and oppression. The act of "telling" Pharaoh implies a demand or plea for him to heed the delivered message, signifying a confrontation between the oppressed and the oppressor. In addition to, "Let my people go": This statement encapsulates the central message of the verse, expressing a strong desire for freedom and release from bondage. The phrase "let my people go" conveys a demand, determination, and

the assertion of basic human rights. It conveys the longing for liberation and the right to self-determination.

2.5. Results

All in all, the preceding analysis yields in the following major results:

1. African American spirituals are coded messages for the blacks and are a creative way of expressing and communicating during the struggle.
2. African Americans used these spirituals to reclaim their culture and establish their identity for themselves and their black communities.
3. Slave spirituals proving that they were more than just protest in the Civil Rights Movement.
4. African American spirituals they were as cultural identity defense during the battle.

2.6. Discussion

In the above results demonstrate the significance of African American spirituals in the context of the Civil Rights Movement, emphasizing their function as innovative ways of communicating issues and expressing hardships through encoded signals. Our analysis draws attention to the effects of these spiritual activities on African Americans who have long been subjected to discrimination and repression because of their race.

Firstly, African American spirituals gave black people and communities a creative means of expressing themselves and communicating during the struggle by acting as coded signals. These encrypted signals served as a form of resistance against repressive forces and allowed for the transmission of important information. Secondly, African Americans developed their identity for themselves and their black communities through the usage of spirituals which helped them

regain their culture. These songs evolved into potent instruments for developing a sense of pride and belonging, fortifying a sense of community, and for fostering harmony among African Americans. Thirdly, our analysis demonstrates that slave spirituals were not limited to being protest songs. They had a larger role in the Civil Rights Movement. These spirituals inspired courage, optimism, and tenacity, giving African Americans comfort in the face of suffering and a sense of empowerment. Finally, African American spirituals were used to defend cultural identity throughout the civil rights movement. African Americans strengthened their distinctive cultural legacy and fought having their identity erased in a society that is characterized by institutionalized racism and prejudice by upholding and continuing their spiritual traditions.

To sum up, our results are consistent with earlier studies that acknowledged the cultural and historical importance of African American spirituals during the Civil Rights Movement. As emblems of resistance and resiliency as well as a means of communicating secret messages, scholars have recognized the spirituals' significance in society. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of African American spirituals in the Civil Rights Movement. Through these songs, African Americans were able to communicate their difficulties and aspirations to both their local communities and the rest of the world in a way that was beyond the limitations of language. We gain invaluable insights into the struggles and resiliency of African Americans throughout history by comprehending and respecting the depth of meaning underlying these spirituals.

Conclusion

A dark period in American history is the history of slavery among African Americans. Africans who were being held as slaves at the time expressed themselves via music and other mediums. Spirituals were among the most significant artistic mediums used by slaves. Due to slave owners' attempts to stifle any type of cultural expression among their slaves, these spirituals were frequently sung in private. In this context, studying slave spirituals offers a window into the experiences of Africans who were held as slaves in America. Examining how

language was used to transmit meaning and a sense of identity is one way to analyze spirituals from a linguistic perspective examining the Spirituals' evolution of Language. These approaches help to comprehend the cultural, social, and political dynamics that shaped America's history of slavery on a deeper level. These spirituals allow to better understanding how Africans who were held in slavery used music as a form of resistance as well as how they used language and symbols to share their stories and convey their desire for freedom.

Conclusion

African American spiritual is a form of religious music that originated in the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries by enslaved African Americans. These spirituals were often sung in churches and religious gatherings, and were also used to convey secret messages among slaves. African-American spiritual texts often contain references to hope, freedom, escape from slavery, and biblical references and stories. Rooted in musical traditions, it has been adapted and transformed by African Americans to reflect their experiences and struggles.

The article "Sounds of Freedom: Spirituals from the 1960 Southern Civil Rights Movement" by Anne Stefani examines the characteristics and purposes of southern spirituals, proving that they were more than just protest spirituals. Beyond their most well-known goal, which was to encourage and solidify widespread participation in the countless nonviolent protests and activities against segregation, freedom spirituals have a transformative impact. Singing took on a new meaning in the context of the southern freedom movement, when African Americans used it to reclaim their culture and establish new identities for themselves and their communities. Stefani claims that in addition to opposing white supremacy in the south, freedom spirituals have also aided African Americans by reuniting them with their culture (Stefani A. 2015).

Some well-known African-American spirituals include "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "Wade in the Water," "Go Down, Moses," and "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen." These spiritual s have been performed and recorded by various artists and have become an important part of American musical tradition. In addition to its cultural significance, African-American spirituality also played a role in the abolitionist movement and the fight against slavery. Many

abolitionists and activists saw spiritual s as powerful symbols of the freedom struggle and used them to inspire and motivate others to join the movement.

The musical journey that was covered in the study "sing for freedom: the African American spiritual as weapon for emancipating cultural identity in the American civil rights movement" African Americans underwent a variety of experiences, from being transplanted on American soil to being freed during the civil rights movement.

This study demonstrated that singing during the civil rights struggle was undoubtedly a tool used by African Americans to free themselves, both through advocating for their civil rights and an identity that had been suppressed by white culture for decades. They achieved this by giving old African American spiritual s new meaning and interpretation, as well as by maintaining a close connection to their culture, religion, and history. The spiritual s they had grown up singing at church and hearing in general became more familiar to them via this process. They also developed into effective nonviolent weapons they could use to fight back against their racist oppressors. These weapons were both familiar and completely divorced from the reality of discrimination they faced on a daily basis. To put it another way, singing helped the demonstrators decolonize their brains and develop a new sense of their own collective identity.

The most important tool for African Americans to express their culture ever since they were transplanted to America is music. Black music served as the principal vehicle for communicating the melancholy and desire of Home Africa, quickly establishing itself as the first social sanctuary. The Great Awakening's religious impact and the populace's thirst for rebellion led to the development of black music. Without a doubt, music is a potent tool for bringing about societal change.

Black music has been used to document the history of the fight for freedom and equal rights, promote cultural knowledge, and develop black consciousness among African

Americans from the post-Civil War era through the post-Black Power Movement. It was at this point that music underwent a paradigm shift, transitioning from being an African-inspired form of entertainment and remembrance through genres like rhythm and blues and jazz to becoming a form of protest music that reflects the radicalization of racial violence and social injustices by white supremacists like the Klu klux clans.

This conclusion is inferred from the facts that identity and culture are two of the principal pillars of ethnicity. Many have tried—and still try—to address the problems of ethnicity and meaning through the development of cultural identity. Cultural identity comes from ethnic groups' behavior as they establish and alter their culture and sense of self. However, as external social, economic, and political processes and factors define and redefine ethnic categories over time, they also contribute to the creation of ethnicity. According to our research, black music serves as a bridge connecting Black individuals to their cultural identity.

When the Civil Rights Movement was at its most active, musicians gave voice to the cause by composing the music for marches, sit-ins, and protests. And one way to achieve that is to teach liberation spirituals to activists in both churches and highlander folk schools. Their own cultural background acted as a guide. The CRM served as the catalyst for many other movements that mostly focused on preserving cultural legacy and the rise of black leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., Amiri Baraka, and Malcolm X. It also served as an influence for the music. Who, despite their differences, all protected black cultural identity and supported and appreciated the value of music for African Americans.

Conclusively, the outcomes of this dissertation validate the assumptions about the strong correlation between the African American Spirituals and the Civil Rights movements through. Firstly, African American spirituals are coded messages for the blacks and are a creative way of expressing and communicating during the struggle. Secondly, African Americans used these spirituals to reclaim their culture and establish their identity for themselves

and their black communities. Thirdly, Slave spirituals proving that they were more than just protest in the Civil Rights Movement. Finally, African American spirituals they were as cultural identity defense during the battle. Those altogether meet the invistagitive study's aim which is to examine the role of African American spirituals as a means of cultural identity defense during the American civil rights movement, as well as their reflection of the movement's fundamental principles and contribution to its message. Furthermore, this study will investigate the most widely recognized spirituals, the methods through which they were modified and transmitted to civil rights activists, and the significance of African American spirituals in raising consciousness and fostering the development of African American cultural identity. And add to the existing body of literature about the American institution of slavery which stills a rich subject for research and especially in light of the ambiguity as well as the scarcity of references in the context of such topics.

In other words, without Freedom Spirituals, many acts of civil rights movement nonviolent resistance would not have been successful or would not have had the same impact on the African American community. What made freedom spirituals so potent was their ability to change both the artists and the audience. We contend that the rise of numerous black organizations fighting to preserve and restore the African American cultural identity was greatly aided by the African American Spiritual. It also had an influence on many white individuals, bringing to the forefront decades of oppression and struggle that the singers' voices reflected, even though such strength was obvious for African Americans.

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Appendices

Appendix A: " Oh Freedom" by: Odetta

Oh, freedom,
Oh, freedom,
Oh, freedom over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.
No more weeping,
No more weeping,
No more weeping over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.
Oh, freedom,
Oh, freedom,
Oh, freedom over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.
No more weeping,
No more weeping,
No more weeping over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.
Oh, freedom,

Oh, freedom,
Oh, freedom over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.
No more weeping,
No more weeping,
No more weeping over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free

Appendix B: "We Shall Overcome" by: Pete Seeger

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we shall overcome someday.
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we'll walk hand in hand someday.
We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace someday.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we shall live in peace someday.
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we'll walk hand in hand someday.
We are not afraid,
We are not afraid,
We are not afraid today.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we are not afraid today.
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we'll walk hand in hand someday.
The truth shall make us free,
The truth shall make us free,
The truth shall make us free someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That the truth shall make us free someday.
We'll walk hand in hand,

We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
That we'll walk hand in hand someday

Appendix C: Swing Low, Sweet Chariot by Jubilee

Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
I looked over Jordan, and what did I see
Coming for to carry me home?
A band of angels coming after me
Coming for to carry me home
Sometimes I'm up, and sometimes I'm down
(Coming for to carry me home)
But still my soul feels heavenly bound
(Coming for to carry me home)
The brightest day that I can say
(Coming for to carry me home)
When Jesus washed my sins away
(Coming for to carry me home)
If I get there before you do
(Coming for to carry me home)
I'll cut a hole and pull you through
(Coming for to carry me home)
If you get there before I do
(Coming for to carry me home)
Tell all my friends I'm coming too
(Coming for to carry me home)
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home

Appendix D: Wade in the Water by Ramsey Lewis

Wade in the water
Wade in the water, children
Wade in the water
God's gonna trouble the water
God's gonna trouble the water

God's gonna trouble the water
Mmh-mmh
Mmh-mmh
God's gonna trouble the water

Appendix E: Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho by Jay Roberts

Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Talk about your kings of Gideon,
Talk about your men of Saul
But none like good old Joshua
And the battle of Jericho.
That morning Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho
Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Right up to the walls of Jericho
He marched with spear in hand,
"Go blow that ram horn," Joshua cried,
"Cause the battle am in my hand."
God almighty then the lamb ram sheep horn begins to blow,
And the trumpets began to sound,
And Joshua commanded the children to shout!
And the walls come a tumbling down.
Oh Lord, you know that Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
The walls come tumbling down
Oh Lord, you know that Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
Joshua fit the battle, the battle of Jericho
The walls come tumbling down

Appendix F: "Go Down, Moses" by Louis Armstrong

Go down Moses
Way down in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go!

Oh when Israel was in Egypt land
Let my people go!
Oppressed so hard, they could not stand
Let my people go!

So the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go (let my people go)

So Moses went to Egypt land
Let my people go!
He made all Pharaohs understand
Let my people go!

Yes the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go (let my people go)

Thus spoke the Lord, bold Moses said
Let my people go!
If not I'll smite, your firstborn's dead
Let my people go!

God the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go!

Way down in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة لإبراز مدى أهمية الروحانيات الأفرو أمريكية إبانة حركة الحقوق المدنية وذلك بتسليط الضوء حول دورها الفعال في تعزيز و الحفاظ على الهوية الثقافية الاصلية للمستعبدین الأفارقة من خلال تتبع آثارهم من جديد عبر إعادة تقييم المخزون الادبي لمؤسسة العبودية الامريكية بالمبحث النظري لهذه الورقة البحثية. قبل التطرق بمحثها التطبيقي لتقصي طبيعة العلاقة الكامنة بين الروحانيات و الحركة بشكل عملي من خلال تحليل و تقييم هذه الروحانيات باستخدام التقنية التاريخية والتحليلية إضافة إلي نظرية الوعي المزدوج ل دو بويس والتي أفضت نتائجها إلي إبراز أهمية دور هذه الروحانيات الأفريقية الأمريكية في الحركة كونها وسيلة إبداعية للتعبير عن معاناتهم وطرح مشاكلهم من خلال إشارات مشفرة ومنه فإن هذه الروحانيات لها تأثيرا كبير على الأفارقة الامريكيين الذين تحملوا سنوات من قمع و اضطهاد هويتهم السوداء.

الكلمات المفتاحية الروحانيات الافروأمريكية، حركة الحقوق المدنية، الهوية الثقافي، نظرية دي بوا