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Baseball in American Culture

(Master Thesis)

Tereza Vítková

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Supervisor: Mgr. Jiří Flajšar, Ph.D.
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Autor: **Tereza Vítková**

Studijní obor: Anglická filologie

Vedoucí práce: **Mgr. Jiří Flajšar, Ph.D.**

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Tereza Vítková

ABSTRACT

The aim of the thesis is to analyze the issue of racial segregation in Major League Baseball. This thesis deals with the historical background of racial segregation and the progressive change of the American attitude to discrimination. The thesis is mainly concentrated on African-Americans.

The thesis consists of five parts. The first part brings a brief introduction to the topic. The focus of the second part is the history of baseball in the United States of America from the 18th century to the years following World War II. The third part comprises the segregation of African-Americans and its consequences, namely the development of the separate Negro Leagues and their subsequent fall after the integration of Major League Baseball. The fourth part is focused on the first African-American player to play in Major League Baseball and the impact of baseball's integration on American culture. The fifth part gives summary and conclusion.

Key words: baseball, segregation, integration, African-Americans, league, color line

ANOTACE

Tato práce se zabývá analýzou rasové segregace v Hlavní baseballové lize. Pozornost je zaměřena na historické pozadí rasové segregace a na postupnou změnu amerického přístupu v otázce diskriminace. Práce se soustředí především na Afroamerickou menšinu.

Práce se skládá z pěti částí. První část přináší stručný úvod do dané problematiky. Druhá část se zabývá historií baseballu ve Spojených státech amerických, a to od počátků baseballu v 18. století až po období po druhé světové válce. Třetí část rozebírá segregaci černochoů a její následky, konkrétně vývoj černošských baseballových lig a jejich pád, který následoval po integraci Hlavní baseballové ligy. Čtvrtá část se zaměřuje na prvního Afroameričana, který hrál v Hlavní baseballové lize, a vliv integrace baseballu na americkou kulturu. V páté části lze nalézt shrnutí a závěr celé práce.

Klíčová slova: baseball, segregace, integrace, Afroameričané, liga, rasová bariéra

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1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the thesis is to analyze the issue of racial segregation in Major League Baseball and the impact of baseball's integration on Americans' attitude towards discrimination. It will try to reveal if the baseball's integration helped to end the segregation in other parts of American society. The main focus will be put on the African-American minority as the only social group not to be involved in the American national pastime. It was Jackie Robinson who played a crucial role in the integration of African-Americans. In fact, the whole fourth chapter will be devoted to Jackie Robinson, the first African-American to play in Major League Baseball.

The thesis will start with the history of baseball. There are many myths and theories of the origin of baseball which roots are still being examined. During the 19th and 20th centuries, there were many attempts to unite the world of baseball and many different leagues were established. Some of them survived but the fall of other leagues was inevitable. In order to keep baseball an unprofessional sport, baseball managers did not give any financial evaluation to players. Such a decision led to financial scandals that struck at the heart of the baseball world. It was baseball that lent psychological support to Americans during World War II.

The third chapter of the thesis will be concentrated on the development of the Negro Leagues. In the 19th century, African-Americans had to face many difficulties. The post-Civil War era did actually help to improve the social status of African-Americans. This era, however, did not last long. With the arrival of Jim Crow laws, the situation of black citizens got even worse. African-American baseball players were being ignored, as well as the rest of the minority. In order to fight such discrimination, black baseball players decided to create their own leagues.

As mentioned before, the fourth chapter of the thesis will focus on Jackie Robinson. Jackie Robinson was the first African-American to break the baseball color barrier. During his career, he showed his determination to change American society. After his retirement, he did not stop to fight for the civil rights. He

cooperated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, with personalities such as Dr. Martin Luther King or Nelson Rockefeller. He supported and established many organizations that helped African-Americans with education and their way of living. The final chapter concludes and summarize the chapter.

2 THE HISTORY OF BASEBALL

2.1 The Origin of Baseball

The origin of baseball has always been shrouded in mystery. An immense number of baseball scientists, journalists and theorists were trying to find out the real background of this American national pastime. Some theories have been disapproved, some of them are still being investigated.

Baseball is often being mentioned in connection with the British game cricket and baseball's antecedent called townball. Cricket used to be very popular among British immigrants back in the 1850s, especially its organized events, attracted more spectators and the press than baseball back then. Cricket clubs were formed in more than 125 cities all over the United States during the first half of the 19th century. However, native-born Americans who had always played ball and bat games preferred other game called townball. Baseball rules are considered to be based on the rules of this particular game.¹ Americans as a nation have always had a tendency to separate their culture from the culture of their British ancestors. It is presupposed that such a tendency was one of many reasons to invent their own game even though the game of baseball was actually based on the British one.

2.1.1 Early History

In 1744, a famous children's alphabet book *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* was published in England. If you browse through the book, you will find out that the letter B is represented by Base-Ball. Although it is most probably a reference

¹ Jules Tygiel, *Past Time: Baseball as History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5-8.

to the British game called rounders, it appears to be the first reference to baseball in literature.²

“It was not very wonderful that Catherine, who had nothing heroic about her, should prefer cricket, base-ball, riding on horseback, and running about the country at the age of fourteen, to books.”³ According to the novel *Northanger Abbey* written by Jane Austen in 1798, it is supposed that the game was already known in England in the 18th century.⁴

The first mention of baseball in the United States appears in the Pittsfield Baseball Bylaw of 1791. “The safety of the interior of the meeting-house being secured by the exclusion of the town-meetings, the exterior was protected by a by-law forbidding ‘any game of wicket, cricket, base-ball, bat-ball, foot-ball, cats, fives, or any other game played with ball,’ within eighty yards of the precious structure. As a matter of fact, however, the lovers of muscular sport were not absolutely excluded from the tempting lawn of the ‘Meeting-house Common,’ as the letter of the law would have excluded them.”⁵ Such a reference to baseball appearing in a legal document as early as at the end of the 18th century proves that baseball was played in the United States much earlier than Abner Doubleday was even born.

2.1.2 The Myth of Abner Doubleday

Throughout the long history of baseball, there were many attempts to discover who was the inventor of the most popular sport in the United States.

In 1905, a commission led by Abraham G. Mills was established to start an investigation into the origin of baseball. The commission posted an advertisement

² David Block, “John Newbery Publishes A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, and with It Our First Glimpse of the Game of English Baseball,” *Our Game*, <http://ourgame.mlblogs.com/2011/07/16/little-pretty-pocket-book/> (accessed May 5, 2014).

³ Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (Boston: Little, Broan, and Company, 1903), 8.

⁴ Stephan Adams, “Jane Austen wrote about baseball 40 years before it was ‘invented’,” *The Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/3562873/Jane-Austen-wrote-about-baseball-40-years-before-it-was-invented.html> (accessed May 5, 2014).

⁵ J. E. A. Smith, *The History of Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, from the Year 1734 to the Year 1800* (Boston: Lee and Shephard, 1869), 447.

in a newspaper with a request to give them any information that could possibly be connected to the beginning of baseball. Already in 1905, Abner Graves, a 71-year-old man from Denver, Colorado, sent a letter to the Beacon Journal with his own memories about his schoolmate Abner Doubleday who, according to him or his imagination, is the true inventor of baseball.⁶ “On Monday, April 3, the mysterious traveler had someone type for him a bombshell letter revealing that as a five-year-old boy in Cooperstown he had witnessed twenty-year-old Abner Doubleday scratch out in the dust the diagram of a new game called baseball.”⁷

Abner Doubleday (1819-1893) born in Ballston Spa, New York, was an American soldier and a war hero fighting in the Civil War (1861-1865). His family moved from Cooperstown in 1838, thus it was impossible that he attended the same school in Cooperstown as did Graves, who was only a five-year-old boy in 1839. In fact, Doubleday entered the military academy in West Point in 1839. In addition to the date incompatibility, Doubleday himself does not indicate anything about baseball in his numerous extant diaries.⁸

Even though there were uncountable historical discrepancies in Graves’ story, the commission settled for his tale and on December 30, 1907, announced that Abner Doubleday was officially proclaimed the inventor of baseball. However, due to historical evidence disapproving Doubleday as the father of baseball, this story has been considered to be a myth.⁹ The desperate attempt to find the real origin of baseball made the investigators to reach for any story available. If they had been more interested in facts than in their glory, they could have been able to reveal the truth.

⁶ James Mallison, “A. G. Mills,” Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/abccef1b> (accessed May 7, 2014).

⁷ John Thorne, *Baseball in the Garden of Eden: The Secret History of the Early Game* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2011), 275.

⁸ “The Abner Doubleday Myth,” 19th Century Baseball, <http://www.19cbaseball.com/game-2.html> (accessed May 7, 2014).

⁹ Ibid.

2.1.3 Alexander Cartwright

Alexander Joy Cartwright (1820-1892), the founder of the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club (1845) and the author of the first set of rules for baseball, is nowadays better known as “The Father of Baseball”.¹⁰

Cartwright wrote down a set of rules that differentiated baseball from the games called cricket and townball.¹¹ “The new rules changed Baseball in a number of ways—further differentiating it from Town Ball—three strikes to a batter, three outs to an inning, tags and force-outs in lieu of hitting a runner with a thrown ball, and the addition of an umpire. The 1845 rules also established the idea of “fair” and “foul” territory.”¹² The baseball rules differentiate from the Knickerbocker rules in many ways, however, they were essential for the further development of the game.

The Knickerbocker Rules became the basis for the current set of baseball rules. The first match played between two rival teams took place at Elysian Fields, Hoboken, New Jersey on June 19, 1846. The Knickerbocker Base Ball Club was defeated by the New York Baseball Club, that is 23–1 in four innings.¹³

In 1848, when James Wilson Marshall found small pieces of gold in the American River in California, people from all over the United States moved there to try their fortune.¹⁴ And Cartwright was no exception. In 1849, he decided to leave New York. Although he left his whole club behind, it was his merit that baseball spread all throughout the USA. On his long journey to California, he was trying to pass on every knowledge of baseball he had and he went on to enhance the game he loved.¹⁵

¹⁰ “Cartwright and the Knickerbockers,” 19th Century Baseball, <http://www.19cbaseball.com/game.html#cartwright-and-the-knickerbockers> (accessed May 8, 2014).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “California Legends: James Marshall – Discovering Gold in California,” Legends of America, <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/ca-jamesmarshall.html> (accessed May 8, 2014).

¹⁵ “Alexander Cartwright,” CMG Worldwide, <http://www.cmgww.com/baseball/cartwright/about/bio.html> (accessed May 8, 2014).

“Father of the Modern Game of Base Ball” is written on Cartwright’s enshrinement plaque in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York where he was inducted into in 1938.¹⁶ The induction of Alexander Cartwright into the Hall of Fame was more than only adequate. As the founder of basic baseball rules, he is the one Americans should be thankful for their national pastime.

2.2 The Birth of Baseball Leagues

From the 1830s till the late 1850s, various types of ball and bat games were played in the United States, differentiating each other from region to region, from town to town. For most of the participants, these games were more of an informal entertainment, matches were rarely played against a rival team from other regions. However, with the growing popularity of baseball, in the late 1850s, a need to organize baseball and its events on a higher level arose.¹⁷

2.2.1 National Association of Professional Baseball Players

Daniel Adams (1814-1899), the President of the Knickerbocker Club since 1846, was also elected the President of the first Baseball Convention that took place in 1857.¹⁸ During this convention, the National Association of Baseball Players (NABBP) was formed and it became the ruling body for amateur baseball clubs. The aim of the convention was basically to standardize the rules of the game. The committee also decided to prohibit any financial compensation for players in order to keep baseball an amateur sport. Regardless of the prohibition, paying players had become an ordinary practice. Such violation forced the National Association to divide teams into those with paid players and those with unpaid ones which led to the establishment of the first professional baseball club, the Cincinnati Red Stockings. The formation of other professional teams was only a matter of time. The increasing number of professional baseball

¹⁶ Monica Nucciarone, “Alexander Cartwright,” Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/09ed3dd4> (accessed May 8, 2014).

¹⁷ Tygiel, *Past Time: Baseball as History*, 5.

¹⁸ John Thorn, “Doc Adams,” Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/14ec7492> (accessed May 9, 2014).

teams led to the formation of a new organization, the National Association of Professional Baseball Players (NAPBBP).¹⁹

The National Association of Professional Baseball Players (1871-1876) is considered to be the first professional baseball league. Even though the NAPBBP was the only league of that time, its central structure was so weak that it fell apart after five years of its existence. The central leadership was missing, the main decisions were made only by the member teams at the annual meetings, they had to prepare their own schedules and they could have played against any team they chose. The only requirement given by the NAPBBP was that teams had to play a specific number of games against each rival team. With such troubles to keep its players under control, the NAPBBP was rendered ineffective and replaced by the National League of Professional Baseball Players.²⁰ Although most of the leagues of the second half of the 19th century fell apart, the following baseball associations could have used them as a deterrent examples and thus avoid all the mistakes of previous management generations.

2.2.2 The National League of Professional Baseball Players

The National League of Professional Baseball Players (NL) was founded in 1876. Its first members were the Boston Red Stockings, Chicago White Stockings, Cincinnati Red Stockings, Hartford Dark Blues, Louisville Grays, The New York Mutuals, Philadelphia Athletics and the St. Louis Brown Stockings. The board of the National League consisted of four directors and the president of the league. The first president of the NL was a politician and businessman named Morgan Gardner Bulkeley (1837-1922). In 1877, the presidency of the National League was put into the hands of William Ambrose Hulbert (1832-1882), the president of the Chicago club. With his deep sense of justice,

¹⁹ "The Commissionership: A Historical Perspective," MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_history_people.jsp?story=com (accessed May 11, 2014).

²⁰ "National Association of Professional Base Ball Players," www.baseball-reference.com, http://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/National_Association_of_Professional_Base_Ball_Players (accessed May 11, 2014).

Hulbert was a man with the reputation of a very strict commissioner.²¹ “Resolved, that W.H. Craver, because of disobedience of positive orders of general misconduct and of suspicious play, in violation of his contract and the rules of the League, be and hereby is expelled from the Louisville Club.”²² Together with W. H. Craver, three more players were expelled from the Louisville club, namely James Devlin, A.H. Nicols and George Hall for intentionally losing a match. Receiving plenty of pleas, intransigent Hulbert issued a statement announcing that the dishonourable behaviour of a player would never be remitted and the player would be expelled for a lifetime.²³ Nowadays, such financial frauds and rule violation would be unacceptable, suspects would be committed for trial and most probably convicted. There were plenty of similar cases, the latest one occur in November 2013 when several British football players were accused of intentionally fixing football matches.

In 1883, after the Louisville Grays Scandal and other problems the NL had to face, the National League, the American Association and the Northwestern League drew up the National Agreement that was concentrated on the issue of luring players from one league to another.²⁴ “National Agreement is a pact which governed relations between rival major leagues, allowing them to respect one another’s player contracts and providing for a championship series between the two leagues’ champion teams.”²⁵ Fourteen leagues signed the National Agreement by 1900: the National League, Atlantic League, California League, Canadian League, Connecticut League, Eastern League, Indiana-Illinois League, Inter-State League, New England League, New York State League, Southern League, Texas League, Western Association and the Western League.²⁶ The National Agreement was a result of previous mistakes, management of the

²¹ “The Commissionership: A Historical Perspective,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_history_people.jsp?story=com (accessed May 11, 2014).

²² William A. Cook, *The Louisville Grays Scandal of 1877: The Taint of Gambling at the Dawn of the National League* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2005), 135.

²³ “The Commissionership: A Historical Perspective,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_history_people.jsp?story=com (accessed May 11, 2014).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ “National Agreement,” www.baseball-reference.com, http://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/National_Agreement (accessed May 12, 2014).

²⁶ “The Commissionership: A Historical Perspective,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_history_people.jsp?story=com (accessed May 11, 2014).

leagues learned a lesson. It is believed that no organization can be fully functional without proper direction.

2.2.3 The American League

Byron Bancroft Johnson (1865-1931), the president of the Western League in 1900, who changed the name of the league to the American League (AL) and tried to set it up as an equal one to the National League is considered to be the person responsible for the Major League Baseball (MLB) two-league system used till these days.²⁷

In 1900, Baltimore Orioles, Cleveland Spiders, and Washington Senators were eliminated from the season in the National League. Johnson decided to take a leap of faith and placed teams in Baltimore, Cleveland and Washington and thus the first full season of the American League could have started. When the NL refused to accept the AL as an equal league, the AL proclaimed it itself and withdrew from the National Agreement.²⁸ Such a move is understandable. Johnson was a purposeful man and he knew what he wanted. If he did not do it, the NL would never accept the AL as an equal league and the World Series would never come into existence.

However, the NL players with the vision of better financial valuation offered by the AL started to reconsider their posts in the NL and joined the AL instead. In 1903, The National League concerned with losing its top players acceded to the AL demands and declared it its equal. This conclusion of a new National Agreement led to the birth of the World Series.²⁹

Baseball legends such as Cy Young starring in the Boston Americans guaranteed a crushing victory for his team defeating the Pittsburgh Pirates by winning five out of eight matches in the first World Series in 1903.³⁰

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "1903 World Series," MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/postseason/mlb_ws_recaps.jsp?feature=1903 (accessed May 12, 2014).

The aim of the National Commission created by the National Agreement was to supervise the decent behaviour of the NL and the AL member teams and their players in order to prevent any contravention of the National Agreement rules. However, the National Commission turned out to be untrustworthy. It was more than obvious that members of the commission made their decisions in order to satisfy the needs of the teams they supported. The result of the inevitable demise of the commission was one of the most scandalous episodes in the Major Baseball League history – the Black Sox Scandal.³¹

2.2.4 The Black Sox Scandal

In 1920, the post of the Commissioner of Baseball was passed to Kenesaw Mountain Landis (1866-1944). He is primarily associated with the infamous incident that occurred during the 1919 World Series, the Black Sox Scandal. Eight members of the Chicago White Sox were banned from Major League Baseball forever.³² It was Landis who rectified the problems of the NL and the AL. It emerged that Landis had become a commissioner for a reason. He was obdurate and stubborn.

The first game of the 1919 World Series took place on October 1, 1919. The very first match already aroused suspicion. The Chicago White Sox' pitcher Eddie Cicotte gave up a sequence of hits causing the triumphant victory of the Cincinnati Reds. In Game 2 the Chicago starter Lefty Williams tried not to be as obvious as Cicotte pitched well until the fourth inning and gave up only one run during the game. Nevertheless, his teammate and the first baseman Chick Gandil, threw the game with mistakes made while hitting the ball. Similar unusual incidents occurred in each game of the World Series. On October 9, 1919,

³¹ "The Commissionership: A Historical Perspective," MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_history_people.jsp?story=com (accessed May 11, 2014).

³² "Sportscenter Flashback: The Chicago Black Sox banned from baseball," ESPN Network, http://espn.go.com/classic/s/black_sox_moments.html (accessed May 13, 2014).

the Chicago White Sox lost the eighth game in the series and let the Cincinnati Reds win.³³

Together with Eddie Cicotte, Lefty Williams and Chick Gandil, five other players, namely left fielder Shoeless Joe Jackson, shortstop Swede Risberg, third baseman Buck Weaver, utility infielder Fred MacMullin and centerfielder Happy Felsch, were accused for illegally fixing the game.³⁴ In 1920, all of the players were waiting for the trial. In September 1920, Joe Jackson and Eddie Cicotte revealed all the details to the jury and finally confessed to the conspiracy.³⁵

On March 12, 1921, when the trial had been delayed, the commissioner Landis determined to suspend the players from Major League Baseball for life.³⁶ “I deeply regret the postponement of these cases. However, baseball is not powerless to protect itself. All of the indicted players have today been placed on the ineligible list.”³⁷

In August, 1921, the former Chicago White Sox players were acquitted by a jury on all charges they had been accused of. Despite the jury decision, Kenesaw Mountain Landis did not change his attitude.³⁸ “Regardless of the verdict of juries, no player that throws a ballgame; no player that undertakes or promises to throw a ballgame; no player that sits in a conference with a bunch of crooked players and gamblers where the ways and means of throwing games are planned and discussed and does not promptly tell his club about it, will ever play professional baseball.”³⁹

Buck Weaver, claiming that he had never accepted any money from gamblers and that he had always played his best, appeared at Landis’ door

³³ “1919 World Series,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/postseason/mlb_ws_recaps.jsp?feature=1919 (accessed May 13, 2014).

³⁴ “Black Sox Scandal,” www.baseballlibrary.com, http://www.baseballlibrary.com/ballplayers/player.php?name=black_sox_scandal (accessed May 13, 2014).

³⁵ “Sportscenter Flashback: The Chicago Black Sox banned from baseball,” ESPN Network, http://espn.go.com/classic/s/black_sox_moments.html (accessed May 13, 2014).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ David L. Fleitz, *Shoeless: The Life and Times of Joe Jackson* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2001), 237.

³⁸ “Sportscenter Flashback: The Chicago Black Sox banned from baseball,” ESPN Network, http://espn.go.com/classic/s/black_sox_moments.html (accessed May 13, 2014).

³⁹ David Pietrusza, *Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis* (South Bend: Diamond Communications, Inc., 1998), 187.

trying to persuade him to reconsider his decision on Weaver's ban. Landis with his intransigent attitude never took his ruling back.⁴⁰

The decision made by Kenesaw Landis was more than adequate. Athletes who are more interested in financial sources than on the game itself should not be involved in the game at all.

2.2.5 The Curse of the Bambino

George Hermann "Babe" Ruth (1895-1948) with the nickname the Bambino was a famous outfielder and pitcher of the Boston Red Sox, later of the New York Yankees. The Curse of the Bambino is a legend familiar to all United States citizens.⁴¹

Babe Ruth was sold from the minor league team the Baltimore Orioles in 1914. In the following year, Ruth showed his talent and with 65 wins became the most successful pitcher in Major League Baseball. During his career in the Boston Red Sox, the team won three World Series titles in 1915, 1916 and 1918. Because of his numerous achievements in baseball, Ruth was in the spotlight of other teams of the MLB. In 1920, the owner of the Boston Red Sox and the Broadway producer Harry Frazee accepted the offer made by the New York Yankees and sold Ruth for 100,000 USD in cash and 300,000 USD loan. Many speculations about the reasons of the Ruth's sale appeared, however, consequences of the sale were fatal for the Boston Red Sox. There were countless factors that caused struggling of the club in the following year but the sale of the Bambino captured the imagination of the public most of all. The New York Yankees won 26 World Series titles since Babe was transferred to this club while the Boston Red Sox winning average went the opposite direction.⁴²

⁴⁰ "Sportscenter Flashback: The Chicago Black Sox banned from baseball," ESPN Network, http://espn.go.com/classic/s/black_sox_moments.html (accessed May 13, 2014).

⁴¹ "The Curse of the Bambino," Babe Ruth central, <http://www.baberuthcentral.com/babesimpact/legends/the-curse-of-the-bambino/> (accessed May 13, 2014).

⁴² Ibid.

The Boston Red Sox did not win any World Series since 1919 until 2004 when the Curse was finally reversed. The myth of the Curse itself was supported by unbelievable bad luck during games. The Boston Red Sox qualified in the World Series in 1946, 1967, 1975 and 1986.⁴³ “The Red Sox came as close as one out away from a World Series Title in 1986 but an easy ground ball in the 9th inning rolled under the glove of first baseman, Bill Buckner allowing the New York Mets to win the game and eventually the series and the curse of the Bambino remained in tact.”⁴⁴

The curse had a huge impact on the fans of the Red Sox who were trying to break it by any mean that came into their mind. Witches had been summoned to exorcise the negative energy from Fenway Park, the official baseball park of the Boston Red Sox. In order to reverse the Curse, a Red Sox fan climbed Mt. Everest, placed a Red Sox cap on its top and set on fire the New York Yankees cap in the base camp. And in 2004, a foul ball knocked out a little boy’s 2 teeth. The boy lived in the Sudbury farm house that was owned by Babe from 1922 to 1926. Fans believed that this event reversed the curse.⁴⁵

On October 27, 2004, a prayer of all fans and players was finally answered and the Boston Red Sox defeated the St. Louis Cardinals and after 86 years won the World Series title.⁴⁶

People can be easily fooled into believing any kind of legend or myth. The Curse of the Bambino was not real, it was fabricated by the media to attract more fans and readers. The media as a strong source of information has always made up stories and conspiracy theories whether based on facts or not.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ “A brief history of the Boston Red Sox,” Boston Redsox History , <http://bostonredsoxhistory.com/> (accessed May 13, 2014).

⁴⁵ “The Curse of the Bambino,” Babe Ruth central, <http://www.baberuthcentral.com/babesimpact/legends/the-curse-of-the-bambino/> (accessed May 13, 2014).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

2.3 Baseball in Wartime

World War II (WWII) was a harsh time for every country and the United States was no exception. In 1939, when war clouds loomed over Europe, most of the Americans preferred a neutral attitude. The American fighting forces were totally unequipped and not ready for the war. However, the United States was forced to make some necessary preparations, especially when Japanese government began to occupy the Pacific. The first effort to reinforce the national fighting forces was the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 signed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt requiring all males between the ages of 21 and 36 to register for military.⁴⁷

Baseball, as well as all other professions, was affected by the act. A huge number of players met their obligations and voluntarily joined the army, namely Hugh Mulcahy of the Philadelphia Phillies as the first MLB player joining the military, a Jewish-born Hank Greenberg of the Detroit Tigers who was later discharged from the Army because of a new law that was releasing males older than 28 from the duty, or Billy Southworth Jr. of the Toronto Maple Leafs, a Minor League team, and many others. More than 500 MLB players and more than 4 000 minor leagues players followed the example of Greenberg and Mulcahy. Despite the war tension, all draftees hoped in an early return to the USA and prayed for the peace. These hopes and prayers were shattered on December 7, 1941.⁴⁸

It was Sunday morning when an Japanese air strike surprised the American military base of Pearl Harbor. The United States of America entered World War II. The disaster that happened on one the Hawaiian islands sparked a wave of outrage and a feeling of nationalism. Most of the Americans enlisted in the military, for example Hank Greenberg applied for re-enlisting, or Bob Feller joined the US Navy.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Gary Bedingfield, "Baseball in World War II," *Baseball in Wartime*, http://www.baseballinwartime.com/baseball_in_wwii/baseball_in_wwii.htm (accessed May 14, 2014).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

When Adolf Hitler declared a war against the United States on December 11, 1941, the industrial giants of that time answered with enthusiasm and started to produce any tools, any guns, and any vehicles imaginable. Louisville Slugger baseball bats manufacturers Hillerich & Bradsby focused all their attention on stocks for the M1 carbine rifle.⁵⁰ Realizing or not, the WWII unified all the nations together, something that was to change the world. The segregation and discrimination started to be questioned. It was one of few assets of the war.

When the USA entered into World War I, the 1918 baseball season was cancelled. The baseball world and its fans faced the fear that the WWII would do the same to baseball again in 1942. President Roosevelt calmed them down when he sent a Green Light letter to Landis.⁵¹ “I honestly feel that it would be best for the country to keep baseball going. There will be fewer people unemployed and everybody will work longer hours and harder than ever before. And that means that they ought to have a chance for recreation and for taking their minds off their work even more than before. Baseball provides a recreation which does not last over two hours or two hours and a half, and which can be got for very little cost.”⁵² Baseball, the American national pastime, was a tool to help American citizens to persist, to survive hard times, to forget their fears, to give them power to continue. Baseball as the national pastime proved its power once again.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Josh Pahigian, *The Seventh Inning Stretch: Baseball's Most Essential and Inane Debates* (Guilford: Globe Pequot Press, 2010), 256.

3 THE NEGRO LEAGUES

3.1 The Emancipation Proclamation

When Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was elected the 16th President of the United States, seven of the southern states created the Confederate States of America to show their disagreement with Lincoln's republican governance. The formation of the Confederacy raised fears in Lincoln and in the majority of Northerners, that such separation of the country could have led to the complete fall of the USA. The main concern of slaveholding states of the Confederacy was Lincoln's pledge to end the slavery. The conflict between the North and the South culminated on April 12, 1861, in the battle at Fort Sumter in Charleston Bay when the Confederate army attacked the fort belonging to the Union and thus began the Civil War (1861-1865). After four years full of fighting and battles, on May 10, 1865, the Union captured the President of Confederacy Jefferson Davis and ended the Civil War for good. The North achieved its goal and the way to a country free of slavery could have begun.⁵³

"All persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."⁵⁴ Although the Emancipation Proclamation was proposed to the Lincoln's cabinet already in 1862, it did not come into force till January 1, 1863. Lincoln assumed that the emancipation of slaves would have weakened the army of the Confederacy that used slaves to support them in the battlefield. After acceptance of the Proclamation, the objective of the Union was to free all of its slaves and to increase a number of soldiers by allowing the freed slaves to join the army. Excited by the emancipation, former slaves voluntarily enlisted. At the end of the war, there was more than 200,000 African-Americans in the Union army. Although the Emancipation Proclamation took effect only

⁵³ "A Brief Overview of the American Civil War," Civil War Trust, <http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/overview.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).

⁵⁴ "Emancipation Proclamation," The Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/EmanProc.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).

in the North, it became an essence of the 13th Amendment of December 6, 1865⁵⁵ declaring “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”⁵⁶ The Emancipation Proclamation was only the first step on a long journey to freedom. Former slaves enthusiastic about newly gained freedom had no idea what would come next.

3.2 African-American Baseball Players in Post-Civil War Era

Even though slavery was abolished by the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, it was impossible to change hearts and attitude of the United States citizens. Beliefs about the differences between races were still implanted in their minds. The white population was still convinced that African-Americans had no rights. Such approach was supported even by the government, namely the Supreme Court, by its decisions on racial segregation of blacks made in the 1870s and the 1880s.⁵⁷

Considering baseball, the segregation began to spread already in 1867 when the NABBP issued a statement that no club including a black player would be accepted in the association. Fortunately, the NABBP was dissolved in 1871 and the ban became invalid.⁵⁸ The break came in 1884, when the Stillwater Club of the Northwestern League hired Bud Fowler. Even though in minor leagues, he was the first African-American ever played in the organized baseball.⁵⁹

One year before Fowler’s integration into minor leagues, Fleetwood Moses, another African-American baseball player was signed by a minor league

⁵⁵ “Emancipation Proclamation,” Civil War Trust, <http://www.civilwar.org/150th-anniversary/emancipation-proclamation-150.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).

⁵⁶ “13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution,” The Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/13thamendment.html> (accessed May 16, 2014).

⁵⁷ Steven Goldman, “The Negro Leagues excelled in a racially divided country—the United States,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues_story.jsp?story=kaleidoscopic (accessed May 18, 2014).

⁵⁸ Jason Lewis, “Black History: First Black Major League Baseball Player,” Los Angeles Sentinel, http://www.lasentinel.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2035:black-history-first-black-major-league-baseball-player&catid=110&Itemid=200 (accessed May 18, 2014).

⁵⁹ Benjamin Hill, “Fowler: A 19th-century baseball pioneer,” www.milb.com, http://www.milb.com/news/article.jsp?content_id=41022&fext=.jsp&vkey=news_milb&ynd=20060208 (accessed May 18, 2014).

club Toledo of the Northwestern League. One year later, the Toledo Blue Stockings club was accepted into the American Association, and thus Moses became the first black player to play in major leagues. Regarding racism, Moses had to handle similar difficulties as Jackie Robinson in 1947. Even though racial prejudice was still deeply rooted in baseball players' and fans' minds, they did not ask any governing institution to prohibit African-Americans to play in the league. Unfortunately, there were some players refusing to play against blacks, such as Cap Anson of the Chicago White Stockings refused to take the field against the Blue Stockings in 1884. Not talented enough to keep his place in major leagues, Moses was excluded in 1889.⁶⁰ It is believed that lack of talent was only a pretence for Moses' firing. Moses represented a black community, he was a person with whom the audience and society, in general, did not intend to reconcile.

“The season of 1887 was a turning point for race relations in baseball. During that summer, several events signaled a retreat from the integration that would end by the turn of the century in the total exclusion of blacks from professional white baseball.”⁶¹ In July, the International League reported that no contracts with African-American players would be signed anytime in the future. In the 1890s, the situation got even worse. Black players were excluded from major leagues, the only opportunity to play was in exhibition games against other colored teams, or against white teams after the regular season ended. Some African-American players were allowed to play on integrated teams but only in amateur baseball championships.⁶²

⁶⁰ Justice B. Hill, “A true pioneer: Fleet Walker is first African-American to play in Major Leagues,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues_profile.jsp?player=walker_fleetwood (accessed May 18, 2014).

⁶¹ Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game* (Campaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 58.

⁶² “Negro League History,” Negro League Baseball Players Association, <http://www.nlbpa.com/negro-league-history> (accessed May 18, 2014).

In 1885, a group of enthusiastic black players devised a different way of playing in organized baseball and founded a new club, the Cuban Giants that is considered to be the first African-American professional baseball club.⁶³

The Cuban Giants were established to provide African-Americans who suffered from the segregation with an option to play in a fully professional club. Back in the 1870s, baseball games played by the staff of black hotels were one of the most popular entertainment for their guests and benefactors. Such games helped Frank Thompson, one of the founders of the Cuban Giants, to realize that baseball had a great potential as a source of entertainment. He got in touch with Stanislaus Kostka Govern, a manager of the Washington Manhattans, and C.S. Massey, the Philadelphia Keystone Athletics' and Philadelphia Orions' manager, to discuss financial resources and to form a new club.⁶⁴ Govern founded and managed other black teams as well but the Giants was the most successful one. The Cuban Giants beat major league teams in Indianapolis and Cincinnati in 1887 and became champions in 1887 and 1888 seasons.⁶⁵ There were many of the African-Americans who were actually good at baseball. The attitude of Frank Thomson only proves that it was not about the color, it was about the skills. It proves that the refusing feelings about black athletes were unjustified.

3.3 Jim Crow Laws

The term Jim Crow, originally a black character appearing in a song and also a name of a dance back in the 1820s, was later in the 1880s used as a reference to laws that were based on the theory of whites and their superiority. Jim Crow Laws were created to support “separate but equal” ideas and to

⁶³ Adrian Burgos, *Playing America's Game: Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 47.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ “Cuban Giants,” Negro League Baseball Players Association, <http://www.nlbpa.com/the-negro-league-teams/cuban-giants> (accessed May 18, 2014).

emphasize the segregation of African-Americans in public facilities, such as hotels, restaurants, schools, or the US military.⁶⁶

Most of the US citizens, especially the Southerners, believed that African-American slaves were not equal to them and so they did not have the same legal rights. Congress proceeded to such attitudes by enacting the 14th Amendment.⁶⁷ “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.”⁶⁸ Not even the 14th Amendment did convince whites to change their stance on African-Americans. The US government used its power to pluck up courage of blacks and to show whites that even the head of the country had a positive attitude to change. The US citizens did not listen.

Despite the 14th Amendment, the South continued to pass laws keeping blacks out of white territories. In 1890, Homer Plessy violated a law passed by the State of Louisiana by sitting in the railway car intended only for whites travellers. He refused to leave the car and was arrested. It was all a part of a bigger plan prepared by the Citizens’ Committee to Test the Constitutionality of the Separate Car Law that was fighting against such injustice. Plessy was a light skinned man of African origin. He pressed charges against the State of Louisiana objecting that the rights given to him by the 13th and 14th Amendments were violated. The decision was quite surprising. The Judge John Howard Ferguson declared that the State of Louisiana had the full right to push through the segregated railroad cars. The Committee, dissatisfied with his decision, appealed to the Supreme Court to reopen the case in 1896. According to the court, to demand separate cars was not a violation of the amendments. The race was not treated differently, only kept

⁶⁶ “Jim Crow Laws,” United States History, <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1559.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).

⁶⁷ “Plessy v. Ferguson,” www.laws.com, <http://constitution.laws.com/supreme-court-decisions/plessy-v-ferguson> (accessed May 20, 2014).

⁶⁸ “14th Amendment,” Legal Information Institute, <http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxiv> (accessed May 20, 2014).

separately. Plessy vs. Ferguson case led to promotion of the segregation in the South and the Separate but Equal Doctrine was enforced in all public places.⁶⁹

The State of Louisiana law was only one example out of many other Jim Crow Laws. These laws prohibited interracial marriages, kissing of two African-Americans in public, going to white schools, blacks even had to live in a separate rooms in mental facilities.⁷⁰

Although the Major Leagues never formally banned African-Americans from baseball, the path to the Leagues went through the minor leagues that were closed to black players.⁷¹ A lot of players jumped from the Negro National League (NNL) to play in Mexican and Latino teams where they were treated like stars, having the opportunity to live in hotels or eat in restaurants of their own choice.⁷² The fact, that African-Americans had to live separately and, at the same, they had to fight in wars next to the white Americans to help to protect America, a country they did not even want to live in, shows the double standards that are so frequent in American society.

3.4 The Negro National League

The Negro Leagues refers to the world of segregated baseball rather than to any particular league. The term was used to cover all African-American leagues that were established from the 1860s till the 1950s. There were many attempts to make African-American baseball professional but none of the leagues lasted long enough to become stable and popular. The first professional black-only league was formed by Andrew Rube Foster in 1920.⁷³

⁶⁹ “Plessy v. Ferguson,” www.laws.com, <http://constitution.laws.com/supreme-court-decisions/plessy-v-ferguson> (accessed May 20, 2014).

⁷⁰ “Jim Crow Laws,” *The Integration of Baseball: The Challenge of Jackie Robinson*, <http://baseballjackierobinson.weebly.com/jim-crow-laws.html> (accessed May 20, 2014).

⁷¹ Steven Goldman, “The Negro Leagues excelled in a racially divided country—the United States,” *MLB Network*, http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues_story.jsp?story=kaleidoscopic (accessed May 18, 2014).

⁷² Roberta Newman, “Shadow Culture, Shadow Game: The Negro Leagues,” *New York University*, <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/mediamosaic/legacies/pdf/newman.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2014).

⁷³ “Negro League History,” *Negro League Baseball Players Association*, <http://www.nlbpa.com/negro-league-history> (accessed May 18, 2014).

3.4.1 Andrew Rube Foster

Among other great personalities who influenced the integration of baseball there was one man, one African-American who is considered to be “The Father of Negro Baseball” and the person was Andrew “Rube” Foster.⁷⁴

He was born on September 17, 1879, in Calvert, Texas. Already as a teenager, he played baseball that actually helped him to forget issues his family had to face. As a skilful player, he started to pitch for an African-American club the Waco Yellow Jackets and then he got opportunity to join other all-black clubs, such as the Chicago Union Giants or the Cuban X-Giants where he earned a reputation not only of an extraordinary pitcher, but of an exceptional manager as well.⁷⁵

After uncountable achievements, in 1910, he decided to form his own African-American club called the Chicago American Giants that under his ruling became the most outstanding black team. Foster himself made his last appearance on the field in the 1917 season.⁷⁶

During his managing career, Rube became conscious of shortage of a national black baseball league and championship and desired to unite African-American baseball. In 1920, confronting race riots against black players, he finally summoned all owners of black teams in Kansas City where they made an agreement to establish a new black-only league, the Negro National League (NNL).⁷⁷ The members of the new league included the Chicago American Giants, the Chicago Giants, the Western Cuban Stars, the Dayton Marcos, the Detroit Stars, the Indianapolis ABCs, the Kansas City Monarchs and the St. Louis Giants.⁷⁸ During the Jim Crow era, Andrew Rube Foster decided to follow Separate but Equal doctrine and established the first negro league in order to provide an opportunity for African-Americans to play baseball on a professional level.

⁷⁴ Timothy Odzer, “Rube Foster,” Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/fcf322f7> (accessed May 22, 2014).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ “Negro League History 101,” www.negroleaguebaseball.com, <http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com/history101.html> (accessed May 22, 2014).

Remaining the manager of the Chicago American Giants, he was elected the first president of the league. As the head of the league, he often gave a helping hand to teams that suffered from financial problems and paid their debts out of his own pocket. Teams included in the league were more profitable than white teams which helped to spread black leagues in the south and the east of the United States.⁷⁹ Andrew Foster could have served as an inspiration for other black managers of the 20th century. It was very difficult to get a managing position in Major League Baseball. There was no African-American in the MLB administration till the 1970s.

3.4.2. The First Negro World Series

On December 16, 1923, the second major league was formed in the East of the United States. The Eastern Colored League (ECL) with Edward H. Bolden (1881-1950) as a chairman included six member teams, namely the Brooklyn Royal Giants, the Lincoln Giants of New York, the Bacharach Giants, the Baltimore Black Sox, the Hilldale Club and the Eastern Cuban Stars. The ECL following the NNL example had an enormous success. The Hilldale Club owned by E. H. Bolden won the pennant in the 1924 series.⁸⁰

Foster's ambition for a united negro association was shattered by the hatred between the NNL and the ECL. The ECL was much more prosperous and more financially attractive for players who eventually left the NNL and joined the ECL instead. The pitcher Dave Brown of the American Giants jumped to the Lincoln Giants, followed by many other players. More than ten players left the Indianapolis ABCs in 1924, such transfers literally destroyed the club. It was very difficult to make a peace between the two leagues but Foster succeeded and the first Negro World Series took place in 1924.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Timothy Odzer, "Rube Foster," Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/fcf322f7> (accessed May 22, 2014).

⁸⁰ Robert Peterson, *Only the Ball Was White: A History of Legendary Black Players and All-Black Professional Teams* (Old Tappan: Oxford University Press, 1970), 87-88.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

The first Negro World Series played in four different cities lasted for nearly three weeks. There were a lot of curiosities surrounding the series. It was more than unusual to play in other places than home ballparks of playing teams. The first play of the series was played on October 3, 1924, at Baker Bowl, Philadelphia. The Muehlebach Field of the Monarchs, Maryland Baseball Park in Baltimore and Schorling's Park in Chicago were the other three ballparks that hosted the World Series. The umpires were both white and black, the white ones were employed from the International League and the American Association. The other odding was the format of best of nine while it was usual to play only seven games a series. However, this series could be considered as a ten-game series because of the third game that ended up as a tie. The Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League defeated the Hilldale Club of the Eastern Colored League by winning 5 out of 9 games.⁸² The Negro World Series represented a strong competition for the white clubs. Since it was something new, something original, it attracted more fans than the white clubs expected. Engagement of white umpires proved that the racial hatred was not as strong as in the previous years. From the historical perspective, the establishment of the Negro Leagues became a basis for something wider, for a change.

The Hilldale Club was fancied by African-American press, however, in both clubs, there were the best players of the time, such as Charles Wilbur Rogan, or William Julius Johnson, both members of the Hall of Fame. It was not only the black press that was interested in the series but it caught the white press' attention as well. Famous newspapers such as *Kansas City Times* and *Kansas City Star* gave reports about each game of the series.⁸³

Until the late 1920s, the Negro National League was one of the most successful leagues in the USA. The NNL was dissolved in 1931 due to financial issues caused by the Great Depression.⁸⁴

⁸² "1924 – The First Negro Leagues World Series," MLB Network, <http://nlbm.mlbblogs.com/2013/10/21/1924-the-first-negro-leagues-world-series/> (accessed May 22, 2014).

⁸³ "The Kansas City Star," Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, <http://www.nlbm.com/NS/ArticleDetail.cfm?ArticleID=52> (accessed May 22, 2014).

⁸⁴ Roberta Newman, "Shadow Culture, Shadow Game: The Negro Leagues," New York University, <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/mediamosaic/legacies/pdf/newman.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2014).

3.5 African-American Baseball at the time of the Great Depression

The Great Depression was the dark era of the United States economy. Millions of Americans lost their jobs and their economic hardship got even worse. The Depression affected all fields and baseball was no exception.

The Negro League teams belonged to the first Americans to feel the crunch. Most of them were unable to go on games without financial resources of which the African-American audience was the main source. In the middle of the 1928 season, the Eastern Colored League had to announce its downfall. Three years later, after the death of its founder Andrew Foster, the Negro National League fell apart as well. Even though the NNL did not endure the Great Depression, there were other attempts to keep black baseball alive and form new leagues. Few teams played games independently, such as the Kansas City Monarchs. They offered a new strategy to allure fans to watch the game and so increase their income. In 1930, they travelled with portable lights that gave them opportunity to add night games to the schedule. This strategy was a breaking news, the white major leagues did not play night games until 1935.⁸⁵

During the Depression, the popularity of lotteries increased and raised hope of economic improvement in fans, as well as in players. Betting represented a higher payoff for players, and a possibility for the owners to support on their teams more. Gus Greenlee, the founder of the Pittsburgh Crawfords, was able to finance his team and the construction of ballpark Greenlee Field only due to the profit from bets. And that was not the only success he achieved. He is the man who founded the second Negro National League.⁸⁶

The incarnation of the NNL happened in 1933. All of its owners were exclusively of African-American or Latino origin. The NNL owners made up another strategy to lure spectators. It was them who introduced the all-star games. Giving the opportunity to see the greatest black athletes, the first East-West Negro League All-Star Classic game was played in 1933 at the Comiskey Park in Chicago with the attendance of more than 20,000 fans.⁸⁷ Not only did they give an

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

opportunity to African-American ballplayers to play in a high-level league but they also invented all-star games that are, from today's perspective, a very popular part of the baseball world. It is next invention baseball clubs should be thankful for.

Before World War II, African-Americans from the South, attracted by more job opportunities, moved to northern cities. Higher income provided finances to be spent which meant the increased number of baseball spectators. The Negro Leagues were in their heyday in the 1940s.⁸⁸

3.6 World War II and the End of Racial Segregation in Baseball

With World War II, racial segregation and Jim Crow Laws in baseball, as well as in any other profession, became more questionable than any time before. Fighting against racism in Europe side by side with African-Americans and all other races, Americans began to insist on changes in the segregation.

The arguments against the integration of African-Americans in baseball became irrelevant. Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis argued that the only reason for the segregation was the lack of abilities but the Negro League players proved the opposite. Another motive to keep blacks segregated was that Southern baseball players of Major League Baseball would protest against the integration and would forbid the spring training that usually took place in the South.⁸⁹ "A ball club spends six weeks in the Deep South and half the season on the road and there were many places where we could not take a Negro because of social problems. Such situations bring about embarrassment and dissatisfaction for all concerned."⁹⁰ However, most of the managers and players of the South approved the integration. Besides, the managers' power was so strong that even if players did protest against it, the final decision would depend on the managers.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Fred Glennon, "Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America," in *The Faith of 50 Million: Baseball, Religion, and American Culture*, ed. Christopher H. Evans and William R. Herzog II (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 146-147.

⁹⁰ Chris Lamb, "Baseball's Whitewash: Sportswriter Wendell Smith Exposes Major League Baseball's Big Lie," Project Muse, <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/nin/summary/v018/18.1.lamb.html> (accessed May 23, 2014).

Considering the white audience, managers had more important issues to think about. There was a possibility that the white audience would not attend integrated games. The profit decrease would have had an outrageous impact on the future of baseball. The World War II fights against racism opened up the imaginary window of opportunity for the integration. The first man who decided to take a leap and risk everything he had, was the president and the owner of the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers and the Brooklyn Dodgers Branch Rickey. Trying to change the face of America, he hired the first African-American to play in Major League Baseball, the baseball legend Jackie Robinson. The involvement of Robinson in the MLB was only the beginning of the arduous task. Such engagement led to an premature end of the Negro Leagues.⁹¹

3.7 The Fall of the Negro Leagues

The Negro Leagues were, ironically, the victims of racial integration in baseball. The audience yearned for an opportunity to see African-American players to play in Major League Baseball, travelled long distances to witness the major change of the American policy.⁹²

The face of the Negro Leagues rapidly changed in the 1950s. The young black ballplayers signing with the MLB were much more attractive to the audience than the stars of the 1930s and the 1940s. In order to survive, the Negro League teams needed to come up with new ideas and strategies to hold fans' attention. There were many attempts to allure the audience but most of them unfortunately failed.⁹³

The Negro American League (NAL) established already in 1937 opened the 1950 season with ten teams. By 1952, only six of the original ten teams remained. For the purpose of saving the leagues, the owners went on to sell their

⁹¹ Glennon, "Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America," 147.

⁹² William Rubinstein, "Jackie Robinson and the Integration of Major League Baseball," History Today, <http://www.historytoday.com/william-rubinstein/jackie-robinson-and-integration-major-league-baseball> (accessed May 24, 2014).

⁹³ "The Demise of Negro League Baseball," Center for Negro League Baseball Research, <http://www.cnlbr.org/Portals/0/RL/Demise%20of%20the%20Negro%20Leagues.pdf> (accessed May 25, 2014).

greatest baseball players, such as Willie Mays of the Birmingham Black Barons who was sold to the New York Giants for \$ 15,000. Such sales had incurred the reduction of the NAL teams of which only six survived by the 1953 season. Dr. John B. Martin, the president of the NAL, realized that it was impossible to compete Major League Baseball. In his opinion, the NAL teams could have a beneficial effect on young black players and prepare them for the entrance into the MLB.⁹⁴

Despite all the 1950s efforts to keep the negro baseball alive, salaries of the NAL players had to be cut and the bad financial situation forced players to leave and accept more advantageous offers made by Canadian, Latin American, or Japanese teams.⁹⁵

In 1960, the NAL struggled for its existence when reduced to only four teams. On August 21 of the same year, the last East-West Negro League All-Star Classic game was played at Comiskey Park. During the 1960s, barnstorming became more than a usual part of black baseball. Teams barnstormed all over the USA and Canada.⁹⁶

The Negro American League officially disappeared into baseball history after the season of 1962.⁹⁷

Although all of the Negro Leagues were trying to survive the competition of Major League Baseball, their fall was unavoidable. If African-Americans wanted the same equal rights as whites, there had to be a victim of the fight.

It is obvious that the Emancipation Proclamation and the following Jim Crow laws influenced every field in the United States. After the acceptance of the Emancipation Proclamation, there were few attempts to integrate the white baseball. Some of them were successful, some of them failed. The segregation, however, returned with Jim Crow laws, and thus African-American had to start their fight for freedom from the beginning.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

The Negro Leagues enabled African-Americans to learn how to cooperate, how to play baseball, how to become a collective, a team. In general, the Negro Leagues prepared black players to join Major League Baseball. All of the African-Americans were impatiently waiting for the year 1947 when Jackie Robinson became a hero. His first game in the MLB became a national sensation. However, the integration had a negative impact on the future of the Negro Leagues. Black players did not have any interest to play in the Negro Leagues anymore. The vision of being a MLB black star attracted them much more than anything else and any baseball league could not exist without players. African-American fans were looking forward to watch black baseball players among the white ones. The lack of players and fans meant the only thing – the end of the Negro Leagues.

4 BREAKING THE COLOR LINE

4.1 Branch Rickey

“Ethnic prejudice has no place in sports, and baseball must recognize that truth if it is to maintain stature as a national game.” Branch Rickey

Wesley Branch Rickey was born on December 20, 1881, in Scioto County, Ohio. Growing up in a Methodist family, religion became an inseparable part of his personality. During his studies at Ohio Wesleyan University, he entered baseball’s summer circuit in 1902. That is when his coaching career has begun. In the same year, he started to play in baseball clubs, such as Terre Haute, Indiana, Le Mars, Iowa, and Dallas, Texas. After his graduation at Ohio Wesleyan, he was sold to the Cincinnati Reds in 1904. In the next three seasons, he earned a reputation of useless player. His poor baseball skills and his refusal to play on Sundays led to his releasing from the Cincinnati Reds. He then realized that coaching was the thing he was good at and so he moved to Allegheny College to work as football and baseball coach.⁹⁸

However, Rickey’s passion for this American national pastime was so intensive that he decided to get back to playing baseball. On June 16, 1905, there was the first game he had ever played in the Major League Baseball. As a part of the St. Louis Browns, he became a very successful and indispensable player, especially in the 1906 season. At the end of the season, unfortunately, Rickey’s arm was hurting. Such affliction had influenced his thriving career. After spending the 1907 season playing for the New York Yankees, he had to leave the MLB for good.⁹⁹

Despite all the obstacles he had to face, he did not take against baseball, and sports in general, and got back to his old job. He became an Ohio Wesleyan’s athletic director, and a football, basketball and baseball coach. At the same time,

⁹⁸ Andy McCue, “Branch Rickey,” Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/6d0ab8f3> (accessed May 30, 2014).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Rickey started to take law classes and graduated from law school three years later. After many failures as a lawyer, he got an opportunity to work for Robert Hedges, the St. Louis Browns' owner, as a scout. And thus began his life in professional baseball.¹⁰⁰

Rickey, as a scout and a manager, was looking for new talents, tracking and evaluating players from the Midwest and the South. It was him who hired a young man to make records of players' results and make statistical analysis to improve the team's play. However, after numerous quarrels with the new owner of the team, Phil Ball, Rickey withdrew from his contract with the St. Louis Browns and joined the unsuccessful team of the St. Louis Cardinals as its president in 1917. Joining the Army Chemical Corps in 1918, he supported the USA in the WWI. He got back to the United States in December of 1918, only to find his team in serious financial difficulties. Rickey's managing skills, however, contributed to the development and improvement of the team. The Cardinals became a dominant team for the following three decades.¹⁰¹

The farm system was only one of Rickey's innovations in baseball. Before the implementation of the farm system, teams of minor leagues had a right to sell a player to the highest bidder. The lack of financial resources forced Rickey to make up a new system that would actually help him to produce his own players. He needed to find, develop and train players to get them ready to join the Cardinals. During the 1920s, the Cardinals bought franchises of five minor teams. The integrated network of teams that were owned by their parent clubs became very popular among other teams as well. Even though the Cardinals managed to win the pennant in 1926, well-trained players were not the only success that was achieved by Rickey and his system. The attendance and so the profit had increased. The Cardinals became the most lucrative Major League Baseball club of the 1920s and by the end of the 1930s, they owned thirty-two minor league teams.¹⁰² Branch Rickey's managing skills were astounding. His awareness and innovations he brought to the baseball world let him to get ready for the following years which proved to be very difficult. He managed to avoid financial troubles

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Tygiel, *Past Time: Baseball as History*, 91-93.

that worried the rest of the baseball clubs during the Great Depression, his actions helped him to lay the foundations for next generations of baseball players, especially African-American ones.

Rickey and his attainment upset the baseball world, especially the baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis who was quite dissatisfied with the role of minor leagues of being only a source of talents for major leagues. Arguing with Landis, Rickey contended that the farm system allowed the minor leagues to survive the Great Depression in the 1930s. In 1938, Landis exempted more than seventy-four farm clubs from the Cardinals.¹⁰³

Rickey's reputation ensured him a wide popularity among players and managers. Never being afraid of giving speeches full of his own religious and political attitudes, he was often invited to speak in public. Befriending Republican politicians, the presidential candidate Thomas Dewey offered him a post of New York governor.¹⁰⁴

When James Mulvey, the board member of the Brooklyn Dodgers, had first given a job offer to Rickey in the Brooklyn Dodgers, Rickey was not ready to leave the St. Louis Cardinals. However, after a fight with the owner of the Cardinals, Sam Breadon, he decided to move forward in his career and accepted Mulvey's offer to work as the new general manager in 1942. Due to the needs of military service during World War II, the number of minor league teams decreased from forty-one to ten. In view of the fact that the Brooklyn Dodgers club consisted of older players at that time, Rickey simply made use of the opportunity and signed talented players to his new club when nobody else did. Other clubs were too respectful towards the war to sign new players but Rickey wanted to achieve the same success as with the Cardinals. After World War II, Rickey introduced his another innovation – the spring training. In order to guarantee proper training and appropriate analysis of players' performance, Rickey concluded a contract with the former U. S. Navy training base in Vero Beach, Florida, to ensure a large facility for training. Such trainings enabled

¹⁰³ Andy McCue, "Branch Rickey," Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/6d0ab8f3> (accessed May 30, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Rickey to separate the wheat from the chaff and then hire the best minor league players.¹⁰⁵

World War II was a tough time for everyone. Baseball as one of the few ways of entertainment attracted people from all over the United States. Coolheaded Rickey was intelligent enough to use this opportunity to enhance the quality of his team, gain new fans and, of course, earn some money. Even though it seems to be quite selfish and against humanity, Rickey knew exactly what he was doing. And that is how his team surpassed all others teams.

Right after Rickey joined the Dodgers, he flirted with a much more important idea, the idea that had changed not only the world of baseball but American society as well. He began scouting for African-American baseball players. That is how he met a black man who had become one of the most important figures of racial integration. The man was none other than Jackie Robinson.¹⁰⁶

Branch Rickey's choice of making a move to integrate baseball was based on his religion. Religion of a person is based on the family background. Rickey's mother taught him that all the people of any race or ethnicity are equal.

4.2 Jackie Robinson

Jack Roosevelt Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in a small town Cairo in Georgia. Growing up as the youngest of five children, he with his mother Mallie and four siblings moved to Pasadena, California, after his family had been abandoned by his father. His mother with a strong devotion to Methodist religion passed her belief on to her five children. Hoping for a new start, they bought a family house in a white Pasadena neighborhood. The white neighbors,

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

unfortunately, had not accepted them and the Robinson boys often had to face a racial denial and had to defend themselves by fighting.¹⁰⁷

Jackie's athletic skills were obvious already at his early age. Being a star in the sports fields such as baseball, basketball, track, and football at Pasadena Junior College, he was offered to enroll at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). His sport achievements earned him a reputation of the best player.¹⁰⁸ "Football, however, again brought out the best in him. Robinson joined a squad that included fellow African-Americans Kenny Washington, Woody Strode and Ray Bartlett. In his first season, he averaged more than 11 yards a carry. Sports Weekly called him 'the greatest ball carrier on the gridiron today.' Robinson and Washington, dubbed 'the Gold Dust Twins,' led UCLA to an undefeated season."¹⁰⁹ Successful African-American was a rarity in the then society. Even though Robinson had to fight against racism all his life, his talent ensured him a career in any sport he would choose. It is a good thing that he chose baseball, the national sport of America, the sport that had the highest viewer ratings and thus, to a certain extent, influenced the fans' minds.

It is quite unbelievable that Robinson had a chance to study at the prestigious university. The educational system was integrated several years later. It is the proof that the color of skin was not as important as it seemed. It was the athletic skills that really mattered.

Standing up from other athletes, Robinson achieved many sports successes. He was one of the best basketball players, the holder of the junior college long-jump record, the winner of swimming championships, the semi-finalist of the Negro League tennis championship, the UCLA Bruins' shortstop.¹¹⁰

His financial problems forced Jackie to quit the college and take a job as a coach for the NYA (National Youth Administration) and start to play football for

¹⁰⁷ Rick Swaine, "Jackie Robinson," Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/bb9e2490> (accessed May 31, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Jules Tygiel, "Where the color barrier faded," Los Angeles Times, <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/dec/03/entertainment/et-125sportssidebar3> (accessed May 31, 2014).

¹¹⁰ Rick Swaine, "Jackie Robinson," Society for American Baseball Research, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/bb9e2490> (accessed May 31, 2014).

the Los Angeles Bulldogs. Later in 1941, he signed a contract to play football for the Honolulu Bears.¹¹¹

4.3 Breaking Point

The Ohio Wesleyan University, 1904. Branch Rickey served as a baseball coach. An African-American first baseman Charlie Thomas and his team travelled to South Bend in Indiana to play a game against the University of Notre Dame. When a manager refused to accommodate Thomas in his hotel, Rickey spoke up for Charlie and persuaded the manager to put a cot in his room for Thomas.¹¹² “tears welled in Charles’ large, staring eyes. They spilled down his black face and splashed to the floor ... his shoulders heaved convulsively, he rubbed one great hand over the other, muttering ‘black skin ... black skin. If I could only make’em white.’ He kept rubbing and rubbing as though he would remove the blackness by sheer friction.”¹¹³ Rickey himself admitted that this scene haunted him for years and that it was only the beginning of his fight against such humiliation of other Americans.¹¹⁴

The racist thoughts and attitudes are being created by the upbringing and the environment in which we are growing up. Branch Rickey, as a religious man, was growing up with a mother who taught him that all people are equal. The hatred to racism and discrimination had become deeply rooted in Rickey from the very beginning of his life. The Charlie Thomas story provoked Branch’s desire to change the status of African-Americans. The integration was the result of 40-year-long plan.

Four decades later, it was Branch Rickey who decided to make the first move to the integration. In August 1945, the scout for the Brooklyn Dodgers – Clyde Sukeforth invited Jackie Robinson for the meeting with Rickey under pretense of looking for a player for the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers of the new

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Jules Tygiel, *Baseball’s Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 51-52.

¹¹³ Glennon, *Baseball’s Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 151.

¹¹⁴ Tygiel, *Baseball’s Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy*, 52.

Negro League. Rickey, however, was scouting for a baseball player for its parent team, the Brooklyn Dodgers. Rickey was searching for a black player of an appropriate character and skills to become the first African-American to play in the MLB. Mr. Rickey's plan to integrate had six basic steps.¹¹⁵ “1) The Backing and sympathy of the Dodgers’ directors and stockholders, whose investment and civic standing had to be considered and protected; 2) Picking a Negro who would be the right man on the field; 3) Picking a Negro who would be the right man off the field; 4) A good reaction from press and public; 5) Backing and thorough understanding from the Negro race, to avoid misinterpretation and abuse of the project; 6) Acceptance of the player by his teammates.”¹¹⁶ These goals were not unattainable. However, it did not only depend on Rickey or Robinson, the biggest risk was other people involved in baseball, fans as well as all employers of baseball clubs.

During the three-hour meeting, Rickey concluded that Robinson was the right one, the one who would actually satisfy his vision. The only thing Branch was concerned about was if Jackie would be able to control his emotions and his pride while facing the injustice. His spirit was crucial for such an experiment to succeed.¹¹⁷ “Rickey asked, ‘Have you got the guts to play the game no matter what happens?’ Robinson asked, ‘Mr. Rickey, are you looking for a Negro who is afraid to fight back?’ Rickey exploded, ‘Robinson, I’m looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back.’”¹¹⁸ Rickey and Robinson then discussed possible incidents that would happen on the field as well as off the field. If Robinson reacted in an appropriate way, if he got angry and showed his defiance against injustice, the whites would use him to prove the point of racial segregation and the plan would fail. The main goal was to convince the audience, fans and managers, that Robinson, through his baseball skills, deserved to play in Major League Baseball and thus demonstrate the absurdity of segregated

¹¹⁵ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 147.

¹¹⁶ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 148.

¹¹⁷ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 155.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

society. Robinson was aware of the importance of this experiment and the consequences that would follow if he failed.¹¹⁹

Rickey felt that Robinson was the right man for the integration of African-Americans. It was their past that connected Rickey and Robinson. Both of them had an experience with racial prejudice, they both were witnesses of discrimination, although from the opposite sides. That is why Rickey knew from the very beginning that Robinson was a fighter by nature.

After the meeting, Robinson signed a contract with Rickey to join the top Brooklyn Dodgers' farm club in Montreal. Rickey's decision to integrate baseball did not exactly please the other team owners. Baseball was a business on the first place, their main concern was the profit then. The results of Jackie's presence on the field proved that there was no reason to worry about the profit because of the increased attendance of African-Americans. Instead of celebration, the owners got even more concerned about Major League baseball thinking that the attendance of black fans would decrease the attendance of the white audience. This attitude unfortunately shows that the owners were not interested in the future of African-Americans at all, the only thing they really cared about was money.¹²⁰ Rickey should not have been surprised by the reaction of other managers. He himself was the one who took advantage of World War II in order to increase the baseball attendance and get new financial resources. Excluding the implicit racial bias, Rickey would react in the same way as other managers if he was in their position.

4.4 Beginnings in Major League Baseball

Robinson's way to Major League Baseball began in the minor league club of the Montreal Royals where he was sent in to demonstrate his baseball skills. Montreal being set in the North, far away from the hatred of Southerners, was a perfect place for the start of Jackie's career as a professional baseball player. His

¹¹⁹ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 155-157.

¹²⁰ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 148.

exceedingly satisfactory results made him a favourite ballplayer of local citizens.¹²¹ The manager of the Montreal Royals Clay Hopper born in the Deep South in Mississippi and his inclination towards racism was one of the reasons why Rickey chose this particular club for Robinson. First of all, Hopper was a great coach who helped Robinson with his development. Second of all, Rickey was hoping for Hopper's acceptance of Robinson to be a positive example for other Southerners. Refusing the African-Americans as human beings, Hopper had to fight with his own racial heritage and prejudice. Robinson managed to change his mind though. At the end of the season when the Royals won the Little World Series, Hopper came to him and congratulated on the game.¹²² "You're a great ballplayer and a fine gentleman. It's been wonderful having you on the team."¹²³ After the victory in the Little World Series, thousands of the Montreal fans carried Robinson on their shoulders. Admiring Robinson, the fans came to every single match he played. He got hundreds of letters from his admirers, giving him their support.¹²⁴ First step on the long journey seemed to be a successful one. Confronting all the eyes staring at him with contempt, Robinson handled it with head held high. His probation period was over.

Robinson was officially added to the Brooklyn Dodgers roster in the spring of 1947. The acceptance of Robinson's teammates in the MLB was the next step in the way to the integration. There were contradictory opinions among the Dodgers' players. Some players, namely Dixie Walker who was born in Alabama, started an unsuccessful petition to get Robinson out of the team. Some players asked to be transferred to other teams. However, this on the first sight failing attempt to integrate began to change during the game against the Philadelphia Phillies.¹²⁵

¹²¹ "1947 The Arrival of Jackie Robinson," This Great Game, <http://www.thisgreatgame.com/1947-baseball-history.html> (accessed June 2, 2014).

¹²² Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 159-160.

¹²³ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 160.

¹²⁴ Glennon, *Baseball's Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 161.

¹²⁵ "1947 The Arrival of Jackie Robinson," This Great Game, <http://www.thisgreatgame.com/1947-baseball-history.html> (accessed June 2, 2014).

It was April 15, 1947, when the team of the Brooklyn Dodgers took the field with a new African-American teammate to play a game against the Philadelphia Phillies. The behaviour of the Phillies shocked the fans as well as the directors and the sportswriters. Ben Chapman, the Phillies manager, yelled many of the racial insults at Robinson trying to upset and disconcert him.¹²⁶ “Nigger, go back to the cotton fields! They’re waiting for you in the jungles, black boy.”¹²⁷ Robinson did not step back from his role, pretending that he did not hear Chapman’s taunts. Although he later admitted he had desperately desired to confront him. Instead, Robinson chose to let his bat show why he was a legitimate part of the Dodgers.¹²⁸ Robinson’s teammates could not stand the mockery from the Philadelphia dugout and they finally decided to cover Jackie’s back. The Alabama-born Eddie Stanky screamed at the Phillies.¹²⁹ “Why don’t you guys go to work on somebody who can fight back?”¹³⁰ After the game, the baseball commissioner A. B. Chandler and the National League president Ford Frick warned Chapman not to get involved in any further racial slurs. Opening the four-game series, the Dodgers travelled to Philadelphia. Robinson’s teammates supported him and found another accommodation for all of them when the Benjamin Franklin Hotel had refused to put him up. During the games in Philadelphia, Chapman, realizing he could have lost his place in a team and in fans’ hearts, asked Jackie to pose with him and take a picture. Robinson agreed.¹³¹ Robinson’s calm behaviour convinced not only his teammates but also the Brooklyn Dodgers’ fans that the racial abuse was not justified. He proved that rumours about violent character of African-Americans were only rumours.

Instead of being upset about what happened in Brooklyn, Rickey took advantage of it and actually turned it into a pro.¹³² “Chapman did more than

¹²⁶ John Rossi, “He was unwelcome,” [www.philly.com](http://www.philly.com/articles/philly.com/2013-04-08/news/38348704_1_jackie-robinson-phillies-baseball-world), http://articles.philly.com/2013-04-08/news/38348704_1_jackie-robinson-phillies-baseball-world (accessed June 2, 2014).

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Glennon, *Baseball’s Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 160.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ John Rossi, “He was unwelcome,” [www.philly.com](http://www.philly.com/articles/philly.com/2013-04-08/news/38348704_1_jackie-robinson-phillies-baseball-world), http://articles.philly.com/2013-04-08/news/38348704_1_jackie-robinson-phillies-baseball-world (accessed June 2, 2014).

¹³² Hal Bock, “The Man Who Changed Baseball – 50 Years Ago, Jackie Robinson Also Changed America As Well,” *The Seattle Times*,

anybody to unite the Dodgers. When he poured out that string of unconscionable abuse he solidified and unified 30 men, not one of whom was willing to sit by and see someone kick around a man who had his hands tied behind his back. Chapman made Robinson a real member of the Dodgers.”¹³³

The non-violence of the African-American audience was another crucial component of the integration. On one hand, Rickey’s experiment attracted thousands of African-Americans to watch the game, to show their commitment to the effort of the integration. On the other hand, Rickey’s concern was that the African-Americans would use Robinson as a symbol of racial superiority or would react excessively if Robinson was unjustly treated. Trying to prevent events that would harm his attempt, Rickey asked the religious community for help. Churches all over the United States encouraged the African-American religious community to resist any temptation to revenge.¹³⁴

The year of 1947 became a milestone in Robinson’s career. Not only was he named the Rookie of the Year and ended up on the fifth place in voting of the most valuable players, but also his admirers asked for permission to create a new holiday, and thus April 15 is now better known as Jackie Robinson Day. In 1949, Jackie joined African-Americans Roy Campanella, Don Newcombe and Larry Doby, all of them playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers, as the first African-Americans that had ever played in the All-Star Game. Later that year, Jackie was pronounced the National League Most Valuable Player. The Jackie Robinson Story, an autobiographical movie, was shot in 1950. The role of Robinson was actually played by Jackie himself.¹³⁵

The noble endeavour to integrate baseball was about to succeed. Robinson and Rickey managed to raise public awareness of racial segregation. Robinson’s contribution led to his rising popularity among Americans, he became an important figure representing the inglorious history of blacks living under the

<http://community.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/archive/?date=19970323&slug=2530175> (accessed May 31, 2014).

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Glennon, *Baseball’s Surprising Moral Example: Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, and the Racial Integration of America*, 161.

¹³⁵ “Jackie Robinson Timeline,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/la/history/jackie_robinson_timeline/timeline_1.jsp (accessed June 2, 2014).

absurd rules of the American government and society. The late 1940s and the early 1950s were only the beginning of Robinson's fight against racism.

4.4.1 Baseball Hall of Fame

On July 23, 1962, four men were elected to the baseball's Hall of Fame. One of them was Edd Roush, sixty-eight years old hitter of the Cincinnati Reds, the other one was an average player Bill McKechnie who was better known for his managing skills. The third one was Bob Feller, nicknamed "The Heater from Van Meter" for his extraordinary pitching average, who was a former player of the Cleveland Indians. And last but not least, Jack Roosevelt Robinson, the first African-American baseball player ever inducted in the baseball's Hall of Fame.¹³⁶

There was a rule instituted by the Hall of Fame in 1954 that a baseball player could be inducted into the Hall of Fame not sooner than five years after his retirement. In 1962, Jackie Robinson, five years after he retired as a professional baseball player, expected to be ignored by the committee of the Hall of Fame. In January, 1962, 160 members of the Baseball Writer's Association of America had each nominated ten players to be elected to the Cooperstown's Hall. The main condition to enter the Hall was that the certain player had to appear on 75 percent of the ballots. Robinson, judged by his baseball skills and his statistics, became one of the nominated players by garnering 124 votes although he himself was convinced that he had no chance for such success.¹³⁷ "I'm positive I won't be accepted this year. Maybe someday. But regardless of what some of my achievements were, many writers are going to disregard this because of Jackie Robinson, Negro outspoken."¹³⁸

In the years following his retirement, Robinson became an indispensable part of the Civil Rights Movement. On one hand, as a courageous man, he had often gotten in a fight with sportswriters and the baseball managers. On the other hand, with his fearless attitude, Jackie managed to command respect from many

¹³⁶ Arnold Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography* (New York: The Random House Publishing Group, 1997), 4.

¹³⁷ Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, 5.

¹³⁸ Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, 6.

newsmen and, most importantly, his fans who supported him no matter what.¹³⁹ “I know you are going to be elected into baseball’s Hall of Fame. And when you are, it will be the happiest day of my life.”¹⁴⁰

Few days before the official induction into the Hall of Fame, Robinson was honored with a dinner that was arranged by the governor of New York together with more than nine hundred of his admirers. Moreover, he received many respectful letters, including letter from Richard Nixon who openly admired Robinson’s achievements; a letter from the president of the United States John Fitzgerald Kennedy who in spite of his disputes with Robinson accepted him as one of the most successful players of all time. The third letter was written by the central personality of the Civil Right Movement, by Dr. Martin Luther King who stood up for all of Robinson’s steps.¹⁴¹ “He has the right because back in the days when the integration wasn’t fashionable, he underwent the trauma and the humiliation and the loneliness which comes with being a pilgrim walking the lonesome byways toward the high road of freedom. He was a sit-inner before sit-ins, a freedom rider before freedom rides. And that is why we honor him tonight.”¹⁴² Already in 1962, politician were aware of Robinson’s fame. It is possible that they supported him in order to get his attention and support in the years following the induction.

4.5 Beyond the Baseball Diamond

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”

Jackie Robinson

Robinson had been a civil right activist a long time before he joined Major League Baseball. There was an incident already during his military career showing his courage to fight the injustice. Robinson, a young black officer of the

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, 6-7.

¹⁴² Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, 7.

Camp Hood, violating protocol of the South, was put on a court-martial for refusing to move to the back of the military bus.¹⁴³

During World War II, African-American soldiers, living still in the Jim Crow atmosphere, were often treated as inferior race with limited possibilities of public transport, with only few facilities for recreation, they even had to face a harsh corporal punishments. As a second Lieutenant, Robinson did not intend to tolerate the unjustified practices not only at the Camp but also in the military. On July 6, 1944, Robinson was on his way to the hospital, when driver of the Southwestern Bus Company Milton Reneger sternly ordered Robinson to sit at the back of the bus. Robinson refused and advised the driver to concentrate on driving instead of his seat. Starting an argument with the driver and the bus dispatcher, who called him a nigger, Robinson was asked by military policemen who arrived at the scene to clarify this incident at the police station.¹⁴⁴

At the station, Robinson was trying to defeat himself by giving the testimony of unfair treatment and racial remarks, he described other witnesses' testimony of the accident as false ones. Being accused of committing a number of transgressions, such as discourteous behaviour toward the officer and the bus driver, Robinson was subjected to the court-martial. There were thirteen depositions at the court, all of them testifying against Jackie.¹⁴⁵

Robinson, who was convinced that the given evidence was racially motivated, decided to open the case to the public. He contacted the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the War Department's civilian aide Truman Gibson and was looking for a support from the Negro press. On August 2, the court-martial began. Quite a number of witnesses was summoned, some of them testifying in favour of Robinson, some of them against him. Capt. William A. Cline, Robinson's Army-appointed defense attorney, pointed out number of inconsistencies in testimony, produced cogent

¹⁴³ John Vernon, "Jim Crow, Meet Lieutenant Robinson: A 1944 Court-Martial," National Archives, <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2008/spring/robinson.html> (accessed June 3, 2014).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

arguments of Robinson's mistreatment that had been based on racial hatred. The court-martial eventually dismissed all charges against Robinson.¹⁴⁶

Already the case which took place three full years before Robinson's integration in baseball proves that Robinson had always been a civil right activist, a battler for the rights of African-Americans who were not lucky enough to fight for attainment of so long desired freedom.

It is unbelievable that the USA did accept African-Americans as equal members on the battle field during the WWII but they still had to sit separately in the public transport.

4.5.1 The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

The main goal of the NAACP is to guarantee the political, educational, social and economic equality for every member of every ethnic minority in the United States, it is trying to find democratic ways how to remove all barriers of racial segregation.¹⁴⁷

As one of the oldest civil rights organizations, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded on February 12, 1909. Including more than half-million members, it leads campaigns for equal opportunities for every man of any color. The foundation of the NAACP is being associated with the 1908 race riot in Springfield, Illinois, where African-Americans were assaulted by whites. In response to such practice, a group of 60 liberals arranged a meeting and founded the NAACP, including seven African-Americans, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, who was made a director of publications and research and who established the official journal of the NAACP, *the Crisis*, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell.¹⁴⁸

Establishing branch offices all over the United States, fighting against racial discrimination laws and demeaning articles published in press, the number

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ "NAACP: 100 Years of History," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, <http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history> (accessed June 3, 2014).

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

of the NAACP members rapidly increased to 90,000 in 1919. In 1930, the NAACP published the Margold Report which led to the reversal of the Plessy vs Ferguson separate-but-equal doctrine. Five years later, in 1935, Charles H. Houston, the dean of the law school of the Howard University, became chief counsel of the NAACP. It was him who helped Thurgood Marshall to win the Brown vs Board of Education case in 1954, the case that disproved the decision of the judge Ferguson and outlawed segregation in public schools. In the 1930s, the association began a cooperation with Congress of Industrial Organizations in order to ensure job opportunities for African-Americans. The NAACP achieved its goal when the 32nd President of the United States Franklin Delano Roosevelt agreed to open thousands of job opportunities to African-Americans and set up a Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC).¹⁴⁹ The acceptance of African-Americans to schools led to the end of the Jiw Crow practice.

Despite the victorious case of Brown vs Board of Education, the process of the integration was slow and full of violence. Many of the members of the NAACP were assassinated and hunted by anti-integration activists, such as the NAACP Mississippi Field Secretary Medgar Evers who was murdered right in front of his residence, or the NAACP field secretary in Florida Harry T. Moore whose home was bombed in 1951. In addition to that there was a Little Rock Nine case when nine African-American students were not allowed to enter the school in Little Rock, Arkansas. Moreover, all over the south of the USA, most of the African-Americans were still not allowed to participate in elections. The NAACP's objectives were reflected in the goals of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Altogether, the leaders of the NAACP and the Civil Rights Movement began to plan the March on Washington that finally took place in 1963. The members of the NAACP assisted during the preparations as well, including Sammy Davis Jr., Harry Belafonte, or Jackie Robinson.¹⁵⁰

After his retirement as a professional baseball player in January of 1957, Robinson decided to get involved in the fight for African-American integration. One year before his retirement, Jackie's merits for the desegregation were appreciated by the NAACP's highest honor, the Spingarn Medal. Admiring the

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

NAACP's democratic principles, he accepted the offer to become the national chairman of the NAACP's Fight for Freedom Fund that was founded in 1953.¹⁵¹

The Fight for Freedom Fund's main concern was to raise one million dollars per year to support the integration efforts of the NAACP to end the Jim Crow policies. The fund did not achieve this goal until the participation of Robinson. His first success was a ten thousand dollar check from William Black, the owner of Chock Full O'Nuts and Robinson's new employer. Robinson with his aide Franklin Williams of the NAACP travelled over the United States, giving speeches on the behalf of the NAACP. Full of enthusiasm, he showed his commitment to the cause in the biggest cities of the United States, such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Clevelanland, Cincinnati, Detroit, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, San Francisco, and St. Louis. Robinson belonged to the most talented and compelling speakers, with his charming personality he managed to mesmerize crowds of people who were listening to him and who then immediately decided to donate money to the fund.¹⁵²

Starting a new career as a businessman, Robinson became a Vice-President of community relations of Chock Full O'Nuts, a coffee shops chain owned by William Black. As a popular public figure, Robinson started his career in Chock Full O'Nuts by visiting the employees who welcomed him with open arms, especially, when he showed his will to help them with anything he could. Robinson's strategy of company picnics, employee training programs, summer camps for employees and their families and blood drives, encouraged the African-American employees not to be afraid of social conventions and try to get a promotion.¹⁵³

The combination of his baseball fame, a new position as a national chairman of the NAACP and a new post as a businessman, gave Robinson a chance to become a spokesman for all African-Americans. As a head of the

¹⁵¹ Mary Kay Linge, "Business and politics, 1957 - 1962," *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, The African American Experience, http://testaae.greenwood.com/doc_print.aspx?fileID=GR3828&chapterID=GR3828-1181&path=books/greenwood (accessed June 5, 2014).

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

Freedom Fund campaign in 1957, Robinson was the first leader to succeed in saving one million dollars for the fund. He organized one-hundred-dollar per one plate dinner. With more than 1500 supporters of his effort for the NAACP, Robinson was offered a position in the NAACP board. In April, 1957, he discussed civil rights on the interview TV show *Meet the Press*.¹⁵⁴ “The money, the way I see it, is going to be used in our fight to achieve first-class citizenship. We have had to, through legal means all of these years, go through the courts to get the things that are rightfully ours under the Constitution. We haven’t picked up arms to do anything to achieve the rights that belong to us; we have done it legally through the courts. Money is needed to hire lawyers to handle these specific cases.”¹⁵⁵ The money has always been important to achieve success. The money means the power that is necessary to be accepted and to be listened to by the public.

The year of 1957 was a turning point in Jackie Robinson’s career. As a lifelong fighter for his own rights and later for rights of his whole race, he decided to use his power to change the world’s attitude, to become an active defender of African-Americans. A former sportsman who broke the color line in Major League Baseball should be admired by all following generations. We should have in mind that it was him who had unselfishly sacrificed his life for others, regardless of the color of their skin.

4.5.2 Political Life

Robinson as a father of two children was more than concerned with the issue of education of African-American children and youth. Although he was one of the member of the NAACP board, he started to doubt the work of the NAACP and its way of solving the civil rights issues. It was in the 1950s when Robinson joined Dr. Martin Luther King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a newly formed civil rights organization. When A. Philip Randolph, a

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Jackie Robinson, interview by Ned Brooks, April 14, 1957, vol.1., no. 15, transcript, Baseball, the Color Line, and Jackie Robinson, The Library of Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/robinson/meetpres.html> (accessed June 5, 2014).

labor leader of the SCLC, suggested a march in Washington, D.C., Robinson did not hesitate and immediately agreed to give them his support. On October 25, 1958, the Youth March for Integrated Schools took place, attracting more than 10,000 demonstrators, including college students. The march's marshal Robinson accompanied by his wife Rachel and Jackie Jr and Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King's wife, led the crowd of demonstrators to the Lincoln Memorial. Following the example of the 1958 march, there was another march that took place on April 18, 1959 with more than 30,000 protestants, this march was already supported by the NAACP as well as by the president Dwight David Eisenhower.¹⁵⁶

Robinson was offered to have his own political show *The Jackie Robinson Show* on a New York radio station. The show was on air every Sunday evening, including discussions with such celebrities as Eleanor Roosevelt, Robert Wagner, the then New York City mayor, or Abraham Ribicoff, the governer of the state of Connecticut. The number of his admirers increased even more when Robinson started to publish his own column in *New York Post*, giving his opinion on politics, as well as on the world of sports. The first politically-oriented column was released in May, 1959, representing Robinson's investigation into the presidential candidates of 1960. His objective was to influence his readers and potential voters of both Democrats' and Republicans' candidates. In the summer of 1959, Robinson resolved to give his vote to the democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey, an advocate, who Robinson admired for his commitment to the Civil Rights Movement.¹⁵⁷

On October 25, 1959, Robinson visited the Greenville in South Carolina to give a speech on a local NAACP event. When he found out that his colleagues who were waiting for him at the airport had been ejected from the airport's waiting room because it was meant only for whites, Robinson was irritated by such discrimination that after giving a speech about this kind of discrimination, he returned to the airport and flew home. He was sitting in the waiting room

¹⁵⁶ Mary Kay Linge, "Business and politics, 1957 - 1962," *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, The African American Experience,

http://testaae.greenwood.com/doc_print.aspx?fileID=GR3828&chapterID=GR3828-1181&path=books/greenwood (accessed June 5, 2014).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

for whites regardless of the airport's rule. The airport manager and a police officer asked Robinson to leave. Arguing that the airport, as a federally subsidized institution, had to be integrated, Robinson remained sitting in the waiting room until his departure. This initially small protest provoked a wave of demonstrations of local activists. On the 97th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, 15 African-American demonstrators entered the waiting room at the same airport, expected by more than 150 white men, most of them were police officers, who were determined to stop them. Peacefully protesting, praying and singing outside the airport, more than 250 blacks joined the demonstrators.¹⁵⁸

Jackie Robinson continued to support the Fight for Freedom Fund during the spring and summer of 1957. As he travelled all over the United States he was giving many speeches in order to raise public awareness of the progress of the bill that would later become the Civil Rights Act of 1957 that was passed in order to ensure the right to vote for every American. He got a chance to exchange few letters with the then Vice President of the USA Richard Nixon.¹⁵⁹ "I have taken note of your speeches and your reports to President Eisenhower on Asia and Africa, and I have developed a deep sense of appreciation for your constant efforts to provide a greater measure of justice for Negro Americans and all others."¹⁶⁰ Robinson was trying to express his feelings and his gratitude to Nixon, who was one of the most powerful political figure of the 1960s, for the effort to make African-American life easier with more opportunities in any field.

The year 1960 was a very important year considering politics. It was a year of presidential election that, primarily, was a fight between a Democratic candidate John Fitzgerald Kennedy and a Republican candidate Richard Nixon. In 1959, Robinson was struggling with a choice of his favourite politician. When Nelson Rockefeller lost in the 1960 presidential primaries, Richard Nixon became the only Republican nominee. Robinson, exchanging many letters with Nixon in which they mainly discussed the situation of African-Americans and other minorities, was quite satisfied with Nixon's perception and stated that blacks had supported Democratic candidates for too

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ "The Civil Rights Letters of Jackie Robinson," Real Design Media, <http://www.realdesignmedia.com/firstclass/read.html> (accessed June 5, 2014).

long, so they should have had change their points of view. Robinson believed that Nixon's promises of taking care of the civil rights were actually valid.¹⁶¹

Despite his final decision to support Nixon, his most favored candidate of presidential primaries was Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, a Democratic candidate who lost in presidential primaries with John Fitzgerald Kennedy. In February 1960, Robinson was one of many popular figures who appeared on the Humphrey's office opening in Washington and who accompanied the senator during his campaign in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Humphrey, despite of all of his efforts, was beaten by Kennedy in Wisconsin as well as in West Virginia and thus was knocked out of the race. Already before 1960, Robinson displayed his disagreements with Kennedy's opinion of racial integration, especially after Kennedy's attempt to block passage of the Civil Right Bill of 1957. After Kennedy's victory, Robinson's distrust of him became even deeper than before.¹⁶² "As long as he continues to play politics at the expense of 18,000,000 Negro Americans, then I repeat: Sen. Kennedy is not fit to be the President of the U.S."¹⁶³ As the youngest president of the United States, Kennedy became an icon, a figure that is worth mentioning. However, preoccupied with the Vietnam War, or the Cuban Missile Crisis, he was more interested in the foreign policy than the domestic issues. His disinterest actually led to the disesteem of African-Americans and civil rights activists.

Kennedy, being aware of Robinson's power over American blacks, invited him to a meeting. Their conversation was long, deepening Robinson's negative feelings about Kennedy. Robinson was convinced that Kennedy inclined to the Southerners, considering his racist behaviour during their talk. The first African-American baseball player to integrate Major League Baseball made his final decision to turn his attention to Nixon after Senate Majority Leader of Texas

¹⁶¹ Mary Kay Linge, "Business and politics, 1957 - 1962," *Jackie Robinson: A Biography*, The African American Experience, http://testaae.greenwood.com/doc_print.aspx?fileID=GR3828&chapterID=GR3828-1181&path=books/greenwood (accessed June 5, 2014).

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, a man born in the segregated South, became Kennedy's running mate.¹⁶⁴

Leaving the Chock Full O'Nuts and New York Post column behind, Robinson fully immersed himself in the endorsement of the Richard Nixon's presidential campaign. Robinson's public speeches were in large measure concentrated on Nixon's merits made during the Dwight D. Eisenhower's governance, including his active participation in the Brown vs. Board of Education case or support of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 and on criticism of Kennedy. His trust was, however, torn by a racist incident against Dr. Martin Luther King who was arrested and thrown into a jail in Georgia. In spite of Robinson's appeal for King's release, Nixon did not stand up for King leaving Robinson humiliated. This incident caused Nixon's degradation in eyes of African-Americans and consequent Kennedy's victory.¹⁶⁵ There are two possibilities why Nixon did not help King to get out of the jail. Nixon's decision was either based on racial discrimination against blacks, or he needed to strengthen his position and power as a presidential candidate among the white voters.

Robinson's fail judgement had detrimental consequences considering his career and popularity, and his credibility suffered as well. He got fired from *New York Post* and thus lost the opportunity to explain his political choices. He returned to Chock Full O'Nuts and then tried to return to politics. Believing in New York's Governor Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller, Robinson contacted him in order to ensure the support of the Civil Rights Movement by a Republican politician.¹⁶⁶

Robinson got back to the NAACP in the spring of 1961. He helped it with a new voter-registration in the south of the United States that was encouraged by Kennedy's new strategy to put an end to old Jim Crow laws. As new civil rights groups were established, such as the Congress of Racial

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

Equality (CORE), Robinson joined them to get involved into the civil rights fights as much as he could.¹⁶⁷

Getting back to Robinson's interest in politics, his first face-to-face meeting with the Republican politician Nelson Rockefeller occurred in 1962. Robinson was amazed by Rockefeller's charm and personality, by his self-confidence, his faith in what he was saying and his determination to change society. Although Rockefeller impressed Robinson, Jackie was trying to be realistic and keep a cool head after he had drawn a false conclusion from Nixon's behaviour who had been as much charming as Rockefeller when they had first met. However, many Rockefeller's deeds worked in his favour. He donated huge sums to black education, supported Dr. Martin Luther King's organization, he fought against Jim Crow policy in the South.¹⁶⁸

Rockefeller was a true civil rights fighter, aware of the domestic number-one issue he considered the sit-ins in the South to be morally justified. It was him who helped Dr. King to be acquitted on all charges after the Georgia jailing. After Dr. King had been assassinated by a black woman in 1968, it was Rockefeller who had paid, without any notice of the public, for all of the King's hospital bills and thus saved his life using his influence to ensure the best surgeons for King. When several baptist churches had been ruined in Georgia, Jackie Robinson was in charge of a national fund established to restore the churches and Rockefeller was the main donator, giving the enormous sum of money from his own pocket.¹⁶⁹ Churches in southwest Georgia were destroyed by unknown arsonists, including the Shady Grove Baptist Church in Lee County, Georgia, burned on August 15, 1962, and another two churches burned on September 9. Robinson himself donated one hundred dollars at first and then manage to obtain an appropriate amount of money needed for complete reconstruction of all three churches.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Jackie Robinson, "On Being Black Among The Republicans," *I Never Had It Made*, Framingham Democratic Town Committee, <http://www.framinghamdems.org/JackRob.html> (accessed June 8, 2014).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ "Jackie Robinson Heads SCLC National Drive to Rebuild Burned Churches," The King Center, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/jackie-robinson-heads-sclc-national-drive-rebuild-burned-churches>

Robinson, familiarized with all good needs made by Rockefeller, did not pin his faith in him, there were several facts about which Robinson expressed his concerns. In New York's state government, there were no African-Americans in the higher positions, no blacks were directly connected to the governor. There was a possibility that Rockefeller did engage in rights of blacks only in his private life but did not mean to get involved in them politically. This concern prompted Robinson to exchange few letters with Rockefeller in which he stated that he did not feel any respect for Nelson Rockefeller's administration, that he could not have a respect for a man who did not offer any significant job position to any black. His honesty made Rockefeller to call Robinson, discuss this issue and admit that the situation in his government was not as it should have been. After their long conversation, they had arranged a meeting during which they discussed the social position of blacks even deeper. The meeting was held in a private room of the Radio City Music Hall, with attendance of more than ten people interested in the issue. Not hesitating to throw harsh facts about the segregation in political and government actions, the people stirred up a heated debate. Rockefeller accepted their criticism with head held high, took up all of the recommendations and promised to make some reforms. He eventually kept his word and implemented all of the suggests within few following months. However, many of white employees were strongly displeased with the employment of black officers.¹⁷¹ The dissatisfaction of whites could be considered as justified, many of the African-Americans yearned for higher positions for which they were not qualified.

In 1964, Jackie Robinson left Chock Full O'Nuts to become one of the six deputy national directors of Rockefeller's presidential campaign. Leaving the company provoked disapproving responses among African-American employees. Robinson confessed that his real intentions were to get involved more in politics, to own a company established by himself, and to fight not only for job integration, but for the integration of blacks into the mainstream of the economy as well. He

(accessed June 8, 2014).

¹⁷¹ Jackie Robinson, "On Being Black Among The Republicans," *I Never Had It Made*, Framingham Democratic Town Committee, <http://www.framinghamdems.org/JackRob.html> (accessed June 8, 2014).

believed in African-Americans as future businessmen, manufacturers, and, above all, job providers, believed in reinforcement of black power.¹⁷²

Robinson's feelings about entering the politics side by side with the Republican Rockefeller were kind of mixed. He was afraid of new things, new experience, but, at the same time, he felt enthusiastic about his new opportunities to influence the progress of the Civil Rights Movement. Opposing the Republican Senator Barry Goldwater who was known as an anti-integration politician, he often accompanied Rockefeller during meetings with politicians or community people, giving them his true opinions and thoughts, persuading them to join him on his way, trying to attract new voters. At least, that was the way how he acted while giving speech in public. His inner voice suggested something else. In the first place, Robinson originally entered the Republican Party in order to regain the trust of African-Americans, however, his own thoughts and plans were not as compatible with the Republican ones as it might have seemed. Reasons were various but the most important one was that most of the Republicans were not interested in the support of blacks, or even worse, they were against their integration.¹⁷³

Robinson was very critical about right-wing Republicans. He was afraid of Goldwater's victory over Rockefeller in the presidential primaries. In his opinion, the Grand Old Party (GOP) would become all-white party in case of Goldwater's victory. Robinson himself admitted that he had thought, lived and breathed almost exclusively only for blacks. In 1964, the Republican Convention took place in San Francisco, California. For Rockefeller, it was one of the most humiliating experience of his life.¹⁷⁴ "Standing before the hostile crowd at the 1964 GOP Convention in San Francisco, a defiant Nelson Rockefeller could barely make his words heard above the booing. After six months of heated campaigning, the convention was about to deliver the Republican nomination to his arch-rival, Barry Goldwater."¹⁷⁵ The freedom of thoughts is one of the most

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ "The 1964 Republican Campaign," American Experience, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/rockefellers-campaign/> (accessed June 8, 2014).

important rights given to the citizens of any country. However, degradation of anyone's beliefs and ideas is in the contrary to humanity as well as one of the racial demonstrations.

Robinson himself was irritated by the situation on the Convention. From his point of view, it was the most frightening experience of a lifetime. He was a witness of pure hatred of whites towards a white man. The right-wing Republicans expressed themselves clearly when they were trying to drive Rockefeller out of the Convention. The New York Governor, however, coped bravely with their abuse, refusing to give up until he finished his speech.¹⁷⁶

On the Convention, there were few African-American delegates who were sitting in the hall, shaken by the Republicans' behaviour and demonstration of their disapproval of Rockefeller's enlightened attitude toward blacks. They realized that the GOP, the party they had been fighting for and that was extremely unpopular among African-American citizens, called them unimportant niggers without any regrets or disgrace. One southern Republican even threw acid on one of the African-American delegate's jacket and set it on fire. Another one was about to fight Robinson if his wife would not stop him from doing it.¹⁷⁷ Such a treatment does not belong in politics. No wonder that people do not take politics seriously when politicians behave like animals.

After the Convention, Robinson used his popularity and wrote few articles that were published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, giving his own critical opinion of Goldwater, finding Goldwater to be a bigot. He did not concentrate only on Goldwater, but also on other politicians, such as Richard Nixon who had immediately started to support Goldwater. For Robinson, it was no surprise. Most of the Rockefeller's colleagues turned to the Governor of Pennsylvania William Warren Scranton. Robinson had a pleasure to meet Scranton. During their conversation, Scranton satisfied Robinson that he would never support Goldwater, not even in case of his victory in the 1964 presidential election. Despite the

¹⁷⁶ Jackie Robinson, "On Being Black Among The Republicans," *I Never Had It Made*, Framingham Democratic Town Committee, <http://www.framinghamdems.org/JackRob.html> (accessed June 8, 2014).

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

Scranton's convincing performance, only few months passed when Scranton pledged his loyalty to Goldwater.¹⁷⁸ One example for all.

Goldwater, hoping for Robinson's acceptance as a proper presidential candidate, sent an invitation to Robinson to join him over breakfast in Washington. Rejecting the invitation, he decided to publish his letter for Goldwater in order to explain his reasons for such a refusal. He wrote he was not interested in talking to Goldwater at all, clarifying that Goldwater's and Robinson's visions were too different to make the two of them cooperate. The Senator did not response to Robinson's letter.¹⁷⁹

In spite of all misunderstandings with the Senator Goldwater, Robinson continued to spread his political influence. Joining the national headquarter of Republicans for Lyndon B. Johnson, the democratic candidate for presidential election, he decided to support him during his presidential campaign.¹⁸⁰

All of the politicians were aware of Jackie Robinson's power and were trying to get his support, as well as the public support. Even though politicians could have lost votes of racist whites, votes of blacks and whites supporting the Civil Rights Movement were more important and there was more of them.

4.6 Jackie Robinson's Legacy

Without a doubt, Jackie Robinson was one of the most influential personalities in the United States. Not only was he the first African-American to break the color line in the Major Baseball League, but he was also civil rights activist, he became embroiled in politics, and last but not least, he established few organizations to help African-Americans to integrate and have the same possibilities for work and education as the white citizens of the United States.

In 1964, the Freedom National Bank in Harlem, New York, was founded in order to provide a possibility for African-Americans to obtain loans which was

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

otherwise very difficult considering the social status of blacks back in the 1960s. Jackie Robinson was one of the investors who helped to start this organization up, with help of Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, or William Randolph Hudgins, the founder of the Carver Federal Savings Bank.¹⁸¹

The main goal of the investors was to establish a commercial bank for black America. There was many of smaller stockholders who decided to buy the bank's stock and thus ensured the growth of a financial resource for African-Americans living in Harlem or further afield.¹⁸²

The first decade of the bank's activity was tough. However, in the 1970s, the situation of the bank improved with Hughlyn F. Fierce, the new Freedom National Bank's president who helped to rescue the bank in 1975 by convincing 11 banks to invest more than four million dollars. Sharnia Buford who was named a president of the bank in 1977 managed to increase the success of the bank and the bank finally became consistently profitable. Its success went on in the early 1980s. Led by George A. Russell Jr. and Isaiah Robinson Jr, the bank came to harm in 1988 when it lost almost two million dollars.¹⁸³

Unfortunately, it would be necessary to get many investments to make the bank work and so the demise of the Freedom National Bank was announced at the end of 1990. The Freedom National bank was considered to be a symbol of Harlem and the Civil Rights Movement.¹⁸⁴ "Symbolically, it's terrible blow, because this was a black bank formed by Jackie Robinson that was more sensitive to the businesses and people in this community."¹⁸⁵ All institutions that were established to improve the life of African-Americans played an important role in the fight against racial segregation as long as they provided services denied to blacks by the white companies.

The last accomplishment made by Jackie Robinson came with the year of 1970. He established Jackie Robinson Construction Company to improve living

¹⁸¹ Andrew L. Yarrow, "Freedom Bank's Failure Hits Harlem Like a Death in the Family," The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/11/12/nyregion/freedom-bank-s-failure-hits-harlem-like-a-death-in-the-family.html> (accessed June 10, 2014).

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

conditions for African-American families who could not effort a family house on their own.¹⁸⁶

4.6.1 The Jackie Robinson Foundation

One of the greatest black personality of all time had been suffering from diabetes for several years. In 1968, he fortunately recovered from a heart attack but his second heart attack was fatal for him. Jackie Robinson, the first African-American baseball player to integrate Major League Baseball passed away on October 25, 1972, at 7:10 A.M. at Stamford Hospital in Stamford, Connecticut, at the age of 53.¹⁸⁷

One year after his death, Rachel Robinson established The Jackie Robinson Foundation (JRF) to honor her husband's work and life's achievements. The foundation gives young African-American people an opportunity for higher education.¹⁸⁸ According to the New York Times, JRF is one of the best educational programs in the United States. JRF is a national, non-profit organization advancing the efforts of skillful but disadvantaged students by providing educational scholarships, such as a four-year college scholarship giving the African-American students a chance to graduate from college with all the advantages imaginable. The success rate of JRF students is nearly 100%.¹⁸⁹

In 1973, An Afternoon of Jazz concert took place with JRF as the sole beneficiary. The jazz concert was a tradition that had started already in 1963 when the Robinsons hosted it at their home in Stamford in order to raise money for African-American activists for civil rights who had been arrested for marching

¹⁸⁶ "The Jackie Robinson Story," The YMCA, <http://www.jackierobinson.ymca.org/about-us/jackie-robinson.html> (accessed June 10, 2014).

¹⁸⁷ Dave Anderson, "Jackie Robinson, First Black in Major Leagues, Dies," The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0131.html> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹⁸⁸ "About Jackie Robinson," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/jackie.php> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹⁸⁹ "The Foundation's Mission," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/mission.php> (accessed June 11, 2014).

with Martin Luther King in Birmingham, Alabama. Five hundred people came to the 1963 concert which eventually raised more than fifteen thousand dollars.¹⁹⁰

During the 1970s, the Jackie Robinson Foundation achieved many success in the field of education. When Jerry Lewis became the first President and CEO of JRF, the first JRF Scholar Debora Young earned a degree in Boston College in 1978.¹⁹¹ The first independent Award Dinner took place in 1979. Robie Awards are the highest tribute of JRF given to individuals who dedicated their lives to the improvement of living conditions of socially disadvantaged people. In 1988, the Jackie Robinson Foundation expanded its program and travelled all over the United States to present an exhibition called *Jackie Robinson: An American Journey*.¹⁹² The Jackie Robinson Alumni Association was established in 1993, its members served as peer mentors for the JRF Scholars. Later in 1997, on the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's success in Major League Baseball, JRF started an scholarship endowment campaign. The biggest contributor to the campaign was Major League Baseball itself with a one-million-dollar gift.¹⁹³

The Jackie Robinson Foundation is a foundation concentrated not only on financial resources for its Scholars but also on their preparation to become successful leaders with a commitment to JRF ideals. Since its foundation in 1973, the number of African-American students has dramatically increased, hundreds of institutions and companies decided to give JRF a hand to achieve its goals.¹⁹⁴

The Jackie Robinson Foundation does not only offer a four-year scholarship to its students but it also offers various possibilities of internships and studies abroad and it organizes conferences in order to familiarize its students with job and education opportunities. Every year, JRF invites its scholars to New York City. The four-day conference is full of workshops, seminars, meetings and

¹⁹⁰ Stephanie Sammartino McPherson, *Jackie Robinson* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2010), 45.

¹⁹¹ "History," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/history.php#1> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹⁹² "History," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/history.php#2> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹⁹³ "History," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/history.php#3> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹⁹⁴ "Program Description," The Jackie Robinson Foundation, <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/programs.php> (accessed June 11, 2014).

interviews with famous public leaders and JRF sponsors, sightseeing and recreational activities. The JRF scholars have the opportunity to meet other scholars and inspire each other with their personal stories and their achievements. At the end of the Mentoring and Leadership Conference the Jackie Robinson Foundation's Annual Awards Dinner is arranged where new scholars can be introduced.¹⁹⁵ The Jackie Robinson Foundation had obviously become one of the most popular organizations among African-American students. Its effort to make their lives easier gives them a hope for better life. Education is the fresh start everyone deserves to get.

4.6.2 Jackie Robinson's Awards

The stadium located in Sawtelle Fields, Los Angeles, California, was dedicated to Jackie Robinson on February 7, 1981. The game between Los Angeles Dodgers and the UCLA Bruins was played to honor Jackie Robinson. Jackie Robinson Stadium belongs to one of the best stadiums in the United States, with possibility of hosting more than 1 250 fans in seats and accomodating even more fans on grass slopes and terrace area. A bronze statue of Jackie Robinson was dedicated to the stadium on April 27, 1985, and it decorates the stadium to this day.¹⁹⁶

On August 2, 1982, Jackie Robinson became the first African-American who was depicted on a U.S. Postage Stamp. The first stamp was called "Black Heritage".¹⁹⁷ Later on, two more stamps were issued by the US Postal Service in order to memorialize Robinson's efforts. The second stamp, issued on February 18, 1999, portrayed Jackie sliding on a base and the third one, showing Robinson on the field, was issued one year later, on July 6, 2000.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ "Jackie Robinson Stadium," Ucla Bruins, http://www.uclabruins.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=30500&ATCLID=208271491 (accessed June 13, 2014).

¹⁹⁷ "Jackie Robinson Timeline," MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/la/history/jackie_robinson_timeline/timeline_3.jsp (accessed June 13, 2014).

¹⁹⁸ "Three Stamps Were Issued to Commemorate Jackie Robinson," African American Coins and Stamps, <http://www.africanamericancoins.com/three-stamps-were-issued-to-commemorate-jackie-robinson/> (accessed June 13, 2014).

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the highest civil award in the United States of America. It is awarded to historical personalities who became significant for the civil rights, the world peace, the cultural development, or other national interest. It was established already in 1945 when the US President Harry Truman decided to honor the World War II heroes. Nine professional baseball players have been awarded by the Medal of Freedom, five of them were former players of the Negro Leagues. In order to honor his war service, the player of the Boston Red Sox Moe Berg became the first professional baseball player to be awarded by the Medal of Freedom in 1945, followed by Joe DiMaggio of the New York Yankees, and Jackie Robinson of the Brooklyn Dodgers. In 1984, Jackie Robinson was posthumously awarded by the US President Ronald Reagan. To the five African-Americans players honored by the Medal belong Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee Brewers (2002), Frank Robinson of the Cleveland Indians (2005), Buck O'Neil of the Kansas City Monarchs (2006) and last but not least Ernie Banks of the Chicago Cubs (2013).¹⁹⁹

The Rookie of the Year is an annual award given to the best baseball players who are extraordinary in pitching, hitting or fielding during their first season in Major League Baseball. The tradition started in 1947. At that time, only one player was awarded from the whole Major Leagues Baseball, however, from 1949 on, one player have been selected from the National League and the other one from the American League. The Rookie of the Year Award is nowadays better known as Jackie Robinson Award. It was renamed in Jackie's honor in 1987, on the 40th anniversary of his debut in the MLB.²⁰⁰

In order to honor Jackie Robinson, a civil rights symbol, thousands of baseball fans came to watch the game on the 50th anniversary of his first appearance on the Major League Baseball field on April 15, 1997. This game took place at Shea Stadium, New York, accompanied by a special ceremony. The organizers stopped the game in the middle of the contest between the New York Mets and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Bud Selig, the commissioner of the MLB,

¹⁹⁹ "Presidential Medal of Freedom," [www.baseball-reference.com](http://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Presidential_Medal_of_Freedom), http://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Presidential_Medal_of_Freedom (accessed June 13, 2014).

²⁰⁰ "Rookie of the Year Award/Jackie Robinson Award," [Baseball Almanac](http://www.baseball-almanac.com/awards/aw_roy.shtml), http://www.baseball-almanac.com/awards/aw_roy.shtml (accessed June 13, 2014).

walked to the second base of the field, followed by Rachel Robinson, her grandson Jesse Simms and her daughter Sharon, the president of the United States Bill Clinton, and Branch Rickey III, the grandson of Branch Rickey. After the song *The Impossible Dream* sung by Tevin Campbell, Selig delivered a speech emphasizing Robinson's legacy. Holding up Jackie Robinson's Dodger uniform with number 42 on its back, moved toward the microphone and declared that No. 42 would never be used as a uniform number not only in the Brooklyn Dodgers club, but it would be forbidden to issue it by any other club in Major League Baseball.²⁰¹ The retiring of the number used by a baseball player is nothing new in baseball, or in sport in general. Many numbers have been retired, however, there is only few numbers that have been forbidden to use in the whole league. The retiring of number 42 signifies that Jackie Robinson was more than a player, that his baseball and post-baseball career affected the whole society, that he gained appreciation and respect not only of his club, not only of Major League Baseball, but also of all the citizens in America, black ones as well as white ones. The Presidential Medal of Freedom and the next award he received reflects that he was able to influence hearts of the Unites States government as well.

On March 2, 2005, Jackie Robinson was the second MLB player to receive the Congressional Gold Medal. A Gold Medal bill must be supported by at least 75% of 290 members of the House and at least 67 senators' votes. In Jackie Robinson's case, the bill was approved unanimously. The ceremony took place in the Capitol rotunda of the US Capitol Dome in Washington.²⁰² "Martin Luther King once said something interesting: He was a freedom rider before freedom rights. To me, that says courage and decency and honor."²⁰³ More than six hundred people looked on the president George W. Bush while he was giving his speech, including Bud Selig, president of the MLB Bob DuPuy and other MLB vice presidents, representatives of the Brooklyn Dodgers Frank and Jamie McCourt, as well as representatives of the Boston Red Sox Larry Lucchino and

²⁰¹ "93: Baseball Retires Jackie Robinson's No. 42," ESPN, <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/espn25/story?page=moments/93> (accessed June 13, 2014).

²⁰² Barry M. Bloom, "Robinson awarded Gold Medal: Hall of Famer is second Major Leaguer to receive honor," MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20050302&content_id=954938&vkey=news_mlb&c_id=mlb&fext=.jsp (accessed June 13, 2014).

²⁰³ Ibid.

Tom Werner with Tony Tavares representing the National League. The Gold Medal together with the Medal of Freedom is the highest honor a citizen of the USA can get. Jackie Robinson is the fourth athlete to receive it, his predecessors were Roberto Clemente (1973), a baseball player of Caribbean origin, Joe Louis (1982), an African-American professional boxer, and Jesse Owens (1988), an African-American athlete, a sprinter who won four gold Olympic medals. Jesse Jackson, the follower of Martin Luther King and a man who gave the eulogy at Jackie Robinson's funeral, gave a speech on this day, praising Jackie for everything he did for the life in America to be better. Branch Rickey III also attended the ceremony.²⁰⁴ "I have come to relish the fact that my family's reputation is entwined with the reputation of Jackie Robinson. That's wonderful personal perspective for us. When you attend ceremonies like this, you realize that not only are we enhancing Jackie, but we are enhancing ourselves by trying to give the appropriate acknowledgement."²⁰⁵ Jackie Robinson's and Branch Rickey's families will be bounded with each other forever. The deeds of the two extraordinary men who once sat together, made up a plan how to change the separatist world, gave all of their energy to make their dreams come true, will never be forgotten.

4.7 Jackie Robinson's Followers

The character of Jackie Robinson is known all over the world. As a first baseball player to break the color barrier, he became the most famous African-American player of all time. His followers, who had to play in the same racial environment and face the same troubles as Robinson, remained, sadly, almost unnoticed.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

4.7.1 Larry Doby

Larry Doby had to live in a shadow of Jackie Robinson. Although he was the first African-American to play in the American League, Robinson was faster than him when he became the first African-American ballplayer to play in the MLB only eleven weeks before Doby's joining the Cleveland Indians.²⁰⁶

Larry Doby made his first appearance on the baseball field while studying at the Mather Academy in Camden, South Carolina. After graduation from the eighth grade he moved to Paterson, New Jersey, to enroll in the Eastside High School where he earned 11 letters in baseball, basketball, football, and track. Already during his studies, he played for the Newark Eagles of the Negro Leagues. On the basis of his basketball scholarship, Larry was able to enroll in the Long Island University, New York. His studies were interrupted by World War II, however, it did not change his future plans as a professional athlete. After the WWII, he returned to the Newark Eagles.²⁰⁷

On July 3, 1947, Doby was purchased from the Negro Leagues by the owner of the Cleveland Indians, Bill Veeck. Only two days later, Doby debuted as the Major League pitcher on the game against the Chicago White Sox. Since it was only 11 weeks after the debut of Robinson, the audience was still not completely ready to watch a game with an African-American on the field, and his teammates were not particularly as supportive as they should have been. Some of them declined to welcome Doby to their team, refusing to shake his hand. During his second game with the Indians, Doby as the first baseman was not in possession of a proper glove so he asked Eddie Robinson, the other first baseman, to borrow his glove. It took quite a long time to convince Robinson to lend the mitt to Doby. The media ignored Doby back in the 1940s and 1950s. Sportswriters were not interested in another African-American fight against the segregation, it was an old theme. Although Larry Doby was an exceptionally

²⁰⁶ Calvin B. Boaz, "Larry Doby: A Forgotten Pioneer," Bleacher Report, <http://bleacherreport.com/articles/212482-larry-doby-the-forgotten-pioneer> (accessed June 16, 2014).

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

talented player, he was never pronounced the Most Valuable Player, even though he deserved to be.²⁰⁸

Larry Doby became the first African-American to hit a home run in the World Series of 1948 and then the first black player to win the World Series. He joined Robinson, Newcombe, and Campanella as first blacks to play in All-Star game in 1949. Five years later, he became the first black ballplayer to hit a home run in 1954 All-Star game. After his ankle injury, he decide to retire from the MLB.²⁰⁹

Doby, hoping for a career as a baseball manager, experienced his second major disappointment when Frank Robinson was selected the first African-American manager of the Indians instead of him in 1975. He achieved his goal three years later, when Bill Veeck, the new owner of the Chicago White Sox, hired him as a team manager. Doby was quite excited about the new job, however, he was still the second one. After life dedicated to baseball, Doby's time finally came in 1994, when his No. 14 was retired by the Cleveland Indians. Not so many years later, in 1998, Doby was inducted into the Hall of Fame.²¹⁰ It is not that surprising that Doby was overlooked by the MLB and by society. Unfortunately, people are mainly interested in the firsts, not the seconds.

4.7.2 Monte Irvin

Monte Irvin, debuting with the New York Giants in 1949, was the fourth black baseball player to integrate Major League Baseball. Appearing on the field not so long after Jackie Robinson's premiere, he was still one of the African-American players to experience racist insults. As a life-time optimist, he

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

was trying to avoid negative thoughts and rather enjoy his opportunity to play in the MLB.²¹¹

After eight seasons playing as a member of the Newark Eagles of the Negro Leagues, he was traded to the New York Giants as the first African-American player to play in this team. As a player for the Giants, he played twice in the World Series in 1951 and 1954, was inducted in the Hall of Fame in 1973, and his No. 20 was retired by the Giants in 2010.²¹²

Monte Irvin loved the time when the Negro League season ended and he got the opportunity to travel to the south, to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, or Venezuela, to countries no man was judged by the color of his skin. Irvin himself referred to days spent in the Negro Leagues as the best time of his life, he did not regret anything. Neither low salary of 125 USD a month, either long bus trips disheartened him, his only memories are the nice ones. Going out for a dinner or jazz concerts, surrounded by fans who never allowed them to pay his own checks. These were the memories he cherished.²¹³ “And we still had this game ... this marvelous, beautiful, blessed game ... and nobody and nothing could take that away from us, so we just went out and played it. Wherever and whenever we could.”²¹⁴

It was Irvin who was Branch Rickey’s first choice to integrate baseball. He signed a contract with Rickey to join his fictitious black team made up to hide Rickey’s real intention to break the color line of the MLB. For health reasons, unfortunately, Irvin had to refuse Branch’s offer to integrate baseball. Since Rickey was eager to integrate the MLB as soon as possible, he chose Robinson instead.²¹⁵ Monte Irvin is an example of the player totally dedicated to the American pastime. Such an attitude is entirely special, unique, comparing to other players who were concentrated mostly on their promotion.

²¹¹ Richard Justice, “Irvin’s unique place in history one of decency, humor: Hall of Famer enjoyed teammates, life in the game despite the realities of the times,” MLB Network, http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article/mlb/richard-justice-monte-irvins-place-in-history-one-of-decency-humor?ymd=20140522&content_id=76361806 (accessed June 16, 2014).

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Jerry Izenberg, “Happy 95th Birthday Monte Irvin,” [www.nj.com](http://www.nj.com/sports/ledger/izenbergcol/index.ssf/2014/02/izenberg_happy_95th_birthday_m.html), http://www.nj.com/sports/ledger/izenbergcol/index.ssf/2014/02/izenberg_happy_95th_birthday_m.html (accessed June 16, 2014).

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

4.7.3 Pumpsie Green and Boston Red Sox

It was on a hot summer day when Pumpsie Green hit his first ball as a ballplayer for the Boston Red Sox. July 21, 1959, is the day when Major League Baseball became completely integrated since the Boston Red Sox was the last club to integrate.²¹⁶

The Boston Red Sox was, and still is, considered to be an anti-black team. Since its managers were trying to avoid the integration as long as possible, it took twelve years to integrate the team. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) asked the Red Sox management to clarify their attitude towards African-American employees since there was no black person employed in any of the available position at all. MCAD warned the Red Sox that they would make this issue public if they did not take a different stand on it. The Boston Ministerial Alliance, the NAACP, the American Veterans Committee of Massachusetts, all of these organizations joined MCAD to exert pressure on the Red Sox club in order to force it to integrate.²¹⁷

To satisfy the baseball's world, the Boston Red Sox scouted few black players, however, not a single one was hired. For example, back in 1945, the Red Sox gave Jackie Robinson a tryout, although the team never actually considered to hire him. Under oath, Bucky Harris, the then general manager of the team swore that the primary concern of the team is to hire winning players without any regard to their race or color. Overlooking the most desirable and talented players, such as Robinson, Billy Williams, or Willie Mays, the Boston Red Sox ended up with hire of a mediocre ballplayer Pumpsie Green.²¹⁸

Pumpsie Green did not desire to become the first one to integrate the Red Sox. Unlike the Jackie Robinson whose team wanted him to succeed, Green's road was more difficult than Robinson's since his team integrated only because

²¹⁶ Howard Bryant, "No Honor in Red Sox Anniversary: Way too late, Boston made 'Pumpsie' Green the teams' first African-American player," ESPN, <http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/columns/story?id=4345309> (accessed June 16, 2014).

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

of the pressure of the baseball associations. According to some critics, the Boston Red Sox remains anti-Negro up to now.²¹⁹

The reason of the Red Sox negative attitude is a mystery. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, black baseball players attracted more fans to the stadium than anything else. If they did not integrate them for social reasons, they should have at least thought of the financial reasons and popularity.

Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson are the most important personalities of the baseball history. You would not be able to find an American who does not know the names of these two legendary men. They found courage to break out of the American racial attitude. Their goal was to popularize the sport they both loved. Since baseball is the American pastime, it was properly used to wake the interest in the segregation and discrimination.

The beginning of Robinson's career as a professional baseball player, especially his first games in Major League Baseball, were crucial for the integration to succeed. The fact that Clay Hopper did acknowledge Robinson to be a good baseball player and a good man ensured Rickey that he was going the right way, that Robinson was the right choice. Robinson's teammates defended him during the first games and thus his integration welded the team of the Brooklyn Dodgers together.

Robinson's popularity allowed him to use his power in other fields of American society. As a civil rights activist, he decided to get involved in politics. Politicians who did agree with the integration and who fought for the end of discrimination, welcomed Robinson in a friendly way. They knew that Robinson's support would guarantee them the votes of the black minority. That is why Robinson dared to openly criticize political decision and interventions in the civil rights events and to make African-Americans listen to him.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

5 CONCLUSION

The main goal of the thesis was to analyze the issue of racial segregation in Major League Baseball and the influence of the integration of African-Americans in baseball on the attitude of American citizens. The thesis was concentrated on the segregation of one of the largest ethnic groups in the United States, African-Americans.

The first chapter served as an introduction of the thesis. The focus of the second chapter was put on the historical background of baseball in the United States. Baseball is the number one sport in the United States. It served as one of many means to distinguish American culture from the British one. Since baseball is one of the few sports where the physical condition is not as important as in other sports, meaning that people of different weights and heights can all play baseball, and although other sports, such as basketball, football, or ice hockey, became very popular in the USA, the popularity of baseball is still on the same level as it was 150 years ago. The segregation of baseball was actually predetermined by the segregation of the whole society. The fact that the first sport of purely American origin was also the first one to be integrated was not a coincidence.

Rules of baseball are based on rules of rounders, an old game of English origin which is dated back to the 15th century. In England, the term baseball was used in literature already in the first half of the 18th century while in American literature, it did not appear in any literary work till 1791. The literary sources prove that the story of Abner Doubleday, a so-called inventor of baseball, was made-up. "The Father of Baseball" Alexander Cartwright was the first one to establish a fixed set of baseball rules and the founder of the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club.

At the beginning of the second half of the 19th century, as long as baseball was more and more popular among Americans, there was a need to organize baseball in a more professional way. That was the time of birth of the first baseball leagues in the United States. Even though baseball managers were trying to improve quality of baseball, leagues were accompanied by many serious issues

they were not able to solve. Most of the leagues faded out within few years of their existence. There were only two leagues that survived till these days. The National League and the American League started to cooperate thanks to Byron Bancroft Johnson, the owner of the American League, who had suggested the two-league system. Both of the leagues had their own troubles and scandals that actually jeopardized the existence of the American national pastime. Despite the decreasing popularity of baseball in the 1920s and 1930s, it was the time of World War II when baseball reunified the American nation.

The third chapter was focused on the segregation of African-Americans in the United States and its impact on baseball. The life of African-Americans has always been tough in the United States as long as slavery was legal there. The Civil War was the breaking point for blacks. Slavery was abolished by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution which actually caused that African-Americans were blinded by illusion of freedom.

Unlike other minorities in the United States, such as Asians, Jews, or Europeans, African-Americans were brought to the USA against their own will. The Civil War and the 13th Amendment were only the beginning of the long way to the full integration of African-Americans. Even though slavery was officially abolished, hearts of Americans could not have been changed that easily. Their attitude remained the same and the life of black citizens was as difficult as before the Civil War.

Jim Crow laws, at first unwritten rules how to keep African-Americans separate from the everyday life of white Americans, were a huge step back considering the integration of blacks. Jim Crow laws were introduced gradually and each state accepted its own laws. Jim Crow laws influenced all the spheres of American society and baseball was no exception. It was not allowed for black baseball players to play in the main white baseball leagues. Such a restriction eventually led to the establishment of the Negro Leagues. The first Negro Leagues were already established in the 1860s. The Negro Leagues, even though Americans did not want to admit it, had a huge impact on white baseball. It was the Negro League managers who made up the World Series, and even the all-star

games. These inventions helped the Negro Leagues to survive the time of the Great Depression.

It was again World War II that affected the development of the Negro Leagues. Americans, influenced by news about holocaust, started to rethink the social status of African-Americans. It was World War II that actually enabled blacks to integrate and to become part of Major League Baseball. Two years after World War II, Branch Rickey, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, hired the first African-American to ever play in the Major Leagues.

Ironically, the Negro Leagues became a victim of the baseball's integration. When the baseball leagues were still separate, African-American baseball fans regularly visited all the games of the Negro Leagues clubs but the integration has changed everything. The African-Americans started to yearn for watching the black player among his white teammates. With the lack of fans, the financial situation got worse. African-American ballplayers were not interested in playing baseball in the Negro Leagues, they decided to grasp the opportunity to play in the MLB. The decreasing number of players and limited financial resources became fatal for the Negro Leagues.

Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson were the most important personalities of the baseball world. Branch Rickey was not even a good manager, he was also a visionary. He was able to foresee the impact of World War II on baseball. In general, World War II was a fight against racism. Rickey was aware of the fact that the fight will go on even after WWII and thus the years following the war would be the most opportune moment for the integration.

Jackie Robinson serves as an example of the black civil rights activist since the late 1940s. During World War II, Branch Rickey was more than aware of the talent that is hidden in the Negro Leagues. Speaking of racism, Rickey was one of the only few exceptions that were more than benevolent to African-Americans. He is the white manager who preferred baseball over racial prejudice.

It was not easy for Jackie Robinson to become an indivisible part of the Brooklyn Dodgers. At first, he was not even accepted by his own teammates.

But it was about to change during Robinson's first game in Major Leagues Baseball. His teammates could not stand the insults of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball players. The rest of the baseball world was totally surprised by the defending reaction of Robinson's teammates. Watching them, many of the baseball players and managers were forced, voluntarily or not, to come to terms with the gradual end of the segregation. Inspiring other clubs all over the United States, many of the black players were hired. Robinson's success was confirmed by being included in the Baseball Hall of Fame in New York and by creation of a new holiday in his honor.

Jackie Robinson was considered to be a hero by the white population of the United States, as well as by African-Americans. The white audience realized that his behaviour on the field was not as bad as they expected and they started to doubt the premature conclusions about African-Americans who supported Jackie's effort by not being insulting to the white audience. It was African-Americans who allowed whites to segregate blacks from white society. Robinson made African-Americans realize that if they wanted to be integrated in society without any restrictions, black themselves had to try to change the hatred in whites into love, or at least into tolerance.

After his retirement, Jackie Robinson did not want to leave the battle field. He became an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. With supporters, such as Dr. Martin Luther King and Franklin D. Roosevelt, Robinson had many opportunities how to get involved in the political world. He used his voice to attract common people and it worked. Joining the Washington march in 1958, he supported the education of black children. Realizing the tough living conditions, he founded a construction company in order to provide the accommodation for those less fortunate. With his power, he managed to influence many fields, not even baseball.

The Jackie Robinson Foundation still exists and helps black children and teens to finance their studies. The fact that the foundation still has a lot of work to do proves that the discrimination did not disappear till these days.

White Americans, as well as African-Americans, and possibly other ethnic and racial groups, sympathized with Jackie Robinson. They knew what he had to undergo in order to get the glory and his own place in society. That is why he is still a legend among Americans. He is the man to be followed, he is the man to admire.

6 RESUMÉ

Hlavním cílem této diplomové práce byla analýza otázky diskriminace v Hlavní baseballové lize a vliv integrace do baseballu na americkou společnost. Diplomová práce se zabývá především nesnadným sociálním postavením Afroamerické menšiny. Práce je založena na rozboru jak knižních publikací, tak internetových článků, které se zabývají diskriminací černochů nejen v baseballových ligách, ale i v dalších sférách americké společnosti.

První kapitola sloužila jako úvod celé práce. Druhá kapitola se zaměřuje na historii baseballu. Původ baseballu se stal cílem mnoha výzkumů a vyšetřování. Bylo dokázáno, že pravidla současného baseballu jsou založena na pravidlech britské středověké hry zvané rounders. Termín baseball se v britské literatuře objevil již v první polovině 18. století. V americké literatuře byl tento termín použit až na konci 18. století. Takový literární zdroj vyvrátil teorii o původu baseballu zásluhou amerického válečného veterána jménem Abner Doubleday. Autorem prvních sepsaných baseballových pravidel se stal Alexander Cartwright. Přestože se tato pravidla v mnohém liší od pravidel současného baseballu, je to právě Cartwright, kdo je nazýván Otcem moderního baseballu.

V první polovině 19. století se na území Spojených států hrála spousta různých míčových a pálkových sportů. S narůstající popularitou se objevily první pokusy o organizaci baseballu. První profesionální baseballová liga byla založena již v roce 1871. Kvůli organizačním problémům se však tato liga po čtyřech letech své existence rozpadla. O rok později, v roce 1876, byla založena Národní liga, která přetrvala až dodnes. Společně s Americkou ligou, která byla založena o necelé desetiletí později, nyní tvoří Hlavní baseballovou ligu.

Ve 20. a 30. letech popularita baseballu mírně klesla. Zpětně ale vzrostla během 2. světové války. Ve válečných letech mnoho amerických občanů opustilo své domovy, aby bránili svou zemi. Mezi ně se samozřejmě zařadili i hráči všelijakých baseballových klubů. Odchod baseballistů ohrozil především sezónu v roce 1942. Tehdejší prezident Franklin D. Roosevelt ale trval na tom, že sezóna musí být odehrána. Byl si velice dobře vědom toho, že baseball je jedním z mála

prostředků, které Američany spojuje a jednotí. Společně s 2. světovou válkou přišla i změna amerického postoje k Afroamerickým civilistům.

Třetí kapitola začíná změnou černošských práv po občanské válce ve Spojených státech. Emancipační prohlášení prezidenta Abrahama Lincolna z roku 1862, které se později stalo 13. dodatkem americké ústavy, mělo původně černošům zajistit stejná práva, která měla bílá populace. Přestože bylo otrokářství oficiálně zrušeno, Američané nebyli schopni změnit svůj postoj ze dne na den. Černoši se ani po prohlášení nemohli zúčastnit bělošských veřejných akcí, či sportovních událostí.

Segregace byla podpořena zejména tzv. Zákony Jima Crowa, které se začaly objevovat již na konci 19. století. Každý stát měl své vlastní segregáčnické zákony. Zákony Jima Crowa byly založeny na systému rovnocenného zacházení s černošy, kteří ale zároveň museli žít odděleně od občanů bílých. Tyto zákony tudíž zajišťovaly, že černošští hráči nesměli být najati do Hlavní baseballové ligy. Jelikož se však Afroameričané nehodlali vzdát bez boje, založili si své vlastní černošské baseballové ligy.

Termín černošské baseballové ligy je souborný termín pro černošské ligy, které byly zakládány již v 60. letech 19. století. První profesionální černošská liga byla však založena o více než 50 let později, a to až v roce 1920, baseballovým managerem Andrew Rube Fosterem, který je nazýván Otcem černošského baseballu. Ačkoli se americká společnost snažila sebevíc, vliv černošské kultury a černošského baseballu je nepopíratelný. Byl to právě Andrew Rube Foster a Edward H. Bolden, kteří zavedli dvouligový systém a již v roce 1923 jejich dvě ligy hrály první světovou sérii. O desetiletí později, v roce 1933, bylo odehráno první all-star utkání. Během Světové hospodářské krize právě tyto inovace pomohly ligám překonat těžké finanční období.

Byl to holocaust během 2. světové války, který změnil sociální postavení černošů. Američané si začali uvědomovat, že barva pleti a původ nejsou tak důležité, jak se zpočátku zdálo. Díky tomuto procitnutí konečně přišel čas na integraci amerického národního sportu. V roce 1947 Branch Rickey, manager Brooklyn Dodgers, najal afroamerického baseballového hráče, který se jako první

stal součástí Hlavní baseballové ligy. Tím mužem nebyl nikdo jiný než Jackie Robinson.

Čtvrtá kapitola je věnována právě tomuto bojovníkovi za lidská práva. Byla 40. léta 20. století, když Branch Rickey začal s pátráním po černošském baseballovém hráči, který by byl schopen odolat nátlaku veřejnosti. V roce 1945 mu jeho kolega Clyde Sukeforth představil Jackieho Robinsona, talentovaného baseballistu z městečka Cairo v americké Georgii. Po několikahodinovém setkání Branch Rickey podepsal s Jackiem Robinsonem smlouvu o nástupu do jeho klubu Brooklyn Dodgers.

Začátky v Hlavní baseballové lize byly pro Robinsona velmi obtížné. Často se setkával s odmítáním jeho osoby jak ze strany protihráčů, tak se strany svých vlastních spoluhráčů. Vše se zlomilo během jeho prvního zápasu v Hlavní baseballové lize proti klubu Philadelphia Phillies. Nejen jeho kolegové, ale i fanoušci Brooklyn Dodgers již nadále nechtěli snášet urážky ze strany Philadelphie. Brooklyn Dodger Eddie Stanky byl první, kdo vyvolal vlnu nevole. Bylo jen otázkou času, kdy se za Robinsona postaví i zbytek týmu. Integrace Afroameričanů mohla pomalu začít.

Robinson roku 1947 získal ocenění Objevu roku. To ovšem nebyla jeho jediná význačná cena. Roku 1962, tedy pět let po svém odchodu z baseballové ligy, byl jako první afroamerický hráč nominován do Baseballové síně slávy.

Robinson se rozhodl pokračovat v boji za práva Afroameričanů i po svém odchodu z baseballového světa. Začal spolupracovat s National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, tedy s asociací, která se zabývala podporou nejen afroamerických občanů, ale i ostatních rasových a etnických skupin, jejich životního stylu a vzdělávání. Stejně jako založil Freedom National Bank v newyorském Harlemu, otevřel také stavební firmu, která nabízela nové levné domy chudým afroamerickým rodinám. Spolupracoval s takovými osobnostmi jako byl Dr. Martin Luther King nebo Franklin D. Roosevelt. Díky své popularitě zastával důležitou pozici i v politické sféře, dokonce publikoval i několik politických novinových článků. Po Robinsonově smrti založila jeho žena Rachel

Nadaci Jackieho Robinsona, jejíž hlavním úkolem bylo zajistit dostatečné vzdělání pro afroamerické děti.

I nyní, více než 60 let po jeho prvním zápasu, se neustále 15. dubna slaví Den Jackieho Robinsona. V roce 1997 Hlavní baseballová liga uspořádala výroční utkání oslavující jeho první zápas. Po jeho smrti získal i několik národních ocenění. Pro své obrovské zásluhy v boji proti rasovým předsudkům a segregaci zůstává Jackie Robinson legendou americké historie.

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