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**Lynching of African Americans in the Post-Civil War Era (1865-
2020)**

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in
Literature and Civilization.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rania Ibtissem', written in a cursive style.

Dedication

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents and my supportive fiancé who stood next to me through the process of writing it.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for my supervisor Mr. Selmi Zakaria, and thank him for his supervision and encouragement, this work would not have been completed without his assistance.

Finally, I extend my greetings to all my teachers during the Master courses.

Abstract

This study aims to present the impact of the American Civil War on black people before and after their emancipation when they were still discriminated, along with the reasons for their lynching. It also strives to put forward the major changes that were brought during the Reconstruction Era, which was described as the most challenging chapter in their history. The research intends to investigate whether or not the social, political, and cultural changes that colored people experienced, including the formation of Reconstruction amendments enhanced their quality of life. According to the findings of this study, the anguish and suffering of lynching have had a profound influence on blacks who are mistreated and dehumanized nowadays because of hatred and prejudice.

Keywords: Civil War, Blacks, Emancipation, Reconstruction, lynching

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

USCT: United States Colored Troops

KKK: Ku Klux Klan

NAACP: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

WWII: World War II

PTSS: Post-traumatic Slave Syndrome

VRA: Voting Rights Act

General Introduction

General Introduction

During the reconstruction era (1865 – 1877) that came after the most significant event in the history of America which was the Civil War, life was still difficult for the black community considering the fact that they were still suffering from the atrocities of white race prejudice that made them live in extreme poverty and deprived them from fundamental rights like education, however, they took privilege from few rights but were still segregated because even when slavery was abolished after the war, the black community still suffered from race-related treatment in the south.

Even though abolishing slavery was one of the triggering causes of the civil war, lynching was still committed against African Americans especially in the south from 1882 to 1968 as a method of racial and social control that made them submit to the white supremacy. The black community went through criminal accusations, arrestations, and sabotage of judicial justice as well as physical mistreatment since victims were seized and tortured in the most horrific manners. They were living a harsh life due to the brutal segregation of the white community that was persisting in spite of the 13th amendment that ended slavery and promised them freedom, they were still segregated and many of them lived in poverty. In the years that followed the civil war, lynching of African Americans gave rise to restraining laws on the black community and crashed their hopes of freedom to be treated as part of the American society. The white supremacy's lynching of the black community took place across different American states as an act of racial terrorism that aimed to subdue the African Americans and cost the lives of many black people because of false criminal accusations and murders.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the different ways African Americans were discriminated during the civil war period and even after they gained their rights by standing against the white political and cultural conservation. Also, it focuses on the social, political, and cultural changes that occurred in the Reconstruction Era which was described as a significant but difficult chapter in the history of the black community due to their unknown future freedom.

The current dissertation attempts to answer the following questions:

- What major changes occurred in the reconstruction era concerning black community? Did it improve their social status?
- What is lynching and how was it committed against African Americans?

General Introduction

- Did the reconstruction amendments improve the status of the black community? Is lynching still practiced against them?

The hypotheses for the questions above can be formed in this way:

- During the reconstruction era, the black community witnessed some major changes within the American society through several amendments and rights that were given to them by the government. Nevertheless, racism against them was still practiced in many ways.

- Lynching can be defined as an act of terrorism against the blacks with the purpose of keeping the white supremacy at the top of the social ladder in America. White supremacists committed acts of violence and produced discriminating laws to humiliate the black community and rule over them through the ideologies of enslaving.

- The reconstruction amendments might have improved the social status of the African Americans and offered them rights however, they are still lynched and discriminated in many ways nowadays that can be seen in the American society where they are still fighting for equality.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will provide an image of the African American life before and during the reconstruction period, including the changes brought by the reconstruction amendments and laws that sought to improve their social status and put an end to slavery.

The second chapter seeks to define lynching and illustrates the different ways African Americans witnessed it, and how the white supremacists spread terror within the black community to keep it in chains especially in the south where slavery and racism were strong existing sentiments that made the blacks suffer from physical torment and torture.

The final chapter will discuss the aftermath of the lynching on the modern American society and provide examples that prove the existence of such atrocities and discrimination which the black community is still fighting against today.

Chapter One

African American

Life before and during

Reconstruction

Chapter One:African American Life before and during Reconstruction

1.1. Introduction

African Americans or black Americans belong to one of the largest ethnic groups of America as they form the second largest racial group in the US, the term usually indicates the descendants of enslaved people of colour or black people who were born in the United States. Their history began in the 17th century when a part of them were sold to European slave traders of the thirteen colonies and more particularly the southern states , European vessels exchanged goods for slaves then sailed to the Americas to trade them for agricultural products, they were chained and crowded naked all along the way under dreadful conditions which caused the death of approximately two million men and women on their way to the New World and separated families forever, triggering by that the emergence of the American Civil War as a means to gain back their freedom (“Origins of the American Civil War”).

The aim of this chapter is to trace African American life throughout the Civil War and Reconstruction in quest of their freedom thanks to their massive efforts.

1.2. Origins of the American Civil War

The United States used to be a nation of two distinct regions, the “free states” in New England, Northeast and Midwest which developed an economy based on industry, mining, commerce and family farms, and the south which was dominated by a cotton cultivation system based on slavery considering the fact that the migration rate was elevated, the outbreak of the civil war provided the primary points of conflict between free soil and pro-slavery forces, yet many historians have mentioned that the primary cause of this war was not only slavery but the disunion itself, the historian David Potter wrote in his book *The Impending Crisis* that was published in 1976:

"The problem for Americans who, in the age of Lincoln, wanted slaves to be free was not simply that southerners wanted the opposite, but that they themselves cherished a conflicting value: they wanted the Constitution, which protected slavery, to be honored, and the Union, which had fellowship with slaveholders, to be preserved. Thus they were committed to values that could not logically be reconciled." (p45)

Chapter One:African American Life before and during Reconstruction

1.2.1. History of Slavery

Also called human trafficking, the history of this practice can be traced back to 11,000 years, it is a large and tragic story full of cruelty and dehumanization that emerged in the first civilizations through the centuries such as ancient Egypt and ancient India, in ancient times it was represented as a mixture of Debt-slavery, punishment for crime, and the enslavement of war prisoners who suffered the most as they represented a potential sacrifice for religious ceremonies and festivals (Wooditch).

In the 17th and 18th centuries individuals were kidnapped from Africa and brought to the white colonies to be treated as a personal property of their owners and contribute to their wealth and development but at the same time it caused the depopulation and devastation of Africa. They were stultified and treated with violence since they didn't benefit from any civil rights, as a result, they were subject to human trafficking, child labor and forced marriage.

1.2.2. Slavery in America

Slavery in America was primordial, it emerged initially in Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina by the year 1776, its rate extended to more than 50% of the population where African Americans constituted the larger part of them, they were kidnapped from their homes towards Northern colonies to work in several fields such as farm workers, servants, and households. They were pressed against each other and led in chains like a group of animals and once arrived at destined where they would be sold to an auction, they took the chance to see light while being relieved for a brief moment because it was the beginning of the end of their freedom. By 1860, America boasted a population of thirty-one million in which 95% of them lived in the south as slaves (Wagner, 69).

Moreover, racism played a major role in enslaving Africans due to the fact that they were seen as inferior species and commodities and a way to provide political power, they were never considered as human beings. Black slavery in North America started from the earliest colonial settlements and was marked by Atlantic slave trade where about 20 Africans in Jamestown, Virginia were sold in the 16th century.

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In the 17th century about 65% of southern colonies population was enslaved, masters prohibited their slaves from reading and writing because they were controlling their every movement and behavior, they suffered from poor living conditions as they used to live in a small room with no furniture, As a result, any rebellious act used to lead to a brutal mistreatment and punishment. Slaves sought help in order to flee the mediocre living conditions they were trapped in and attract sympathy from outside or from slave ownership in order to escape to north, however, nobody was to be trusted as they were slave hunters everywhere who were rewarded by capturing these slaves on the run (Slavery in the British Colonies”).

Historians estimated that 6 to 7 million enslaved Africans were imported to the New World in the next century in order to be exploited in the cultivation of cotton and tobacco, rice and indigo of the southern coast from which came into sight the conviction of considering slavery as a civilizing institution. Consequently, the slave population in America increased the eve of the Civil War from seven hundred thousand to four million slaves.

1.2.3. The American Civil War

After the establishment of the United States in 1776, the country was newly independent from England and attracted diverse migrants from Europe and quickly found itself divided into two parts, the north which was well developed and benefited of plenty of factories and machines instead of human power for labor leading it to slowly prohibit slavery, and the south which was agrarian and therefore based its production mainly on slavery. This conflict between the north and the south gave rise to their future conflict over slavery, the civil war.

Also called War Between the States, the Civil War was America’s bloodiest conflict that took place in South Carolina between 1861 and 1865. According to his interpretation of the war’s causes, historian James Ford Rhodes (1913) asserted that its main cause was the historic event of slavery. Among the other factors that led to the war were social and economic differences between the North that became industrial and commercial, and the South that remained largely agricultural, in addition to the fights between Slave and Non-Slave states advocates, as a matter of fact, the political system then rested on human beings enslavement where work was obtained with the whip and the lash,

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consequently, black people who were detained as slaves during this period of time endured all kinds of physical abuse after it was allowed by the government that was sceptical over the enslavement of black people in southern states and whether or not it should continue (Rhodes 75).

After Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency in 1860, the Republican started losing state after state when he declared that none of them had the constitutional right to secede and he incited them to carefully think about such intentions knowing that it would lead either to anarchy or dictatorship, he added: "the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States", and that before the turnaround during the Reconstruction era that lasted from 1865 to 1877 and played a major role in the history of civil rights in the United States. ("Slavery, Secession, and States 'Rights'")

1.3. Afro-Americans during the Civil War

This war was the main cause in reshaping a new country where blacks served in non-combat support functions such as working as nurses, cooks, and even smiths during the war, not only that, but they were also used as defensive walls and placed in railroads and bridges because northern officers believed that black troops wouldn't get involved in fighting.

African-Americans were always seen as slaves and a property to the government, as the chief source of information to the enemy is through "Negroes". They used to serve as spies to the union Army in order to provide important information about confederate forces and plans which earned them the title of "Black Dispatches", a term that refers to black spies contribution with the union officers providing Confederate intelligence, which led them to break racist stereotypes after realizing how brave and intelligent those people were (Central Intelligence Agency, United States 10).

1.3.1. Military History of African Americans

African-Americans have always played a significant role in defending and fighting for the United States throughout its history, they served the country despite all the obstacles and difficulties, yet they were not given their basic rights as citizens and had to face different policies of racial segregation, their military history dates from the colonial

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history of the United States when the first enslaved Africans arrived around the 16th century, it's mentioned that about 9,000 workers were in service for the American side and they were even motivated to serve in place of their masters in the front lines because they were promised freedom. (“African-Americans in Combat”)

When the Civil War erupted in April 1861 it was illegal for men of colour to join the federal army, people in the North claimed that these people wouldn't follow orders nor fight and that they would immediately surrender if they were attacked because they believed that they were not brave enough and didn't have the required physical, mental or moral characteristics to resist war and that until the passing of the Militia Act on July 17, 1862.

The Act allowed Afro-Americans to join federal army for the first time ,yet it was still controversial for the U.S war Department whether to recruit Afro-Americans as laborers or as soldiers due to the racial prejudice and discrimination of the military officers, however, they were still put at a disadvantage and treated only as a “war necessity”, consequently, they received 7\$ a month, half of a white soldier's wage which enforced unequal pay upon black combatants.

In 1863 president Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation that changed the legal status of more than 3.5 million enslaved African American where he stated that they were henceforth allowed to join the federal troops as soldiers. (“The Emancipation Proclamation”)

1.3.2. Black Regiments

As the war was progressing, black men were determined to form their own regiments in order to fight for the Union, so the United States military divided African Americans and enlisted more than 186.000 black soldiers who served in the union army who were known as the United States Coloured Troops (USCT).Blacks who took part in the war whether free or slaves constituted the main key in the triumph later. Around the 18th century the organization of these regiments took place in Kansas, South Carolina and Louisiana, they engaged in small unit operations combat that included 6 cavalry units, 13 heavy artillery regiments, 135 regiments of infantry, and 29.000 served in the Navy. Besides that, several volunteer regiments were formed mainly due to the recruitment of

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1,000 free black men by the former slave, William Henry Singleton, who became a union soldier later.

Black soldiers fought for the first time in the major combat of Port of Hudson in 1863 which was the first battle area of the longest siege in which two regiments of African American military units were engaged in order to take the leadership. Andre Cailloux, a former confederate lieutenant served as the captain of Company E of the first Louisiana Native Guard regiment which was mainly composed of “free men of color”. Different other regiments served as well in the war, for example, the second Infantry Regiment which was organized from June 20 to November 11, 1863, at Arlington, Virginia. Though the regiment was accredited to the District of Columbia, its ranks were filled by men from Virginia and Maryland. The 6th Cavalry served as forward scouts for the Army as well (“The Siege of Port Hudson”).

1.3.3. Black Women during the War

In the years that preceded the war, life was harsh and brutal for women of color both from the south and the north, women on both sides were repressed and severely punished because of strict racial policies, black women played an essential role in the survival of the black community whether in hard times like slavery or in freedom for the one and only reason that they established centered networks in order to contribute in the development of the black community, but their race and gender never played in their favor.

Free and enslaved African-American women were always marginalized in spite of their participation and contribution in this long process and that in many ways, whether through the United States Sanitary commission which was specialized in taking care of the wounded soldiers of the army by cooking and reading for them, or as spies by hiding information in their skirts hoops, they were even soldiers as they succeeded to find war related jobs, scouts, organizers, activists or workers. They were always trying hard to find new strategies to reach freedom in a world full of chaos by adopting different mechanisms in order to face and deal with the mortifying realities like racism and sexism, at some point, they were even promised rewards and favors for their obedience. Thus, they developed all kind of resistance to escape enslavement which the fugitive slave “Margaret Garner” attempted to do along with her toddler daughter, however she got captured while

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trying and decided to sacrifice her child rather than to have her face the cruel world of slavery.

In her book *Incidents in the life of a slave girl*, the African American writer Harriet Jacobs highlighted the problems of sexual abuse of black women and slaves since they lived in a society where they were denied their rights, treated like a sexual property and lacked protection which had a negative impact on their moral development (66).

1.4. Reconstruction

It was the era following the civil war which had as a goal the unification of the divided nations in order to integrate African Americans and former slaves into society after abolishing slavery as an act of reconciliation on behalf of President “Abraham Lincoln”. Congress passed a series of acts which aim to deal with the issue of rights, in addition to the right management of southern states. These acts included the freedmen’s bureau act, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and other Reconstruction Acts.

Reconstruction included three main objectives; it aimed for the restoration of the union, the reshaping of southern society and an adoption of progressive legislation that puts forward the newly freed slaves. However, it was a great failure since it brought more questions rather than answers. Unfortunately, Abraham Lincoln’s plan has never been materialized owing the fact that he was assassinated in 1865.

After president Lincoln was assassinated, he was followed by “Andrew Johnson” who believed that “Lincoln” was too indulgent regarding the South, unlike him who estimated that blacks had no role to play in Reconstruction. In fact Johnson’s plan did not do anything to dissuade white landowners from economically exploiting their former slaves. (“Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military during the Civil War”).

He had a total different standpoint which consisted of constructing a new all white government, meanwhile, newly freed slaves were promised lands by government and General William Tecumseh Sherman’s military orders “Special Field Orders, NO. 15 (1865), promised to distribute them in forty acre plots which finally didn’t happen and instead President Johnson returned all of the lands to their former owners. Republicans in Congress weren’t satisfied with the reconstruction of the south basically because it was

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similar to the pre-civil war south, consequently they decided to take the lead by using congress to impede Lincoln's attempt of bringing the south back into the Union, therefore they imposed harsh conditions on the south (Gates).

As a result, slaves were questioning their faith and whether or not this newly gained freedom would procure them the same status as a white citizen, and most importantly whether the terms would be established by congress or president and that until the establishment of the reconstruction amendments.

1.5. Reconstruction Amendments

Also called the Civil War amendments, these three amendments were established by the US constitution following Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation; thirteen, fourteen and fifteen amendments were designed in order to guarantee equal rights and liberties to newly freed African Americans.

1.5.1. Thirteenth Amendment

On 1861 congress passed the first Confiscation Act which was signed into law by President Lincoln and consisted of laws which were passed by US congress during the civil war that intended to free all the slaves who worked or fought for the confederate forces in the south. Almost a year later, the Confiscation Act of 1862 or second confiscation Act was passed by the United States congress on 1862 to suppress insurrection and punish treason and rebellion. Later on in 1863, when additional measures were passed by the federal government, south supporters were seized all their property and southern slaveholders lost about \$2,000,000,000 of human property worth ("Abraham Lincoln and Emancipation").

Abraham Lincoln delivered the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, it was initially passed by the Senate on April 8, 1864 as a response to the abolitionist petition campaign in order to abolish slavery in a legal way in the United States but failed because it didn't receive the intended two-thirds majority. After his reelection in the same year, Lincoln's active role and persuasion in ensuring its passage through Congress after eight House Democrats finally voted for the bill which encouraged many other Representatives who missed the chance to do so (Elliott).

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On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the 13th amendment, historian Edward Baptist at Cornell University underlined the big significance that this official document has brought to the constitution, he said that The 13th Amendment was the most important amendment in the history of the U.S. Constitution, since the latter has been founded on the concept of slavery from 1776 to 1861, the amendment was dedicated to bring to an end that ideology of exploitation (Baptist).

The thirteenth amendment was ratified in 1865 and set free about four million African-Americans, which makes nearly a third of the South's population. The text stated, "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, nor any place subject to their jurisdiction."

1.5.2. Life Post Slavery

Even though the 13th amendment officially ended slavery and sought to reduce black labor as much as possible, it continued to be legal in many southern states such as Maryland, Kentucky, Delaware, and Missouri. However, former masters still treated and controlled their former slaves as their property. They weren't called slaves anymore but they were far from free because Slavery didn't end with the American civil war. Despite of the war amendments, blacks were underpaid and discriminated which gave rise to a labor war by forcing blacks to work on the capitalists own terms at the side of the white laborers and white landholders triggering by that a new doctrine of racism (Du Bois 669).

The newly freed afro Americans who were used in the antebellum period as slaves to build railroads and sent to mines and southern factories as a labor force in the 1850s were also the first ones to suffer from forced labor on the 1870s and the widespread of slaves regenerated itself with the same brutal forms of mistreatment and physical punishments (Blackmon 23-24).

The American writer Douglass A. Blackmon used the term "neoslavery" to describe the new conditions in which these former slaves found themselves in instead of the so coveted freedom and promises, on the contrary, the main method for white planters to earn a living during hard times such as the economic crisis they've been through was by exploiting blacks.

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German-American Carl Schurz came to the United States during the German revolution which he participated in and got imprisoned, but he eventually escaped to settle in Wisconsin and quickly became active in the antislavery movement and a delegate to the Republican National Convention of 1860 to support black's rights. Schurz reported that some planters used to hold their former slaves in a brute way, and when white men drove back the wandering Negroes during their patrols, they found dead bodies of people of color murdered near the highways and byways, and those in the hospital were found tortured, their broken bodies lacerated by knives and scourges, in addition to plenty of similar cases that were spreading in the south which caused a prevailing terror among black southerners (Young, 2015).

In his book *“When Slavery Was Called Freedom”*, John Patrick Daly claimed that reconstruction was aiming to bring back the old system which viewed slavery as the key element in it, the postbellum period was marked by violence and oppression against colored people who were always treated as a property to whites and were deprived from basic autonomy over their lives which was irredeemably evil. In addition to that, African Americans had to face legal charges if they were found carrying fire-arms of any kind or ammunitions because the state considered it unsuitable for them to possess them, same for professions; long time free blacks were authorized to practice any work they chose until the legislature of black codes into law which specified that the only legal job they could exert was working for a white person.

1.5.3. Fourteenth Amendment

It was ratified in 1868 and granted Citizenship, Equal rights and protection to people born or naturalized in the United States including formerly enslaved people, and that by forbidding states from denying any person “life, liberty, property, without due process of law”, as a result, developing American's civil rights regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Unfortunately, congress excluded women's suffrage and they didn't have the right to vote until 1920.

After Lincoln's administration consent to authorize the recruitment of black troops, the number of white volunteers declined, meanwhile the number of former slaves “contrabands” was rising which led the government to reconsider the ban, consequently, activist and former slave Frederick Douglass encouraged black men in becoming soldiers

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to ensure their full citizenship, he said that “Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letter, U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, there is no power on earth that can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship.” (666-76)

1.5.4. Fifteenth Amendment

It's the last amendment which has been ratified in the 1870s and guaranteed the United States citizens the right to vote despite their race, color, or previous condition of servitude, as a matter of fact, neither the 1787 Constitution nor the original Bill of Rights insured a right to vote. It also provided Congress with power to enforce the article by appropriate legislation as shown in figure 1 below. Unfortunately, congress excluded women's suffrage and they didn't have the right to vote until 1920.

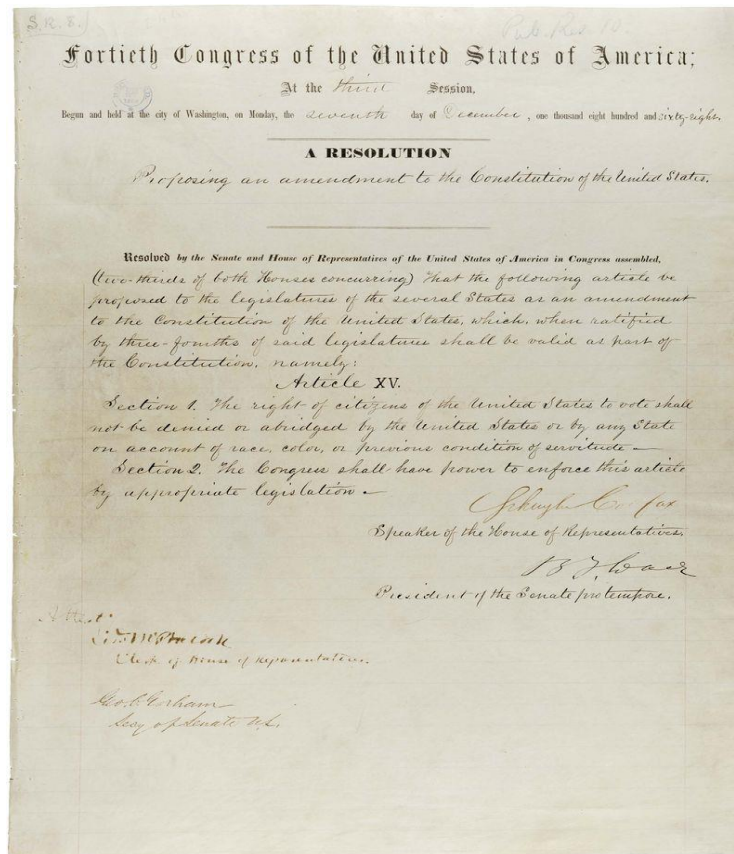


Figure.1. the Fifteenth Amendment in the National Archives stating that ““The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” (Adapted from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution#/media/File:15th_Amendment_Pg1of1_AC.jpg

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1.6. Black Codes

Southern states developed a series of discriminatory laws known as black codes which were passed in the 1860s in the early days of Reconstruction to put newly Afro-American freedmen in a close to slave like conditions as much as possible, they limited black freedom by restricting their labor, activity, and even their civic participation like the right to vote, or to rent or lease land. These codes were a mean to recreate the antebellum economic structure of racial slavery and aimed to maintain it by making blacks live in the deception of free-labor system after the abolishment of slavery, consequently, young African Americans were confided to white plantation owners to benefit from an apprenticeship period, but ended up being exploited and forced to work, some of them were even forced to sign contracts with their previous owners to end up working in poor conditions and receiving low wages or none at all. (Corbett et al. 323)

Moreover, slavery was not fully abolished even after the enacting of the 13th amendment since it continued in many southern states and any former slave who attempted to violate these labor contracts was beaten or arrested for vagrancy, therefore, freedmen started living in rural poverty and found themselves doing the same work they used to do before emancipation, for example, it was illegal for them to serve on juries, testify against whites, or serve in state militias.

1.6.1. Jim Crow Law

During the American Revolution in the late 18th century, the abolitionist movement was already working to eradicate racial injustice by getting rid of the slavery policy, however despite its abolition and the legal gains they benefited from, racial segregation called “Jim Crow Laws” was still a current even in the south.

Also called “separate but equal” doctrine, they represented any of the laws that were enforced by Ku Klux Klan (KKK) vigilantes and promoted racial segregation in the southern United States between the end of reconstruction in 1877 to the beginning of the “Civil Rights Movement” in the 1950s. The name’s origin came from a minstrel routine called “Jump Jim Crow” which consisted in the performance of white actors in black face. After the spread of the show, “Jim Crow” became a derogative term for black people because it reflected their segregated life. (History.com Editors)

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Besides, these laws included the separation between blacks and whites in their daily life; in schools, hospitals, transportation, movie theaters, and parks to prevent any contacts between blacks and whites until the Supreme Court ruling declared that segregation in public schools and places unconstitutional in 1954.

1.6.2. The Civil Rights Movement:

The emergence of the Civil Rights Movement was a move on behalf of African American activists who sought to ensure and secure their political, and economic rights as well as to improve their life quality because they were still facing discrimination and enduring the cataclysmic outcomes of racism mostly in the south. The movement took place mainly in the 1950s and the 1960s by bringing pressure on the federal government in order to put forward and glorify their black power and valuable victories, thus putting an end to the bigoted prejudice and violence against them. As well as improving their life quality from 1954 to 1968 by bringing pressure on the federal government in order to put forward and glorify their black power and valuable victories after a series of segregation and division which was the case of the American Activist Rosa Parks who was called “the first lady of civil rights” and “the mother of the freedom movement by the United States Congress.

Rosa was a long time member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a civil rights organization in the United States for the advancement of justice and equality for colored people suffering from discrimination. In 1955, Rosa refused to cede her place to a white man and move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, as result, she was arrested and jailed for her protest which encouraged and inspired black local activist to visit her in order to plan a twenty four hours bus boycott but ended up lasting for ten months almost. Park’s simple gesture caused her to lose her job, but developed into a rising civil rights activism and a national movement which led to the desegregation of public transports, the activist stated on her 77th birthday hat she wanted to be known as a person who is concerned about freedom and equality and justice and prosperity for all people.

1.6.3. Brown V. Board of Education

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The case originated in Topeka, Kansas when a public school declined the admission of a nine years old little girl Linda Brown who was forced to walk and ride buses to reach her black school due to the fact that she lived near white schools only. Young children of color were denied the right to attend the same white schools as their Caucasian neighbors even though they could meet in the street and play together, they were sent to different schools which was contradictory to what came in the 14th amendment which stated that no public school would deny access for black children living in the area.

Despite the fact that schools were well built, segregation free and contained good and qualified teachers, the act of separating children based on race in itself generated a feeling of inferiority, consequently, the plaintiffs headed to the U.S Supreme Court and the latter pleaded that segregation laws for public education was unequal after the district court panel asserted its detrimental effect on African American children, and on May 17th, 1954 all schools across the country had to reverse their racial segregation policies in order to allow people of color to study alongside white students, but it took three years and five similar cases from Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware while before this decision was fully materialized.

In his book *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*, American writer Johnathan Kazol said: “During the decades after Brown V. Board of Education there was terrific progress. Tens of thousands of public schools were integrated racially. During that time the gap between black and white achievements narrowed.” (235)

1.6.4. The Civil Rights Act of 1964:

The Civil Rights Act was a legislation that aimed to outlaw discrimination and segregation in education and public places like hotels and theaters, it also banned the employment of people based on their race, color or origin by granting equal opportunities to everyone. This Act was enacted in June, 1964 when President John Kennedy sent the civil rights bill to congress in 1963 where it was blocked in the Judiciary Committee because of the slow tactics of southern segregationist senators who were against it such as the democratic James Eastland.

Lyndon B. Johnson, Kennedy’s successor after he was assassinated signed into law this act which was expanded by Congress besides other additional civil rights legislation such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that aimed to overcome the legal obstacles made by

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white leaders who used intimidation and fraud as a method to prevent African Americans from voting.

1.8. Conclusion

The Civil War was one of the deadliest and costliest battles in American history between northern and southern states over the controversial issue of slavery, westward expansion, and states' rights, thus it has completely changed and devastated the United States. After the end of the war, a long and painful process began in order to rebuild a new nation free of slavery thanks to the federal government which insisted on granting African Americans civil and political rights in the form of different laws and amendments to improve their social life and enable them to stand against racial segregation; however, white supremacists revolted against blacks mainly in the South and have put an end to their hopes of becoming respected and acknowledged citizens in their society by slaughtering them and rising a lynching wave against them to regain control of state legislatures.

Chapter Two

Lynching in the
United States of
America

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2.1. Introduction

For African Americans in the South, life post slavery proved to be difficult because it transformed the world, indeed, the indignities of slave life were gone and blacks were about to start a new life to enjoy their rights as freedmen and women, yet times in the following years were not easy because of the brutalities of white race prejudice which persisted and the lynching activities that increased dramatically during the Reconstruction period.

During the Reconstruction era, lynching increased dramatically and became a form of domination to impose white supremacy through violence and harassment against blacks mostly in the south, this massacre peaked between 1877 and 1950 where lynch mobs caused the slaughter of 3959 black victims mostly in 12 southern states which constitutes 70% of the victims, therefore, this act became so banal that it was ten time higher in the south than in the rest of the states and regions combined. Lynching was under no circumstances a way to bring popular justice but an act to terrorize black community who were not punished for their crimes but rather for violating social hierarchy; they were dragged behind trucks, hanged, beaten, castrated and even burned alive to constitute by that 94% of lynch victims.(Lartey and Morris)

The second chapter aims to lift the veil on the dreadful ways Afro-Americans have experienced lynching in a white supremacist society motivated by the belittlement and segregation of these people.

2.2. Origins of lynching

The origins of the word “lynch” comes from the expression “lynch law” which means “punishment without trial”, it was coined by two Americans Charles Lynch and William Lynch in 1782, the latter used that term in case he wanted to deal with suspects which he thought were part of loyalists or colored people through informal court and unauthorized punishments of criminals. William claimed that the phrase originated from a deal in 1780 which was signed by him and his neighbors in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to preserve their own perception and beliefs upon legal authority. Lynching was a national crime that targeted white southerners and other ethnic minorities in the first few decades, but after African-American’s emancipation they became the principle targets of

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this hideous act, the violence and torture they were victims of traumatized them in the period between the civil war and WWII, considering the fact that they were brutalized without legal justification.

In the 1830s this public punishment became more lethal without a formal process or deliberation of a court or even a tribunal, in addition to that, the testimony of blacks against whites was unallowable in court, which guaranteed whites protection from all kinds of repercussions within the law despite of their guilt. (Pfeifer, 37)

After the prohibition of slavery in 1865, formerly enslaved people were granted full citizenship thanks to the different amendments that guaranteed them different civil rights such as the fourteenth amendment that was supposed to accord them equal rights to the whites regardless of their race but they got nothing. Nevertheless, their freedom didn't suit the white community since southerners were blaming them for their financial issues which resulted in tensions and anger mainly in the south, consequently, racial terror lynchings were directed at black people to restore white supremacy and reinforce racial oppression and segregation ,so white mobs were putting persons of color to death extra-legally without a court sanction according to their perception of justice.

It's during the year of 1885 that blacks witnessed a massive quantity of violence to end up disfranchised by the states which made new constitutional changes concerning the 15th amendment by preventing dark skinned people from voting, consequently the White Southern Democrats promulgated the Jim Crow Laws as an alternative, and therefore, lynching reached its highest point in the south.In 1886 America became racialized to the extent that the number of black lynch victims exceeded the white lynch victims. That is to say, compared to other forms of violence, lynching held a traumatic and psychological sequelaes causing a level of fear and horror that overpassed all kinds of violence, humiliations, and hostilities that black southerners endured. (Wood 1)

In the 1890's activists struggled to define the term "lynching" since the number of black victims was significantly growing to exceed that of the whites mostly in the south, this brutal act was rising in terror inside the American society to finally become a racist, common, and collective form of violence that developed in the period of Revolutionary War years and it was named after the founder of the city of Lynchburg in Virginia "John Lynch", it took place as an extra legal justice during that period of time due to the lack of courts and the hardness to get to them, this period was marked by the location of the

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British in the south which made it very dangerous for African Americans to move around since this act was seen as a form of local justice which was not accepted by a formal court (“The Origins of Lynching Culture in the United States”).

2.2.1. Major Motives Behind Lynching in the USA

One of the main motives behind lynching was racial stereotypes since whites who were living their lives in a classy way considered first-class citizenship as a privilege for them and not a right to be deserved, and also their fear of blacks who reached political power and civil rights in the Reconstruction era due to different amendments made by the government to dream of equality.

There were even more reasons for discrimination against black people such as the fear of whites of the emerging myth of rape threats of a white woman by a black men principally after the southern euphemism for marriage between the races, so the white community used it as an excuse to accuse them of violence and keep them in a lower position. (Thurston, 4)

This new social order where blacks reached coveted position of employment and similar rights was a threat to white dominance since they were brought to work together with blacks which increased the rate of their interactions and exchanges, therefore, African American started expecting the same legal and civil activities as whites which offended them and pushed them to benefit from their racial privileges such as the Jim Crow Laws and the disenfranchisement¹ of former slaves and their descendants, moreover, many white southerners were convinced that this new environment had resulted in the sudden transformation of black men who have been accused of violence and sexual transgression, which later gave rise to racial fears. (Wood, 6)

In the late 19th century, the evolving scientific theory of Charles Darwin claimed that human beings were categorized and ranked according to social constructs and affiliated to different groups due to this theory of biology “Social Darwinism” which claims that the fittest will survive, consequently it gave rise to different myths concerning the way societies should evolve, and the main ideology of these myths was that black people were inferior to white people, so they used it as a justification for their racism that later transformed into acts of savagery and lynching.

¹ Deprivation of a right or privilege, especially the right to vote.

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As a result, lynching became a crucial event to attend among the white community which dedicated a number of its newspaper to the advertisement of this act by informing the general public in order to make an appearance at the execution place, they even accorded employees some spare-time for the sole purpose of witnessing the spectacle of the massacre. These severed body parts were kept by individuals as souvenirs that would be passed on from generation to generation as cherished family heirlooms (Chacon and Dye 20).

2.2.2. Geography of lynching

The optimism of the black community did not last long since federal courts had restricted their voting rights by imposing segregation and intimidation through the Jim Crow system, thus, lynchings used to take place in areas that were struggling with moral corruption, from where the conclusion of using this act as the ultimate penalty against crimes to maintain white dominance. The practices of lynching emerged in the America mostly from the southern states where racial hatred against blacks was at its peak. Researchers have spent years trying to document the source of lynching in the United States of America and the most active states that witnessed terrors of lynching and segregation against the black race were: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, and Louisiana. Other areas that saw the rise of white supremacy against blacks were located in Mississippi, the northern and southern Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and especially Texas.

Lynching was not limited only to the southern states, however in the south across the previously mentioned states over 4000 report of lynching was documented. These acts of violence were used as a tool to impose racial segregation and laws against the blacks which the reconstruction was aiming to make an end to.

Figure 2 below shows a map that tackles the different places and rates of lynchings that took place across the United States of America from 1877 to 1950.

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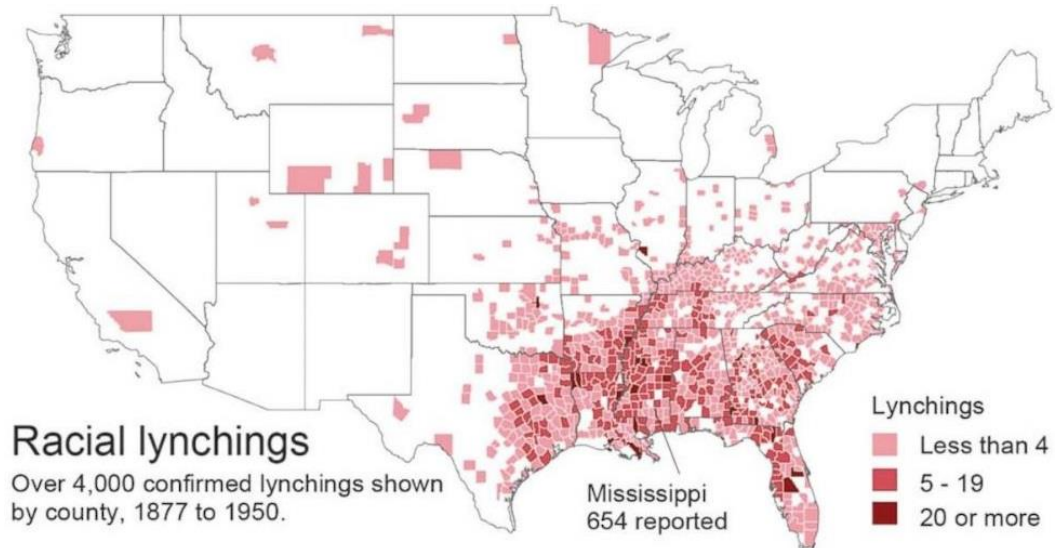


Figure.2. A map of the racial lynchings in the United States of America (adapted from: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/museum-memorial-lynching-victims-set-open/story?id=54727774>)

2.3. The rise of White Supremacy

In the post-civil war era between 1867 and 1877 southern whites used a variety of methods to restore white supremacy, such as the organization of groups that put forward racial domination, an ideology that supports the “white power” social movement which socially empowers white landowners and creditors. Contrariwise, plenty of African Americans were sentenced for leasing, labor camps and chain gangs which led to their enslavement once again under the pretense of law.

In order to preserve the system of white supremacy southern states did not only prevent blacks from benefiting from their voting rights but also kept them in poverty so that their work is available to employers who pay extremely low salaries, southerners continued to believe that nonwhites were fundamentally inferior to whites after Reconstruction, therefore, white mobs publically tortured and murdered African Americans suspected of crimes and lynching became widespread and promoted by local authorities.

Every southern legislature established “Jim Crow” laws to reinforce this mindset and establish it in the legal code, consequently, the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States which legitimized the concept of "separate but equal"²societies in 1896, these municipal policies established the

² A legal doctrine in the U.S constitutional law applied on blacks who are given equal opportunities but still racially segregated.

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foundation for long-term segregation and inequality that were sustained through less coercive measures.

White supremacy isn't just linked to hate organizations like the Ku Klux Klan in the United States and the British National Party in the United Kingdom but it's also visible throughout social, economic, political, and cultural history of European expansion and the development of the New World. (Gardiner & William, 180).

Racism and white supremacy represented a persistent threat to African people's survival before, during, and after enslavement over the previous four and a half centuries as Africans have been forced to change their beliefs, views, and behaviors in order to survive in a world where they are regarded as underdeveloped people ("The Origins of Lynching Culture in the United States").

2.4. Reconstruction failure

During Reconstruction between 1865 and 1877, the rate of the dreadful recorded lynchings increased and many African people were attacked, raped, and wounded in racial terror assaults that occurred in towns across the country leading to the death of hundreds of black individuals. The adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment meant that the Constitution prohibited racialized chattel slavery; however, it did not claim that white Southerners acknowledged Black people and treated them as "humans" or that Southern authorities would impose new legal protections in the absence of federal control. After the war, black independence increased, however, white American identity maintained deeply rooted culture of white supremacy. Southern white groups were outraged that federal law acknowledged their former properties as human beings.

Therefore, a frightening reaction from freedom to fear took over on freedmen; most white Southerners were so eager to preserve their lifestyle that they turned to fraud, intimidation, and murder in order to re-establish their dominance over state governments, The new civil war in the Southern states arose from an unwavering determination to restore white supremacy by opposing the Republican governments because of their conviction that it was corrupted and it violated true Republican principles (Gates Jr, 2).

With the progression of Reconstruction, the terrorist assaults carried out by white mobs became increasingly organized and group-based. The South launched widely

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coordinated attack against the "Negroes" by adopting a strategy of mass and nocturnal homicides, one of the main reasons blacks were segregated despite their freedom was due to their considerable arrival to the south in order to work for Reconstruction, Some were appointed to positions of power in Southern states, while others were assigned to them. Nonetheless, The Reconstruction administrations were controversial amongst countless white Southerners and mainly the elite "planter class" also known as the "Southern aristocracy" who refused to acknowledge defeat and kept trying to restrict black political involvement in any way they could.

When a Black man called Andrew Flowers beat a white candidate for justice of the peace in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1870, Klansmen whipped him out and lectured him that "they did not desire any nigger to occupy office in the United States (Foner, 427). Therefore, as Democrats acquired control of state legislatures, they sought to reform voter registration procedures to deny most blacks the right to vote. Despite this, blacks continued to vote in considerable numbers until the 1880s, with many gaining regional offices and by the 1890s, black Congressmen election started decreasing. George Henry White, the last post-Reconstruction Southern black congressman completely resigned in 1901 ("Reconstruction in America").

2.4.1. Lynch Mobs

From 1880 to 1940, the rate of mob murdering per black citizen in Mississippi was twice as high as in South Carolina, despite the fact that both states were mainly rural, had a majority black population, and were governed by white supremacists. The civil war's fatalities and massive destruction left whites in a state of physical and psychological despair which led them to reverse all the gains and changes made by blacks after they reached their freedom in addition to their political and social rights. (Buckelew, 10).

Throughout the Reconstruction period, law officers arrested an African American, Robert Mulliner, for the supposed rape of an Irish immigrant woman, Ellen Clark, miles north of New York City, along the Hudson River in the Catskills Mountains, a mob of fifty Irishmen assisted by a crowd of several hundred Irish, surrounded the courthouse and requested that Mulliner gets arrested. Overwhelming the sheriff, the mob refused the local priest's supplication, Father E. J. O'Reilly, two judges, and the district lawyer's to let the law take its course. The mob forced its way into the courthouse cell with axes and sledges,

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dragging Mulliner out to kick and beat him as they took him to a tree in the courtroom yard, where they hung him. (Preifer, 76)

Americans developed a form of violence that became a tradition and dated back to the colonial period and before, these repeated episodes of violence began with vigilante groups of three or more persons which were mainly concerned with maintaining order and law throughout extrajudicial activities, moreover, this savagery grew into another level of barbarity including whitecapping³, nightriding⁴, baldknobbing⁵, and lynching, consequently, the Reconstruction era had also seen a radical shift in the nature of violence, resulting in a wave of brutality against blacks who could not enjoy their basic rights and newly gained freedom, furthermore, the southern horrors did not stop there since it was combined with white supremacists terrorism that was unleashed by the Ku Klux Klan and other similar organizations (“The Rise of Lynching”).

2.4.2. Ku Klux Klan

After the end of the bloody conflict America went through, Americans believed that this would be the true beginning of a new government, however; lynch mobs targeted Black communities by inciting them to leave the country or else suffer deadly consequences. Undoubtedly, the South was the most affected area after white supremacists carried out a campaign of terror in every southern state in America such as the Ku Klux Klan that made of lynchings a public spectacle and a festival of violence where black victims were tortured in front of a crowd to end up dismembered. Local judges, police officers, and politicians were all engaged in in this criminal activity and domestic terrorism against the black community with the main intention to suppress voting.

The Ku Klux Klan was an American hate group that supported Christian Caucasian ethnic supremacy, the Klan was characterized by its members who used to wear a white robe with a hood that covers their faces in order to preserve their identity and as a symbol of supremacy. The Klan itself had three periods of significant strength in American history;

³ A widespread practice of vigilante justice that expanded among farmers in the United States to enforce community standards

⁴ An extralegal practice where a band of mounted men committed nocturnal acts of violence and intimidation against African-Americans

⁵ A Caucasian group of vigilantes that aided law enforcement officials in their judicial cases

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in the late 19th century, in the 1920s, during the 1950s and the early 1960s when the Civil rights movement was at its height.

The Klan was founded in 1866 in Pulaski, Tennessee, as a prankish social organization by a few of young Confederate soldiers. They were mostly active in the South and were known for using extreme violence to oppress other races, notably African Americans. Especially when blacks were granted the right to vote, which constituted a challenge to whites since it altered the political structure of the south, an act that cost Africans their lives because it offended many white southerners, particularly the KKK, who replied with lynchings. However, it quickly turned from a secret fraternity into a social paramilitary force designed to restore southern white's political and social dominance against Radical Reconstruction, that is to say; after the end of the American Civil War and during the beginning of southern Reconstruction. The main aim of the Klan was to suppress the increasing freedom of black people, in addition to spreading propaganda and similar activities of segregation such as flogging, mutilation and lynching among the local black population. (Berg, 78)

In its early years, members of the Klan feared that white people in the south would lose their dominance over other races because they had the absolute belief that African Americans were inferior to white people, as a result many ex-slaveholders attempted to preserve pre-Civil War circumstances by targeting black people and leaders in order to intimidate them into obedience and finally move their troops from the south to the west.

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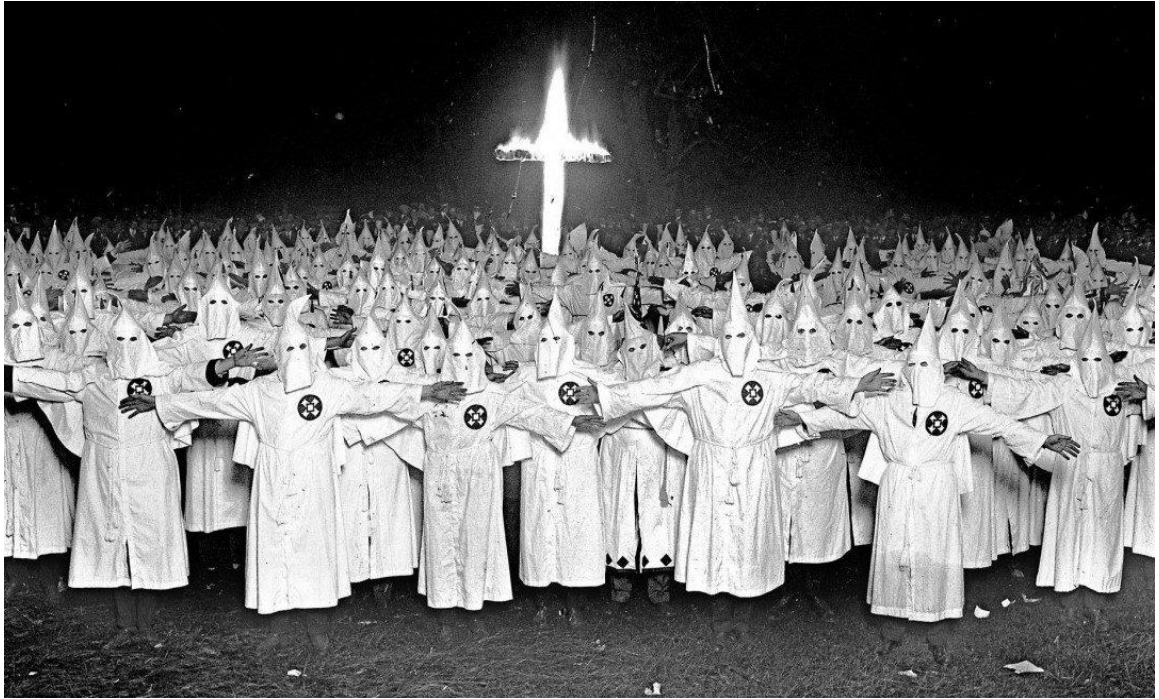


Figure.3. Ku Klux Klan members (adapted from :

<https://voices.uchicago.edu/religionculture/2017/06/26/the-klan-white-christianity-and-the-past-and-present-a-response-to-kelly-j-baker-by-randall-j-stephens/>)

In some Southern states, Republicans created paramilitaries to disintegrate the Klan and allowed President Ulysses S. Grant to employ military action to eradicate the KKK after the series of attacks in a row they underwent, as a result, Congress passed the ‘Ku Klux Act’ in 1871, also known as the Third Enforcement Act. Figure 3 above shows members of the KKK and their rituals and dressing style.

The Ku Klux Klan Act resulted in martial law being declared in nine South Carolina counties and hundreds of arrests in 1882, thus, the Supreme Court decided to forbid this Act, therefore, whites' power in the south was decreased, paving the way for Democrats to gain complete control of the region and declaring the demise of the ‘Ku Klux Klan (“The Origins of Lynching Culture in the United States”).

2.4.3 The White League

By the early 1870s, lynching had become a common aspect of the social environment and a relatively typical reaction to charges of African American deviancy

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giving rise to political violence along with the barbaric campaign of the “White League” which played a major role in the downfall of Republican rule and the intimidation of blacks during the period of Reconstruction, mainly in Louisiana. In late April 1874, the first conceptualization of the White League arose at a convention at the St. Landry Parish courthouse in Opelousas. While preparing for the forthcoming nominations and elections season, the St. Landry Democrats have advocated for the development of a political movement based on white supremacy.

The White League, commonly known as the White Man's League, was a white paramilitary terrorist organization aligned with the Democratic Party formed in the American South in 1874 to prevent freedmen from voting and participating politically. It was firstly established in Grant Parish, Louisiana, and surrounding parishes by former Union soldiers who had taken part in the Colfax massacre that occurred in April 13th, 1873 in Colfax, Louisiana between blacks and white radicals to bring back white supremacy that was erased after the emancipation of African Americans, to do that; whites turned to violence as they practiced it before in order to proclaim their authority over blacks and lynching became an alternate method of exerting control over the local social order, particularly in police African American resistance and crime. In January 1873, a large mob killed Henry Moore, an African American convicted of raping and killing a white lady, Mrs. Kidd, in Claiborne Parish, Moore was seized from men who were carrying him to legal authorities, tied him to a pine tree, and burned him.⁹² (Pfeifer, 86)

Figure 4 below illustrates members of the white league and their beliefs that power belongs to the whites.

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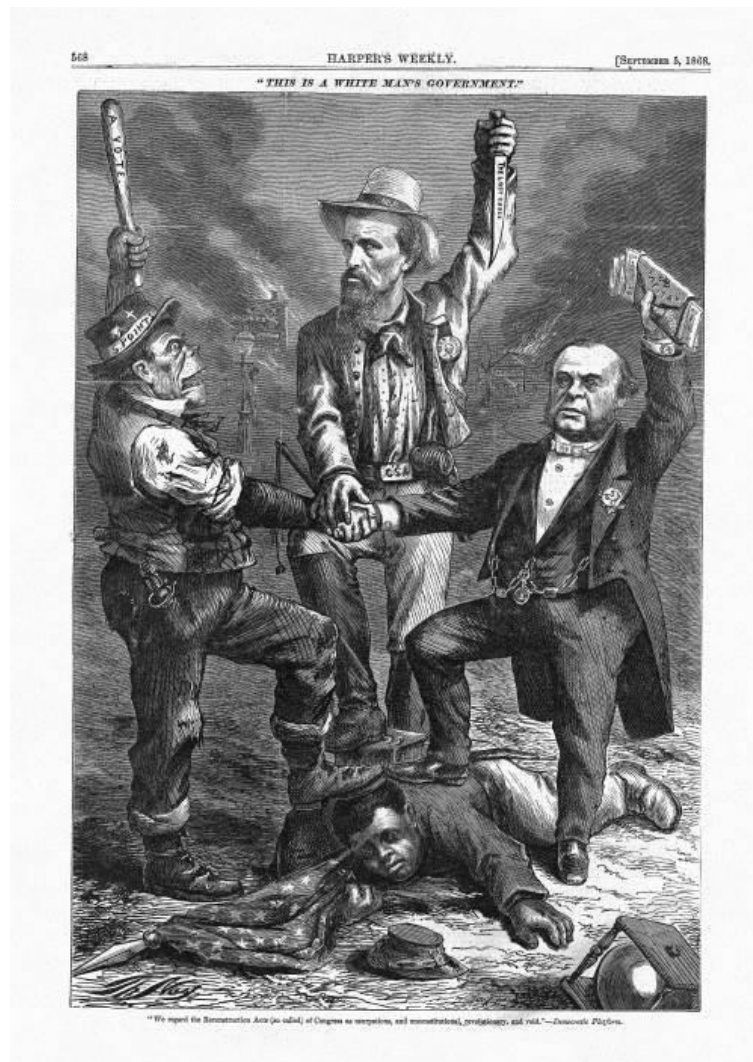


Figure.4. the White League Members “this is a white man’s government” (adapted from :

<https://faithandamericanhistory.wordpress.com/tag/white-league/>)

2.4.4. The Knights of the White Camelia

During Reconstruction, Knights of the White Camellia emerged as Louisiana's version of the Ku Klux Klan, it was an American political terrorist group that was founded by “Alcibiades DeBlanc” in the late nineteenth century in the southern United States to oppose the social and political changes brought forth by the “radical” country’s constitution of 1868, it was nicknamed Louisiana’s version of the Ku Klux Klan because it promoted white supremacy and opposed freedmen's voting rights. Moreover, their tactics, which included "harassment, floggings, and occasionally murder," created an environment of dread among the state's black population, the organization was mostly composed of

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upper-class southerners such as physicians, landowners, newspaper editors, doctors, and officers.

The Knights of the White Camelia won the support of many conservatives and assisted the Democrats in securing electoral victories by intimidating Black voters, the organization's main weapon was intimidation which could take many forms. Unlike the Ku Klux Klan, this organization did not walk around covered up nor wore masks, the fact that the freedmen recognized their oppressors only heightened the effect of their supremacy, their activities included nighttime armed patrols on roadways during which they faced freedmen and white Republicans with fatal violence in order to hurt them physically and financially (“Knights of the White Camelia”).

2.4.5. Red Shirts

Whites had opposed social and political reforms following the war, believing that the Republicans' Reconstruction plans were being exploited by corrupted politicians and carpetbaggers .Meanwhile, many whites were outraged by the ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, which granted former slaves citizenship rights.

The Red Shirts or Redshirts were white supremacist militia groups which were active in the late nineteenth century and in the post-reconstruction era mainly in the southern United States, these organizations began in Mississippi in 1875. Moreover, these politically traditional and private terror groups used red shirts as a particular costume to be more recognized and menacing to Southern white liberals and, in especially, freedmen.

During the campaigns for the South Carolina governorship elections in 1876 and 1878, among the most prominent Red Shirts were advocates of Liberal Party candidate Wade Hampton who was accompanied by these horsemen on their tour around South Carolina where they attempted to reestablish white supremacy by attacking the members of the black militia regiment which resulted in the Hamburg Massacre

Hamburg Massacre was a riot in July, 1876 in South Carolina in the town of Hamburg, white democrats desired to regain control of state governments and eradicate the civil rights of black Americans, over 100 white men attacked about 30 black servicemen of the National Guard at the armory, killing two of them as they tried to leave that night, they tortured and murdered several members of the militia while they were held as prisoners,

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besides others who were wounded. In the end, an estimated 100 blacks were killed after whites have imposed legal segregation through the “Jim Crow” Laws and disenfranchisement law that deprived blacks from their rights as civilians

To sum up, during the white supremacy movements of 1898 and 1900, North Carolina fielded the most vivid Red Shirts campaigns, the Red Shirt Movement along with disfranchisement movements which brought on the critical social and economic repression blacks had to endure after the fleeting freedom they experienced during Reconstruction (Prather, 174).

2.5.2. The Lynching of Emmett Till

Emmett Till Was a 14 years old teen who was brutally murdered in Mississippi, his lynching was the key turning point in the Civil rights movement because of the injustice that sparked a national movement, He grew up in a middle-class black neighborhood in Chicago’s south side, he travelled with his cousins to Mississippi which was a different place of living than Chicago, it was more racist and a xenophobe community which had its own rules and laws, something that the young Emmett did not understand.

While roaming around in the neighborhood, he went with his cousins to a store to purchase candy where he supposedly touched the white shopkeeper’s hand named “Carolyn Bryant” and after he left the store he made a wolf-whistle, a behavior that shocked everyone around him and made headlines throughout the town, his uncle Moses sent him right away on the next train to Chicago in order to avoid any kind of trouble yet the unthinkable happened.

Three days later, at 2:30 a.m. On Saturday, August 28, 1955, Bryant’s husband “Roy Bryant” and his brother-in-law “J.W.Milam” who according to many accounts were accompanied by two others drove to Emmett’s uncle home “Moses Wright” to abduct Till, they drove to the edge of the Tallahatchie River where they beat him then shot him in the head before they secured the fan to his neck with a spiky wire and threw his body into the river. Till’s death emphasized on how bad things were in the south for blacks, because of the democracy that privileged whiteness and imposed a political ideology to maintain social and political domination.

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His cousins called the county sheriff Harold Clarence Strider to report the abduction which was not taken into consideration until a 17yo white boy, Robert Hodges spotted feet sticking out of the water at Pecan Point, thereafter, his body was discovered in the Tallatchie River on Tuesday, August 31, 1955. Local law enforcement had been made well aware of Till's kidnapping from his uncle's part Moses Wright and brother in-law, Crosby Smith.

Till's body was so decomposed that once retrieved from the river he could only be identified by the ring he was wearing that had his father's initials on it "L.T"—Louis Till. The first act that the police had made was to burry Emmett's body straight away to dissimulate the horrors he endured before he was killed, he had been choked out, his left eye was lying about midway his cheek and his right eye was totally gone along with the bridge of his nose which was chopped. Moreover, one of his ears had been cut almost in half due to the shot that left a massive whole on the side of his face, they smashed his head with a blow of an axe that separated his face from the back of his head (Baker, 112-113).

The courageous act of his mother," Elizabeth Till" to let the world have a look at his disfigured body allowed people to see the racist and ongoing threats blacks were dealing with in America which caused her a lot of troubles as tons of people came to gather around the courthouse to threaten her by pointing guns at her head. Furthermore, when called to identify Emmett's body his uncle "Moses Wright" did not reveal any emotion and behaved in accordance with "the code. White Jury came back after less than an hour to judge the two men as not guilty causing a wrath across the United States and the departure of his uncle Moses and their family because they felt no longer safe in Muddy Mississippi.

Like every other black person in the Delta, "Wright" was aware of it and lived by it, blacks didn't have the right to express or show their emotions, they were not allowed to express their joy. It was prohibited. Blacks were unable to express their dissatisfaction that would be resistance, and they couldn't show grief because that would be weakness. Southern whites wanted people of color to repress their emotions, So "Mose" held back his feelings, as he was so used to do, until he couldn't hold them back any longer, he pointed to JW Milam speaking the truth in front of white courtroom (Till-Mobley, 129).

This brutal murder and grotesque miscarriage of justice that is depicted in figure 5 below has outraged a nation and helped galvanize support for the modern American civil rights movement from different parts of the world, and it echoed more precisely in several

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European countries such as France, Belgium and Germany and reflected the scandalous way blacks were treated.



Figure.5. Emmett Till before and after being mutilated (adapted from :

<https://www.facingsouth.org/2016/08/living-legacy-emmett-tills-casket>)

2.5.3. Lynching of Jim Williams

Jim Williams was an African American soldier and militia leader between the 1860s and 1870s in York County, South Carolina. During the Civil War, he fled slavery and made his way to freedom behind Union lines, He then led a black militia organization in order to support the cause of the emancipation that held African American as slaves. Later, during the following years the Ku Klux Klan organization launched a campaign of terror to frighten black people and also prevent them from voting, an act that the African American soldier did not accept since he was determined to protect the black citizens of York county.

On March 6, 1871, Williams was abducted from his house by seventy members of the Klan under the leadership of “James Ruffus Braton” at midnight, they fastened a noose

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around Williams' neck and then secured the rope to a tree of 10 to 12 feet outside and forced him to climb it so that Bob Caldwell, another Klansman, would be able to push him from it, He was then suspended from his hands from the limb, Caldwell chopped William's fingers with a knife until detachment, whence he died screaming cursing and praying all at the same time.

2.6. Convict Leasing

For African Americans in the south, life post slavery proved to be difficult because it transformed the world, indeed, the indignities of slave life were gone and blacks were about to start a new life to enjoy their rights as freedmen and women, yet times in the following years were not easy because of the brutalities of white race prejudice which persisted and the lynching activities that took place during the Reconstruction period.

Georgia began leasing prisoners to private companies in 1868 as a means of punishing them, the state's move from incarceration to convict leasing coincided with a change in the composition of its convicts. African-Americans in Georgia were imprisoned at a rate more than 12 times that of whites 15 years after the Civil War even when they prevailed over white's efforts to maintain their status as reliant agricultural laborers. (Muller, 367)

The convict lease system was a functional alternative to slavery because prisoners were subjected to brutal working conditions, were frequently purchased and sold, and also sometimes whipped and beaten to death. In 1870, a black man accused of burglary testified that he was a witness of a large number of blacks who got whipped out because their work did not suit the landowners.

2.7. Sharecropping

By the early 1870s, the sharecropping system had grown to dominate agriculture across the cotton-planting South until the middle of the 20th century. Under this system, black families would temporarily occupy small plots of land, or shares to labor themselves; in exchange, they would provide the landowner a section of their harvest at the end of the year.

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Despite the rights of citizenship they were given, African Americans were exploited during this situation because landowners provided farmers with the necessary equipment such as tools and seed to cultivate their property. Following the Civil War, this system expanded throughout the South and remained in use until the middle of the twentieth century, consequently, some of the Sharecroppers remained primarily stuck on the land by debt and crushing poverty when landowners started investing their money in mechanization reducing by that the need for labour which gave rise to an underemployment outbreak in 1940. Meanwhile others managed to gain enough money and shift from sharecropping to better-paying industrial jobs after the World War II (“Sharecropping”).

2.8. Women’s lynching during Reconstruction

The Jim Crow era's social instability brought in another episode of slaughter for black people, the history of the Post-Reconstruction and Jim Crow South is filled with horrid events of violence inflicted to blacks, in addition to that, the story of black women who were victims of lynching has largely been hidden from history owing the fact that most studies did not pay much attention to women’s suffering and lynching, consequently, it has always been hard to explain this kind of gender violence they were victims of. In fact, in any case, the amount of black women and girls killed in lynchings is almost certainly undercounted, and researchers will probably never discover the right exact number of black females killed in reaction to white male hostility towards black race.

Lynchings of black men and sexual assaults on black women were justified by racial oppression and gender stereotypes, and in the south, black women were viewed as “instinctively sexually promiscuous” human beings. From 1838 until 1969, black women and young girls were subjected to horrors like lynching on the commands of white mobsters in order to restrict their responsibilities as active members of American society, moreover, the white southern press often provided moral and legal justification for mob actions against black women and girls by defaming their characters.

White male vigilantism against black women and girls was a kind of sexual racial oppression in the United States because they considered black women's lynchings as a symbolic method to push these African women and girls to preserve their inferior social

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status to white male supremacy, and they completely neglected black motherhood as they lynched pregnant women and teenage girls (Garland, 39)

In 1870s, in the Jim Crow South, black female lynching reached its peak, when white lynchers decided that black women deserved the same rough justice as black men, they underwent all forms of killing such as decapitation, burning alive, whipping to death, stabbing to death, drowning, bludgeoning, and even dying in dynamite explosions. In addition to that, mobsters always opted for more than one death method like hanging and shooting, hanging and burning, or shooting and burning.

As a result, sexism towards black women did not only increase the number of lynching, but it also doubled the number of the young females sentenced to the southern convict leasing system, chain gangs, and judicial executions. The brutalization and mistreatment of women of color continued as they were raped, shot and even dismembered, apart from that, white bosses abused their black employees for using "insolent" language or conduct, or for refusing to acknowledge them as their "masters" (Muray, 98)

2.9. Conclusion

To sum up, the dread of lynching was constant for many African Americans growing up in the South during the nineteenth century, the famous image of an enraged white mob tying a black guy to a tree barely tells half the tale. Lynching, an act of terror that intended to instill dread among blacks by supporting the overarching common purpose of preserving white dominance in the economic, social, and political spheres.

Not only was lynching a flagrant public spectacle, but it was as well a method in which white mobs expressed their anger and racism against black people they thought were a nuisance for the lives of southern Caucasian women, consequently, they were motivated by these racial stereotypes which helped them to restore their supremacy through hate organizations and laws that penalized blacks under the pretext of law.

Although blacks gained their freedom and benefited from civil rights, the situation did not turn into their advantage because the members of different mobs treated freedmen with insurgent violence, they were enraged that their former slaves were equal to them by becoming independent farmers and businessmen which often led to their lynching and

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properties destruction. Later, violence against blacks started decreasing throughout WWII, only to reemerge following the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision, which abolished the country's separate-but-equal policy. However, all positive, blacks decided to register and mobilize people to vote. Hence, in regional communities, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) organizations started gushing to ensure justice for the colored people, yet it never made an end to racism and segregation that kept haunting the black community decades later.

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3.1. Introduction

Reconstruction failed to address issues such as real equality, racial discrimination, and visible indications of injustice that were widespread but rarely challenged because blacks were always surrounded by hostile whites who refused to acknowledge the freedom of colored persons, so any black who crossed the social, political, or economic barriers that existed between them and whites suffered from repercussion such as banishment and segregation.

In this chapter, the focus will be on the inability of the Federal and State governments to protect the freedmen's rights which the constitutional amendments granted them and the unwillingness of the Radical Republican leaders to undertake land redistribution nor to provide former slaves with the necessary financial means to rise out of poverty which is still impacting their lives and place today in the American society.

3.2. The End of Radical Reconstruction

Reconstruction was a success because it helped to reestablish the United States as a unified nation, by 1877, all of the former Confederate states had adopted new constitutions that recognized the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments and pledged allegiance to the United States government, it also put an end to the long-running argument between states' rights and federalism, which had raged since the 1790s, in addition to that, it helped out black Americans to earn many political and civil freedoms. However, racial prejudice was still an existing issue on a national level as whites grew more obsessed with expansionism and industrialization rather than the miserable conditions of former slaves.

Moreover, the Supreme Court diminished the power of the 14th and 15th amendments which put freedmen in a low place in society after the end of Reconstruction for White Supremacist organizations, Jim Crow laws, and state constitutions completely rejected these political advances, and downgraded black Americans who became the punching bags for white southerners to second-class citizenship by passing xenophobic laws known as "black codes", they were passed in Southern regions of the United States to enforce racial segregation and limit the power of black voters, for that reason, Reconstruction can only be judged as a failure.

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3.3. Trauma and the legacy of lynching

Lynchings were carried out with the intention of terrorizing all black people through random and lethal violence which triggered deep traumatic and psychological wounds that could not be left off, Harvard psychiatrist Alvin Poussaint argued that suicide rates among black males doubled between 1980 and 1995 because of the hardships of the slave system they were victims of, and also the misconceptions and misjudgment which were the main reasons behind the increase of suicide among black young men because they believed that the afterlife was a better place for them.

Joy DeGruy, Portland State University researcher and scholar, has developed “post-traumatic slave syndrome” as a theory for explaining the effects of undiagnosed trauma on the behaviors of blacks that is transmitted from generation to generation, and it proves that repressing feelings that are caused due to racism may be psychologically damaging for people from black ethnicity who are more likely to develop mental health problems such as severe anxiety, depression and symptomatic behaviors of PTSS. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, black adults are 20% more likely than white adults to experience significant psychological distress such as feelings of despair, hopelessness, and worthlessness (Carten 1).

3.3.1. The Impact of lynching on Black Suffrage Today

Historical lynchings were the original form of voter suppression, whites terrorized the black population through these acts of violence and to show them the consequences of their insistence to participate in democracy and their voting movement, if we take the case of the most famous lynching of all times, that of Emmett Till, his assassins didn't execute him only because he whistled to a white woman, quite the contrary, their act held a deeper meaning which was sending a warning to people of color to keep away from voting.

Moreover, lynchings in southern states a century ago were intended to keep blacks from voting; there were over 3000 lynchings between 1882 and 1930, and when compared to contemporary data on black voting, they still face county-level barriers that prevent them from voting, it is estimated that blacks who currently reside in counties that were exposed to a relatively higher number of lynchings have lower voter registration rates today (Williams,70).

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In the end, lynchings may be associated with Black voter registration rates today for several reasons. First, considering the negative relationship between lynchings and black voter registration in the Voting Rights Act (VRA) period, it is plausible that these violent acts continue to reduce the political participation of blacks today, they would have a “prolonged and persistent influence on polling numbers” to the extent that they serve as a local surrogate for the risk that blacks face from exposure to violent actions for political purposes. (Kantrowitz, 54)

While the country’s progress is indisputable, millions of Americans of color continue to lack full voting rights in America and remain structurally excluded from American Democracy in this new era of voter suppression following the states restoration of old tactics such as felony disenfranchisement to make it more difficult for black people to vote since they are twice, three times and four times more likely to experience racial discrimination than whites while attempting to vote or participate in politics.

3.3.2. Color Line

The famous African-American scholar W.E.B DuBois coined the expression “color line” in his seminal book *“The Souls of Black Folk”* in 1903, the phrase referred to the conceptual framework used in America to maintain racial segregation. While the legal structure of racial segregation was progressively razed over the years, the informal architecture has remained completely intact, hence, many challenges that African Americans have faced later have gotten worse, they were the most impacted by the economic downturn in 2008, as a result, they had lower household income than whites.

The color line has evolved into a widespread cultural institution and structure that profoundly influences large-scale human organization such as nation-states and international relations throughout the modern period. It is not a random construct, but rather represents a purposeful categorization of individuals according to a basic color-coded typology and strategy that divides human beings into five major skin tones (blacks, browns, reds, yellows and whites)

This new form of racial segregation is a well-designed chain of barriers that distinguishes the two social worlds of the whites and non-whites, Frederick Douglass was the first one to introduce this concept in his book *“The Color Line”* that was published

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originally in 1881 where he discussed race, he believes that it is the greatest problem of the twentieth century because it resulted from white Americans belief and feelings that color is always linked to undesirable human and social conditions, such as slavery, ignorance, stupidity, poverty and dependence, Douglass thought that white Americans' hatred for blacks led in racial prejudice against them, giving rise to the color line system which can be revealed through the visible and segregated communities or so called rural “ghettos” in the modern United States (84).

3.4. Systemic Racism

Racism is still a vital problem in the United States, and the physical marks of descent remain highly determinative of an individual's destiny, which was the case for Harvard University Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr who was arrested in 2009 in his own home, this proves that the concept of Post-racial America is absurd because the gap between blacks and whites in the modern American society is only getting deeper and engendered what we call “systemic racism”, a modern incarnation of white supremacy.

The American dream has turned into a nightmare, and the land of opportunities where parents hoped to improve their social and economic conditions has become a threat to their freedom because racism of this kind affected every structure of the American society, for example, in terms of education, white children are more likely to move up the educational ladder, whereas African American children are expected to drop off the scale, consequently, black population has a high number of high school dropouts, which has an impact on the community's incarceration rate, they represent about 40% of the imprisoned community because they have a better chance of being arrested in comparison with white people (“Systemic Racism Is Real”).

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, blacks constitute a considerable part of the homeless population, although accounting for just 13% of the population, housing discrimination and redlining¹ disadvantaged black people in almost every aspect of life because it has an influence on their safety, the quality of their jobs and even that of their children's education, these policies prevented Black families from collecting and saving money the way white families could, which led to the growing racial wealth gap between them in addition to a persistent housing instability, in addition to

¹The practice of highlighting regions with significant Black populations in red ink on maps as a warning to mortgage lenders

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that, a typical white family's net worth (\$171,000) is approximately ten times that of a black household (\$17,150). (Yancey-Bragg).

Moreover, a tragic example of systemic racism is the fact that black women's health outcomes are miserable compared to white women since they are 3 to 4 times more likely to die during delivery because of the lack of adequate health care due to the medical staff's belief that black women have higher pain tolerance than other races. That being the case, understanding the severity of systemic racism is the main key to create the necessary change in society.

3.5. Hate Crimes against African Americans

Racial and cultural diversity have been the most common factors behind hate crimes and African Americans are by far the most common victims of these criminal offences in the United States, they have been subjected to intolerance because they have been forced into slavery in the past, they were targeted for racial lynching and denied equal rights even with the adoption of hate crime laws and civil rights measures, as a consequence, black Americans are still enduring unfair intimidation, and extremist ideologies that lead to deadly violence. Despite the fact that black Americans are targeted more than any other group, according to FBI data, only 2% of the overall hate crimes are reported to the department according to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As a result, nobody knows how many times black Americans have been the targets of hostility and hatred (Byington et al, 2).

As a matter of fact, many victims told News21 that authorities were skeptical of their allegations, to the point where they had to record hostile acts in order prove their truthfulness to the police and drive prosecutors to seek hate crime charges ("Hate in America"). According to senior assistant director for the Anti-Defamation League Southwest regional office, political tension in America are actually pushing people to openly express their disdain against people of color, consequently, hate crimes incidents have increased. Also, according to a 2018 research by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, showed that hate crimes recorded to police in America's ten largest cities climbed by 12.5% in 2017 mainly xenophobia seeing that the black community is still going through the gloom of the dark

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days from physical assault to verbal abuse which they thought were left behind (“Hate Crime Data and Reports”).

3.6. Police and Civilian Brutality

One of the most controversial issues in the United States today is “Race” and it serves as a social barrier that only organizes social groups, however, these notions create prejudice which is a combination of negative assumptions that can lead to discrimination against other ethnic groups including blacks who are considered as “minorities” in the American society and killed wrongly and through by law enforcement.

When differences in ethnicity, religion, politics and financial positions exist between police and citizens, the rate of police brutality increases because it's linked to racial stereotyping since the majority of police union leaders and officers are white, and only 27% of them are people of color. The link between racial profiling and police violence are strongly linked which generated a series of race riots that targeted minorities such as black people throughout the years (Winters 48).

Furthermore, according to a 2019 research, the percentage of black persons executed by police is twice that of whites, a risk that starts increasing amongst black males and undoubtedly threatens their lives. For instance, in 2014 race was considered to have had a factor in the murder of Michael Brown, an unarmed 18 years old African American who was shot by a white police officer named Darren Wilson, an act that generated a lot of debate about the treatment of African Americans (Reiss 13).

Figure 6 below is a chart that depicts the rates of deaths of blacks in the United States of America by the hands of police in comparison to whites and Hispanics, the rates are high when it comes to blacks.

Black people are most likely to be killed by police

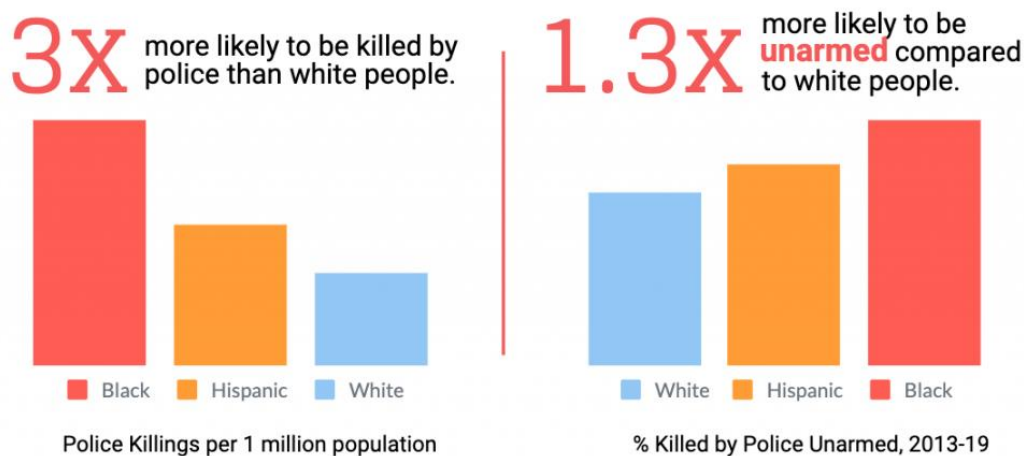


Figure.6.A chart that illustrates black population slaughter by policeman (adapted from :

<https://thesocietypages.org/toolbox/police-killing-of-blacks/>)

Despite the fact that black Americans are nearly three times more likely than white people to be killed by police, less than 2% of officers are prosecuted; in fact, from 2013 to 2021, only 153 police officers were legally charged and 38 were convicted out of 9,170 reported police killings, an average of three killings every day (“Black Americans Disproportionately Killed by Police”).

3.6.1. Murder of George Floyd

America is still facing the brutal legacy of lynching which is incarnated in police brutality nowadays, a modern way to impose the white supremacist ideology on minorities and mostly black men and women who keep enduring all kinds of cruelty repeatedly, it's due to the fact that the country has failed to confront its horrific past of slavery, lynching, and ongoing persecution of blacks to protect the white people involved, such as jurists and elected officials which caused more racial injustice.

George Floyd, a 46 years old unarmed African American man who went to the grocery store in South Minneapolis on the evening of May, 25, 2020 to purchase a pack of cigarettes found himself victim of a prejudicial situation after the shop employee suspected

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he had used a fake \$20 bill so she called the authorities when Mr. Floyd refused to return the cigarettes or pay again, after the officers arrived they pulled a gun on him, handcuffed him and tried to put him into the police car despite the fact that he cooperated with them when they arrested him, Floyd claimed that he was claustrophobic from which his resistance to get into the car, two officers then pulled him while Chauvin, the white police officer pinned him to the ground and pressed his knee on his neck and shoulder for more than nine minutes where George was mumbling his last breath telling the policeman that he couldn't breathe and begging him to release him more than twenty times, and while he remained on the ground the cops did no move to assist him with medical aid in front of a mass of people who witnessed the "lynching spectacle" and even filmed the whole scene but couldn't intervene for they were stopped by other officers and were asked to leave (Brown 3).

The murder of Floyd was legalized lynching since he underwent a series of torture on behalf of the policemen before of a crowd, he was muttering "my stomach hurts", "my neck hurts", "everything hurts", and he requested water while asking them not to kill him, he was not even resisting to get in the police car because he was in a bad state and crying for help, however, he died asphyxiated under Chauvin's knee who fits the stereotypical image of the white supremacist and xenophobic community which attempts to maintain an unjust social order since they have always regarded blacks as inferior sub- humans.

3.6.2. Murder of AhmaudArbery

On February 23, 2020, around the time of the incident, a number of emergency calls were placed according to CBS news, in one, a neighbor reported seeing AhmaudArbery, an unarmed 25 year old black man at a construction site and when questioned if he was breaking in, the caller simply replied that he was not supposed to be constantly on the premises, whereas it was always open since children from the neighborhood often played there, moreover the house owner recognized Arbery on his video surveillance and disapproved to report any crime to the police fearing that it would be misinterpreted as a robbery or stealing (BBC News).

While jogging nearby Brunswick in Glynn County, Georgia, Arbery was chased by three white residents, two of whom were armed and driving a pickup truck; Travis McMichael who was initially standing beside the driver's door with a shotgun and his

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father Gregory confronted Arbery who was on the left side of the road running away from the vehicles for almost 4 minutes with no way out in sight because of the third accomplice William Bryan who blocked Arbery's path, the young man rushed on the right side of the vehicle where Travis shot his first shot which led to injuries in his chest, his right lung and ribs, while the two men were wrestling over the gun Gregory from the back of the truck shots Arbery again who was heavily bleeding and resisting until he received the final shot in his left upper chest that killed him. Later, the police took the pair father and son to have their testimony then let them go only to arrest them 36 hours and William Bryan two weeks later. After the dreadful homicide of their son, Arbery's family called his death a "lynching".

The video of Arbery's slaughter went viral because it brought back the image of "lynching" in colonial America where white people used to arm themselves to chase down and murder people of color without evidence even, Arbery's assassin confused him with a thief because of his prejudice on black people. In addition to that, it was not the first time the young black man has been judged because of his skin color, in 2017, he was questioned by police officers while sitting in his car near a park and he told them that he was enjoying some free time in nature to relax, however, the police grew hostile and told him that he was in a drug-infested area and started even checking him for weapons and he found nothing, but he rushed to tease him anyway (Collins 2).

3.6.3. Death of Freddie Gray

On April 12, 2015, the Baltimore Police Department arrested the 25 years-old African American Freddie Carlos Gray Jr for possessing a knife, the two policemen pinned the young man to the ground before transporting him in a police van after falsely accusing him of carrying an illegal "switchblade" although it was a legal knife under Maryland law which therefore didn't justify his arrest, yet, Gray was charged with the violation of the Baltimore code.

After his arrest, two bystanders recorded the shocking scene where they heard and saw Gray screaming as he was folded up and dragged to the police van by six officers, one of the bystanders reported : "one officer bent Gray's legs backwards, and another held Gray down by pressing a knee into his neck. Witnesses commented Gray "couldn't walk", "can't use his legs" while The Baltimore Sun reported that another witness saw Gray being beaten

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with police batons which caused the victim a severe and fatal spinal cord injury, and while being handcuffed he was trying to reach his inhaler but couldn't what drove him to ask the police officers for it who ended up ignoring him, the young man got furious so he got placed in leg irons ("The 45-Minute Mystery of Freddie Gray's Death").

After the arrival of the paramedics, Gray was treated for 21 minutes and taken to the hospital where he went into a coma because of a possible "rough ride" which is a form of police brutality when a shackled prisoner is placed in a recklessly driven car without a seatbelt which was a contributing cause in Gray's injuries. That being said, Officer Porter was able to save Gray's life in many ways, such as restraining him and calling for medical help after his injury, but he deliberately let him suffer. Gray underwent a total cardiopulmonary arrest due to the spinal injury and never regained his consciousness again despite of the extensive surgeries to save his life (Rector 3).

3.7. Reasons behind Police Brutality

As the United States of America has become highly diversified and multicultural, it gave rise to a series of conflicts that deal with the growing issue of ethnic differences that are coexisting in one country. However, these differences are the main cause of prejudice towards others and mostly blacks who are frequently killed by the police. In a "Shoot-Don't Shoot" study that uses a video game to simulate encounters between law enforcement officers and potentially hostile targets, the players are transformed into real police officers in order to measure their racial prejudices that cannot be consciously controlled, the results revealed that the participants still preferred shooting blacks. Moreover, the test also asks the participant to categorize images as either "African American" or "European American" then quickly categorize them through attributes like "evil", "happy", "awful" by tapping on the screen as fast as they can, a test that puts forward the amount of prejudice black people suffer from (Lopez 5).

Policemen and Caucasian community in general already have the preconception that black people are aggressive criminals; anytime they witness a crime committed by a black person, they will become more confident in their racist beliefs that reinforce their prejudices against African-Americans who are often seen as potential threats, so they automatically use deadly force to arrest them which is not necessary. In fact, the best resolution that can break this racial stereotype would be to strengthen the relationships

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between law enforcement departments and their communities which is called as “contact hypothesis”, a theory in psychology that suggests positive interaction between members of stereotyped groups, it is a step toward reducing racial prejudice, which is frequently unjustified, through collaboration and institutional support making black communities less defensive and the police less aggressive during an interchange.

On account of this, these types of systemic issues are at the core of all forms of segregation whether at school, at work and mainly outside where blacks face police shootings, these horrific acts may persist to spread racial inequities even if law enforcement is highly taught on how to deal with unconscious prejudice, so they can definitely not be ignored because tons of innocent blacks are victims of police injustice and racial biases every day.

3.8. Approaches to Reduce Racism

Systemic racism goes beyond police brutality, it exists in the banking, education, and business spheres, it affects almost every facet of how individuals move through society, and it impacts black people the most because they are underrepresented in management roles among economic industries, face significant barriers to decent housing, are over-represented in the criminal justice system, and their healthcare conditions vary drastically with those of white and non-black individuals.

Moreover, there is no other option to minimize the damaging effects of racism on minorities until change occurs through the eradication of racial epithets and the animosity that racist people propagate in the environment such as the “Colorblindness” ideology which consists of denying the negative racial experiences black people undergo and the rejection of their cultural heritage by invalidating their own perspectives. In fact, this ideology stigmatizes blacks and imbeds them into an infinite loop of marginalization because it infers that there’s something shameful about their ethnicity and culture, yet the first step towards fixing racial issues is talking about them and understanding them.(Solomon et al. 1)

Allies may become involved in the fight against racial injustice and, in particular, police brutality in a variety of ways, the most effective of which is to become active, stay involved, and continue to educate people about the anti-black racism struggle by spreading

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awareness among them and breaking all kinds of racist acts or statements that normalize biases and racial prejudice. For example, the development of the “Black Lives Matter Movement” that emerged after the homicide of George Floyd at the hands of police in Minneapolis, the movement has spread worldwide to protest against police brutality and systemic racism that have a significant impact on the black community.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter came out to analyze the reasons behind the failure of Reconstruction in solving major issues for freedmen such as hate crimes and injustice, as well as the impact of lynching and discrimination on the modern American society which are oversimplified today, a fundamental mistake in the right of black people who are still victims of racism. Also, the chapter depicted the potential approaches to reduce racism and spread awareness among the society and enable black people to live in peace with white citizens and not in constant fear.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The main objective of this dissertation is to investigate the different ways in which African Americans were discriminated and lynched throughout the civil war and even after they earned their rights owing to reconstruction amendments by standing up to white supremacist tyranny in order to gain their independence. This topic is of a great interest since it marks a significant chapter in the history of black Americans considering that they have always been judged without ever taking into account their calamitous past.

The study's findings have revealed some historical factors that have brought along the segregation of blacks that can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries, when Africans were abducted from their homelands and taken to the white colonies to be considered as private possessions of English colonists and serve in different sectors where they have been victims of hideous genocides and humiliations because of the ideologies of enslavement which kept haunting them, in addition to the fact that lynching was the main system of degradation back then. Another factor that was the reason behind black's exclusion and discrimination was the idea of eugenics; a method that involved deliberate natural selection of human populations in order to enhance the genetic composition of the population since blacks were dehumanized.

Results of the study brought into light White American' motive for using lynching, which was to terrorize and control black people in the 19th and 20th centuries mostly in the South because of the constant racial allegations they were victims of, white mobs treated them with extreme brutality in public and turned their suffering into a spectacle attended by the white community who celebrated their "supremacy" and even sold pictures of the lynched black bodies as souvenir postcards. The findings of this research have shown how traumatic and damaging the aftermath of lynching was for black Americans as it's still affecting their lives today.

Another result of this study has shown that the Southern states of America were the major states in which lynching of African-Americans was at its heights and most brutal forms. For the evidence that was tackled in this dissertation proved that the rise of white supremacy was born mainly in those Southern regions and many cults were established firmly to show hatred against blacks and commit acts of violence. This combined with the failures of Reconstruction to protect black life which has paved the way for lynching to take many forms in tormenting African-Americans and which can be said has evolved

General Conclusion

along the way into more modern methods of torturing black lives; with plenty of violent murder cases that were documented in the history of America.

The legacy of lynching has had significant influence on race relations in the United States shaping the geographic, political, social, and economic situations of African Americans in ways that are still visible today mainly in the administration of criminal justice that is mistreating black people by enclosing them in a hostile and violent environment since they consider them as minorities. However, researchers have concluded that the idea of local legal culture may be useful in comprehending the intriguing links between lynching and modern social problems, which social scientists have just lately begun to investigate, they have found connections between lynching and recent criminal justice policies, such as hate crime enforcement, increases in state prisons, establishment of death sentences, and execution. These studies proved that lynching still has a significant impact on African Americans lives because they are always haunted by this traumatic event of their history.

The research that has been undertaken for the thesis of lynching of Afro-Americans in the post-civil war era has highlighted diverse topics on which further research would be beneficial such as the issues of racism and injustice which have deeply impacted the black community who are living in constant dread nowadays. This study is recommended for further studies to unveil more knowledge about the heinous history of blacks to live independently.

To sum up, race has always been the most controversial topic in the United States, whether the issue is about tolerance and understanding or hatred and prejudice, they both result in racial inequalities that must be addressed more directly and concretely across the country starting by spreading awareness and talking openly about the painful past that traumatized the black community which is still keeping the after-effects, in order to promote healing and reconciliation as a way to overcome the legacies of racial disparities.

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