

KU KLUX KLAN

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HIST101ShortPaper

American History before 1877

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Due Date



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American history is rich in various events, including not very pleasant ones, such as group terrorists' movements. This research is on the role of unique groups that acted since 1860s and until nowadays in the USA named as the Ku Klux Klan.

The organization, which also holds an informal name of the Klan, is the name of the three organizations, which acted across the United States of America. The Ku Klux Klan defended extremist currents that included anti-immigration, white nationalism and white supremacy. However, in historical dimension they expressed their activities through terrorism. It is significant to mention about the anti-communist character of the Ku Klux Klan since the middle of the 20th century.

After its foundation in 1866, the organization spread to almost all states in the south by 1870, being a vehicle for white citizens that were resistant to the rules and policies of the era of the Republican Party Reconstruction. The party's task was to establish economic and political equality for black people residing there.

The white supremacy reestablishment was the main goal of the Ku Klux Klan. Their main task was the underground campaign of violence and intimidation directed at white and black leaders representing Republicans.

In the early 20th century, the Klan, after the decline period, was revived by the groups of white Protestants. They burned crosses, organized various marches and parades in order to denounce blacks, immigrants, Jews, Catholics, and representatives of organized labor.

Chalmers describes the civil rights movement of the 1960s focusing on the Ku Klux Klan's activities looking beyond their abuses in the past and, at the

same time, focuses on their activities in the 20th century ¹. The period of activities of the organization also includes bombings of black churches and schools and violence against white and black activists in the Southern part of the United States.

Another book written by Chalmers about the Ku Klux Klan organization is *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan* ². The author describes the history of the world's oldest organization starting from its beginning to its decline. He mentions about their seldom appearance in newspapers, however, the leaders of the Ku Klux Klan are quite frequent guests in various talks in the news and shows.

The book is written in a scholarly manner that gives a space for the thought-provoking, describing these terrorist organizations as mysterious and dangerous, but still gives a possibility to feel a particular sort of excitement. Chalmers confesses in the preface that Ku Klux Klan, being a part of the great tradition, is described by him with a little unfairness regarding the media. Despite the fact that the Klan received wide media attention, the scholar does not consider such exposure as an important factor as media can both overplay their activities and demonstrate its distrust delineating the facts of the Ku Klux Klan's activities especially across the Southern part of the United States.

¹ David Mark Chalmers, *The Backfire, How the Ku Klux Klan Helped the Civil Rights Movement*. Maryland; Rowman & Littlefield Publishing 2003, http://books.google.com.ua/books?id=ziG-M2q3ckYC&printsec=frontcover&hl=uk&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

² David Mark Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*. New York; F. Watts, 1981, http://www.google.com.ua/books?hl=uk&lr=&id=2bLU20MbUI4C&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=ku+klux+clan&ots=tjF3ImkOXy&sig=_S_jQA-YnHGHR6_r1q3ejY16Y&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=ku%20klux%20clan&f=false

Jackson, describing the urban origins of the organization in the period of 1915-1930³, divides her story into logical parts. First, she describes the origins of the organization starting with the *Founding Farther* part, then she delineates about Ku Klux Klan's activities in particular parts of the United States, such as South, North and West by presenting particular city examples; and she finishes her story with the urbanization part, which is some sort of generalization of the idea of the Klan's activities in the city.

Being so broadly based, the Ku Klux Klan gives a chance for the author to compare their activities to the authentic folk movement. They are compared to various history epochs such as World War II or John Birch Society as less fanatical, violent or radical as the first, or not that economically conservative or socially acceptable as the second.

As we see, Ku Klux Klan is the unique organizations that painted the US history in a particular way. There are various ideas on its connection to the political country issues. Many media representatives are willing to uncover their activities; however, not all of them are allowed to be present during their ceremonies. That adds a lot for making the Ku Klux Klan as unique as possible.

² Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City: 1915-1930*. New York: Oxford University Press 1992, http://www.google.com.ua/books?hl=uk&lr=&id=0TUL_pAiQ4AC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=ku+klux+clan&ots=pfESqIHU3X&sig=tuNMCOKRZoMSPOpqFpdY3uoO9Qk&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=ku%20klux%20clan&f=false