



The American Democracy: Ethics, Principles and Advocacy for the Contemporary World

Abdou Wahaed Sime^a

Didier Kombieni

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Abstract

The evolution of humanity and the demographic growth experienced worldwide have prompted country leaders to consider more flexible approaches to managing their internal policies. Different nations have embraced various political philosophies, with Democracy, in its different forms, being the most widely advocated. Since its inception in ancient Athens, Greece, the concept of democracy has continuously evolved. Today, the United States positions itself as a leading champion of democracy worldwide, often assuming rightly or wrongly the role of global enforcer of democratic principles. From Alexis De Tocqueville to Robert Dahl, Francois De Corcelle to Jacques Mariel Nzouankeu, many authors have apprehended the notion of democracy in general and the one of the US in particular. The general objective of the present paper is to analyze the American Democratic system and its possible transposition in Africa. To be more specific, the research focusses on presenting the different theories of democracy and exposing the principles of a role model democratic regime. The paper expects to highlight both the positive aspects of American democracy throughout the ages and the aspects that are less commendable. From a documentary research perspective, this paper has relied on literary theories such as the new criticism and the new historicism. These theories have helped to evaluate the dynamic notion of democracy through time, and in the context in which it was critically evaluated, since the study is not only based on history but it is also where all critical approaches begin.

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^a **Corresponding author:**

Université de Kara, Togo

Email address: abdouwahaedsime@gmail.com

Introduction

The composition and the organization of nations defers from a nation to another; as a response to the evolution of humanity and the increase of the number of citizens in the world, governments face new issues then need new ways of management to meet them by their flexibility over time. As a results, nations experienced different kinds of country management systems such as Monarchy, Dictatorships, Anarchy, Democracy etc...those management systems are adopted by the country leaders according to how they believe the country should be managed, either for their own interest of for the interest of the people. One of the greatest systems respecting the right of the people in the world is Democracy. In the XXI century, there was a huge change in the world and each country was now looking for a system of governance being in accordance with their society. The new system should guaranty freedom to the citizens regardless their religion, sex, origin, language, culture, the right to vote to all adult citizens with no distinctions of gender and race. One of the best systems capable to respond to these criteria is Democracy. From the antiquity In Athene, Democracy already existed but was not that defended as the United States does in the world we live today. As a matter of fact, the US place themselves at a position of the leading actor of democracy worldwide and act as a role model dictating to other countries, the attitudes to adopt in order to be in harmony with the core values defended by a good democracy. The current article focusses on the appreciation of the quality of the democracy in the US and its adaptability in West African francophone countries for inspiration. A presentation of a role democratic regime would be made along with the study of the positive sides and the limits of the US democracy. The current article is subdivided into three main parts including the theoretical framework developing the conceptual clarification followed by the objectives, methodology and the litterature review. A presentation of the American democracy as a role model with brief arguments will be made and finally comes the last part presenting its limits and especially the study of the black community.

1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

1.1. Conceptual Clarification

According to Cambridge International Dictionary of English,

Democracy is a belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves. “Cambridge International Dictionary 364” It is a system of government in which all the people of a country can vote to elect their representatives. It is also the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on the belief, in which power is either held by elect representatives or directly by the people themselves. History is more than the path left by the past. It influences the present and can shape the future.

Democracy is a political system , or a system of decision-making within an institution, organization, or state, in which all members have an equal share of power. Democracy means rule by the people. One should mention that democracy is not the only management system of governance. Various sorts of government employed or adopted this name, where the people can participate within the decisions that affect the way their community is run.

According to the Indian Lawyer Aditya Yadav democratic government is a system of government that is elected by the whole adult population, people over the age of 18 years. They do this by choosing someone to represent their community at an area, state, and federal level in case the country is a federation. The purpose of the elected government is to protect the people and promote their rights, interests, and welfare to the benefit of everyone. They have the responsibility to maintain order in the country and be a model of good governance by keeping their promises and protecting the flag of their country. (Yadav)

This said what is the origin of the word “Democracy”?

1.2. Objectives of the Study

This article aims at a global side, analyzing the American Democratic system and its possible transposition in Africa. To be more specific, the research focusses on presenting the different theories of democracy and exposing the principles of a role model democratic regime. The paper expects to highlight both the positive aspects of American democracy throughout the ages and the aspects that are less commendable.

1.3. Methodology

To carry out this dissertation, documentary research was done added to some researches on internet to reach more accurate elements of information to succeed the data collection. Many books related to history in America were studied and especially the ones talking about Democracy and its weaknesses. Great authors who marked the history of America were studied with specific facts explaining their influences in the history. Talking about literary theories, a literary trend also known new historicism contributed to conduct this research work. Indeed, new historicism literary trend refers to a method used to situate facts according to history and claims that the themes and meaning of literature are not universal and cannot be derived from the text alone. They are rather the product of the author's time and cultural situation.

1.4. Literature Review

The paradigm of democracy in the world has long been the center of questionable theories among scholars and thinkers. Many countries define it in correlation of the realities of their environment. This notion has several definitions and moreover by some writer, is defined according to a certain number of conditions necessary to be filled. According to Robert DAHL (De la démocratie), for a government to be qualified as democratic, there are some criteria to be observed. The authors think that such a system should meet a certain number or principles; 4 in total and that any other system meeting those criteria would be considered democratic as well. Those five criteria to be filled are:

- Effective participation: before the adoption of a given decision, all the members of the association should truly have the same possibilities to express their view points
- Equality in voting: When decision taking time finally comes, all the members should have equal and effective possibility to take part to votes and all votes should be considered equal.
- Full information: In the reasonable set time, all the members should have the same and real possibilities to get informed on the different possible politics et on their predictable consequences.
- Agenda control: Only members should have the possibility to set the agenda. Then no possible blocking for the democratic process ensured

by the three previous criteria. The politics of the association is always opened to any form of change as long as its member's desire.

- Inclusion of major citizens: All permanent adult resident should get credit the integrality of the rights provided by the four previous criteria. (Dahl 37)

One can understand here that many aspects aiming at considering the people has been taken into account in the criteria set by Robert DAHL to qualify a country or an association as a democratic one.

F. de Corcelle proposes a comparative study of American democracy through the assessment: “American democracy can only be compared to European democracy in France, and in other countries devoted to the same revolution” (my own translation). For (**de Corcelle 758**) American democracy believes in itself, thinks it's infallible in its continuous innovations and nevertheless submits its wishes to the tolerant maxims of its fathers and believes that they could not reach their goals by iniquitous means. M. de Tocqueville while debating about the real goal of American democracy, its functioning or its general mission, it's probable future supports that “The American democracy, is a stupendously powerful force and fast in its flood, which to reclaim a world, embosom to the full liberty of human reason, to the energy of personal interest, the inexhaustible fertility of its territorial resources, to the harmony of a free society from its very birth, and facilitates in all things, the marvelous twinges of its happy activity” (758). This is to show how exemplary the democracy of the United States is. The other aspect is the face of patriotism, engagement to observe and the pride of being American that **F. de Corcelle** supports: “...By this way, social life manifests at all moment by the achievement of a duty or by the exercise of a right. We truly believe that in the United States, the love for the country is a kind of worship to which men are attached by its practices. The American loves his district because it is strong and independent. He gives it a lot of interest because he contributes to its lead; he relies his ambition on it and his future, this is where he tries to help leading the society, that he gets accustomed to forms without which liberty only precede revolution and understand the harmony of the powers he practices in their prime element.” (my own translation). As a matter of fact, Americans believe in their country and in all that make its pride like the bald eagle, the flag, the monuments, their history etc...

Moreover, according to the same author, the United

States represent the land where one can find perfect harmony to enjoy the freedom of religion as he argues “For them (Americans) no religious hates because religion is universally respected and because no sect dominates. No class hates because the people represents all. No public miseries to be exploited because the material state of the country offers a huge career to the industry. (752).

One can notice that the approach of DHAL implicates all adult part of the population of all countries claiming to be democratic. Going in the same direction and in order to develop more the notion of Democracy, Daouda Dia in his Doctoral thesis in political sciences declares “The Lexique of political sciences defines democracy as a regime in which sovereignty belongs to the citizens as a whole, who exercise it through free and open elections held at regular intervals. From this perspective, democracy is, in Abraham Lincoln's famous phrase, "government of the people, by the people, for the people” (Dia 10). But he believes this definition is not enough to widely define and explore the ins and outs of the notion. He believes we need to go back to the roots to better understand what it is really about. But this narrow conception does not allow us to describe a democratic system in all its dimensions. To do this, we need to go back to the origins of the word. Democracy, as we know it today, is associated with ancient Greece. Indeed, it was in the Greece of Pericles, over 2,500 years ago, that Demos, meaning "the People", was entrusted with Kratos, meaning "Authority". It's a fairly simple political system, at least theoretically, in which the people are constantly consulted. In terms of politics and institutions, democracy includes such features as equality of all before the law and institutions, periodic elections of citizens' representatives, and freedom of political action and policy formulation. The *raison d'être* of democracy simply lies in the right of the people to choose or reject, periodically, their leaders, in full political freedom, without coercion. (10) From the point of view of doctrine, Jacques Mariel Nzouankeu has identified five (5) fundamental principles that characterize a democratic regime:

First and foremost, the existence of several political

parties, one or more of which are in power, while the others form the legal opposition. Political mores demand respect for the opposition, recognizing its right to challenge power and criticize the government, but at the same time obliging it, among other things, to respect the rules of the democratic game, and to present a genuine political alternative to power, by developing clear, credible and practically achievable objectives.

Secondly, freedom of the press and information. This implies, in particular, that those wishing to set up a newspaper are not required to provide a guarantee, that there are several opinions and newspapers, and that the government does not censor.

It is also the independence of the judiciary. In practice, this independence means that judges are not subject to any pressure from the executive, and that they do not fear for their careers, or even their lives, as a result of the judgments they are called upon to hand down.

It is also the organization of free elections, i.e. consultations whose results cannot be known before the votes are counted, it being understood that these elections bring into competition people or parties claiming different political convictions.

Lastly, there is the principle of alternation of power, according to which today's rulers, defeated in free elections, must agree to step down and allow yesterday's majority or opposition to govern. (11)

To these principles pointed out by Jacques Mariel Nzouankeu, we must add the depositaries of the law, who also act as representatives of the people, without whom, moreover, the people in question do not hold power, as defined by Abraham Lincoln.

Concerning the limits of the American democracy, **Claude Fohlen** declares “the United States are the first country in the world to have established a constitution, to have guaranteed liberty and equality, to have applied power separation, one the first to have adopted a national representation, and at the same time to deny all individual rights to a category of people established on their land” (Fohlen 13). To support him, Bruno Revesz argues : “to exactly report and bring accurate explanation to the weakness of the civic culture of new democracies; one should not underestimate the weight of historical heritages.

First of all, the colonial heritage; “If the struggles for independence were carried out in reference to the ideals of American and French revolutions, they also lead to a discriminatory exercise of citizenship and particularly toward Indian populations, black slaves and illiterate masses. So were born hierarchical citizenships that still persist in spirits. There would then be people who are “more equal” than others”. (Revesz 39)

2. The US as a Role Model of Democracy

2.1. History of Democracy in the US

The United States of America detains one of the most accurate constitutions holding a strong history after a long period of fight for independence and the Liberty of their people. Believing the preamble of the constitution that stipulates: “We the People of the United States, to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Prosperity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.” This preamble makes the US, one of the best places on earth to be for a heavenly life full of tranquility and dream to achieve. In fact, this preamble serves as a prelude to the American constitution and introduces the intentions of the farmers and is made up of 52-words in a whole. One of the key elements that show how much US is definitely a place to be and better than any other is the unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America right after their independence in July 4, 1776 from the United Kingdom colonist. One should not ignore that this declaration was set in presence of the representative of the United States of America and in the General Congress Assembled. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. These take into account the integrity of all human beings living in the US and how they count and belong to the country. **F. de Corcelle** supports that “there’s no other country in the world where reigns less spirit independence and more effective freedom of discussion than in America. There’s no people that tries so hard to create a social cohesion and good life” (De Corcelle 754) **M. de Tocqueville** knows none where one succeeded to establish so numerous and efficient schools, temples more in relation with religious needs, inhabitants, and districts roads better kept. **M.**

de Tocqueville also supports that the poor of America is richer in comparison to the one of Europe; that he pays to the tax a lesser portion of his salary or his income, and that in no other country, one can see so well-kept roads, schools and temples in better state. (754)

2.2 Citizenship in the US

Several reasons motivate any citizens of any country on earth and especially from Africa to feel the will of becoming an American citizen. From their level of development and technology, armed forces, and the possibility of finding a job. The American Dream incites citizens worldwide to go to the US for the pursuit of their dream and to believe in themselves for a better life and future no matter their place of birth and their origin contrary to many African countries where the notion of hope is still to be tightly approached motivating citizens to take the clandestine immigration way by the illegally navigating western seas to the price of their lives. For most Americans, the United States stands for the land of freedom and liberty. According to the first amendment written in the constitution, all citizens have the freedom of religion, speech, and assembly.

Eddie Ferell in his article entitled “What does it mean to be American” supports that being a citizen in America implies more than just being an American. Being an American obliges you to be the best version of yourself and to keep the society running properly. America is also called “Home” as it is a country basically run completely by the people inside it. American people have the responsibility to brand the country and contribute to its well-being. (Eddie Edward Ferell)

John F. Kennedy went in the same direction of the strengthening of American citizenship by and reinforcing the essence of civic and public service to the man and women composing the United States of America through those historical words: Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country. Those words one the calls for the contribution of every single citizen of the United States to prioritize the public good. The public spirit of the Union is just a little summing up of the common patriotism. One can feel it everywhere. While French people do not perceive the magistrate more than a single representative of power, the American citizens consider them as the representative of their rights and their common interests. The civil servant is small but their authority is great in value and as

a result, they obey less to the person than to the justice and law. In the United States, the power is divided in its exercise.

For *F. de Corcelle* “there’s no other country in the world, where the law speaks such an absolute language and its application right divided between such a several numbers of hands. The providence gave each American individual, the credit of the necessary reason for him to be his own leader in the things he has the greatest interest. That is the great maxim on which the civil and political society of this continent lies. The father applies it to his children, the teacher to his students, the master to his servants, the commune to their constituents, the province to the commune, the Union to the states. An American citizen bears or represents America wherever. That also includes the mental state of being the best and giving the best of themselves. When you kill an American citizen outside the country, you just killed the whole America as you won’t get out of this safe” (De Corcelle 750)

America is a state that was made to thrive in greatness. From the day it was deemed a country, they had one goal, to give freedom to those who don’t have it. American people share the same goal of success. Americans think of America first and believe in the greatness of their country just like a spirit, that’s a high sense of integrity. (Eddie Edward Ferrell)

Being an American means you have the freedom to do whatever you believe in and pursue your dream. In America, you can express how you feel about any topic and won’t be punished for it. This doesn’t happen in some other countries, where whenever you dare talk bad about the leader, you may be arrested for that. Democracy is not defined the same way in every country.

One of the greatest goals of Americans is helping one another out not only when needed but also in everyday life. Americans put everything in their power to conserve their image of the most powerful country in the world. The word freedom comes to mind when we think about America. Being American means to be united just like the United States of America, they then come together to solve problems to help the country thrive, no matter the quarrels between the political parties.

America promotes excellence through shows like America Got Talent (AGT) where amateur performers present their singing, comedy, magic, gymnastic etc... to celebrity judges and a nationwide audience in the competition and win a huge prize when they convince the judge to press the golden buzzer. The AGT show helps young man and woman to give life to

their dream. An identified talent should be used to serve in the country and hope should be in the mind of all citizens.

Being American means that you have respect for your country, integrity and moral ethic, that you show patriotism and that you support your country no matter what. You should contribute to unify the fundamental element in America. American are the best motivational speakers in the world, for motivational speakers help people from given domains to bring out the inner power and greatness in order to reaffirm more their power and capacity to do things normal people thinks difficult.

2.3. Limits of the American democracy

All those positive aspects considered, one could not ignore the fact that Democracy in the United States is really well branded, but what about the inside, what are the realities faced by some citizens inside that country? Do all the races living in the US under equal rights and enjoy the freedom the US brag on so loud?

The notion of freedom and equality that pushes the US to stand as a model of democracy appears to be a myth for the history of races still strike in the spirits of humanity even after their independence. The core values of democracy seem to be applied for just a certain category of people they consider more American than others, going in contradiction with the power of equality reserved to all men in the declaration of independence. As a matter of fact, one of the most shaming historical facts in the US is the racial segregation toward colored people and especially the black community though being completely part of the country and representing one of the most important races that contributed to give to the US that pride of the greatest economy, the greatest military power and of great achievement in sports, science and technology in the world. The limits of the democracy in the US are apparent enough to be ignored despite their strong institutions and pride.

2.3.1. America and Black Emancipation

After the United States got their independence from the British colonist in 1776 black people life experience didn't really follow the wave of the freedom and equality as promised to all citizen in the American constitution over time and across some regions of the country. One could mention a continuation of slavery in many states and black people were held

in bondage and subjected to forced labor preventing them from benefiting their basic human rights. Racial segregation became a serious matter for black people to face as many organizations were formed from both black and white people to affirm the right to live and matter as full human for the first group, and for the second group to show their supremacy over all the other races living in the country. These lead to the creation of several movement and some prominent activists such as Marthin Luther King Jr, Rosa Parks, Malcom X, Thurgood Marshall etc... worth knowing to better illustrate black's life after independence in the so democratic United States of America despite the advent of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution.

2.3.2. US Blacks in the American democracy

After independence in US as the Civil War came to a close, southern states began to pass a series of discriminatory state laws collectively known as **black codes**. While the laws varied in both content and severity from state to state, some laws actually granted freed people the right to marry or testify in court, these codes were designed to maintain the social and economic structure of racial slavery in the absence of the “peculiar institution.” The laws codified **white supremacy** by restricting the civic participation of freed people; the codes deprived them of the right to vote, the right to serve on juries, the right to own or carry weapons, and, in some cases, even the right to rent or lease land.

2.4. The post emancipation Black Code

In the words of James Kent, in most of the United States, there is a distinction in respect to political privileges, between free white persons and free colored persons of African blood; and in no part of the country do the latter, in point of fact, participate equally with the white, in the exercise of civil and political right. (James 258). One of the movements that took place after the Civil war is the creation of the “Black code”. Indeed, historically, the phrase "Black codes" refers to a set of laws decreed in the Southern United States, as this was the part of the country that was the most against the freedom of black people, after the Civil War that aimed to restrict the rights and freedoms of African Americans. These laws were enacted primarily between 1865 and 1866. They varied by state and mostly enacted in the south, but generally aimed to maintain white supremacy and control the newly freed

African American population. Slavery took the most places in the south and highly contributed to the growth of the economy of the country in general and the southern side in particular. They sought to regulate the labor, behavior, and movement of African Americans and essentially reestablished many aspects of slavery in a different form. Some common provisions included restricting the right to vote, limiting employment options, controlling housing and land ownership, and imposing harsh penalties for minor offenses. The Black codes were met with significant resistance and criticism from both the northern abolitionist movement and newly freed African Americans themselves. They were seen as a violation of the principles of equality and freedom established by the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which abolished slavery.

2.5. The History of the Ku Klux Klan

In the period following the Civil War, also known as the Reconstruction era, the United States of America's congress introduced a series of laws that gave blacks the right to citizenship, the right to vote giving them the right to be protected by the law as a democratic country should normally be. The gag is that when blacks try to claim those rights, certain white people try to deny them. This group of white people is all grouped into a powerful organization in the name of which they act. In the middle 1860s, white supremacists began to organize throughout the South that was the part of the country where slavery was seriously practiced. The largest of those groups was the Ku Klux Klan. The 19th-century Klan was originally organized as a social club by Confederate veterans in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1866. They derived the name from the Greek word *kyklos*, from which comes the English "circle"; "Klan" was added for the sake of alliteration and Ku Klux Klan emerged. The organization quickly became a vehicle for Southern white underground resistance to Radical Reconstruction/

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is a white supremacist organization that has a long and troubled history in the United States. It was founded in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee, shortly after the Civil War and the abolition of slavery. Some of their primary goals were to maintain white supremacy and undermine the rights and freedoms of African Americans in the South.

At the very beginning of their activities and acts, the KKK members used violence, intimidation, and terrorism to express their dominance.

Members of the Klan wore white robes and hoods to conceal their identities and to instill fear. They targeted African Americans, particularly those who attempted to exercise their newly gained rights, such as voting or participating in the political process.

2.6. The Jim Crow Law and racial segregation

After the civil war in US, and in the same context of segregating African Americans, there was the application of separation of the two major existing races in US. That consist in using different establishments such as Public schools and spaces, transportations, housings, Poll taxes and literacy tests, marriage etc...Those segregation acts were covered by the Jim Crow Laws. Indeed, Jim Crow laws were a set of racially discriminatory laws and practices enacted in the United States from the late 19th century until the mid-20th century. These laws enforced racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans and other non-white populations. Those laws promoting “Equal but separated” notions forbade African Americans to fully integrate the white American society. They couldn’t have good jobs, couldn’t vote and couldn’t travel or live in the same conditions like White Americans do.

The Jim Crow era began in the late 1800s after the Reconstruction period following the American Civil War. During this time, Southern states implemented laws and policies that reinforced racial segregation and denied African Americans’ civil rights. These laws were meant to maintain white supremacy and control over African Americans by imposing a strict racial hierarchy. The Jim Crow laws encompassed various aspects of life, including education, housing, employment, transportation, and public accommodations as mentioned above.

Some of the common Jim Crow laws included:

- Segregated schools: African American children were forced to attend separate and often inferior schools that received fewer resources and funding compared to white schools in order to reduce their intellectual capacities and prevent them from having a good education from school. Black schools were underfunded and often provided inferior resources and opportunities compared to white schools.
- Segregated public spaces: Public facilities such as parks, libraries, theaters, and swimming pools were segregated, with separate facilities

designated for African Americans and whites. The facilities for African Americans were typically of lower quality.

- Segregated transportation: Public transportation, such as buses and trains, were segregated, with separate seating areas and facilities for African Americans. Public transportation, including buses and trains, enforced segregated seating arrangements. In many areas, African Americans were often required to give up their seats to white passengers. This is one of the key elements that provoked the bus boycott. That day, a seamstress of the age of 42 by the name of Rosa Parks and secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), refused to give out her seat to a White person in the section “Black” of an autobus (Johnson and Adelman 12)
- Segregated housing: Laws and practices enforced residential segregation, with African Americans confined to specific neighborhoods or excluded from certain areas through discriminatory practices such as redlining.
- Poll taxes and literacy tests: These measures were used to disenfranchise African American voters by imposing financial and educational barriers. Many African Americans were unable to pay the taxes or pass the literacy tests, effectively denying them the right to vote.
- Racial segregation in marriage: Laws prohibited interracial marriage or relationships between people of different races and precisely between Black and White Americans.

Conclusion

All in all, Democracy is a management system which includes the respect of many aspects of human rights and that guarantees the right to all citizens of any country run under this system. The United States of America is one of the best countries in the world that meets the requirements of human rights and offers to all citizens, equal rights and chance to achieve their dreams. Indeed, the US is recognized as the land of the free, of opportunity and any kind of dream achievement place. It is the land where hope is the most expressed and believed to all citizens. The pride of being an American can be heard from all the citizens of this country as Americans consider

themselves as the greatest nation in the world. Indeed, Americans are protected by the laws of their country wherever they are in the world. They have a strong constitution and they are one of the rare countries that are really free from their colonizer as a former colony in contrary to most African countries. But as a saying goes, one should not judge a book by its cover. Inside the country, there are internal issues that are still to be dealt with as their Democracy has some crucial limits to be mentioned. There comes the issue of race as the United States is one of the first nations in the world to adopt Democracy and ensure liberty and justice to the citizens but at the same time deny the liberty and justice for a social group or a race living inside that same nation. To show their supremacy over Blacks, White Americans preceded to the creation of many laws the one entitled Jim Crow law and the creation of racist organizations like the Ku-Klux Klan, an organization that had for goal to deprive Black people from their rights and prevent them from voting. This fragilizes the strength of the democracy of the US and shows how mythical this may be at certain points.

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