15- Reconstruction (1863-1877)

1. Issues of Reconstruction
   1. political
      1. readmitting the South would reunite the Democrats
      2. gaining in strength, Democrats would be able to repeal the industrialist, nationalistic economic legislation that the Republicans had passed during the Civil War
   2. emotional
      1. some northerners wanted to punish the South for the suffering and sacrifice
      2. many wanted to urbanize the South because it was backward, feudal and undemocratic
2. Lincoln’s Policies (1863 - early 1865)
   1. Lincoln believed that southern states could not leave the Union and therefore never did-- wanted to treat the Confederate states as if they had never left
   2. adopted moderate view
   3. **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction (1863) (10% plan)**
      1. full presidential pardons to southerners who:
         1. take an oath of allegiance to the Union and the US constitution
         2. accept the emancipation of slaves
      2. once 10 percent of the voters in that state take the loyalty oath, state government can be reestablished and legitimate again
      3. would allow southern states to rewrite their constitutions to eliminate slavery
      4. Lincoln promised not to mess with their private property
      5. Radical response:
         1. refused to give seats to representatives from the reconstructed states
         2. refused to count the electoral vote from those states in the election of 1864
   4. **Wade-Davis Bill (1864)**
      1. required 50 percent of voters to take an **Ironclad Oath**
      2. only non-Confederates could vote for a new state constitution
      3. Congress passed because many Republicans felt that Lincoln’s 10 percent plan was too lenient- would allow state government to fall under domination of disloyal secessionists
      4. Lincoln vetoed it
   5. **Freedmen’s Bureau (1865)**
      1. early welfare agency which provided food, shelter and medical aid for those harmed by the war (blacks and homeless whites)
      2. freedmen had no possessions but the clothes on their backs
      3. initially able to settle freed blacks on confiscated land, but that land was later given back to their original owners
         1. gave slaves dreams of “forty acres and a mule”
         2. however, land ownership for blacks went from 0% to 20%, while land ownership for whites went from 80% to 67%
      4. legacy was that they established 3,000 schools for freed blacks; taught 200,000 blacks how to read (these schools were open to whites though)
      5. however, not a permanent solution since it only had the authority to operate for one year
   6. Lincoln’s last speech called for immediate black suffrage and indicated that he would have become more radical/progressive
   7. however, his assassination caused northern hysteria about the south being unrepentant
3. Johnson and Reconstruction (early 1865 - late 1865)
   1. southern, white supremacist Democrat picked to be Lincoln’s vice president to encourage pro-Union Democrats to vote for Lincoln  
      “White men alone must manage the South.”
   2. became president after Lincoln was assassinated
   3. **Johnson’s Reconstruction policy**
      1. like Lincoln’s 10 percent plan, but disfranchised:
         1. former leaders and officeholders of the Confederacy
         2. Confederates with more than $20,000 in taxable property
      2. but Johnson used his power to grant individual pardons to save the wealthy planters
   4. Southern governments of 1865
      1. new constitutions repudiated secession, negated the debts of the Confederate government and ratified the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery
      2. but did not extend voting rights to blacks
      3. also, former leaders of the Confederacy were elected to Congress
      4. these southern governments that proclaimed to be loyal angered the north
   5. **Black Codes**
      1. attempted to restrict freedmen movement and provide a stable workforce for the plantations
      2. prohibited blacks from renting land or borrowing money to buy land
      3. allowed local officials to fine unemployed blacks for vagrancy and then hire them out to private employers to satisfy the fine (SLAVERY!!!)
      4. forced freedmen to sign work contracts
      5. prohibited blacks from testifying against whites in court
   6. Johnson vetoed two important bills:
      1. a bill increasing the services and protection offered by the Freedman’s Bureau
      2. civil rights bill that nullified the Black Codes and guaranteed full citizenship and equal rights to blacks
      3. but Congress overrode his vetoes
   7. The Election of 1866
      1. Johnson’s speeches argued that equal rights for blacks would result in an “Africanized” society
      2. Republicans responded by branding the entire Democratic party as rebellious and treasonous southerners
4. Congressional Reconstruction (1866-1870)
   1. Radical Republicans
      1. major players: Thaddeus, Sumner, Wade
      2. divided between moderates (concerned with economic gains for the white middle class) and radicals (civil rights for blacks)
      3. became more radical when they feared the Democrats would become more dominant in Congress (blacks now counted as equal to slaves in population)
      4. struggled to allow blacks to exercise civil rights freely, to be educated in schools and receive lands confiscated from the planter class
      5. also supported other liberal causes like women’s suffrage, rights for labor unions and civil rights for northern blacks
   2. Enacting the Radical Program
      1. dominated Congress using political coercion and overrode Johnson’s vetoes
      2. **Freedman’s Bank (1865)**- persuaded freemen to deposit money in the bank, but they lost the money by investing poorly and heavily
      3. **Civil Rights Act of 1866**- overrode Johnson’s vetoes of the Freedmen’s Bureau Act and the first Civil Rights Act
         1. pronounced all blacks as US citizens and tried to prevent the operation of the Black Codes
      4. **Fourteenth Amendment**- passed because Republicans feared that if Democrats won control of Congress, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 would be repealed
         1. main points:
            1. declared that all persons born or naturalized in the US were citizens
            2. obligated states to respect the rights of US citizens and provide them with “equal protection of laws” and “due process of law”
         2. also:
            1. disqualified former Confederates from holding state/federal offices unless two-thirds of Congress voted to pardon them
            2. repudiated debts of defeated Confederate governments
            3. penalized a state if it kept any eligible person from voting by reducing that state’s proportional representation in Congress and the electoral college
         3. not really used in the 1800s, but used widely in the 1950s to protect minorities, women, children, disabled persons and those accused of rights
      5. **Report of the joint committee (1866)**
         1. didn’t want reconstructed states to be represented in Congress
         2. asserted that Congress, not the president, could determine when reconstructed states could rejoin the Union-- rejected the presidential plan of Reconstruction
      6. **Reconstruction acts of 1867**
         1. placed the South under military occupation; Union generals controlled five districts
         2. increased the requirements for gaining readmission to the Union:
            1. had to ratify the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments
            2. constitutional guarantees for race-blind male enfranchisement
         3. increased resentment against the North
   3. Impeachment of Andrew Johnson
      1. Congress passed the **Command of the Army Act** which prohibited the president from issuing military orders except through the commanding general of the army, who could not be relieved or assigned elsewhere without the consent of the Senate
      2. **Tenure of Office Act** passed, which prohibited the president from removing a federal official or military commander without the approval of the Senate
         1. Congress wanted to protect the Radical Republicans in Johnson’s cabinet
         2. unconstitutional because it legislated on executive branch powers
      3. Johnson dismissed his Secretary of War anyways and was impeached
      4. not removed because some Republicans thought it was a bad precedent to remove a president for political reasons
   4. Reforms After Grant’s Election
      1. US Grant only won by a small margin, forcing Republicans to defend the voting rights of blacks if they hoped to keep control of the White House
      2. alienated:
         1. his own party by relying heavily on the spoils system
         2. moderate/conservative Republicans by supporting Radical Reconstruction policies
      3. **Fifteenth Amendment**- prohibited any state from denying/abridging a citizen’s right to vote “on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude”
      4. **Civil Rights Act of 1875**- guaranteed equal accommodations in public places and prohibited courts from excluding blacks from juries
         1. not enforced because Republicans afraid of losing Northern votes and tired of reforming the unwilling South
         2. its provisions for educational desegregation were removed
5. Reconstruction in the South
   1. during the second round of Reconstruction, the Republican party dominated the governments of the ex-Confederate states
   2. Composition of the Reconstruction Governments
      1. initially, one-fourth of white males were excluded from voting or holding office, making the majority of voters black
      2. whites were in the majority in both houses, not blacks
      3. **scalawags**- Southern whites who supported the Republican governments who were usually former Whigs interested in economic development for their state
      4. **carpetbaggers**- middle class Republican northern newcomers who were missionaries, teachers or investors interested in setting up new businesses
      5. black legislators
         1. educated property holders with moderate positions
         2. created “colored convention” and declared: “We claim exactly the same rights, privileges and immunities as are enjoyed by white men-- we ask nothing more and will be content with nothing less.”
         3. the percentage of black officeholders was always lower than the percentage of blacks in the population
         4. their power caused unfounded resentment among disenfranchised ex-Confederates
   3. Evaluating the Republican Record
      1. were they abusive or did they govern responsibly?
      2. accomplishments
         1. universal male suffrage, property rights for women, debt relief and modern penal codes
         2. internal improvements like roads, bridges, and railroads
         3. state institutions like hospitals, asylums and public school systems
      3. failures
         1. lots of government corruption-- took bribes, graft (profiting from political position)
         2. state budgets increased to provide south with services, but increased along with state debts...
         3. corruption caused by rapid economic expansion of government services and revenues that put new strains on and new temptations before elected officials everywhere
         4. however, the government corruption in the South was no worse than the corruption in any other part of the country
   4. African Americans Adjusting to Freedom
      1. Building black communities
         1. blacks interpreted freedom differently:
            1. some wanted economic equality-- redistribution of land   
               “The property which they [whites] hold was nearly all earned by the sweat of our brows.”
            2. some only wanted legal equality
            3. but *all* wanted to be independent
         2. desire to be autonomous reflected in the many independent black churches
         3. set up independent schools (but already were segregated)
         4. many migrated to frontier states in order to achieve independence and self-sufficiency
      2. Sharecropping
         1. initially, white landowners attempted to force freedmen to sign contracts that would basically enslave them (**Black Codes**)
         2. forced contract signing failed because of black insistence on autonomy and changes in the postwar economy
         3. **sharecropping**- landlord provides seed and other needed farm supplies in return for a share of the harvest
            1. was part of white southerners’ interpretation of freedom as the ability to control their own destinies (white supremacy) without interference from the North or federal government
            2. was similar to the gang-labor system of the antebellum plantation
            3. allowed poor people to work a piece of land for themselves
            4. sharecropping freed landlords from responsibility for their workers
         4. **crop-lien system**- caused by sharecropping system
            1. rather than owing debt to banks, post-Civil War southerners owed money to local stores in mill towns
            2. without competition, stores were able to charge interests at 50 to 60 percent
            3. farmers forced to give merchants **lien** (claim) on their crops
            4. forced new landowners to lose their land
            5. farmers became dependent on cash crops, exhausting the soil

forced the subsistence farmers of backcountry to change

also were forced to fence in their animals (“fence laws”), causing widespread protests

later, the backcountry people would become strong supporters of the populist movement

* + - * 1. this system did create a strong sense of community though
        2. also brought blacks and whites into close contact with one another, causing greater white supremacy movements
  1. The North During Reconstruction
     1. Greed and Corruption
        1. became less focused on ideals and civil rights, and more on money
        2. masters of patronage (giving jobs and government favors to supporters) like **Roscoe Conklin** and **James Blaine** replaced reformers like **Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner,** and **Benjamin Wade**
        3. assisted by President Grant’s brother-in-law, **Jay Gould** and **James Fisk** cornered the gold market, making a huge profit
        4. **Credit Mobilier** **affair**- insiders gave stock to influential members of Congress to avoid investigation of the profits they were making from government subsidies and fraudulent contracts for building the transcontinental railroad
        5. **Whiskey Ring**- federal revenue agents conspired with the liquor industry and stole millions from the government in excise taxes by filing false tax reports
        6. **Boss Tweed**- local Democratic party leader Tweed stole $200 million from New York’s taxpayers
     2. The Election of 1872
        1. **Horace Greeley** nominated by:
           1. Liberal Republicans

wanted to break from the corruption and scandals of the rest of their party

advocated civil service reform, end of railroad subsidies, withdrawal of troops from the South, reduced tariffs, and free trade

* + - * 1. Democrats
      1. but Republicans just “waved the bloody shirt,” reminding the public about the Civil War and pinning it on the Democrats
    1. **The Panic of 1873 (1873-1879)**
       1. overspeculation by financiers and overbuilding by industry and railroads caused widespread business failures and depression
       2. people wanted Greenback money unsupported by gold, causing inflation so that they could more easily pay back their debts
       3. formed political party called the **National Greenback Party**
       4. Grant did not cave, vetoed a bill calling for Greenbacks
       5. Instead passed the **Specie Resumption Act**, which would redeem the greenback dollars with certificates pegged to the price of gold
       6. used Panic of 1873 to justify **Social Darwinism**, who argued that the unemployed vagrants in the North and the poor blacks in the South did not deserve government assistance-- helped bring the end of Reconstruction
  1. The End of Reconstruction
     1. causes:
        1. strong state and individual right protections of economic privilege, so property redistribution never would have happened
        2. even the most liberal of whites did not feel blacks were their equals
     2. white supremacy
        1. **Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Camellia, the Red Shirts and White Leagues** were secret societies/paramilitary organizations
        2. intimidated blacks and white reformers by lynching to prevent from exercising their voting rights so Democrats could reign supreme
        3. Southerners considered them patriotic societies, fighting against Northern rule
        4. another even more effective way planters discouraged blacks from voting was through economic pressure (refused to rent them land, extend them credit or employ them)
        5. **Force Acts** **of 1870 and 1871 (also known as Enforcement Acts and the Ku Klux Klan Acts)**
           1. prohibited states from discriminating against voters on the basis of race (15th Amendment again)
           2. gave federal government power to supersede the state courts and prosecute violations of the law
           3. also allowed president to use the military to protect civil rights and to suspend the right of habeas corpus after egregious rights violations

used in South Carolina to arrest many Klan members

* + - * 1. helped in the decline of Klan violence against blacks
    1. **The Amnesty Act of 1872**- removed restrictions on ex-Confederates (except for top leaders), allowing southern conservatives to vote for Democrats to retake the state government
    2. The Election of 1876
       1. Republicans nominated **Hayes**, who was unassociated with the corrupt Grant administration
       2. Democrats nominated **Tilden** who fought the corrupt Tweed
       3. Tilden only needed one electoral vote from the contested returns of South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana to receive a majority
       4. Constitution didn’t say what to do, so Congress had a special electoral commission, writing the....
    3. **The Compromise of 1877**
       1. Hayes would become president if
          1. federal support (troops) for the Republicans in the South ended
          2. southern transcontinental railroad (**Texas and Pacific Railroad**) built
          3. one Southerner to the Hayes cabinet
       2. so Hayes, now known as “His Fraudulency,” withdrew his troops, marking the end of Reconstruction
       3. Supreme Court began to strike down Reconstruction laws that protected blacks from discrimination
       4. rather than industrializing, most southerners remained poor farmers

1. The New South
   1. **Henry Grady**, the editor of the Atlanta Constitution, wanted economic diversity and laissez-faire capitalism
   2. Bourbon/Redeemed Governments
      1. southern conservatives took control of the southern state governments again
         1. called the Redeemers by supporters and the Bourbons by critics
      2. advocated for states’ rights, reduced taxes, reduced spending on social programs (public education) and white supremacy  
         “Schools are not a necessity.”
      3. despite condemning the corruption of the Grant administration, they were corrupt as well
      4. **Readjusters**- opposed the Bourbon commitment to paying back prewar and Reconstruction debts in full; instead wanted them to repudiate their debts and spend the money on social programs
         1. ultimately did not gain much momentum because of racial prejudice
      5. argued that with suffrage, blacks should be able to take care of themselves
   3. Economic Progress
      1. **Henry Grady**, editor of Atlanta Constitution, was strong supporter of thrift, industry and progress
      2. these new values happened in contrast to the romanticization of Antebellum South as “the Lost Cause”
         1. books like ***Uncle Remus*** portrayed the slave society as harmonious
         2. popular minstrel shows featured white people dressed up as bumbling, black buffoons
      3. textiles
         1. before, cotton was shipped out to the North or to Europe
         2. now, textiles made in the South, production rates overtaking the North’s
         3. able to expand because of cheap labor, low taxes and the accommodating conservative government
      4. railroads were converted to standard-gauge, integrating its transportation with the rest of the country
      5. iron industry became a fifth of the nation’s total capacity
      6. **American Tobacco Company** had a monopoly over the processing of war tobacco into marketable materials
      7. used **convict-lease** system where states leased their criminals as a cheap labor supply, paying the criminals nothing
      8. however, in terms of population, industry and railroads, the South’s rate of postwar growth from 1865 to 1900 was the same
   4. Continued Poverty
      1. despite industrialization, still mostly agricultural and poor
      2. average south income 40% of north income, when in 1860 it had been more than 60%
      3. causes:
         1. South’s late start at industrialization
         2. poorly educated workforce that was unable to industrialize and take advantage of opportunities
      4. industries’ profit went to Northern investors-- they had developed a colonial economy
      5. many women needed employment after their men died in the war
      6. hours long and wages low
   5. Agriculture
      1. cotton production increased, causing prices to decrease, strengthening a vicious cycle
      2. forced sharecroppers into the crop-lien system
      3. **George Washington Carver** attempted to diversify agriculture by growing peanuts, sweet potatoes and soybeans
      4. poor black and poor white farmers created separate organizations (the Colored Farmers’ National Alliance and the Farmers’ Southern Alliance) to demand political reforms to solve their economic problems
      5. did not unite b/c of racism-- otherwise could have been powerful
   6. Segregation
      1. white supremacists wanted to segregate blacks and whites in order to treat them as inferior-- kept political power by unifying all whites regardless of class
      2. racism also distracted people from the glaring social inequalities among blacks and whites alike
      3. Discrimination and the Supreme court
         1. during Reconstruction, federal laws protected southern blacks from discrimination by local and state governments
         2. but Supreme Court began to strike against civil rights cases
         3. ***United States v Cruikshank (1883)***- Congress can’t legislate against the racial discrimination practiced by private citizens, including railroads, hotels, and other businesses
         4. “separate but equal” did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee of “equal protection of laws”
            1. ***Plessy v. Ferguson***- regarding separate seating arrangements
            2. ***Cumming v. County Board of Education***- laws establishing separate schools for whites were valid even if there were no comparable schools for blacks
         5. allowed Jim Crow laws (separate facilities for separate races) to proliferate throughout the South
         6. were necessary in the cities to preserve the white supremacy that was preserved by custom in the rural South
      4. Loss of civil rights
         1. motives:
            1. small white farmers- prejudiced against blacks and objected to the black vote being used against them by the Bourbons
            2. conservative elite feared that the poor whites might unite politically with poor blacks to challenge them
         2. political discrimination:
            1. literacy tests (different for blacks and whites), poll taxes, grandfather clauses and political party primaries for exclusive to whites prevented southern blacks from voting
            2. Supreme Court upheld these laws in 1898 in ***Williams v. Mississippi***
         3. penal discrimination:
            1. blacks barred from serving on juries
            2. blacks given stiffer penalties than whites for the same crime
            3. accused blacks not even given court-ordered sentences
         4. economic discrimination:
            1. southern blacks couldn’t get skilled trades or even factory jobs
            2. poor whites and immigrants learned industrial skills that allowed them to become middle class while blacks were left behind farming and doing domestic work
      5. responding to segregation
         1. some wanted to move to Kansas, Oklahoma or even to Africa (**International Migration Society**)
         2. **Ida B. Wells** wrote against lynching and Jim Crow laws, but her response was an exception to the general white support for the suppression of blacks
         3. **Booker T. Washington** wanted blacks to become educated in agriculture and in white middle class standards
            1. believed that economic sufficiency and respect from whites were prerequisites to political power and social equality
            2. wanted to concentrate on economics before fighting for political rights  
               “The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly.”- Washington’s Atlanta Compromise
            3. created an industrial school at Tuskegee, Alabama
            4. organized the **National Negro Business League**