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**White Supremacy and the Failure of Reconstruction after the  
American Civil War**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is sincerely dedicated to:

Our supportive parents for providing us love, a great sense of enthusiasm and strength.

To our brothers, sisters and best friends we found along the way.

To our supervisor Dr. Kouider YUCEF for his great support and kindness, for making us see  
this adventure through to the end.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Wars are times when states or nations engage in violent hostility. Typically, a historical period follows them, during which leaders begin to consider how to rebuild the country; yet, this recovery may be unsuccessful due to a number of serious circumstances. This study attempts to investigate the causes of the American Reconstruction era's birth and its subsequent collapse following the Civil War. The main question explored in this research is whether reconstruction failure after the American civil war can be attributed to White supremacy. To answer this research question, a historical descriptive- analytical method was adopted. The analyses focused on the turbulent era in the American history following the Civil War. The study revealed that along with other related issues, white supremacy was one of the primary reasons for Reconstruction. Furthermore, due to political, economic, and social factors, Reconstruction was and is still viewed as a failure.

**Keywords:** American Civil War, Civil Rights Movement, Failure, Reconstruction era, White Supremacy.

### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

|              |                                                                 |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>US</b>    | The United States                                               |
| <b>WWI</b>   | The First World War                                             |
| <b>WWII</b>  | The Second World War                                            |
| <b>EP</b>    | Emancipation Proclamation                                       |
| <b>CS</b>    | Confederate States                                              |
| <b>TPP</b>   | Ten Percent Plan                                                |
| <b>KKK</b>   | Ku Klux Klan                                                    |
| <b>RR</b>    | Radical Republican                                              |
| <b>CORE</b>  | The Congress for Racial Equality                                |
| <b>SCLC</b>  | The Southern Christian Leadership Conference                    |
| <b>SNCC</b>  | The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee                   |
| <b>NAACP</b> | The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People |
| <b>NOW</b>   | The National Organization for Women                             |

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# **General Introduction**

## **1. Background of the Study**

The scar of white supremacy is intrinsically tied to the United States. Despite numerous turning moments and chances to acknowledge America's racial past, it remains a stain that has proven challenging to remove. The United State's first chance to attain some sort of racial equality came during the Reconstruction Era following the Civil War, which ran from 1865 to 1877 and saw the ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. On paper, the adoption of these amendments resulted in the abolition of slavery, the grant of citizenship, and the right to vote for Black Americans . The Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871 was one of many significant and heinous acts of violence that Congress thought necessary because it was committed to thwarting Blacks from civil and political rights. The Reconstruction Era amendments and other legislation seemed idealistic in comparison to the vigilantism and acts of terrorism , including the Klan Act, committed against the Black population in the United States after the Civil War. Thus ,these crimes resulted in thousands of deaths.

The aspirations of the brand-new Reconstruction era held out a great deal of oath and had the potential to fundamentally alter the nation's history. Nevertheless, these intentions were not accomplished, and it was soon apparent that emancipation in the United States did not equate to Black people's equality. The dream of Reconstruction swiftly turned into a nightmare of unimaginable brutality and tyranny because the resolve to abolish chattel slavery was not followed by a commitment to equal rights or equal protection for Americans as terrorist expert Daniel Byman recently reported in International Security.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Reconstruction was labeled as one of the most complicated, poorly understood, and significant periods in American history. Reconstruction occurred in an era of great hope and tragic loss. Many scholars have debated about the Reconstruction era and its legacy, and disagree about

the issue whether it was a success or a failure . In the views of historians , Reconstruction was a success because African Americans were able to achieve a certain level of independence.They have been freed from slavery, and four million people made vociferous demands for political, economic, and social equality. Conversely, some others have proved that Reconstruction was a complete failure in view of the fact that " the new birth of freedom " for African Americans was countered by white supremacists. The rights that former slaves were promised by constitutional amendments were not upheld by the federal and state governments. Therefore, they discovered themselves in a subordinate position in the society once more.

### **3. Research Questions**

The present study attempts to answer the following questions :

- 1- What led to the outbreak of the American Civil War ?
- 2- Whether White supremacy the point reason for Reconstruction failure after the American Civil War ?
- 3- Why is the Reconstruction era considered a complete failure ?

### **4. Hypotheses**

The present study assumes forward the following hypotheses :

- 1- The American Civil War erupted due to political, economic, and social reasons .
- 2- White supremacy contributed to Reconstruction as one of the main motives besides other secondary causes .
- 3- Reconstruction was and still judged a failure owing to political , economic , and social factors .

### **5. Aims of the Study**

The study aims to scrutinize the reasons behind the explosion of the American Civil War. Moreover, it investigates the emergence of Reconstruction era and raises the possible factors of its failure as well as the most significant events of the Civil Rights Movement .

## **6. Research Methodology**

The method used to conduct this research is historical-analytical. The study seeks to describe the historical worldwide events that paved the way to the outbreak of the American Civil War from 1861 to 1865 , and then analyses the factors that might have led Reconstruction to fail from 1865 through 1877 . Furthermore, this research is based on collecting and analysing data from relevant books, articles, websites, and reports .

## **7. Significance of the Study**

The study attempts to provide a prelude to the American Civil War and consider the circumstances that might have led to its occurrence, as well as it allows to discovering the possible key causes that resulted in Reconstruction failure. Furthermore, it sheds light on the significance of the Civil Rights Movement and how it was formulated to achieve equality for black Americans.

## **8. Structure of the Study**

The present research is divided into two chapters . The first chapter *The American Civil War*; clearly defines the major battles of the Civil War and describes the political, economical, and social aspects that led to its blow . The second chapter *The Failure of Reconstruction Era and the Significant Role of the Civil Rights Movement*; focuses on the foremost possible reasons that might have led to the failure of Reconstruction, including political, economic, and social causes. This dissertation concludes with examining the fundamental key facts about the Civil Rights Movement

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **The American Civil War**

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## **Introduction**

The vast majority of historians indicate that the American Civil War was a worldwide event with worldwide consequences. It has been claimed that the United States experienced its worst crisis up until that point in 1861. The social, economic, and political similarities between the northern and the southern states have diminished gradually, with Northerners wishing to stop the growth of slavery and Southerners wanting to keep it, not to mention the eleven state's expulsion from the federal union as a result of Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860. The U.S. is an important illustration of how the Civil War altered nation's ties with the rest of the globe and how persuasive the message of human rights can be.

This chapter presents a prelude to the American Civil War. It focuses on the political, economic, and social aspects that might have led to its burst. Furthermore, it examines the repercussions of the war at the aforementioned levels. Finally, it looks at the restoration of the Union through the force of arms after four years of fighting.

### **1. A Prelude to the Civil War**

Since 1989, Historians debated on what to choose as a nickname for the American Civil War. Foster (2018) points out:

Abraham Lincoln and most northerners initially referred to a civil war or an insurrection but quickly adopted "Rebellion", which stressed the goal of preserving the Union and stigmatized secession. Frederick Douglass and others proposed "Abolition war" or the "Slaveholders' Rebellion", but few northerners adopted them. After Appomattox, northerners continued to use "Rebellion". White southerners protested; they preferred "Civil War", "War between the States", and other names. By the 1890s, "Civil War" had become the most name, and between 1905 and 1911, Congress made it virtually the official name (p.416).



In the same vein, the authors of *The American Battlefield* (2021) find that the American Civil War was commonly known as the War Between the States. It lasted four years (1861/1865), between the United States and the confederate states of America and a group of 11 states that had seceded from the union, and which is known now as the confederate states of America. The long-standing disagreement over the legitimacy of slavery is largely responsible for how the conflict started. The representatives of the Confederate constitutional convention chose Jefferson Davis, a former U.S. senator and secretary of war, as president of the Confederate States of America on February 9, 1861. It was the world's bloodiest and most divisive conflict as more than 620,000 people were killed, and millions more were injured, leaving the South in ruins.

## **1.2 Origins of Slavery**

Christopher Columbus and his crew traversed the seas in 1492 and made the first landfall in what was known as the "new world." The Indians who were wearing gold made him aware of the wealth of the new land. Several empires, kingdoms, and even individuals began making travel plans as soon as people learned about the new globe and its riches. Europeans were the initial immigrants who introduced African males and brought slavery to North America in the 1600s. The American civil war was brought about by a number of circumstances: all of which had slavery as their roots cause (Gunderson, n.d.).

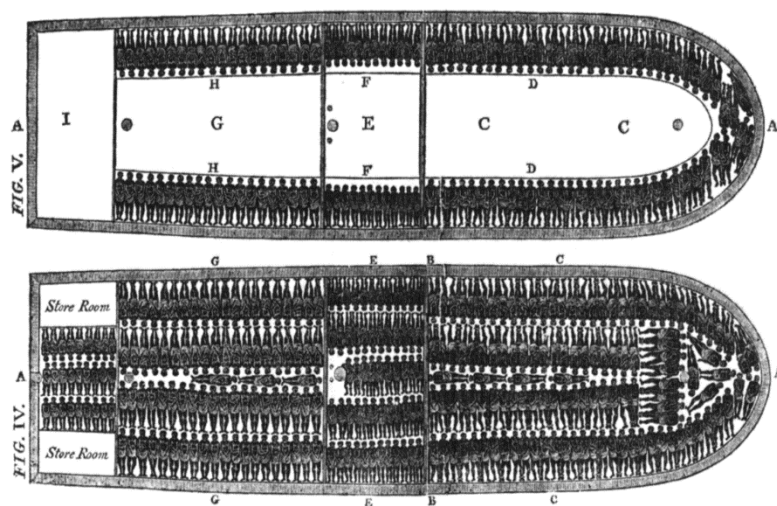
Numerous white colonists in British North America gradually forced Africans into a coercive labour system during the course of the colonial era in all of the colonies. Enslavement of Africans spread throughout the colonies and was seen as a racial, enduring, and genetic condition. Even though the institution was a part of the greater Atlantic System of trade and enslavement, it took on a distinctive and varied personality in British North America. ("U.S. Slavery: Timeline, Figures & Abolition," 2009)

Africans were forcibly transported to the New World by Europeans as part of the global slave trade. For instance, 12.5 million Africans were transported by European slave ships between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries, largely to the New World. Only 10.7 million

African slaves arrived at their destinations because of the overcrowded ships, illnesses, and poor care. Nearly 2 million people died in what the text of the Declaration of Independence later referred to as "execrable commerce". The majority of the enslaved Africans were purchased by Europeans from African slave traffickers along the western coast of the continent in exchange for firearms, alcohol, textiles, and a wide variety of other items that the African traders desired. (Background Essay: The Origins of American Slavery - Bill of Rights Institute, n.d.)

**Figure 1:**

*A diagram depicts the layout of a slave ship*



Note. Adapted from Background Essay: The Origins of American Slavery - Bill of Rights Institute, n.d.)

### 1.3 Reasons of the Civil War

One of the most contentious topics in the history of this country is how the American Civil War came to be. Some claim that the conflict was caused by the moral dilemma of slavery whereas others assert that the economics of slavery and the political control of that system were at the heart of the conflict.

#### 1.3.1 Political Reasons

The result of years of escalating inter-sectional tension over slavery was the secession of the southern states from 1860 to 1861, which included South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida,

Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina (in chronological order).

The Northwest Ordinance of 1784 raised the question of the spread of slavery into new states and territories. Congress considered the Missouri Compromise of 1820 for two years after the slave territory of Missouri applied to become a state in 1818. This was the first of a string of political agreements that came about because of disputes between forces that supported and opposed the spread of the "peculiar institution", as it was known, to the West. The Mexican-American War ended in 1848, and the United States gained over 500,000 square miles (1.3 million square kilometres) of new territory, giving the conflict a new feeling of urgency as a result. ("The Civil War," 2013)

In the 1850s, increasing number of Northerners began to believe that bondage needed to be abolished due to moral concerns or a desire to defend free labour. Limiting the spread of slavery, in the eyes of white Southerners, would doom the practice to extinction. The two sides grew more and more polarized over the course of the ten-year period, and politicians found it harder to resolve the conflict through negotiation. Seven Southern states—South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas—carried out their threat to secede when Abraham Lincoln, the candidate of the explicitly anti-slavery Republican Party, won the 1860 presidential election. These states formed the Confederate States of America. (The Civil War: The Nation Moves Towards War, 1850-61 Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress | Library of Congress, n.d.)

In 1854s, Senator Douglas introduced legislation to organize the Territory of Nebraska, promoting a transcontinental railroad that would pass through Chicago, but had to pass through a place where slavery was prohibited. Douglas proposed a compromise in order to accomplish what he wanted, allowing the inhabitants of those territories to determine whether to legalize slavery. Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts and abolitionist, criticized the

concept for establishing "a dreary region of despotism." Congress nevertheless approved it, with disastrous consequences. It undermined a long-standing political consensus on the subject of slavery in the West and reopened that area to the spread of slavery, according to Phillips. In an effort to sway the vote, pro- and anti-slavery campaigners pushed into the frontiers and engaged in a bloody struggle known as "Bleeding Kansas," which foreshadowed the Civil War. ("9 Events That Led to the Civil War," 2023)

Hopkins (1967) narrated in "Dred Scott's Case" that in Missouri, Dred Scott was a slave. He lived in the Louisiana Territory, where slavery was outlawed by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and in Illinois, a free state, between 1833 and 1843. When Scott eventually made it back to Missouri, he was sued for his freedom there, arguing that because he had lived in a free territory, he is now a free man. In 1857, Scott filed a new lawsuit in federal court after suffering a loss. No "negro" or descendant of slaves, according to Scott's master, could be a citizen in the sense of Article III of the Constitution.

On April 12, 1861, in the early hours of the morning, rebels started firing on Fort Sumter, which was located at the entrance to Charleston, South Carolina's harbour. Strangely, there were no casualties in this first battle of what would become the bloodiest war in American soldiers to the history. Maj Robert Anderson gave over his command of around 85 besieging Confederate troops led by P.G.T. Beauregard after a 34-hour bombardment. Within a few weeks, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina were the four Southern states to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy. With the ongoing of the battle, president Lincoln ordered 75,000 militiamen to serve for three months as the country was at war. (Political and Economic Causes of the American Civil War, 2022)

Although Lincoln claimed that the C.S. were not technically a sovereign nation but rather states in revolt, he declared a naval blockade on them. He also suspended the writ of habeas corpus, initially throughout the East Coast and eventually the entire nation, and ordered the

secretary of the treasury to advance \$2 million to help with army raising. A request for 100,000 soldiers for at least six-month's service had previously been approved by the Confederate administration; this number was shortly raised to 400,000. (Hillstrom, et al., 2000)

### **1.3.2 Economic Reasons**

Before the American Civil War, the country was divided into two regions: the agricultural south, where slaves were heavily needed by landowners to cultivate cotton, tobacco, and other crops, and also the industrial north, where educated people worked in factories and other institutions and lived in developed cities. (Hillstrom et al., 2000)

The industrial revolution was a crucial factor in the war's beginning as it spread to the southern states in 1793. The cotton engine, created by Eli Whitney, was a lifesaver for the planters because it made it easier to separate the fibre from the seeds in the raw cotton that was transported to England. The machine caused an increase in the demand for enslavement, which in turn increased output and exporting average. The latter supported success among the southern states as a means of preserving their affluence. (Perkins, 2009)

The disputes about the import duties where the Southerners disagreed, claiming that import duties would affect their foreign relations because they completely depend on their different raw materials and necessities and that acting import duties contributed to raising goods prices. The Northerners preferred to act import duties only to protect their growing industries and factories from the merchandise of foreign competitors. (Longman, 1990)

### **1.3.3 Social Reasons**

The Declaration of Independence is a formal document that outlines the guiding ideas of American identity and government. Giving freedom and equality to every American was one of the most crucial ideas that Thomas Jefferson highlighted. However, he had slaves of his own. George Washington and other freedom movement figures did likewise. The latter demonstrated how the law and reality are incongruent. (Longman, 1990). The drafters of the Declaration of Independence passage stated:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all man are created equal,  
that they are endowed by their creators with certain unalienable rights,  
That among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. -that  
to secure these rights, government are instituted among Men, deriving  
their just powers from the consent of the governed, - that whenever any  
form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right  
of the people to alter or to abolish it. (Declaration of Independence:  
A Transcription, 2023, para.2)

The Declaration of Independence was written to ensure that everyone has the same rights, and if Congress had wanted to limit it to only Englishmen, the phrase "rights of Englishmen" would have been left in the text. The passage eventually came to stand for a higher bar that the US ought to aim towards. Lincoln, who believed the proclamation to be the cornerstone of his political theory and contended that it should be used to interpret the US constitution, was a notable proponent of this viewpoint.

White supremacy was personalized in the idea that black skin on slaves served as a distinguishing feature between them and free white people. Moreover, black people suffered from mistreatment and severe conditions; they were treated like property, received no pay or housing, and were only given what they needed to survive. (Finkelman, 2011)

Moreover, several arbitrary laws between had been passed in 1671 and 1700 to ensure the expansion of the slaves. For instance, even if their owners were Christians, slaves in Maryland are still considered the property of their owners. The slaves who fled to New York were put to death. In Virginia, slaves who had affairs or got married to partners of a different race faced harsh penalties in addition to inheriting slavery to one generation to another and subjecting children to the same harsh life. (Hillstrom et al., 2000)

The state's rights doctrine left its mark on breaking the civil war as it was a result of the disagreement between the north and the south over import tariffs. The southerners, who were led by a politician by the name of John C. Calhoun, objected to the disagreement. According to the doctrine, individuals have the right to decide whether to obey or defy any federal law. Sen. Daniel Webster contended that the Supreme Court, not the individual states, should have the final say in any judgment. If the states were granted the power to self-determination, he continued. The government's ability to unite the states would be lost. Additionally, he asserted in his speech that the concept posed a serious threat to the unity of the states. Slaves were urged to flee their nightmares and seek freedom by fleeing to the north by the painful experiences and harsh conditions they were forced to endure. (Finkelman, 2011)

The issue of extending slavery was brought up once more due to the development westward. Congress passed a new compromise in 1850 that gave Utah and New Mexico the freedom to decide whether to maintain slavery or not. California, on the other hand, was declared to be a free state. To persuade the South to accept those methods, Congress passed The Fugitive Act, which imposes harsh penalties on anyone who helps Black people flee slavery and reclaim their freedom. (Longman, 1990)

According to McNeese (2007), the Abolitionist Movement also had a significant impact on the start of the conflict. The journalist William Lloyd Garrison demanded comprehensive racial equality as well as the immediate freedom of all slaves because of the rise in religious relevance between the years 1820 and 1830. Several religious leaders proposed to their followers that living good lifestyles and speaking out against sin would lead to salvation.

Since many people believed that slavery was the evillest activity in America, abolitionists attacked the institution with more fervour and vigour than ever before. The Liberator, a publication committed to the eradication of slavery, was founded by Garrison on January 1, 1831. He indicated "on this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, write with moderation, further, he reported, "I will not retreat a single inch and I will be heard ". Although the abolitionist movement

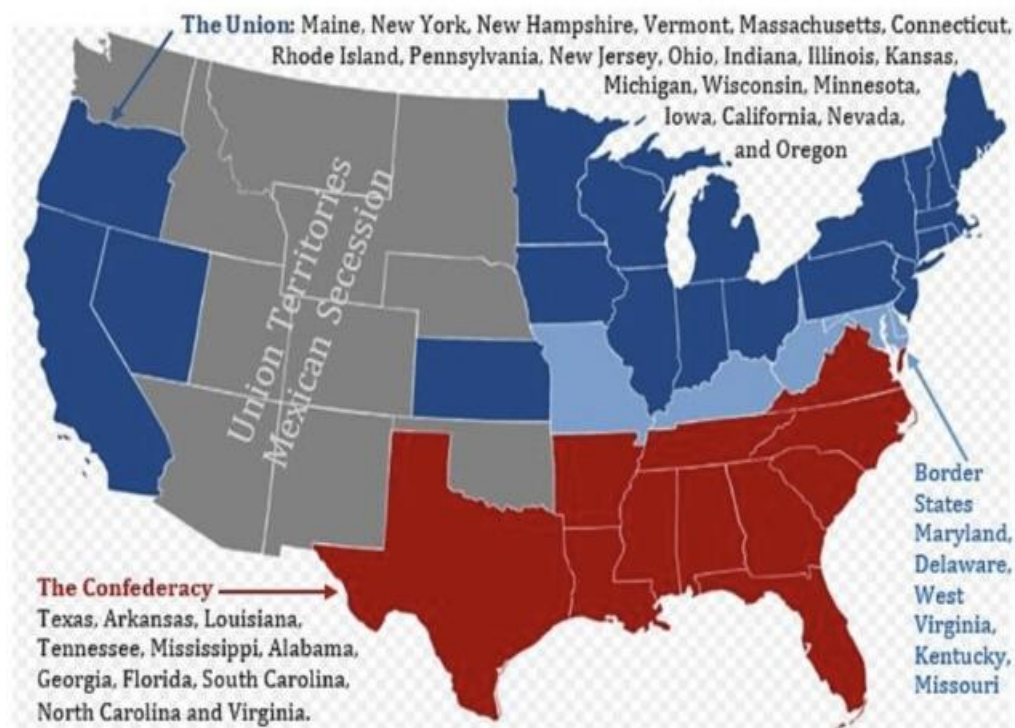
drastically altered the lives of many Americans: it encountered fierce opposition anytime its proponents attempted to convince Southerners of the importance of freedom and equality. (McNeese, 2007).

### 1.4 Civil War Major Battles

The Civil War battles were titanic clashes that claimed numerous lives and altered the trajectory of the war. They raged between the little area of territory separating the two capitals of Washington, D.C., Richmond, and Virginia as well as along the Mississippi River from South Carolina to New Mexico. It is viewed as the worst conflict in US history that stole the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans between 1861 and 1865. (Civil War Battles, n.d.)

**Figure 2**

*The territorial divisions of the Union and Confederacy during the US Civil War*



Note. Adapted from Civil War Battles, n.d.-b.



The map above depicts the southern Confederacy and the northern United States Union territorial divisions. The majority of US Civil War battles took place on the frontlines of these territorial divisions, in states like Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, with Virginia hosting the most battles of the entire Civil War. Not to be forgotten, many battles were fought along and west of the Mississippi River in states like New Mexico, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri. (Civil War Battles, n.d.-b)

Among the hundreds of hostile encounters that occurred during the American Civil War, the table below only lists eight key Civil War Battles that were preceded by "the Fort Sumter", (April 12/13, 1861) near South Carolina, it stole more than 620,000 lives and acknowledged as the first American Civil War engagement. (The Crisis at Fort Sumter in 1861 Reconsidered on JSTOR, n.d.)

**Table 1**

*The Civil War Major Battles. (Civil War Battles, n.d.)*

| Battle Name                            | Date/Location                                            | Outcome              | Casualties | Significance                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The First Battle of Manassas(Bill Run) | July 21st,1861,near Virginia.                            | Confederate Victory. | 4,500.     | After epic struggle, both sides realized that the war would not finish soon.                    |
| The Battle of Shiloh.                  | April 6th to 7th,1862,near Pittsburgh Landing,Tennessee. | Union Victory.       | 23,746.    | Ulysses S. Grant provided the Union with a route to the west by outnumbering the Southern army. |

|                                 |                                                               |                      |         |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Seven Days Battles.         | June 25th to July 1st, 1862, near Richmond, Virginia.         | Confederate Victory. | 34,000. | General Lee protected Richmond from a northern invasion during the bloodiest week of battle in the Civil War.                                                   |
| The battle of Antietam.         | September 17th, 1862, near Sharpsburg, Maryland.              | Union Victory.       | 22,717. | The first significant Confederate invasion of Union territory. Both sides experienced severe casualties during the Civil War's bloodiest single day of battle.  |
| The Battle of Chancellorsville. | April 30th to May 6th, 1863, near Chancellorsville, Virginia. | Confederate Victory. | 24,000. | Confederate officer Stonewall Jackson lost his life as a result of the conflict, despite General Lee's soldiers crushingly defeating the far larger Union army. |
| The Battle of Vicksburg.        | May to July 4th, 1863, near Vicksburg, Mississippi.           | Union Victory.       | 19,233. | As a part of the Anaconda strategy, Ulysses S. Grant made a successful effort to capture the Mississippi River at Vicksburg.                                    |
| The Battle of Gettysburg.       | July 1st to July 3rd, 1863, near                              | Union Victory.       | 51,000  | In the second and the final significant                                                                                                                         |

|  |                              |  |  |                                                                                                                                                       |
|--|------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Gettysburg,<br>Pennsylvania. |  |  | Confederate attack of the war, the Army of Northern Virginia was defeated by the Union Army of the Potomac in one of the bloodiest Civil War battles. |
|--|------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The Civil War, which ranged from 1861 to 1865, divided the country and pitted brothers against brothers as James P. Hoffa states:

This union has been divided in like a civil war brother against brother sister against sister. And I'm pulling it together. We've already seen evidence of that in New York, in Pennsylvania, in California. The first thing is we have to get on the same page. We have to be united in one cause. (Jimmy Hoffa Quotations, n.d, para.1)

During four terrible years, the United States and the Confederacy battled for survival. Hence, it resulted in featuring the bloodiest and most famous fights in American history. It has been proved that the major conflicts that shaped the U.S. as a potential nation are listed in the table above from the Battle of Gettysburg through the Siege of Fort Sumter; the U.S. has experienced more casualties than in any other military engagement. ("Battle. Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era," 1989).

### **1.5 Consequences of the Civil War**

Although liberation did not result in equality for former slaves, the American Civil War resulted in significant constitutional reforms that redefined American society and served as a starting point for the fight for equal civil and human rights. It had a variety of impacts on America's politics, society, and economics.

### **1.5.1 Political Effects**

The American Civil War created the U.S. as a unified political entity, emancipated more than four million slaves, strengthened and centralized the federal government, and laid the groundwork for the country's rise to global prominence in the 20th century.

In the first place, Lincoln suggested the seceded states to re-join the Union in September 1862 or risk having their slaves set free. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation after no state objected. The proclamation inspired the North morally and dissuaded European nations from aiding the South. Also, it made it possible for Black Americans to be enlisted in the Union army. (Collier & Hoeffler, 2007)

Another noted effect is that the Union army won the war in the end, despite a succession of early Confederate victories. Beyond its superior military, economic, and industrial capabilities, the North's victory was also partially attributed to Lincoln's statesmanship. He had developed into a powerful political and military leader by 1864. (Rust, 2022)

Furthermore, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which was ratified in 1865, formally ended slavery in the entire nation. Despite the war's devastation of the South, the Union was preserved. (Rust, 2022)

### **1.5.2 Economic Effects**

Massive destruction and damage were left by the end of the Civil War, especially in the south, in its cities and agriculture. Before the American Civil War, the south mainly used unpaid slave labour to cultivate and harvest cash crops; the majority of paper money was made up of banknotes issued by private banks; and west of the Mississippi river, roads, canals, and railroads were few. All of that drastically changed as a result of the American Civil War. Government-issued money gained popularity, wartime spending significantly expanded infrastructure and industry, and the government supported westward expansion. (Rust, 2022c)

After the American Civil War, there was a time known as the Reconstruction era. As efforts were made to address the injustices of slavery, it was a crucial period in American civil

rights history. In addition, the nation's political, social, and economic facets were addressed in order to preserve its history. (Hillstrom et al., 2000)

### **1.5.3 Social Effects**

Scholars and military historians have never stopped being astonished by the huge number of casualties sustained by both sides during the American Civil War. About 2% of American citizens in 1860 were killed in the battle. The war is still the bloodiest in American history. Moreover, a study of individual and unit records of more than 15,000 veterans found that younger troops who served in the US Civil War and those who have seen more colleagues die were more likely to have heart, stomach, and nervous disorders decades after the conflict. (Levin, 2006)

According to Sarah (2013) in *Suffering in Silence*, post-traumatic stress disorder has a substantial positive link with wartime events like seeing peers die, being the target of friendly fire, or being the target of IED explosions. It makes sense to assume that American Civil War soldiers experienced risks equivalent to those faced by modern soldiers given the devastation caused by the fight. There is a clear correlation between events of the Civil War and psychological effects; for example, new medical techniques, psychological warfare, and hand-to-hand combat may have triggered mental health issues. The data gathered from diaries and letters will support the existence of psychological problems in wartime soldiers.

In a similar view, Musisi S and Kinyanda E (2020) posit that the experiences of the American soldiers include risk factors for mental health issues like major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), generalized anxiety disorder, panic attacks, adjustment disorder, somatisations, and substance misuse. Suicide is a common act. Their diagnoses are more or less common depending on their backgrounds and experiences.

## **1.6 The Ending of the Bloodshed**

On July 3, 1863, General Lee's Confederate force suffered a crushing loss and withdrew to the south. Even though further conflicts followed, the Battle of Gettysburg was the

most significant because it changed the course of the Civil War. (Tours & Tours, 2022)

Gettysburg was not only considered a battle that was fought, but it was an address, a speech that was said by Abraham Lincoln few months later when he travelled to Gettysburg. On November 19, 1863, he dedicated:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this  
Continent a new nation dedicated to the proposition that all men  
are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war,  
testing whether that nation can long endure. We are met on a great  
battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that  
field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives,  
that that nation might live. But in a larger sense, we cannot  
dedicate, we cannot consecrate this ground. The brave men, living  
and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our  
poor power. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we  
say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the  
living to resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this  
nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that  
government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not  
perish from this earth. (Longman, 1990, p.53 )

The battle at Gettysburg was overshadowed in fame by Lincoln's speech there. It was viewed as a declaration of the causes for which the north was fighting at the time. Later on, it was viewed as a stirring demonstration of faith in the fundamentals of democratic government. The Civil War came to an end in April 1865, over 2 years after the Confederate army's initial surrender.

Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith, in charge of the Confederate forces west of the Mississippi, signed the conditions of surrender proposed by Union negotiators in a move that is widely considered as signalling the end of the Civil War. The last Confederate army was

defeated with Smith's surrender, officially ending the bloodiest four years in American history. (American Civil War Ends, 2021)

The end of the war and the nature of its aftermath were significantly influenced by surrender. Abraham Lincoln saw the Confederate surrender as a path to peace following the worst year of the war after being re-elected in November 1864. Lincoln urged his generals to give favourable conditions in the hopes that doing so would persuade Confederates to surrender. "Let them surrender and go home", Lincoln said:

They will not take up arms again. Let them all go, officers and all,  
let them have them have their horses to plow with and, if you like,  
their guns to shoot crows with ... Give them the most liberal and  
honourable of terms. (Surrender in the American Civil War, n.d, para.6)

Lincoln believed that the Confederate soldiers would be released right away and permitted to go back to their homes. In some situations, they would also receive transportation and supplies. They agreed not to be imprisoned and not to face treason charges. The most efficient and least bloody process to terminate the war would be through surrender. (Surrender in the American Civil War, n.d.)

## **Conclusion**

The background to the Civil War is still up for question, with a portion of Southern cultural memory emphasizing state rights and Northern bellicosity over the subject of slavery. In the interest of forming the Confederate States of America, eleven states seceded between 1861 and 1865, sparking the American Civil War. The election of President Abraham Lincoln in November 1860 and the start of hostilities in April 1861 served as impetuses for them to depart. The Northern states, also known as "the Union," fought this war primarily to reunite the country and free the slave-owning territories in the West. However, for the Southern Confederate nations, this was a war to defend their independence from what they saw as Northern aggression, as first proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence in 1776. As a result, Lincoln's assassination ruined victory

celebrations a few days after the Confederacy finally submitted to the Union on 9 April 1865, after four brutal and prolonged years of fighting. While the Civil War did offer the country a "new birth of freedom," as Abraham Lincoln argued, thus it left a lasting mark on Southern history and greatly influenced how the United States prospered in the subsequent centuries.

Between the Napoleonic Wars and World War I, the American Civil War constituted, the largest military battle in the Western world. More American lives were lost in it (600,000) than in WWI and II combined. Particularly wide-ranging were its social implications. Four million African Americans who had been slaves were freed as a result of the conflict. In addition, it became the first total war in modern history and brought about significant changes to the country's financial system as well as the relationship between the states and the federal government. While the fighting was over, conflict continued through the revolutionary era known as Reconstruction. That truly shows a watershed point in America's history.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The Failure of Reconstruction Era and the Significant Role of Civil Right Movements**

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## **Introduction**

In the years immediately following the Civil War, from 1865 to 1877, numerous US administrations worked to rebuild society, especially in the former Confederate States, by creating and defending the legal rights of the newly liberated black people. In simple words, it was a time of great hope for African Americans who had just been freed from slavery. This period is referred to as Reconstruction. Since the former CS did not recover economically from the destruction of the war and the Black population was consigned to a second-class existence with restricted rights enforced via violence and discrimination, historians believed that Reconstruction could be viewed only as a complete failure.

This chapter points out the origins of Reconstruction era and how it is known as. In addition, it answers the questions why and what are the main reasons behind the emergence of Reconstruction. Furthermore, it debates the most impactful political, economic and social factors that led the Reconstruction to fail. Moreover, it states the major events and precious facts about the Civil Rights Movement.

### **1. A Preface to the Era of Reconstruction**

The time following the American Civil War, was defined as Reconstruction (1865–1877), is arguably the most contentious in American history. This period was distinguished by the President Abraham Lincoln's announcement the Ten Percent Plan, which was the first comprehensive Reconstruction program. Reconstruction, historically demonstrated by historians as a despicable period when vengeful Radical Republicans imposed black dominance on the victorious South, has recently gained favor as a respectable example of interracial democracy. However, the entire country, particularly the South, was compelled to confront the legacies of slavery and the effects of emancipation during this period. (Reconstruction (U.S. National Park Service), n.d.)

According to Smith (2013), Dunning taught his students that " the Civil War had been a tragic misunderstanding and that Reconstruction had been a scurrilous punishment foisted upon helpless white Southerners by arrogant Yankees who exploited African Americans by giving them the citizenship rights" (p.2) .

On December 8, 1863, the President Abraham Lincoln reported his inaugural address on Reconstruction. In Lincoln's words:

By these recent successes the re-inauguration of the national authority -- reconstruction which has had a large share of thought from the first, is pressed much more closely upon our attention. It is fraught with great difficulty. Unlike the case of a war between independent nations, there is no authorized organ for us to treat with. No one man has authority to give up the rebellion for any other man. We simply must begin with, and mould from, disorganized and discordant elements. Nor is it a small additional embarrassment that we, the loyal people, differ among ourselves as to the mode, manner, and means of Reconstruction. (Speech on Reconstruction by Abraham Lincoln, n.d.para2)

Reconstruction was commonly perceived for much of this century as a time of corruption and bad governance, purportedly brought on by allowing black people to participate in politics. This view aided in the justification of the South's continued practice of racial segregation and the exclusion of black people from voting into the 1960s. History is now much more favorably viewed as a period of true development for former slaves and the South as a whole during Reconstruction as a consequence of vast new research and significant changes in American race relations. It marked a period of profound social, economic, and political transformation for all Americans. The thorny issue of racial justice was left to future generations when Reconstruction was overthrown. (America's Reconstruction: People and Politics after the Civil War, n.d.)

## **2. Reasons Led to the Occurrence of Reconstruction Era**

During the Civil War, a national discussion about Reconstruction emerged. Less than a year after issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln unveiled the TP Plan, the first comprehensive Reconstruction scheme. This offered a pardon to all Southerners who took an oath affirming loyalty to the Union and support for emancipation, with the exception of Confederate leaders. A state might create a new state government once 10% of the voters there had taken such an oath. Lincoln perceived the strategy as more of an effort to undermine the Confederacy than a map for the postwar South. (Adams, 1933)

In addition, after Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865, Andrew Johnson was elected president. He began the term of Presidential Rebuilding in May (1865-1867). With the exception of wealthy plantation owners and Confederate officials (although the majority of these later won individual pardons), Johnson granted a pardon to all Southern whites, restoring their political rights and their property aside from slaves. He also described the formation of new state governments. These governments, chosen exclusively by white people, were given complete autonomy in running their affairs, with the exception of the requirements that they abolish slavery, reject secession, and cancel the Confederate debt which received widespread popular support or received congressional recognition. (U.S. National Park Service), n.d.)

Furthermore, the Republican Congress declared that laws and constitutional amendments were implemented after rejecting President Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction plan, enabling the federal government to uphold the principle of equal rights and granting black Southerners the ability to vote and occupy public office. The Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacists violently opposed the new Southern governments. Reconstruction came to an end, the North gave up its promise to defend the rights of the freed slaves, and white supremacy was eventually returned throughout the South. (America's Reconstruction: People and Politics after the Civil War, n.d.-b).

### **3. The Reasons behind the Failure of Reconstruction Era**

There are vital factors that led Reconstruction period to fail. According to the beliefs of Byman (2021), Reconstruction in the U.S. failed because those who rejected it, mostly white Southerners, used violence to erode Black political power and persuade other white Southerners to join them. Despite the fact that structural issues made it more difficult to control this violence, a number of policy missteps turned out to be the most significant. The U.S. government, which was dominated by the RR, did not send out enough troops or use them aggressively. Moreover, it did not seek other options that may have increased the likelihood of success, as arming the Black community. Since Reconstruction was unsuccessful due to the bloodshed, the triumphant white nationalists incorporated structural racism into the post-Reconstruction political and social structure in the South.

The failure of Reconstruction serves as a warning against using a half-measure. With little expenditure of time or troops, the United States aimed to transform the American South. The failure also highlights the significance of making sure that democratization encompasses the rule of law, not just elections. The most significant lesson from Reconstruction is that it is frequently risky to reach an agreement with the losers of a civil war, with the price of peace after centuries of injustice. (Byman, 2021b)

#### **3.1 Political Factors**

President Andrew Johnson was naturally conceited and was seen as politically weak in comparison to the late Abraham Lincoln, one of the best rhetoricians of the 19th century. In addition to allowing the withdrawal of Union forces from the South before ensuring that African Americans were included on the voting rolls of their individual state legislatures, Lincoln used the legislative recess to provide unquestioning pardons to former Confederate officers and secessionists. This effectively rendered the 13th Amendment's abolition of slavery as a theoretical concept and opened the path for the adoption of "Black Codes". Grant's presidency was also

dogged by corruption rumors, and he did little to quell them by getting involved in the Whiskey Ring controversy to defend an accused old friend, Orville Babcock. (MyTutor, n.d.)

Following Andrew Johnson's recognition of the Civil War governments, the southern states implemented what are known as "Black Codes," which openly distinguished between Blacks and Whites. African American's circumstances were demoralizing and degrading, leaving them much better off than they would have been under the system of slavery. The doctrine of State's Rights was supported, according to the Slaughterhouse decision of 1873, and the federal government could only step in when individual constitutional rights were in risk. As a result, despite establishing laws like with the 14th Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1863, Congress's efforts to advance the civil rights of Black Americans were only partially successful. The Freedman's Bureau, which made significant contributions to enhancing African American's access to education and housing in the years following the Civil War, was severely understaffed and further harmed by the white supremacist Klan violence against white people. ("Florida Black Codes," 1969)

White backlash, or the "resentment" at the speed of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, continues to influence policy today. A unified federal government was required to support the newly formed radical reconstruction governments. Reconstruction was seen as an assault on the white power structure in the South by a White Backlash Movement attributed to the disagreements that existed between the presidency and Congress. Resentment at the disenfranchisement of former Confederate officials sparked a Democrat rebirth, which was supported by the paramilitary activities of White "secret societies" like the Red Shirts and the KKK. (Brown Chau, 2020)



### **3.2 Economic Factors**

Plantation owners and local farmers in the South experienced growing financial difficulties throughout the Reconstruction Era as the United States made attempts to recover economically. The labor infrastructure necessary for running vast plantations effectively was in disarray. The loss of investments in Confederate securities, disputes over labor contracts, and the shift to cotton as a cash crop were all factors in the economic collapse of the Southern states. (What Factors Lead to the Failure of Reconstruction? 2023)

Increasingly farmers were compelled to buy things on credit or put crops up as collateral because they were desperate for money from cotton crops and goods supplied by Northern merchants. Several white and African-American farmers fell into acute poverty as a result of high borrowing rates and a number of severe crop failures in the territory. (What Factors Lead to the Failure of Reconstruction? 2023)

In particular, Southern whites, who were devoted to keeping blacks in a submissive position, reacted brutally to the endeavor to reshape the South. An unfair sharecropping system spread throughout the South in order to keep blacks from advancing economically and to preserve cheap labor for the agricultural sector.

### **3.3 Social Factors**

Black men and women were outside the bounds of what antebellum southern whites regarded as proper gender norms and familial hierarchy because to their degraded status. Marriages between slaves were not legally recognized. Enslaved men were disgraced, stripped of their power, and unable to defend enslaved women, who were routinely subjected to the violence and sexual exploitation of both white masters and vigilantes. Slave parents were unable to defend their kids since they might be purchased, sold, forced into labor, subjected to harsh punishment, and mistreated without their permission. Parents could also be sold away from their infants. In addition, when it came to slaves, the idealized division of labor that existed in white southern society—where men worked the land and women took care of the home—was null and meaningless. Slaves

were forced to work in the fields, both genders. (“State of Rebellion: Reconstruction in South Carolina,” 1997)

African Americans welcomed the right to gender norms and familial ties during the Reconstruction era, which they had been routinely denied. Thousands of freed black males who had been divided from their families when they were slaves hit the road to reunite with them and strengthen their relationships. In one incident, a journalist claimed to have spoken with a liberated slave who had walked more than 600 kilometers in search of the family that had been stolen from him while he was in servitude. As soon as this option became available, couples who had avoided divorce eagerly set out to legally bind their unions, frequently through the Freedmen's Bureau. In order to be a part of the wider black society, those who had no family occasionally moved to southern towns and cities where churches and other mutual aid institutions offered support and company. (Lumen Learning, n.d.-c)

In summary, Reconstruction failure attempts can be linked to opposition from proponents of the Old South, economic difficulties, inadequate law enforcement, and decreasing interest on the side of Northern reconstruction backers. Each of these factors did its part to undermine the nation's faith in Reconstruction efforts and the idealistic support of resources used up during this time. When Reconstruction's failure was finally acknowledged in 1877, the period as a whole came to an end, leaving troubles with racial inequity for future generations to address. (Foner, 1987)

#### **4. Prelude to Civil Rights Movement**

The term "modern civil rights movements" refers to the black movement that began in the south in the 1950s, when large numbers of black people actively participated in economic boycotts, street protests, large-scale gatherings, thousands of arrests, and a variety of disruptive actions known as nonviolent direct action. Confrontation is the term that best captures the mood of this era. (Morris, 1984)

The present civil rights movement diverged from earlier protest customs in at least two significant ways. One, it was the first time that sizable numbers of black people challenged and successfully disrupted the operations of organizations and groups believed to be behind their oppression. These large-scale conflicts, which were sustained over a long period of time in the face of severe repression, are what define the modern civil rights movement. Two, this was the first instance in American history where blacks used peaceful methods on a large scale to effect social change. These factors make the contemporary civil rights movement a subject that must be discussed on its own terms. (The Civil Rights Movement: An Introduction (Article) | Khan Academy, n.d.)

## **5. Reasons of Civil Rights Movement**

Morris (1984) argues that by 1950, whites in the South had put in place a thorough system of dominance over blacks. This dominance structure created great hardship for black people while defending the privileges of white society. Blacks were under economic, political, and personal domination in the southern cities and countryside. A "tripartite system of domination" was created by combining those three dimensions.

### **5.1. Economic Reasons**

This Economic despotism resulted from black people being overrepresented in the cities' lowest-paying and dirtiest jobs. In a typical southern city in 1950, at least 75% of black men who were employed held unskilled jobs. Common labourers, janitors, porters, cooks, and machine operators were among them. Only about 25% of white males, in contrast, held these low-paying positions. Domestic work accounted for almost 50% of black women's employment in the typical southern metropolitan. Compared to 20% of black women, less than 10% of white women worked in low-paying service positions. In 1950, there was a 54% national income disparity between white and non-white families was brought on by workplace social inequalities. (Morris1, 1986)

According to Robin D.G. Kelley, a history professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, "legalized segregation was an economic system," therefore the civil rights movement was also a labour and economic movement. It set the wages, classified the jobs, and decided where people could live. Even where one could attend school was decided by this movement. The civil rights movement was about more than just changing racial views; it was also about expanding workers' rights and gaining access to prosperous jobs and institutions of commerce. (Ryssdal, 2023)

Whites held the positions that called for white shirts and ties: who would be promoted, fired, and required to put in the most effort was selected by Whites. However, blacks hold inferior positions with lower pay and fewer benefits. Moreover, Black women's mothers, spouses, and sisters cleaned white women's homes and made their meals. (Weller, 2019)

## **5.2. Political Reasons**

By virtue of black's systematic exclusion from politics at this time, black urban communities in the South experienced political oppression. As a result of policies, such as the poll tax, which began in the 1890s as a legal way to keep African Americans from voting in southern states, poll taxes were essentially a voting fee, all-white primaries, the grandfather clause, intimidation, and violence against black people, there were typically no black representatives in city and state governments. Typically, white police forces kept the black community low and order. In addition, black people were oppressed by law enforcement, when white judges and jurors ruling in favour of white people. Hence, their power structure allocated public resources, disproportionately affecting blacks. (Morris, 1984)

## **5.3. Social Reasons**

The segregationist system, which denied blacks everyday personal liberties enjoyed by whites, exacerbated the economic and political tyranny. Black people were separated from the general population and treated as an inferior race thanks to segregation. Blacks had to use special

restrooms, drinking fountains, waiting areas, parks, schools, and other facilities. These segregated facilities, which stood in stark contrast to the well-maintained amenities intended for whites only, served as a constant reminder to black people of their inferior status. The coloured and whites only signs that were strewn around in a typical southern city's buildings and public spaces revealed the reality of a social structure dedicated to black people's subordination and rejection of their human dignity and self- respect. All this goes under the umbrella of White Supremacy. (American Experience, PBS, 2019)

Separation was only one aspect of segregation. It significantly influenced how different races behaved. Blacks were required to adopt formal titles and a respectful tone of voice while speaking to white people. Black men and white women intercourse was considered the gravest offense against the segregationist society. Therefore, it was advised for black men to look down when they pass by a white woman so that she would not have an excuse to accuse him of rape and have his life taken. Segregation was a sort of personal oppression that drastically limited a person's ability to move around, make decisions about their conduct, and have experiences. (Morris, 1984)

Southern governments supported the triple system of racial dominance, economic exploitation, political tyranny, and personal exploitation, benefiting whites in lower and intermediate income brackets, as well as the southern white ruling class. Moreover, blacks had to live in slum areas due to low wages and segregation, with lower quality education and lower life expectancy due to unsanitary living conditions. (McFayden, 2013)

lucks (2014) used Langston Hughes's words as an introduction in which he describes the bitter reality of the black community:

Mister backlash mister backlash Just who do you think I am You raise my  
taxes, freeze my wages, send my son to Vietnam You give me second  
class house, second class schools, do you think that coloured folks Are just  
second class fools?

## **6. The Background of Civil Rights Movement**

### **6.1. The churches**

The institutional hub of the modern civil rights movement served as the black church. Churches gave the movement an organized mass base, clergymen who were adept at managing people and resources and were economically independent of the larger white society, an institutionalized financial base through which protests were funded, gathering spots where the masses discussed their tactics and pledged their collective allegiance to the struggle. (Sunnemark, 2003)

With a rich tradition of hymns, testimonials, oratory, and prayers that spoke directly to the concerns of an oppressed group, the black Church provided the civil rights movement with a collective zeal. Numerous black churches spread the message that oppression is wrong and that god supports social injustice protests. The church also provided the civil rights movement with continuity by tracing its roots back to the long-standing religious practices of black people. The black church, a native institution owned and run by black people, also played a somewhat independent role in the movement. The Baptist martin Luther king Jr ensured the significance of the church in his speech "the church on the frontier of racial tension" in which he challenged the audience to realize that the church is and must be the central institution of the struggle. (Sunnemark, 2003)

### **6.2. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)**

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was established in 1942 by the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation to address civil rights issues. In 1942, the group held America's first organized sit-in in Chicago. Originally based in the North, CORE expanded its reach in 1961 by sending racially mixed groups of passengers on Freedom Ride. Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney, three of its members, were killed in Mississippi while registering voters in 1964's Freedom Summer. David Dennis, the state director of CORE in Mississippi,

remarked during Chaney's funeral, "He's got his freedom, and we're still fighting for ours". (American Experience, PBS, 2018)

### **6.3. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).**

The most well-known and lauded of the black Civil Rights groups of the 1960s was the SCLC, or Southern Christian Leadership Conferences. Following the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, it was established in 1957 in Atlanta, Georgia, under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. African American's civil rights were peacefully advanced through a number of protests and initiatives that the SCLC assisted in coordinating. (Civil Rights Organizations, n.d.)

### **6.4. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**

Black and white college students founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. (SNCC). In addition to opposing American involvement in the Vietnam War and funding the Mississippi Project, which helped African Americans register to vote, the SNCC also enlisted young people to take part in desegregation efforts. The group had a significant role in planning sit-ins. (REED, 2019)

### **6.5. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP)**

In contrast to the church, the NAACP was founded specially to advocate for the rights of African Americans. A group of black and white intellectuals fiercely opposed the prejudice that the black community faced created it in 1909 and 1910. With its main office in New York City. The organization used persuasion and legal action to achieve equality for blacks, arguing that white people's ignorance of black people was a major cause of racism. The founders worked to transform the public's perception of black people through speeches, pamphlets, lobbying, and Crisis. The latter founded by W.E. B. Du Bois, was based on the idea that white Americans would treat black people equally. The NAACP began taking legal action against racial discrimination and segregation, winning notable victories such as invalidating the grandfather clause and launching

the all-white primary. It also influenced Supreme Court rulings forcing blacks to white universities. Furthermore, its legal victories and educational influencer tactics led to its expansion into cities outside the north. (Morris, 1984)

## **7. The Events of Civil Rights Movement**

One of the key movements that started social change during the civil rights era was the boycott of the Montgomery buses (Luther king, jr, 2010). The height of the civil rights movement and the ongoing fight for social and racial justice for African Americans in the United States occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. Although slavery was abolished during the Civil War, discrimination continued. African Americans organized and started a historic journey for equality with assistance from many white co-workers. The main boycotts, movements, and marches during the civil rights movement that contributed to societal change are listed in the subsequent section.

### **7.1. 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycotts**

This boycott came about as a result of Rosa Parks' imprisonment in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white male passenger. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. advocated a citywide boycott against racial segregation on the public transit system the following day, on December 1, 1955. African Americans stopped using the system and began to travel by foot or by taxi. The boycott lasted for 381 days and was extremely successful. The regulations enacted to maintain bus segregation were declared illegal in June 1956 by a federal court, and the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately agreed.

### **7.2. 1961 Alabama Movement**

This campaign opposed Albany, Georgia's segregation laws. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), local activists, and King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) were among the organizations that participated in the Albany campaign. King's intention was to provide advice rather than take part in the rally, but he was arrested and handed a sentence of 45



days in jail or a fine. He went to jail in order to promote change, but was let out three days later. The movement eventually disintegrated after nearly a year of protests without succeeding in its objectives, although certain concessions were given to the coalition. (Bond-Nelms, 2022)

### **7.3. 1963 Birmingham Campaign**

The Birmingham campaign aimed to eradicate economic discrimination against African American citizens in the Alabaman metropolis. When addressing racial concerns, they encountered severe financial discrepancies and violent retaliation. A boycott of certain companies that exclusively employed white people or kept segregated facilities was part of the movement. The aim of the protesters' peaceful actions, such as marches and sit-ins, was to garner enough arrests to fill the local jail. Police attacked protesters with dogs and high-pressure water hoses. The campaign was effective when segregation-related signage was taken down from Birmingham establishments and all races were able to enter public spaces. (Jackson, 2000)

### **7.4. 1963 March on Washington**

The size of this political protest for human rights in the US was unprecedented. On August 28, 1963, between 200,000 to 300,000 people gathered in Washington, D.C., on the Mall to demonstrate for African Americans' right to freedom and employment. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech on the Lincoln Memorial steps. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is attributed with being made possible by the March on Washington. ("March on Washington - Date, Facts & Significance," 2009):

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. five scores years ago a great American in whose symbolic shadow we stand today signed the emancipation proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. (Korea, 2023b)

King addresses the audience in the speech's opening lines, and the two main themes of justice and freedom are introduced through a number of analogies, references, and repetitions. He discusses the "Constitution and the Declaration of Independence" and what the "architects of our republic" were thinking when they were writing. As part of their pledge, they stated that "all men" would be "guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness". It's interesting to note the part of this phrase where King pauses and confirms, "all men, yes, black men as well as white men," before anyone gets a chance to doubt him. These political agreements guaranteed equal rights to men of all races (Baldwin, 2022).

In the third paragraph of the speech's introduction, King discusses redressing the economic injustices experienced by African Americans since emancipation:

In a sense, we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check.  
When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent  
Words of the constitutions and the declaration of independence,  
they were signing a promissory note to which every American  
was to fall heir...instead of honoring this sacred obligation,  
America has given the negro people a bad check, a check which  
has come back marked "insufficient funds". But we refuse to  
believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. (Korea, 2023b)

In the excerpt above, King argues that the economic structure that America had developed into had completely forgotten about African Americans and the poor. (Silver, 2022)

In another excerpt from "I have a dream" speech, King kept emphasizing on the idea that holding dignity and the right deeds are the only path to seek justice:

But there is something that I must say to my people who  
stand on the worn threshold which leads into the palace  
of justice. in the process of gaining our rightful place  
we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. (Korea, 2023b)

The speaker then tells his "people," those who were listening, to continue seeking justice while staying on the right course. It is crucial that they "conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline" rather than "drinking...from the cup of bitterness and hatred." These lovely remarks highlight the fact that many share King's aspirations for a new world of freedom for all people, black and white. Given how challenging this battle will be, it is critical that "We cannot walk alone". (I Have a Dream Speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. Plot Summary LitCharts, n.d.)

Moreover, King poses a query, to which he responds. When will they feel content? They will not be content, he concludes, as long as "the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality" and "we can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities." He adds a few additional sentences that outline the objectives of both his speech and the Civil Rights movement as a whole when he said, "The sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood ". He imagines that these issues will not be a concern in the more promising future as he stated, "I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi state sweltering with the heat of injustice sweltering with the heat of oppression will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. (I Have a Dream Speech Summary and Study Guide | SuperSummary, n.d.)

The speech's most well-known passage, "I have a dream," is repeated several times in the following part. King emphasizes that he has a "dream" about a different future in which his children "will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character" and "little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers." The difficulties of the present are contrasted with these pictures of hope. For instance, consider this portrayal of Alabama's governor and other state officials: "with its savage bigots, with its Governor with his lips glistening with the words of interposition and nullification ". (Baldwin, 2022)

In the final lines of the speech, King says that today is the day when “all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning” they sing the lines of the national anthem. He repeats “Let freedom ring” in reference to various places around the country, uniting those listening in a common goal and reminding the audience of his desire to have all of God’s children stand and “join hands and sing.” The final line comes from “the old Negro spiritual” that encompasses the passion of the Civil Rights movement: “Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last. (I Have a Dream Speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. Plot Summary | LitCharts, n.d.)

### **7.5. 1965 Bloody Sunday**

Due to the brutal beatings state troopers inflicted on protestors as they sought to march peacefully from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital, Montgomery, this march became known as Bloody Sunday. The march was organized to protest African Americans' lack of voting rights. On March 7, 1965, John Lewis, then-chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Rev. Hosea Williams of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference planned to lead 600 protestors from Selma on U.S. Highway 80 to the state capital. The march came to an abrupt halt due to police violence against demonstrators. Public outrage and sympathy for the civil rights movement were increased as a result of footage of the brutality being broadcast across the country. (Bond-Nelms, 2022)

### **7.6. 1965 Chicago Freedom Movement**

The Chicago Freedom Movement was formed to protest segregated housing, educational deficiencies, and employment and health disparities based on racism. It included rallies, marches, and boycotts to address the issues facing black Chicago residents. It was credited with inspiring the Fair Housing Act in 1969. (Luther king, jr, 2010b)

### 7.7. 1967 Vietnam War Opposition

King denounced U.S. involvement in Vietnam in his "Beyond Vietnam" speech in 1967, calling for a stop to bombing and a unilateral truce. He was assassinated one year later. In addition, King strongly opposed the U.S. involvement in the conflict, saying that it was there "to occupy it as an American colony" and referring to it as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today". He argues that the nation needs a significant moral transformation by linking the war to economic injustice:

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. with righteous indignation it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the west investing huge sums of money in Asia Africa and south America only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries and say "this is not just".

(Rhetorical Analysis of Milk's Speech "Beyond Vietnam", Teen Ink, n, d).

King opposed the Vietnam War because it consumed resources and funds that could have gone toward domestic social welfare. The American Congress was simultaneously increasing its military spending and decreasing its funding for anti-poverty initiatives. He succinctly put it this way: "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defence than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death." He said that North Vietnam "did not begin to send in any large number of supplies or men until American forces had arrived in the tens of thousands" and that the United States was responsible for a million Vietnamese deaths, "mostly children." King condemned American opposition to land reforms in North Vietnam as well (Rhetorical Analysis of Milk's Speech "Beyond Vietnam", Teen Ink, n, d).

## **8. Effects of Civil Rights Movement**

The civil rights movement had a profound impact on the American society on all the components of system, the economic, the political and the social dimensions.

### **8.1. Economic Effects**

By addressing, the economic disparities that had long followed racial discrimination and exclusion, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and President Johnson's War on Poverty added to these civil rights milestones. Moreover, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was established in 1966 as a result of the Civil Rights Act's Title VII, which outlawed employment discrimination based on sex as well as on race, colour, religion, and national origins. This legislation sparked a surge in the women's movement. (The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom | Exhibitions - Library of Congress, n.d.)

Morris (1984) claims that the Civil Rights Movement was unable to change one of the components of the tripartite system of domination and economic exploitation which still severely limits the rights won by the movement. Before the movement, southern blacks fared worse economically than other sections of the country. Following the peak years of the movement the median family income of southern blacks began slowly rising but it is clear that southern blacks are severely dominated economically. As of 1979 the national median family income for blacks was only 56 percent of that for whites meaning there are no difference between the types of oppression, blacks endure in the south and in the rest of the nation.

An SCLC paper was created before the 1968 Poor People's March on Washington published:

We fought hard those years, some of us died, all of us were psychologically and spiritually resurrected. And, as a result, we are now more sophisticated; of necessity, we have recreated our vision, placed it in its proper perspective. We can now see ourselves as the powerless poor trapped within an economically oriented power structure. Our

insight into the structure of American society teaches us that the right to vote or to eat in any restaurant While important, does not penetrate the "power plant" and therefore does not actually effect conditions of living. We have learned that fruitful existence in America requires money, for the society offers no degree of mobility, creativity, or power to those without it. (Morris, 1984)

By the middle of 1960, everyone involved in the movement understood that neither the southern civil rights movement nor the late 1960 urban disturbances in the north had been successful in improving the economic circumstances of American blacks as this passage revealed this awareness. (Morris, 1984)

## **8.2. Political Effects**

Prior to the movement, the majority of black people in the South lacked political rights and had no chance to elect black authorities. Atlanta and Birmingham now have black mayors who have served for 20 years. The majority of black people in the South are eligible to vote and have elected a sizable number of black officials to public office. For example: In 1982, there were 5160 black elected officials in the US, with the south accounting for 61% of that total. However, this was only 1.1 percent of the elected officials, while blacks made up 12 percent of the population. (Morris, 1984)

Despite this, there have been some notable advancement, and the movement, with its citizenship schools, freedom houses, and political confrontations like Selma in 1965, was largely responsible for the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the political enfranchisement of blacks. If these societal and political shifts are long-lasting, only time will tell. (Morris, 1984)

## **8.3. Social Effects**

The civil rights movement had tragic implications for two of its leaders in the late 1960. On February 21, 1965, former nation of Islam Leader and Organization of Afro - American

unity founder Malcolm X was slain at demonstration. In addition to Martin Luther King, a civil rights activist and recipient of the Nobel Peace prize, was killed on the balcony of his hotel room in April 1968. Following emotionally charged looting and riots, Johnson administration was under even more pressure to pass more racial rights legislation. (“Civil Rights Movement: Timeline, Key Events & Leaders,” 2009)

Jim Crow laws were finally abolished thanks to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Equal access to eateries, transportation, and other public amenities was ensured for African Americans. It made it possible for women, people of colour, and other minorities to overcome obstacles in the workplace. In addition, many African Americans from the South and the North started attending integrated schools after the act's implementation, it also made access to equal education a reality. (The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom | Exhibitions - Library of Congress, n.d.)

For many other American organizations seeking access and equality, the civil rights movement and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 served as models and sources of inspiration. Prior to the civil rights movement, a number of other American groups, including American Indian women farm workers and college students experienced exclusion from one or more of the major institutions of authority and decision making in the American society who tried to modify their positions through conventional means. The civil rights movement gave these marginalized groups practical organizational and tactical models to use in their resistance to injustice. For instance, the farm workers' movement the student movement and modern women's movement. (Morris, 1984)

Activists have persuaded Congress to safeguard groups including elderly Americans, individuals with disabilities, and pregnant women so that they can fully participate in both public and private life, inspired by the exceptional success of the 1964 legislation. (The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom | Exhibitions - Library of Congress, n.d.)



**Conclusion:**

The Reconstruction Era spanned the years 1865–1877, following the end of the Civil War. It is widely agreed on the view that Reconstruction was seen as an era of a great hope; in which it mainly focused on guaranteeing former slave's rights, reestablish full political involvement for the southern states in the Union, and establish new connections between African Americans and whites. The era discussed the power struggle between President Andrew Johnson and Congress, which included the vote on the president's impeachment. The Reconstruction period described Presidents Lincoln and Johnson's plans to readmit the Confederate states to the Union as well as the more restrictive Congressional plan.

The twelve years that followed the Civil War had a significant impact on the development of the country. Even while Reconstruction defined the federal government's role in promoting racial equality and helped lay the groundwork for future race relations, African Americans continued to be treated as second-class citizens, and women continued to face barriers to full participation in American public life. In order to achieve geographical expansion and economic prosperity, if not the full enjoyment of people's rights, North and South were brought together toward the end of Reconstruction. A new nation emerged from the ruins of civil war, a nation endowed with new opportunities but plagued by long-standing issues (as the KKK Act, Black Codes), these acts led to the awakening of the black community. African Americans made an effort to regain their social, political, and economic equality through demonstrations and conflicts, which were pictured in Montgomery Bus Boycott, Birmingham Campaign, and March on Washington. Those huge demonstrations left their mark on the movement's achievement of its desired aims, i.e. The Voting Rights Act and The Civil Rights Act in 1964, and served as a powerful example for other oppressed minorities in American culture.

## **General Conclusion**

The general consensus is that White Supremacy has remained a mark on American history that has been challenging to eradicate. Prior to the American Civil War, which was the most traumatic event that has affected a whole generation of Americans, racism and the latter had been widespread attitudes in both the North and the South.

Following the four years of bloodshed, the Reconstruction era began, and during the aforementioned period, leaders began pondering how to rebuild the country. For African Americans who had recently been released free from slavery, this era was viewed as one of immense a sense of hope. However, in a short time, it turned out that Reconstruction was an epoch of travails as the Civil War era case.

Reconstruction was marked by significant political and social changes. Although the three amendments were passed, they were insufficient to completely remove many white American's deeply ingrained racism and White Supremacist views. African Americans continued to experience violence and discrimination as a result of Reconstruction's failure to achieve its objectives, and the successes they gained over time were gradually lost.

Further dissertation is needed to determine the main reasons that led to the failure of Reconstruction. As it was heading toward the combination of White intimidation, the South experienced an extensive financial crisis, and the Democratic Party gained control over the House of Representatives in 1874.

Our study aimed to emphasize that White Supremacy was one of the key causes that deemed the Reconstruction to fail after the American Civil War. In order to conduct this research, we adopted the historical-analytical method based on qualitative research. The study helped us to learn about the key events and figures of the turbulent period's failure.

Both before and after the Civil War, white supremacy was the dominant ideology in the US, and it persisted for many years following the Reconstruction era. Many affluent White-

European Americans owned slaves before the American Civil War, and they attempted to defend their economic exploitation of black people by developing a scientific thesis of white supremacy and black inferiority. White supremacy has a lengthy and complicated history, according to popular belief. Furthermore, it continues to influence racially prejudiced thinking in every aspect of human experience even though the underlying concepts are no longer considered acceptable by society. Its legacy is widely spread now, which is a reflection of how strongly it influenced earlier times in history. Therefore, further researchers within this respect, should consider the continuity of white supremacy in US communities.

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## المخلص

تمثل الحروب تلك الأوقات التي تدخل فيها الدول والأمم في عداء عنيف لتليها بعد ذلك فترة إعادة البناء والإعمار التي ينصب فيها اهتمام القادة والرؤساء حول كيفية إعادة بناء البلاد وإعمارها. إلا أنّ مجموعة من الظروف والأسباب قد تحول دون بلوغ ذلك. تحاول هذه الدراسة البحث في الأسباب الكامنة وراء ظهور فترة إعادة الإعمار في الولايات المتحدة، وكذلك العوامل التي أدت إلى فشلها وانهيارها بعد الحرب الأهلية. يبرز فشل سياسة إعادة الإعمار الأخطار المترتبة عن اعتماد حلول مؤقتة. فشل الولايات المتحدة في إعادة إعمار الجنوب الأمريكي وإحداث تغييرات فيه يعزى إلى أنها لم تخصص لذلك ما يكفي من الوقت ولم تجند له ما يكفي القوات. يحيل أيضا فشل سياسة إعادة الإعمار على أهمية الديمقراطية حيث إنه لا يمكن اختزالها فقط في مجرد عملية انتخابية، وإنما هي عملية تنطوي على فرض القانون وسيادته. وأهم ما يمكن أن تحيل عليه سياسة الإعمار هو صعوبة التوصل إلى اتفاق مع الخاسرين في الحرب بشأن السياسات التي تحكم الدولة ذلك أنّ ضريبة السلام كانت قرونا من الظلم والاضطهاد. حاولت هذه الدراسة البحث في الدور المهم للعرق الأبيض في المجتمع الأمريكي، ومدى تأثيره في فشل سياسة إعادة الإعمار بعد الحرب الأهلية من خلال الاعتماد على المنهج التاريخي الوصفي التحليلي للتحقق. ركزت عملية التحليل على البحث في الفترة العصيبة التي مر بها المجتمع الأمريكي بعد نهاية الحرب الأهلية. خلصت الدراسة إلى أنّ هيمنة العرق الأبيض وتفوقه، إلى جانب القضايا الأخرى ذات الصلة، شكلت إحدى الأسباب الرئيسية لاعتماد سياسة إعادة الإعمار. علاوة على ذلك، وبسبب عوامل سياسية واقتصادية واجتماعية، كان ينظر لإعادة الإعمار ولا يزال يُنظر إليها على أنها مشروع فاشل.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الحرب الأهلية الأمريكية، حركة الحقوق المدنية، الفشل، عصر إعادة الإعمار، تفوق العرق الأبيض.

