

Lecture 4

THE CIVIL WAR

Lecture plan:

1. Conflict situation between the North and South
2. The Civil War (1861 – 1865)
3. The Years of Reconstruction

1. Conflict situation between N and S

The relations between North and South were close to a breaking point.

In the presidential election of 1860 the southerners put forward their candidate to oppose Lincoln. They threatened that the South would “secede” (break away) from the US if Lincoln became President.

Lincoln won the election 

In **December 1860** the state of South Carolina voted to secede from the US. It was soon joined by 10 more southern states.

In **February 1861**, these eleven states announced that they were an independent nation – **the Confederate States of America – the Confederacy.**

The Civil War was about to begin. 

Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln:



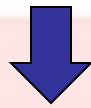
PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S REINAUGURATION AT THE CAPITOL, MARCH 4, 1865.—PHOTOGRAPHED BY GARDNER, WASHINGTON.—[SEE PAGE 164.]

2. The Civil War (1861 - 1865)

On March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln took the oath of office as President of the US.

In his inaugural address he appealed to the southern states to stay in the Union and not to break up the US by seceding.

The southern states took no notice of Lincoln's appeal. On April 12 Confederate guns opened fire on Fort Sumter (South Carolina), that was occupied by US troops.



the beginning of the American Civil War

The Union warships blockaded the ports of the South in order to prevent the Confederacy from selling its cotton abroad and from obtaining foreign supplies.

The North

- ✓ A population of 22 mln people
- ✓ More food crops
- ✓ More than 5 times the manufacturing capacity + most of the country's weapon factories
- ✓ The only way it could win the war was to invade the South and occupy its land.

The South

- ✓ 9 mln people (3,5 of them - slaves)
- ✓ All it had to do was to hold out until the people of the North grew tired of fighting
- ✓ Almost all the war's fighting took place in the South – Confederate soldiers were defending their own homes

The Union armies suffered one defeat after another in the first year of the war. Each time they were thrown back with heavy losses.

Two Confederate generals **Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. Jackson (“Stonewall”) showed much more skill than the generals leading the Union army.**

The North’s early defeats in Virginia discouraged its supporters.

Fortunately for the North, Union forces in the Mississippi valley had more success.

By **spring 1863, the Union armies were closing in on an important Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi called **Vicksburg**.**

On July 4, after much bloody fighting and a siege, Vicksburg surrendered to a Union army led by **General Ulysses S. Grant**.

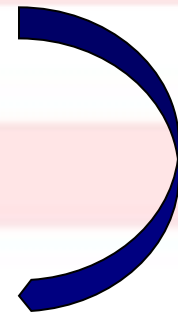


It was a heavy blow to the South

In June 1863 General Lee (the Confederate commander) marched his army north into Pennsylvania. At a small town Gettysburg a Union army blocked his way.

The Confederacy suffered a defeat from which it would never recover.

The Confederate capital was in danger from the Union army led by General Grant. **April 9, 1865** – General Lee surrendered.



The Civil War gave final answers to 2 questions that had divided the US ever since it became an independent nation. It put an end to slavery. In 1865 this was abolished everywhere in the US by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. And it decided finally that the US was one nation, whose parts could not be separated.

The Civil War caused terrible destruction at home. Cities and farms lay in ruins. The dead on both sides totaled 635,000.

3. The Years of Reconstruction

On the night of **April 13, 1865**, crowds of people moved through the streets of Washington to celebrate General Lee's surrender.

The next day Abraham Lincoln and his wife went to Ford's Theatre where he was shot by an actor.



Lincoln was succeeded as President by his Vice President, Andrew Johnson. The biggest problem – how to deal with the defeated South.



Johnson began to introduce plans to reunite the South with the rest of the nation. When a state accepted the 13th Amendment (abolishing slavery), it was accepted back in to the Union as a full and equal member.

White southerners were determined to resist any changes that threatened their power to control the life of the South.

The former Confederate states passed laws to keep blacks in an inferior position – “**Black Codes**” – refused blacks the right to vote, to serve on juries, to give evidence in court against a white man, to buy or to rent farm land.



In July 1866, Congress passed a **Civil Rights Act** and set up an organization called **the Freedmen's Bureau** – to ensure that blacks in the South were not cheated of their rights.

The **14th Amendment** gave blacks full rights of citizenship, including the right to vote. All the former Confederate states except Tennessee refused to accept it.

In March 1867, Congress replied by passing **the Reconstruction Act** – dismissed the white governments of the southern states and placed them under military rule.

Reconstruction governments passed laws to provide care for orphans and the blind, to encourage new industries and the building of railroads, to build schools for white and black children.

None of these improvements stopped southern whites from hating Reconstruction.

The largest and most feared terrorist group was a secret society – **the Ku Klux Klan**.



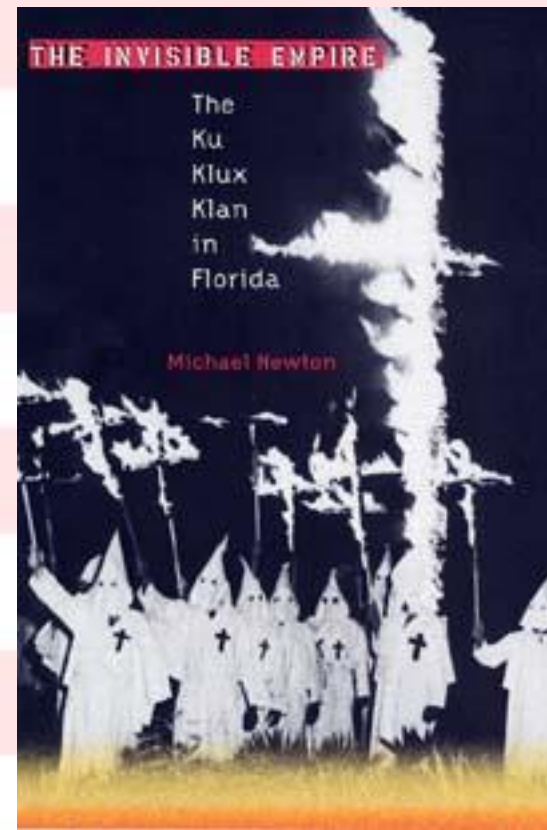


The use of violence and fear helped white racists to win back control of state governments all over the South.

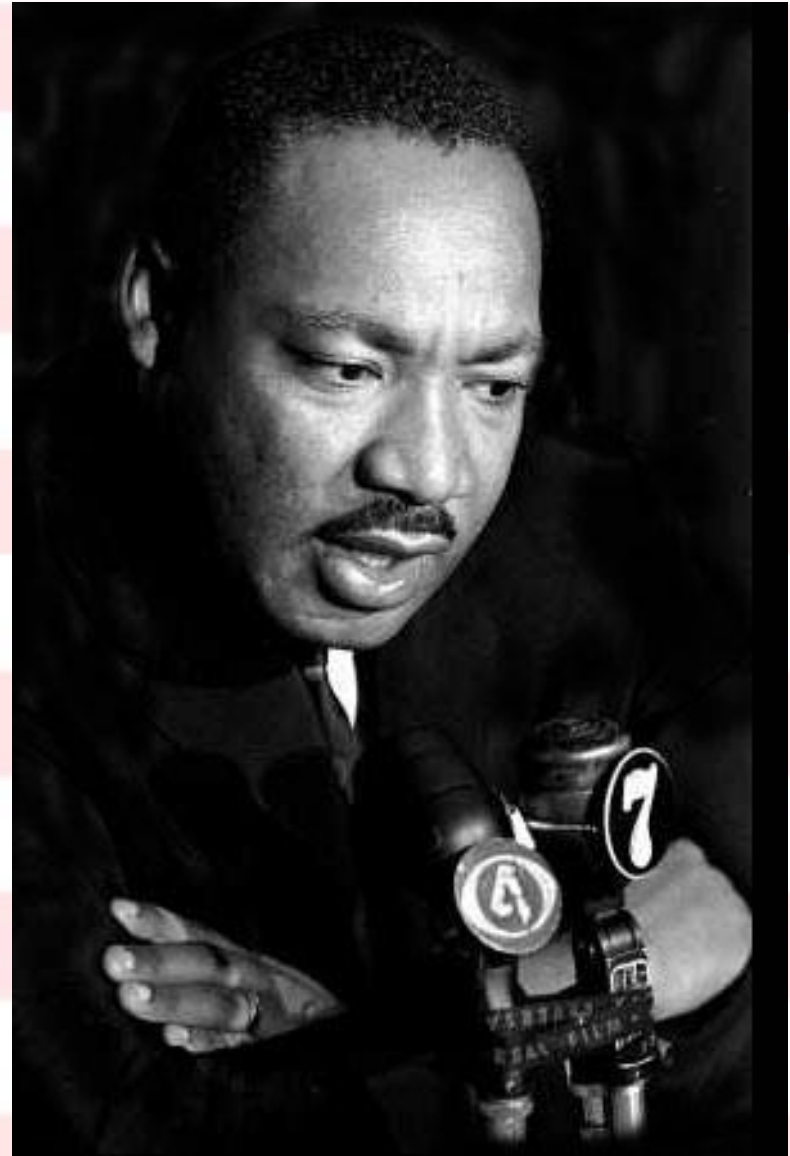
All the Southern states passed laws to enforce strict racial separation – “segregation”.

But Reconstruction had not been for nothing. It had been the boldest attempt to achieve racial justice in the US.

Martin Luther King - prominent leader in the African-American Civil Rights Movement.



Martin Luther King (1929 - 1968)



A Baptist minister, King has become a national icon in the history of modern American liberalism.

His famous speech - "I Have a Dream" (during 1963 March in Washington).

In 1964, King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end racial discrimination through nonviolent means.

King was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was established as a U.S. federal holiday in 1986.