

The South and the West Transformed

- ❖ **What were the economic and political policies of the states in the post-Reconstruction South?**
- ❖ **How did segregation and political disenfranchisement shape race relations in the New South?**
- ❖ **What were the experiences of farmers, miners, and cowboys in the West?**
- ❖ **What were the consequences of late-nineteenth-century Indian policy?**
- **After the Civil War the South and the West provided enticing opportunities for American inventiveness and entrepreneurship.**
 - The Federal government encouraged western settlement and economic exploitation
 - **Construction of railroads, military conquest of Indians, liberal land-distribution policy**
 - 200,000 miles of railroad by 1897
 - Expensive to build railroads—led to panic of 1893
 - Rail lines were rebuilt in the South
 - **Proponents of the “New South” after 1865 wanted to pursue industry**

The New South

The Fresh Vision

- **Prominent leaders insisted that the South must create modern society and bustling cities**
 - Henry W. Grady, editor of *Atlanta Constitution*
 - Vision that New South would be an example of democracy
 - More diversified agriculture and education would lead to material success

Economic Growth

- **The chief accomplishment of the New South movement was an expansion of the region’s textile production**
 - Number of cotton mills and mill workers increased fivefold—demand for cotton went up eightfold
- **Tobacco also increased significantly**
 - Duke family of North Carolina
 - American Tobacco Company
 - Supreme Court ruled that the company was in violation the Sherman Anti-Trust Act
 - Buck Duke moved on to hydroelectric power and aluminum
- **Systematic use of other natural resources**
 - Coal production
- **Industrial growth spawned need for housing, and after 1870 lumbering became a thriving industry**
 - Southern pine product outdistanced textiles
- **New industries: fertilizers, oysters, vegetables, fruits, ships, battleships, leather, liquors, glass, clay, stone**

Agriculture Old and New

- **Industrialization was not profound**
 - **King Cotton survived the Civil War and expanded over (1879 regained prewar levels)**
- **Majority of southern famers were not flourishing, despite new diversity**

- **Prolonged deflation in crop prices—more difficult to own land**
 - Sharecropping and tenancy among blacks and whites grew
 - Most farms were worked by people who did not own land
- **How did sharecropping and tenancy work?**
 - Sharecroppers worked in return for supplies and share of the crop (about a half)
 - **System was horribly inefficient and corrupting**
 - Tenants and landowners were suspicious of each other
- **Acute shortage of capital**
 - People had to devise ways to operate without cash
 - **Crop-lien system:** country merchants furnished supplies to farmers in return for mortgages on crops
 - To some, it was a hopeless cycle of debt
 - Merchants charged interest
- **Stagnation of rural life held millions, white and black, in bondage**

Tenancy and the Environment

- Leached nutrients from the soil
- Tenants had no incentive to take care of farmland
- Fertilizer used to accelerate growing cycle
 - Depleted soils
- Deep gullies, red clay, streams were clogged with silt

The Bourbon Redeemers

- **In post-Civil War southern politics, habits of political elitism still prevailed**
 - People gravitated around the rich elite
 - These groups were known as redeemers, or Bourbons
 - **Included rising class of entrepreneurs**
 - Those who opposed redeemers labeled them Bourbons to depict them as reactionaries, not progressives
 - **They generally pursued a government fiscal policy of frugality**
 - Slashed state expenditures
 - Urge to reduce state expenditures created **convict leasing**
- **Wartime destruction of prisons + demand for cheap labor = leasing of convict workers**
 - Way to avoid penitentiary expenses
- **Bourbons reduced state expenditures and public debt**
 - Repudiated debt
- **Established boards of agriculture and public health, stations for agricultural experimentation, state colleges**
- **Democratic party of the time was coalition of Unionists, secessionists, businessmen, small farmers, hillbillies, planters, even some Republicans**
 - Against Reconstruction Radicals
 - Bourbon regimes never achieved complete unity
- **Southern politics remained surprisingly democratic—allowed blacks and whites despite Bourbon control**
 - Disenfranchisement of African Americans remained inconsistent under Bourbon rule
- Racial segregation appeared before the end of Reconstruction, especially in schools, churches, hotels

- **The ultimate achievement of the New South prophets and their allies, the Bourbons, was that they reconciled tradition with innovation**
 - Relative moderation in racial policy allowed them to embrace and keep control
 - Promoted growth of industry
 - **Textile industry**

Disenfranchising African Americans

- Moderate attitudes toward race evaporated in 1890s
- **Negrophobia**
 - Many whites resented signs of black success and influence
 - Education of blacks was threatening
 - New Negroes were more assertive
- **Racial violence and repression surged to the fore during the last decade of the nineteenth century**
 - New South began to resemble Old South
 - Ruling whites imposed their will, racial subjugation
 - **Jim Crow** laws mandated public separation
- **Political dynamics of the 1890s exacerbated social tensions**
 - Rise of populism—courting black votes to swing
 - Farm-based protest
 - Bourbons revived the race issue in response to bringing of blacks into prominent positions by populists
 - Argued that black vote should be eliminated in the South
 - **Disenfranchisement was indirect due to the fifteenth amendment**
- **Mississippi led the way to near-total disenfranchisement of blacks and poor whites**
 - Constitutional convention to change suffrage
 - More states followed
 - **Residence requirements—struck at tenant farmers**
 - **Conviction qualifications**
 - **Taxes to vote**
 - **Literacy test**
 - Other states added variations to these guidelines
 - Louisiana's **Grandfather Clause**—illiterates could vote if their grandfathers or fathers could vote

The Spread of Segregation

- **Jim Crow laws symbolized segregation, political disenfranchisement followed**
 - **First target was the railway train**
 - **Separate rail cars**
 - Segregation violated Civil Rights Act
 - **Supreme Court ruled against blacks in rulings**
 - **Their interpretation left as an open question the validity of state laws requiring separate racial facilities under the rubric of “separate but equal”**
- **Plessy v. Ferguson** challenged rail car rules
 - Plessy refused to leave white car because he was only 1/8 black
 - Racial segregation extended to every area of southern life
- **Violence accompanied Jim Crow laws**

- Lynchings
- Legalized racial discrimination: segregation of public facilities, political disenfranchisement, vigilante justice
- **How did African Americans respond?**
 - Some left the south
 - Majority stayed in their native region
 - Most accommodated to white supremacy
 - Not total submission—they turned inward
 - Churches continued to provide hub of community life
 - Political activities, meeting grounds
 - Churches offered leadership roles to black men
 - Racial pride and dignity
- **Irony of state-enforced segregation is that it opened up new economic opportunities for blacks**
 - New class of African-American entrepreneurs
 - Blacks formed their own fraternal clubs
 - Independent Order of Odd Fellows
- **Middle-class black women formed a network of racial uplift organizations**
 - **Engines of social service**
 - **Sponsored welfare, clinics, etc.**
 - **Converged into National Association of Colored Women**
 - Meant to combat racism
 - Mary Church Terrell

Ida B. Wells

- **One of the most outspoken activists**
- Denied a railroad car because she was black
- First African American to file suit against discrimination
- Became editor of *Memphis Free Speech*
- Launched crusade against lynching
- Helped found National Association for the Advancement of Colored People **NAACP**

Washington and Du Bois

- **Booker T. Washington**
 - Argued that blacks should first establish an economic base for their advancement before striving for social equality
 - **Endorsed segregation, supported work and money**
 - Sacrificed broad education civil rights for acceptance of white conservatives and economic opportunities
- **W.E.B. Du Bois led criticism of Washington**
 - Assaulted Booker's accommodationist philosophy
 - **Supported ceaseless agitation for civil rights**
 - Suggested that education should be broad, not just for occupation

The New West

- **The Post-Civil War West offered the promise of democratic individualism, economic opportunity, personal freedom**
- Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and western Minnesota: spread of farmers
- Miners from California, cowboys from Texas
- Great Plains were barren
- Discovery gold, completion of railroads, destruction of buffalo, collapse of Indian resistance , rise of range-cattle industry,
 - New techniques of dry farming and irrigation

The Migratory Stream

- **During second half of nineteenth century, stream of migrants flowed into West**
 - African Americans, Mexicans, European and Chinese immigrants
 - Most settlers were relatively prosperous white, native-born farming families
 - Most were men
 - The poor could not afford to relocate due to expense of transportation
- **The largest number of foreign immigrants came from northern Europe and Canada**
 - Germans, Scandinavians, and Irish were most numerous in the northern plains
 - Those from China and Mexico were less numerous but significant
- African Americans also migrated after collapse of Radical Republicans
 - **The foremost promoter of black migration to the West was Benjamin Pap Singleton**
 - Convinced that God was calling him to rescue his brethren
 - Led colonists
 - Established Dunlop community in Kansas
 - **Many blacks followed Singleton into Kansas—southerners worried about loss of labor**
 - Whites closed access to Mississippi River
- **Black exodus to West died out by early 1880s**
 - Many settlers were unprepared
 - Drought, working conditions, not self-sufficient
 - Resources drained due to influx of people
- Life on the frontier was not the promised land that settlers expected
- **In 1866 Congress passed legislation establishing two “colored” cavalry units and dispatched them to the western frontier—buffalo soldiers**
 - They were mostly Civil War veterans from Louisiana and Kentucky
 - Built and maintained forts
 - Mapped vast areas, strung telegraph lines, protected railroad crews, subdued Indians, captured outlaws

Mining the West

- **Valuable mineral deposits continued to lure people to the West after the Civil War**
 - The California miners of 1849—forty niners—set the typical pattern
 - Sudden, disorderly rush of prospectors
 - Lawlessness and vigilante rule
- **Drama of the gold rush was reenacted**
 - Colorado became a state in 1876

- **Comstock Lode discovered in Nevada**
 - Nevada became a territory
- **Demand for orderly government in the West led to hasty creation of new territories and admission of new states**
 - **Democrats were reluctant to create states that were heavily Republican**
 - **Republican domination led to admission of the Dakotas, Montana, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico**

Mining and the Environment

- **Mining became a mass-production industry as individual prospectors gave way to large companies**
 - After “placer” deposits were exhausted, efficient mining required large-scale operations
 - Hydraulic mining, dredging, hard-rock mining
 - Dirt and debris, clogged rivers, farmland and orchards destroyed
 - **Irate California farmers formed Anti-Debris Association and won in court:**
 - *Woodruff v. North Bloomfield Gravel Mining Company*—first major environmental ruling

The Indian Wars

- **Indians were forced out of their Western refuge**
 - Indian tribe gathering at Fort Laramie—Plain Indians decided to settle Wyoming Territory and leave whites alone, allow them to pass through
 - Initially effective but fighting resumed
 - Emigrants began to encroach
- Untrained militia in Colorado killed peaceful Indians
- **Congressional committee gathered evidence of hostility against Indians**
 - **“Report on the Condition of Indian Tribes” led to Indian Peace Commission charged with removing causes of Indian wars**
 - Encroachment continued
- **1867 conference at Medicine Lodge, Kansas**
 - Some Indian tribes accepted land in western Oklahoma
 - Other agreed to settle in Dakota Territory
 - **Indian resistance in the southern plains continued until Red River War**—Indians forced to disband
- **Trouble in the north**
 - Miners filtered into the Black Hills, Sioux hunting grounds despite promises of the North to stay out
- **Great Sioux War**
 - Largest military event since Civil War
 - Largest campaign against Indians
 - Colonel Custer’s men were destroyed because they were isolated from main body of soldiers
 - **Indians celebrated instead of pursuing victory**
 - US army reclaimed offensive and forced Sioux’s to give up land and goldfields
- **Sioux were forced onto reservations on the least valuable land**
 - Struggle to exist
- **Blackfeet and Crows had to leave their homes in Montana**
- **Chief Joseph**—kept his dignity, was respectful of Indians, surrendered
- **Indian wars ended in 1886 with capture of Geronimo, chief of Apaches**

- **Ghost Dance craze fed upon old legends of coming messiah**
- **Alarmed white authorities—banned**
- **Wounded Knee:** accidental rifle shot caused bloodbath, Indian wars ended due to misunderstanding

The Demise of the Buffalo

- **Decimation of buffalo herd contributed to collapse of Indians**
 - By 1850, less than 10 million buffalo
 - By 1900, only few hundred left
 - Harvesting of buffalo by white hunters
 - Demand for buffalo robes, leather, fertilizer from bones
- **Buffalo population decreased for environmental reasons as well**
 - Drought
 - Competition with horses, sheep, cattle
 - Cattle-borne disease
 - Plain Indians

Indian Policy

- **Slaughter of buffalo and Indians ignited widespread criticism**
 - Politicians and religious leaders spoke out against mistreatment of Indians
 - Helen Hunt Jackson: *A Century of Dishonor*
 - **Indian policy gradually became more benevolent but did little to ease plight of Indians**
 - **Reservation policy inaugurated by Peace Commission did little**
 - Partly humanitarian in motive but also saved money
- **Well-intentioned reformers sought to “Americanize”**
 - Dealt with them as individuals, not tribes
 - **Dawes Severalty Act of 1887:** divided land of any tribe, granting 160 acres to each head of a family and lesser amounts to others
 - To protect Indian property, government held it in trust for 25 years after which Indian became citizen
 - **Burke Act of 1906:** Indians who took up life apart from their tribes became citizens immediately
- **Despite best intentions, Dawes Act created more opportunity for white plundering of Indians**
 - It broke up reservations
 - Undistributed land was sold
 - Indians’ inexperience with private ownership

Cattle and Cowboys

- **Mexican roots**
 - Spanish horses and livestock
 - Saddle, spurs, cowboy tools made in Mexico
- **Texas longhorns evolved through natural selection**
 - Little value
 - In upper Mississippi River valley, cattle was in demand after war
- **New opportunities arose as railroads pushed farther west, where cattle could be driven through relatively vacant lands**
 - Joseph McCoy—moved cattle trade west, Abilene, Kansas

- **Cowboys**
 - Diverse backgrounds
- Population of Kansas and Nebraska increased
 - The secret to higher profits for the cattle industry was to devise a way to slaughter the cattle in the Midwest and ship the dressed carcasses east and west—required refrigeration
 - Gustavus Swift developed mechanical refrigeration
- **The dangers of the trail, wear and tear, charges on drives across Indian territory, advance of farms persuaded cattlemen to work near railroads—cattle business spread with railroad**
- **In absence of laws governing the open range, cattle ranchers worked out a code of action**
 - Keep animal out of other's territory
 - Joseph Glidden—barbed wire

The End of the Open Range

- **Combination of factors put an end to the open range**
 - Barbed-wire wars—due to crowding
 - Associations formed to keep intruders out
 - Shepherding
 - Severe winters and drought in 1886 and 1887

Range Wars

- **Conflicting claims over land and water rights ignited violent disputes between ranchers and farmers**
 - Cattle ranchers clashed with farmers and shepherders, who were typically Mexican Americans
 - Strain of ethnic and religious prejudice
- Perennial tension between large and small cattle ranchers
 - To survive, smaller ranchers cut fences
 - **Fence Cutter's War** in Texas—state ended it by passing legislation

Farmers and the Land

- **Federal land laws offered farmers favorable terms**
 - **Homestead Act of 1862:** settler could realize the old dream of free land simply by staking out a claim and living on it for five years, or he could buy land at \$1.25 an acre after six months
- **Environmental forces shaped development**
 - Dry land
 - Where farming was impossible, ranchers simply established dominance by control of the water, regardless of law
 - **Newlands Reclamation Act:** set up Bureau of Reclamation
 - the proceeds of public land sales in sixteen states created a fund for irrigation projects
 - Reclamation Bureau set about building major projects like Hoover Dam
- **Lands were passed on from private hands, more so than from government**
- Even though land was cheap, farmers found it hard to survive financially due to expenses
- New innovations: sodbuster plow
- Bonanza farms—gigantic agricultural producing and processing

Pioneer Women

- **West remained largely male society**

- Women could not own property without husband approval, could not sell property, divorce, sue, etc
- **Fight for survival made men and women equal somewhat**
 - Women became more independent
- **Individual character**

The End of the Frontier

- **End of the frontier was not distinguishable anymore due to population increase and spread**
- Turner's frontier thesis guided several generations of scholars and students in their understanding of distinctive characteristics of American history
 - Homogenizing effect of frontier environment