**Reconstruction in the United States (1865–1877) – Summary**

Reconstruction was the turbulent period following the Civil War (1861–1865) during which the U.S. government attempted to reintegrate the former Confederate states, abolish slavery, and redefine African Americans' rights. Despite early progress, Reconstruction ended in 1877 with the withdrawal of federal troops, leaving many of its promises unfulfilled.

**Presidential Reconstruction (1865–1867)**

After President Lincoln’s assassination in April 1865, his successor, **Andrew Johnson**, took a lenient approach toward the South. He pardoned former Confederates and allowed Southern states to form new governments under the **Black Codes**—laws restricting African Americans' freedom and forcing them into labor contracts resembling slavery. Radical Republicans in Congress opposed Johnson’s policies and pushed for stronger federal intervention.

**Congressional (Radical) Reconstruction (1867–1877)**

In 1867, Congress took control, passing the **Reconstruction Acts**, which:

* Divided the South into military districts.
* Required Southern states to ratify the **14th Amendment** (granting citizenship and equal protection) and **15th Amendment** (granting Black men voting rights) to rejoin the Union.
* Temporarily barred ex-Confederate leaders from politics.

During this phase, African Americans gained political power, with over **2,000 Black men** elected to office, including **Hiram Revels** (the first Black U.S. senator). Southern states established public schools and sought economic recovery.

**Resistance and the Rise of White Supremacy**

Many white Southerners resisted Reconstruction through:

* **The Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**: A violent terrorist group targeting Black voters and Republicans.
* **Black voter suppression**: Poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation.
* **Sharecropping**: A system that kept freedmen economically dependent on white landowners.

**The End of Reconstruction**

By the mid-1870s, Northern support waned due to economic concerns and fatigue with Southern resistance. The **Compromise of 1877**—a political deal to settle the disputed 1876 election—resulted in the withdrawal of federal troops from the South, effectively ending Reconstruction.