

UNIT 10.2

RECONSTRUCTION AND DAILY LIFE

MR LANGHORST

Many African Americans left plantations and started to travel

They were in search of lost family members, economic opportunities and more freedom

Ex-slaves could now legally marry and family ties strengthened



<http://www.sonofthesouth.net/leefoundation/civil-war/1863/november/freed-slaves.jpg>

Most slaves went to school to learn to read and write



<http://www.emu.edu/news/images/freedmenlyncburg.jpg>

Adults and children flocked to Freedman's Schools

Many northern charities funded these schools



http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/91.3/images/edelstein_fig01b.jpg

CONTRACT SYSTEM – a person that did not own land could contract to work the land for someone else who owned it



<http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/images/a3.jpg>

Without their own property, many ex-slaves returned to work on plantations

They were paid for their labor



<http://lsm.crt.state.la.us/cabildo/cab9d.gif>

Ex-slaves could now chose the best contracts for jobs

Very low wages were paid – some were cheated out of wages and benefits



The drawbacks to this system made many turn to sharecropping

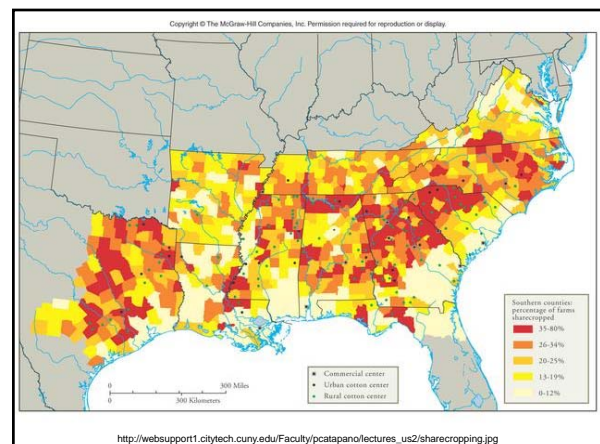
SHARECROPPING – a worker rented a plot of land to farm

The landowner provided the tools, seed and housing

Sharecroppers bought food and clothes on credit at the landowner's store, owning a lot of money at harvest time

Often a farmer had to use one year's harvest to pay the previous year's bill

Many sharecroppers were caught in a cycle of debt, they often owned more than they made each year



African Americans faced poverty and violent racism in the South

Officially slaves were given their freedom but in many regards things were still difficult in terms of living their lives

KKK – KU KLUX KLAN – a secret group with goals to restore Democratic control and keep former slaves powerless



The KKK attacked African Americans, burned homes and killed people

Klansman scared people away from voting, Democrats increasing their power

