

Hist of Black Am 11500  
Spring 2018  
Exam 2  
Ans. Key

Note: This is a summary of what your answers should have entailed. Generally, I do not specify individuals and policies, but you can find these kinds of details in the primary sources and on the power point presentations on *Moodle*.

1. What brought about Jim Crow laws and disfranchisement in the South in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century? Why did southern whites commit racial violence and lynching? How did Ida B. Wells explain the lynching?

**Ans.**

The question is about causality and human agency. Black resistance—especially blacks efforts to vote, aspirations of social mobility, etc . . . brought about Jim Crow laws and lynching. Jim Crow laws were responses not only to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments, but African Americans efforts to realize their political rights. The question is also about change over time. Reconstruction ends in 1877, so white southerners already have political control over the South, but segregation laws and other forms of white supremacist activity, particularly lynching bloom decades later. Why? White southerners always used racial violence, so that was a constant. But lynching as a specific form of violence was necessary to subdue black efforts for equality since legal forms—Jim crow law and disfranchisement strategies (grandfather clause, poll tax, gerrymandering voting districts) were insufficient. Wells focused on blacks’ political & economic efforts, as well as the hypocrisy of white women and white men. White men’s complaints about rape, in other words, masked their insecurity and, in some cases, the fact that some white women voluntarily had “relations” with black men.

\*Some of you centered segregation laws, that is oppression, but did not address black efforts to realize their freedom (or resistance) as what triggered segregation and white mob violence. You might have use the case of the 3 black groceries from Wells or the political and economic power of blacks in Danville as examples.

2. What brought about the ‘Great Migration’? What made the “New Negro” New? What were some of the global and domestic changes that contributed to the “New Negro Movement? What were the dominant political ideologies that distinguished the New Negro from the old Negro?

**Ans.**

World War I—which promised jobs—triggered the Great Migration, as well as various push (out of the south) & pull forces (to the north)—such as lynching, segregation, voting rights, and industrial jobs; as the first generation born in freedom, this “new” Negro, relentless and brazen, demanded whites to respect their civil rights. Black soldiers participation in the Great War and the New Negro magazines, and more broadly, the black public sphere, framed the black struggle within a domestic and global context. African Americans migrants encounters with racism in the north, particularly the series of race riots, also raised their political consciousness. These ideologies include black nationalism and anti-capitalism, which were different from Du Bois’s

early civil rights approach and BTW's bootstraps approach (Old negro). Individuals like Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, A. Phillip Randolph, Hubert Harrison, Langston Hughes, and George Schuyler represented different elements of these political ideologies.

## Section II.

### II. Document Analysis:

Please respond to all prompts in essay form. The best answers will be those that demonstrate expertise of the Primary Source itself & the historical period, including relevant events, personalities, policies, etc . . . , in order to respond to the prompts.

#### 1. What does Booker T. Washington mean by "Cast down your bucket where you are"?

Regarding Reconstruction, Washington writes, "Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our new life we began at the top instead of at the bottom; that a seat in Congress or the state legislature was sought than real estate or industrial skill."

How are his ideas about Reconstruction a reflection of the Jim Crow era? And why does he describe Reconstruction as he does? What is his main point? How is this related to his goals?

#### **Ans.**

BTW urged both blacks and whites to take advantage of the economic resources; this meant that blacks should remain in the south rather than migrate north and pursue the economic and political rights. BTW tried to appeal to southern and northern whites, because he wanted to assure them that blacks would not pursue political rights, such as voting and holding political office, but would still function, as they had in the past, as a source of cheap labor. Thus, BTW was speaking blacks and whites. As we know, and here's how this reflects the Jim Crow era, the issues of lynching, segregation, and voting could not be avoided, especially among black people living in the South. So the goal of insuring a black economic infrastructure prompted BTW to publicly denounce politics and even "liberal arts" education.

#### 2. Langston Hughes's "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," what does he mean by the "Racial mountain"? He writes, "one of the most promising of the young Negro poets said to me once, 'I want to be a poet—not a Negro poet,' meaning, I believe, 'I want to write like a white poet.'"

What role did popular culture and science play in creating the "racial mountain"? How were the "Negro Renaissance" and "New Negro Movement" answers to the "Racial Mountain"?

#### **Ans.**

The racial mountain is white supremacy, as an American standardized form of racism, and, in the case of the artist, it referred specifically how black artists internalized racism; popular culture ensured that racism was distributed throughout American culture in post cards (lynching),

consumer products (Aunt Jemima), and theater (minstrels). The Renaissance and New Negro movement tried to promote the humanity of blacks as well as, in the case of the Garvey movement, prove the superiority of blacks. Anti-capitalists, on the other hand, targeted capitalists and racism as the culprits.

3. “The Negro-Art Hokum” Why does George Schuyler, an African American socialist (anti-capitalist), claim that “Negro art ‘made in America’ is non-existent”? What does Schuyler mean when he describes “Coleridge-Taylor,[and]Edward Wilmot Blyden” as “Negroes; yet their work shows the impress of nationality rather than race”? How are his ideas regarding “Negro Art” a reflection of his ideas as an anti-capitalist? And how is this reflective of the New Negro movement?

Full quote: “Consider Coleridge-Taylor, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Claude McKay, the Englishmen; Pushkin, the Russian; Bridgewater, the Pole; Antar, the Arabian; Latino, the Spaniard; Dumas, pere and fils, the Frenchmen; and Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Charles W. Chesnutt, and James Weldon Johnson, the Americans. All Negroes; yet their work show the impress of nationality rather than race. They all reveal the psychology and culture of their environment—their color is incidental.”

**Ans.**

This primary source was primarily about Schuyler, as an anti-capitalists, trying to dissuade people from accepting “racial difference.” Thus, he argued that there could be no “Negro Art” since blacks and whites were culturally the same, and that “sameness” was based on their shared environment—nationality. This is essential, since he reinforces commonality between blacks and whites, and thereby can emphasize what they might also share—the common experience of being oppressed as workers (remember DuBois’s “African Roots of War”).

Thus, his rhetoric about nationality, region, etc . . . attempted to destabilize the notion that “race” had anything to do with culture. If this was true, according to his logic, inequality was the result of environment or class and not racial difference; furthermore, his ideas are a reflection of the New Negro era, since his ideas reflected some black activists move towards socialism and explicitly economic issues, such as Randolph and others, not solely voting rights (the debate between DuBois & BTW).

4. In “The African Roots of War,” W. E. B. DuBois wrote:

Yet the paradox is easily explained: The white workingman has been asked to share the spoil of exploiting ‘chinks and niggers.’ It is no longer simply the merchant prince, or the aristocratic monopoly, or even the employing class, that is exploiting the world (graph 15).

How is DuBois’s explanation of the “paradox” connected to Frederick L. Hoffman’s claim that: It is not in the condition of life, but in race and hereditary that we find the explanation of the facts to be observed in all parts of the globe, in all times and among all peoples, namely, the superiority of one race over another, and of the Aryan race over all (312).

How does each quote help to explain the emergence of the “New Negro”?

**Ans.**

The paradox, as DuBois, represents both roots of the WWI and the ways that modern colonialism unites the white workers across Europe and the US with white capitalists, as a means to both breakdown class unity and discriminate against non-white colonized people in Asia, Africa, and US. Colonialism, as we know, was done through violence and the exploitation of the land and labor of colonized people. Hoffman, on the other hand, questioned this approach, and claimed that non-white people were inherently inferior to the “Aryan race.” Hoffman, as an example of scientific racism, believed that so-called whites superiority because of their “race and hereditary.” Such an understanding legitimates violence—which is understood as racial superiority.

The New Negro movement, using an anti-capitalist approach, here represented by DuBois, argued that capitalism and colonialism explain the status of black, brown, and Asian folks in the U.S. and colonized people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In this view, racial superiority is fiction, and violence and economic exploitation is centered to explain the station of people of colonized people.