

3. FROM THE GREAT MIGRATION TO WORLD WAR I (1878-1919)

a) Erosion of Black Rights



Reconstruction came to an end gradually, as Democrats took over state governments from Republicans. In the last three states, South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, Reconstruction ended as part of an apparent political compromise. Both Democrats and Republicans claimed victory in those states in the elections of 1876. However, leaders of the national Republican Party agreed to recognize Democratic affirmations to state offices in return for receiving the electoral votes of those states for Republican presidential candidate Rutherford B. Hayes, who thereby won the election.

After 1877 Democratic governments were in power in all the Southern states, and they continued taking away black rights. This was done in many different ways—laws that enforced the separation of blacks and whites, the sharecropping system that kept blacks economically dependent on whites, and the increased disenfranchisement of blacks. Northern whites were tired of spending time and money on the South. As a result, the discrimination and oppression of the African Americans in the South went largely unchallenged.

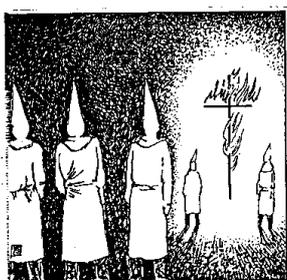
b) Emigration from the South

By the late 1870s much of the optimism of emancipation had faded to the reality of the post-Reconstruction South. Thousands of blacks, landless and poor, decided to leave the South. In 1878 over 200 blacks sailed from Charleston harbor for Liberia in Africa. Many others decided to move west to the new territories that had been opened to settlement. In the 'Exodus of 1879,' sometimes called the Exoduster Movement, almost 20,000 blacks left Mississippi and Louisiana for the frontiers of Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and Oklahoma. They established a number of all-black towns like Langston (Oklahoma) and Nicodemus (Kansas), planted farms, settled in cities, and worked in mines.

Some blacks, especially those with Native American ancestry, found homes with Native American nations, and a few followed in the footsteps of black explorer and mountain-man **James Beckwourth**, who had traveled throughout the West. In 1856 Beckwourth had published his memoirs entitled *Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, Mountaineer, Scout, and Pioneer*. Some African Americans went west with the U.S. military, as part of the all-black Ninth and Tenth Cavalry Units that Native Americans called Buffalo Soldiers. Others went with wagon trains or as cowboys, moving cattle to market.



c) The Ku Klux Klan



The word Ku Klux Klan was made up by combining the Greek *kyklos* (circle) with clan. Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is the name of several past and present organizations in the United States that have advocated white supremacy, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, racism, homophobia and anti-Communism. These organizations have often used terrorism, violence, and acts of intimidation, such as cross burning and lynching, to oppress African Americans and other religious, social or ethnic groups.

The Klan's first incarnation was in 1866. Founded by veterans of the Confederate Army, its main purpose was to resist Reconstruction. It focused as much on intimidating "carpetbaggers" and "scalawags" as on repressing the freed slaves. The KKK quickly adopted violent methods, but this caused a backlash as many Southern elites saw the Klan as an excuse for federal troops to continue their activities in the South. The organization declined from 1868 to 1870 and was destroyed in the early 1870s by President Ulysses S. Grant.

In 1915, a second distinct group was founded using the same name. It grew against social fears aroused by rapid changes in many major cities as they absorbed immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, Southern blacks of the Great Migration and whites from rural areas. Mass media sensationalized events that helped spark the Klan, such as the film *The Birth of a Nation* and inflammatory newspaper coverage of the trial, conviction and lynching of Leo Frank in Atlanta. The second KKK was a formal fraternal organization, with a national and state structure, that paid thousands of men to organize local sections all over the country. At its peak in the mid-1920s, the organization included about 15% of the nation's electors, approximately 4-5 million men. The second KKK typically preached racism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Communism and anti-Semitism. Some local groups took part in lynchings and other violent activities. Violence occurred mostly in the South, which already had a tradition of lawlessness. Its popularity fell during the Great Depression, and membership fell further during World War II because of scandals resulting from prominent members' crimes and its support of the Nazis.

👉 **For more, see:**

The KKK – Wikipedia : <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kkk>

d) The fight against lynching



Lynching is murder by mob violence. It was largely directed in this country against African Americans in the South as an extralegal way of maintaining and enforcing white supremacy. Every African American knew that any violation (real, apparent, or prepared) of written or unwritten customs or laws could result in assault and death without protection from police, courts, press, or government. In fact, representatives of these agencies were themselves sometimes actively involved in lynchings. Between 1882 and 1968, at least 4,743 people were lynched in America, 3,446 blacks and 1,297 whites. The number of black victims, and therefore the totals, are undoubtedly higher due to unreported or questionably defined cases.

The worst period for lynching was the 1880s and '90s, as white Americans vehemently reacted against the gains of African Americans during Reconstruction and tried, successfully, to regain by force total white political, social, and economic control. The worst year was 1892, when more than four black people were lynched a week. The total annual number of lynchings stayed in the triple digits until 1902, when it dropped to double digits, and not until 1936 did it drop to a single digit. The states with the highest numbers of lynchings from 1882 to 1968 were Mississippi, with a total of 581, then Georgia, with 531, and Texas, with 493.

The federal government, presidents, Congress, and courts refused to intervene in what they called local or state affairs. **George H. White**, a black congressman from North Carolina, introduced the first of many anti-lynching bills in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1900, but it never got out of committee. The **NAACP** campaigned vigorously against lynching. The Department of Records and Research at Tuskegee Institute kept scrupulously detailed records of racial murders, and the shocking accuracy of their reporting did exert some influence on public opinion.

If any person can be said to have led the crusade against lynching, it was **Ida B. Wells-Barnett**, a militant African-American journalist. Wells-Barnett was born in slavery in July 16, 1862. Her mother had an Indian father, and her father's father, not untypically, was his mother's slavemaster. Ida attended Rust University in Holly Springs, a school sponsored by Methodists, where she was accompanied by her mother, who wanted to learn to read and write. Both parents died in a yellow fever epidemic, and Ida supported her brothers and sisters by teaching in rural schools for \$25 a month.

Moving to Memphis, Tennessee, she taught in the city's segregated school system until she criticized the school board and was fired. She wrote for the local black press, and became an editor of the newspaper "*Free Speech and Headlight*" with the Reverend Taylor Nightingale of Beale Street Baptist Church. In 1884 she sued the Southwestern Railroad for refusing her a seat. She won in the lower court, but on appeal the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled in the company's favor, saying Wells-Barnett's only purpose was to harass the railroad.

In 1892 several African-American men opened the People's Grocery in a black Memphis neighborhood where the streetcar turned from Mississippi Avenue to Walker Avenue. They were soon doing better business than the white-owned grocery store across the street. The white owner retaliated, and three of the men, Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Henry Stewart, were lynched by a white mob which included the local criminal-court judge. In shock and anger, black people boycotted the streetcars, and over two thousand African Americans left Memphis for the Oklahoma Territory.

Wells strongly criticized the lynching in her newspaper, but she went further and dared say something in print that was well known in the black community but never publicly expressed. It was generally thought by whites that most black men who were lynched were killed because they had raped white women. But in truth, charges of rape, untried and unproven, constituted only 25 percent of the alleged crimes of which lynching victims were accused. The secret Wells revealed was that sexual relationships with black men were sometimes initiated by white women, who held absolute power by being able at any moment to cry "rape" and thus protect themselves while condemning black men to death.



She moved to Chicago, where she spent her life crusading against lynching and involving herself in civic, suffragist, political, and women's movements. She participated, in London, in founding the Anti-Lynching Committee, the first of its kind. She was one of the signers of the 1909 call that led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), but she was too radical to be accepted as one of its leaders. Ida B. Wells-Barnett died on March 25, 1931.



e) William E. B. Du Bois



Probably the most influential book by an African American, at least the one most reflective of the African-American experience itself, is **William E. B. Du Bois** 's *The Souls of Black Folk*, published in 1903. Du Bois (1868-1963) was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, and educated at Fisk and Harvard universities as an undergraduate. He took a Ph.D. at Harvard, the first African American to earn a doctorate there, and studied with Max Weber in Berlin at Friedrich Wilhelm University. In 1896 he published his Harvard thesis, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, and was on his way to becoming the

international political and intellectual spokesperson for black America, and for other oppressed people as well.

Du Bois published an amazing number of books and articles over his long life, and he wrote in every discipline, from fiction to philosophy, and in every format, from poetry to essay. His best form, though, was probably the latter, and *The Souls of Black Folk*, written when he was thirty-five years old, is a collection of fourteen essays that artfully combine personal impressions with social data. The result was a book that expressed and communicated to the world, perhaps better than anything before or since, the spirit of the black American. It decidedly shaped the African-American literature that followed. *The Souls of Black Folk* contains writing of Du Bois that has lasted over the years and is still read and quoted today.



"After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world,--a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,--an American, a Negro; two warring souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife,--this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. ..."

from W.E.B. Du Bois' *"The Souls of Black Folk"*

f) Early Blues, Ragtime and Jazz



The origin of the **blues** is lost somewhere in the unaccompanied work songs, ring shouts, field hollers, and religious call-and-response rituals of the slave South. However these songs may have evolved, the blues express the sadness and melancholy of people struggling with the "blue devils" of despair. Sometimes performed by wandering singers, the musical poetry of the blues is traditionally simple, basic, ironic, and often highly humorous. The blues were improvised because they were created by people who did not read music.

With great personal intensity, blues deal with such themes as mistreatment and abandonment by lovers, bad luck, loneliness, the penitentiary, poverty, drink, and escape. They are often raucously sexual, full of clever if vulgar meanings and sexual euphemisms. Beneath the sorrow, however, is often another theme: the wisdom of survivors who perceive the absurdity of their situation. The blues seem to have been born in the Mississippi Delta, the Georgia coast, and rural Texas, areas where the large black population was often poorest and most isolated.

Whatever its antecedents, the blues as a distinct form did not emerge until the late nineteenth century. African-American men were probably the earliest blues singers, usually self-accompanied on a guitar or harmonica. Their rural laments are generally considered the most basic expression of the blues. Singers like "Papa Charlie" Jackson, "Blind Lemon" Jefferson, "Blind Willie" Jackson, and "Leadbelly" (Huddie Ledbetter) are now well known as masters of country blues. Middle-class black people quite correctly associated the blues with low-life folk and gut-bucket dives. As a child, W. C. Handy was ordered by his parents to get rid of the guitar he had bought with his own money, since they considered it "a sinful thing brought into a Christian home."

Handy was the first to write and popularize a blues composition, "Memphis Blues: A Southern Rag" in 1912. He published "St. Louis Blues" in 1914, and the song became so popular during World War I it was said Europeans believed it was the American national anthem. A somewhat more sophisticated urban or classic blues style emerged as the early country songs were influenced by Euro-American ballads and instruments as well as by black vaudeville, spirituals, popular theater, and traveling musical shows. Classic blues were usually sung by black women accompanied by a piano or jazz band.

Ragtime music transformed American popular culture at the turn of the century, but nobody really knows for sure how it originated. It may well have started in the better black sporting houses and honky-tonks which often employed piano players.

In 1896, Scott Joplin, the greatest of the ragtime composers, was touring with his Texas Medley Quartet, publishing his first piano compositions ("*Please Say You Will*" and "*A Picture of Her Face*"), and living, studying, and playing in Sedalia, Missouri. This was a critical moment for black music. Ragtime was taking a "definite, potentially classic" shape, but it stood in real danger of being lost: it needed to be heard throughout white America and it needed to be preserved in printed scores."

Exactly this breakthrough came the same year, 1896, when Ben Harney, a black musician passing for white, introduced ragtime as "jig piano" in New York. It was an immediate hit. The word ragtime apparently first appeared in Bert Williams' 1896 song, "Oh, I Don't Know, You're Not So Warm." And William Krell, a white Chicago bandleader, copyrighted "Mississippi Rag" the next year, quickly followed by the first black-authored rag to see print, Tom Turpin's "Harlem Rag."

Meanwhile, the growing popularity of ragtime not only gave Joplin the impulsion he needed to publish his own ragtime compositions, but prepared the public to recognize his genius. Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" came out in 1899, raising the genre to classic proportions, and forever identifying ragtime as a black art form.



The young white music industry, however, concerned with money rather than art, forced most of the best rags to the sidelines or even out completely, in favor of simple, homogenized tunes white people could comprehend; hence the great popularity of something like Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and other pseudo-rags. But Joplin's compositions were too remarkable to be ignored or displaced.

One reason for ragtime's success was its appropriateness for the **cakewalk**, the black plantation dance the white middle class discovered simultaneously with ragtime. The cakewalk has no set steps, and its improvised movements can be done perfectly to ragtime's syncopation.

Jazz grew out of the same ingredients as the blues: a meld of European musical forms and complex African percussive rhythms. It is impossible today to sort out jazz's various historical components, which include plantation brass bands, non-unison-shouting Baptist hymns, Caribbean cult rituals, the accents of syncopated ragtime piano, the shape-note singing of white gospel. But each of these made a contribution to what became America's most distinctive original music. Even the meaning of the word jazz itself is lost, although it most likely originated as an African-American slang term for the rhythmic abandon of sexual intercourse.

Jazz as we know it emerged in New Orleans around the turn of the century. It came from the city's marching bands, dance hall orchestras, riverboat entertainment, advertising wagons, and sporting-house pianos. New Orleans was a unique American city in its blend of races, different cultural traditions, and sophisticated openness. Unlike other cities, it allowed black people to gather on Sundays for their own remembered African music and bamboula, or drum, dances in Congo Square. Also, the slave trade continued to bring Africans to New Orleans, often via the West Indies.

It is important to note that in 1894 New Orleans tightened the city's segregation laws, and the middle-class, mixed-blood, French-speaking Creoles, whose trained musicians could indeed read music, were thrown together with the darker-skinned and lower-class African Americans. As a result, there was undoubtedly a mixing 'of Creole classical training with more "authentic" African-American folk music traditions.

Jazz developed and flourished in Storyville, (district of New Orleans). There was a white Storyville, adjoining the French Quarter, and a black Storyville across Canal Street. Black women worked in both places, but black men had access to white Storyville houses only as musicians or other workers, like the young Louis Armstrong selling coal from a wagon. In 1914 Storyville contained 750 prostitutes, 300 pimps, 200 musicians, 500 domestics, and 150 saloon employees. He estimates, that 12,000 people lived off the District's income.



New Orleans produced an extraordinary roster of men who could "play hot," as they described the new music. Among the best was Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, who sported a diamond filling in his front tooth and whose nickname testified to his sexual prowess. He was a hustler, and like other pianists with access to bawdy-house residents, a sometime pimp who often traveled with a entourage of ladies. Morton was a Creole of color who disliked black people and liked to think of himself as white. He always claimed he "invented" jazz himself in 1902, and that everything significant in the music had been stolen from him. His "Jelly Roll Blues" of 1915 was the first published jazz arrangement, and he was the first black to record with a white band, the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, in 1923.



g) Segregation in the South



After the Civil War, tolerated segregation rapidly became the rule in the South. There had been little need for segregation before the war because about 95 percent of all blacks were slaves. However, the small free black population in the prewar South faced segregation or total exclusion from schools, theaters, taverns, and other public places. After the war, Southern state legislatures, dominated by former Confederates, passed laws known as *black codes* that severely limited the rights of blacks. The codes were slightly different from state to state, but they usually contained limitations on black occupations and property owning, and vagrancy laws under which blacks could be forced to work for whites if they were considered unemployed. Mississippi, for example, prohibited blacks from renting property in towns or cities and provided severe penalties, including fines or imprisonment, for blacks who did not sign labor contracts agreeing to work for whites. These codes effectively segregated blacks into the rural areas of the state where they were virtually

forced to become farm workers. Laws were also passed that segregated schools, courts, and juries. The black codes successfully prevented the newly freed slaves from improving their status in society.

In response to these laws, Congress, in 1866 seized the initiative in remaking the South. Congress, especially its Republican members, wanted to ensure that the South was rebuilt with the newly freed blacks as viable members of society. During Reconstruction the Republican Party controlled most governments in the Southern states and blacks gained the right to vote throughout the former Confederate states and were elected to political office in the South. By 1868 integrated Southern legislatures had abolished most of the laws that obviously discriminated against blacks. Meanwhile, Congress acted in a number of ways to protect the rights of the former slaves. In 1875 Congress passed a new Civil Rights Act, designed to prohibit segregation in public facilities and accommodations, such as theaters, hotels, and restaurants.

However, by 1877 the Democratic Party had regained control of the Southern states, ending Reconstruction. The advances that blacks had made—holding political offices, having the right to vote, and participating as equal members of society—were reversed. With the Democrats in power, the South gradually reimposed racially discriminatory laws. These laws reached two main goals—disenfranchisement and segregation. In order to take away black political power gained during Reconstruction, the Democratic Party in the South began to disenfranchise blacks, or prevent them from voting. There were a variety of methods to stop blacks from voting, including poll taxes, fees which were charged at the voting booth and were too expensive for most blacks; and literacy tests, which required that voters be able to read to vote. Since it had been illegal to teach a slave how to read, most adult former slaves were illiterate. The Democrats also began to create a segregated society that separated blacks and whites in almost every sphere of life. They passed laws that created separate schools and separate public facilities.

In addition, the Supreme Court turned its back on racial equality. In *The Civil Rights Cases* (1883), the court declared that Congress had no power to prevent private acts of discrimination. Rather than being the “special favorites” of the law, blacks were increasingly the special targets of laws that required discrimination and segregation.

The Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) supported the constitutionality of separate railroad cars for blacks and whites. In *Williams v. Mississippi* (1898), the Supreme Court approved a Mississippi system that prevented almost all blacks in the state from either voting or serving on juries. Before 1890 about 190,000 blacks voted in Mississippi, but in the 1890s Mississippi established a method of poll taxes and literacy tests. By 1898 this system had reduced the number of black voters and potential jurors to a few thousand. The story was similar in other places; most Southern states established voting requirements that stopped blacks from voting. In 1896 there were 130,344 blacks registered to vote in Louisiana; by 1900 the new Louisiana constitution had reduced that number to 5,320. Only 3,000 black men in Alabama were registered to vote out of the more than 180,000 black men of voting age in 1900.



h) Jim Crow Laws



The 1880s witnessed a profusion of segregationist legislation, separating blacks and whites. The system of Southern segregation was often called the Jim Crow system, after an 1830s minstrel show character. This character, a black slave, personified negative stereotypes of blacks. One after another, Southern states passed laws segregating blacks and restricting African American rights in almost every conceivable way. For example, Tennessee initiated segregated seating on railroad cars in 1881. In Alabama, laws prohibited blacks and whites from playing checkers together; in Louisiana, statutes ordered that there be separate entrances for blacks and whites at circuses. All Southern states prohibited interracial marriages.

Conditions for blacks in the South deteriorated further when the Supreme Court ruled against federal guarantees of African American rights. In 1883 the Court declared the Civil Rights Law of 1875 unconstitutional. In a series of cases, the Court also drastically undermined the 14th Amendment's protection of black citizenship rights and narrowed federal protection of the right to vote guaranteed by the 15th Amendment. Finally in 1896 the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that segregation was legal.



The following examples of Jim Crow laws are shown at the National Park Service website. Although sometimes counted among "Jim Crow laws" of the South, such laws were also passed by other states.

- *Alabama* : "All passenger stations in this state operated by any motor transportation company shall have separate waiting rooms or space and separate ticket windows for the white and colored races."

- *Arizona* : Marriages between whites with "Negroes, mulattoes, Indians, Mongolians" were declared illegal and void. School district managers were given the authority to segregate black students from white children only where there were more than eight Negro pupils in the school district.

- *Florida* : "All marriages between a white person and a Negro, or between a white person and a person of Negro descent to the fourth generation inclusive, are hereby forever prohibited." "Any Negro man and white woman, or any white man and Negro woman, who are not married to each other, who shall habitually live in and occupy in the nighttime the same room shall each be punished by imprisonment not

exceeding twelve (12) months, or by fine not exceeding \$500" "The schools for white children and the schools for Negro children shall be conducted separately."

- *Georgia* : "All persons licensed to conduct a restaurant, shall serve either white people exclusively or colored people exclusively and shall not sell to the two races within the same room or serve the two races anywhere under the same license."

- *Indiana* : Separate schools to be provided for black children. If not a sufficient number of students to organize a separate school, trustees were to find other means of educating black children.

- *Louisiana* : "Any person who shall rent any part of any such building to a Negro person or a Negro family when such building is already in whole or in part in occupancy by a white person or white family, or vice versa when the building is in occupancy by a Negro person or Negro family, shall be guilty of a transgression."

- *Maine* : Required an elector to be able to read the Constitution in English and write his name.

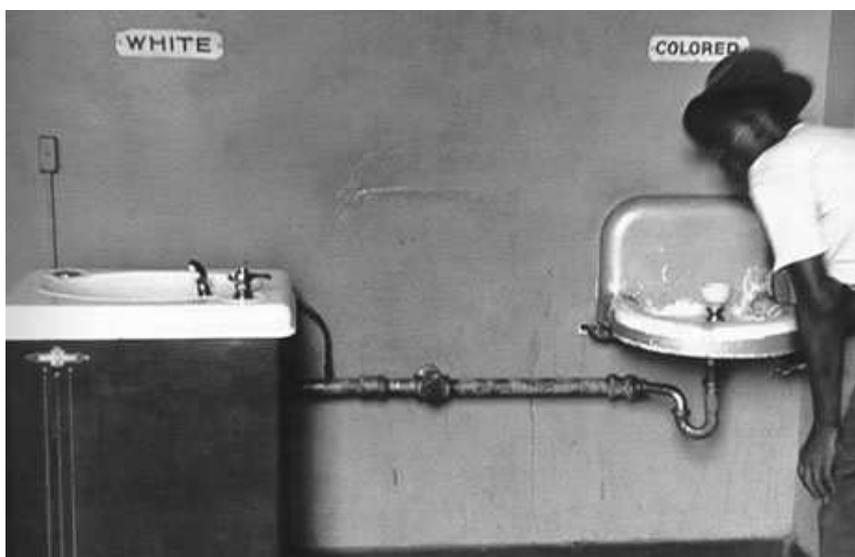
- *Michigan* : Adoption required that race be used as a consideration in adoption petitions.

- *Mississippi* : "Any person...who shall be guilty of printing, publishing or circulating printed, typewritten or written matter urging or presenting for public acceptance or general information, arguments or suggestions in favor of social equality or of intermarriage between whites and Negroes, shall be guilty of a transgression and subject to fine not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment not exceeding six months or both."

- *Nevada* : The education statute declared that blacks, Asians and Indians were prohibited from attending public schools, and that a separate school would be established for them if "considered necessary." Illegal for a white person to intermarry with any person of "Ethiopian or black race, Malay or brown race, Mongolian or yellow race, or Indian or red race, within the State."

- *North Carolina* : "Books shall not be interchangeable between the white and colored schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using them. " "The state librarian is directed to fit up and maintain a separate place for the use of the colored people who may come to the library for the purpose of reading books or periodicals." "The Corporation Commission is hereby vested with power and authority to require telephone companies to maintain separate telephone booths for white and colored patrons when there is a demand for such separate booths.

- *South Carolina* : "No persons, firms, or corporations, who or which furnish meals to passengers at station restaurants or station eating houses, in times limited by common carriers of said passengers, shall furnish said meals to white and colored passengers in the same room, or at the same table, or at the same counter." "It shall be unlawful for any parent, relative, or other white person in this State, having the control or custody of any white child, by right of guardianship, natural or acquired, or otherwise, to dispose of, give or surrender such white child permanently into the custody, control, maintenance, or support, of a negro."



i) Sharecropping



Reconstruction failed to eliminate black economic dependency largely because it did not provide African Americans with the land they needed to be independent. During the war, former slaves believed that they had earned the right to abandoned or confiscated Confederate lands through generations of uncompensated labor. Holding land might bring economic independence, and initially, it seemed as if the government might support their claim.

In January 1865 Union General William T. Sherman had issued Special Field Order No. 15, setting aside abandoned lands on the sea islands and the coastal region of South Carolina and Georgia for exclusive use of the region's freed population. Former slaves were given temporary titles to 40-acre plots of land with the promise that the titles would be made permanent by appropriate legislation. However, President Johnson reversed Sherman's order and ordered the abandoned plantations to be returned to their former owners.

By the 1880s a majority of former slaves had become sharecroppers, often working land that belonged to their former masters for a share of the profits. As Republicans in the South were driven from office or killed by terrorists, sharecroppers were left without protection and were frequently cheated by white landowners. Laws forced debtors to work the land until debts were paid, and landowners often manipulated credit to insure that sharecroppers ended each year in debt. Those who questioned the landowner's accounting might be arrested for bad debt. Those convicted were often leased out to work on the same plantation, but without wages. Landowners in need of laborers might have local police invoke vagrancy laws against blacks who refused low-paying jobs.

j) Increased Disfranchisement

White Southerners also increased their domination in the South by denying blacks the right to vote. Because the 15th Amendment to the Constitution prohibited denying the right to vote based on race, white Southerners developed other ways to disfranchise blacks. Beginning in Mississippi in 1890, they passed laws making it more difficult to vote (poll tax or literacy test). These laws discriminated against blacks who were often poor and illiterate, and many were removed from the voting rolls. Officials exempted poor whites who could pass the 'good conduct test' by having a person of good standing in the community guaranteeing for them. After 1898, Southern states adopted 'grandfather clauses,' which allowed illiterate and propertyless men to vote if their grandfathers had been eligible to vote prior to the abolition of slavery in 1865. Almost no blacks could meet this requirement.

Perhaps the most effective barrier to black political power was the white primary election. The primary determined the candidates who would run in the general election, but since the Democratic Party was the majority party, the candidates that it nominated in its primary always won the election. Primaries were the real election. Beginning in the 1890s Democrats were able to block blacks from voting in the primary on the pretext that the party was a private club and thus not subject to federal laws prohibiting discrimination.

As Democrats reasserted political authority in the South, African Americans had few legal or humanitarian protections. Throughout Reconstruction, blacks were hanged without formal charge or trial. The reported lynchings increased from about 50 a year in the early 1880s, to about 75 a year in the mid-1880s, and averaging well over 100 a year during the 1890s. Between 1890 and 1900 more than 1200 African American men and women were lynched in the United States. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, Southern black people lived under the constant threat of terrorism, were denied access to public facilities supported by their taxes, were relegated to the worst schools, and labored under an unjust economic system enforced by discriminatory laws.



k) Rise of Populism

In the 1890s black farmers and white farmers, joined by common poverty and unjust treatment from wealthy planters and business interests, attempted to construct an interracial political alliance. This populist movement organized a political party, the People's Party, and recruited blacks, some of whom were still voting in the mid-1890s. The party encouraged political equality, and white populist leaders such as Georgia's **Tom Watson** spoke out against the poll tax and other measures that discriminated against blacks. African Americans saw the populists as potential allies against the racism that threatened their rights, and many risked their lives to campaign for populist candidates. Black minister **H.T. Dole** gave 63 speeches on behalf of Watson; in Georgia, 15 black populists were killed during the state elections of 1892. Some white populists saw African Americans as allies in their campaign to take power from Southern Democrats and elected blacks to positions in the People's Party.

But the appeal of white supremacy was too strong. This coalition fell apart after 1896 as a result of intimidation and racist appeals to whites. The Ku Klux Klan's racist beliefs that all whites were superior to all blacks meant that whites were never at the bottom of society. In the end these beliefs were far more attractive than the prospect of an interracial political alliance.

I) Racial Accommodation



African Americans debated the best response to the rising tide of racial discrimination. Black educator **Booker T. Washington** reacted to this erosion of rights by advocating a policy of racial accommodation. Washington, who had been born into slavery, believed that protest aiming for social integration and political rights was destined to failure in the South. Instead, he urged blacks to acquire occupational skills for economic advancement. He argued that African Americans were the backbone of Southern labor and urged sympathetic whites to encourage manual and agricultural education for blacks to strengthen the Southern economy. With the financial support of wealthy white businessmen, he established the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Alabama in 1881 to educate black workers.

Washington's school was remarkably successful, considering the racially hostile atmosphere. His accommodationist attitude made him one of the most influential African Americans among powerful whites during the late 19th and early 20th century.

Many college-educated blacks disagreed with Washington and pursued equality through political and social protest. Ida B. Wells, Mary Church Terrell, William Monroe Trotter, and W.E.B. Du Bois were among those who established such all-black groups as the African American Council, the Niagara Movement, and in 1909, the interracial National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (**NAACP**). They demanded their civil rights and worked against the Jim Crow system of segregation through the courts and, where possible, through politics.

m) Black Culture in the Early 20th Century

During the last quarter of the 19th century, black urban societies in the South grew as many agricultural workers looked for work and the relative safety of the city. Black women in particular found jobs as domestics in the homes of the growing white middle class. A few African Americans found work in the new Southern textile industries and tobacco factories, but most of those jobs were reserved for whites. Generally, Southern blacks in the cities, like those in rural areas, shook on the edge of poverty, although such Southern cities as New Orleans, Memphis, and Atlanta had small but significant black middle class communities.

As black urban communities grew, they offered a broader range of social institutions and educational opportunities. Cities attracted many blacks who had been educated at Howard, Fisk, Atlanta, Hampton, and other black colleges established during the 19th century. The growth in the size and literacy of the urban black populace stimulated cultural and intellectual activity. Blacks published newspapers and magazines in all substantial African American communities.

The composers Scott Joplin and W. C. Handy and the poet-novelist Paul Laurence Dunbar were among the black artists who achieved prominence at the turn of the century. Many other lesser-known musicians and writers combined Western musical styles with rhythmic and melodic forms rooted in Africa and in slavery to create American jazz. This musical style reflected African notions of improvisation and community and developed distinctive regional styles, from the Dixieland popular in New Orleans and the western South to the more sophisticated sounds that became the cool jazz of the southern Atlantic states. As blacks migrated to the West and the North, they carried these regional musical styles with them.



n) The Great Migration

During the first decade of the 20th century, the infestation of Southern cotton crops by insects diminished production and reduced the need for farm labor. Growing unemployment and increasing racial violence encouraged blacks to leave the South. Soon after, in 1914, World War I broke out in Europe. Although the United States did not enter the war until 1917, its factories supplied the combatants. American industry needed labor, and the war slowed European immigration. In response, Northern manufacturers recruited Southern black workers to fill factory jobs. From 1910 to 1930 between 1.5 million and 2 million African Americans left the South for the industrial cities of the North. By 1930 more than 200,000 blacks had moved to New York, about 180,000 to Chicago, and more than 130,000 to Philadelphia.

The sudden influx of newcomers to established Northern black communities brought not only new vitality but also new problems. Tensions grew between long-time black residents and the new emigrants, who were generally poor and sometimes illiterate. Cheap taverns and dance halls appeared to cater to them, and they established new churches that rivaled older more traditional black churches.



As black communities in Northern cities grew, black working people became the clientele for an expanding black professional and business class, gaining in political and economic power. This new black leadership replaced traditional leaders whose status often depended on their connection to influential whites.

Under these conditions, many social conflicts gradually gave way to an increasing sense of racial pride and social cohesion. While Jim Crow laws and political terrorism continued to discourage blacks from voting in the South, African Americans in Northern cities became an important political force. Black fraternal orders, political organizations, social clubs, and newspapers asserted an urban consciousness that became the foundation for the militancy and African American cultural innovations of the 1920s.

o) Early Black Resistance to Segregation

Blacks fought against discrimination whenever possible. In the late 1800s blacks sued in court to stop separate seating in railroad cars, states' disfranchisement of voters, and denial of access to schools and restaurants. One of the cases against segregated rail travel was *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), in which the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that "separate but equal" accommodations were constitutional. In fact, separate was almost never equal, but the Plessy doctrine provided constitutional protection for segregation for the next 50 years.



To protest segregation, blacks created new national organizations. The National Afro-American League was formed in 1890; the **Niagara Movement** in 1905; and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. In 1910 the National Urban League was created to help blacks make the transition to urban, industrial life.

The **NAACP** became one of the most important black protest organizations of the 20th century. It relied mainly on a legal strategy that challenged segregation and discrimination in courts to obtain equal treatment for blacks. An early leader of the NAACP was the historian and sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois, who starting in 1910 made powerful arguments in favor of protesting segregation as editor of the NAACP magazine, *The Crisis*. NAACP lawyers won court victories over voter disfranchisement in 1915 and residential segregation in 1917, but failed to have lynching outlawed by the Congress of the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. These cases laid the foundation for a legal and social challenge to segregation although they did little to change everyday life. In 1935 Charles H. Houston, the NAACP's chief legal counsel, won the first Supreme Court case argued by exclusively black counsel representing the NAACP. This win invigorated the NAACP's legal efforts against segregation, mainly by convincing courts that segregated facilities, especially schools, were not equal. In 1939 the NAACP created a separate organization called the NAACP Legal Defense Fund that had a nonprofit, tax-exempt status that was denied to the NAACP because it lobbied the U.S. Congress. Houston's chief aide and later his successor, **Thurgood Marshall**, a brilliant young lawyer who would become a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, began to challenge segregation as a lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.



p) World War I

With America's entrance into World War I the military needs used up manpower from Northern industries. Increasing job vacancies attracted more black migrants to urban industrial centers, and for the first time, substantial numbers of black women held industrial jobs. Thousands of black women worked in industrial plants producing goods for the war effort and for a growing domestic consumer market. Most appreciated the higher pay and greater autonomy compared to domestic work. As black communities in the North grew, so did opportunities for blacks, more of whom became politicians, newspaper publishers, real estate brokers, insurance agents, lawyers, and teachers, serving the black communities.

African Americans also went to war; approximately 400,000 black soldiers served in the armed forces. Over half of the African American men who served in the war were stationed in France. They served in segregated units, and most were assigned as cooks, laborers, shipment handlers, or to other noncombat support positions, but some black regiments saw extensive combat duty. Some black regiments were recognized for their achievements; the entire 369th regiment (along with some members of the 370th, 371st, and 372nd regiments) was awarded the Croix de Guerre by France for distinguished service.



Despite their demonstrated military proficiency and bravery, black soldiers were insulted and harassed by white soldiers. Some American military officials attempted to establish the Jim Crow system in France. General John Pershing, commander of the Allied forces, issued a document called "*Secret Information Concerning the Black American Troops*." This document warned French military leaders against treating black soldiers as equals, but French people were unconcerned about such American practices and often welcomed black soldiers as heroes.

Most black leaders supported America's involvement in the war, but not all agreed. Labor leader A. Philip Randolph and socialist Chandler Owen vigorously opposed World War I and were sentenced to over two years in jail for publishing their views. Leaders were united, however, in the view that blacks' wartime sacrifices entitled them to first-class citizenship. At the end of the war,

African Americans were determined to demand respect from the nation for which they had fought.

APPENDIX 3

Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901)

The leading African-American landscape painter of the nineteenth century, **Edward Mitchell Bannister**, was a leading artist of rustic motifs and the American wilderness. He added his own sense of tranquility to his portrayal of regional landscape.

He was born in St. Andrews, Nova Scotia, Canada, around 1828. His father, Edward, was an African American, from Barbados, and his mother was Hannah Alexander, presumably white. Both parents died early in Bannister's life, and after a period at sea he moved to Boston, where he became a barber and a photographer.

Bannister began sketching and painting as a child and continued to paint in Boston, specializing in portraits because they were marketable. In 1857 he married Christiana Cardeaux, a successful hairdresser and wigmaker from North Kingston, Rhode Island, who was part black and part Narragansett Indian. Together they participated in Boston's large and politically active free black community. Bannister sang tenor in the Crispus Attucks Choir, and he and Cardeaux may in fact have met at the Histrionic Club, a black dramatic group. His studio was near that of the important African-American sculptor Edmonia Lewis.

Bannister and his wife were particularly involved in the abolitionist movement and in spiritedly escaping slaves to Canada and freedom on the Underground Railroad. They boarded with Lewis Hayden, Boston's antislavery and Underground Railroad leader. Bannister was secretary of the Union Progressive Association, which sponsored the famous meeting in Boston's Tremont Temple on January 1, 1863, to hear the news of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and at which Frederick Douglass, William Wells Brown, and William Cooper Nell spoke.

In 1870, following the Civil War, the Bannisters moved to Providence, Rhode Island, to escape Boston's growing racism. By this time Bannister's work was more widely known. In 1876 he submitted a large landscape, *Under the Oaks*, to the show at Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition, where it received a first-prize bronze medal and made Bannister the first African American to win a national award for art. Guards tried to keep him out of the exhibition where his work was on display, and when officials discovered he was black, they tried to revoke the prize. *Under the Oaks* sold for \$1,500, a large sum at the time, but, like much of Bannister's work, it is now lost. Only a few of his pieces survive.

Bannister's style was influenced by Millet and the Barbizon and Hudson River schools, but he added his own distinctive touch to rural and wooded American landscape. In Providence he was, a founder in 1880 of the Providence Art Club, which evolved into the preexistent Rhode Island School of Design. Bannister died on January 9, 1901, just after offering prayer at a midweek service at Elmwood Avenue Baptist Church.

**Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937)**

James A. Porter, the Howard University art historian and critic, said that **Henry Ossawa Tanner** was "*the first genius among Negro artists.*" Tanner was certainly the first black artist whose talents were recognized around the world. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 21, 1859, the son of Benjamin Tucker Tanner and Sarah Miller Tanner. Sarah Tanner was a former slave whose mixed-blood father was the son of a Virginia plantation owner; she had escaped to the North on the Underground Railroad. Benjamin Tanner was a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the founder of the AME Church Review, a leading black periodical of the day. He gave his son the middle name "Ossawa," after John Brown of the Osawatimie, Kansas, antislavery raid who was martyred the year Tanner was born.



Tanner studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia under Thomas Eakins, who was to remain a major influence on his work. He operated a photograph gallery and taught at Clark College. To escape American racism, both personal and professional, he traveled to Africa and the Middle East and moved to Paris, where he lived and worked the rest of his life. In 1899 he married Jessie Macaulay Olsson, a white opera singer from San Francisco.

In the 1890s Tanner produced some of his most memorable work, notably *The Banjo Lesson* (1893) and *The Thankful Poor* (1894). In 1895 with *Daniel in the Lions Den*, he began the paintings with biblical themes for which he is now best remembered. His work displays a unique use of color and, with its dreamlike quality, clearly pre-figures the symbolist and impressionist movements.

Tanner helped make American art independent of Europe, and he, unlike Bannister and others, used African-American subjects, especially at the beginning of his career.

