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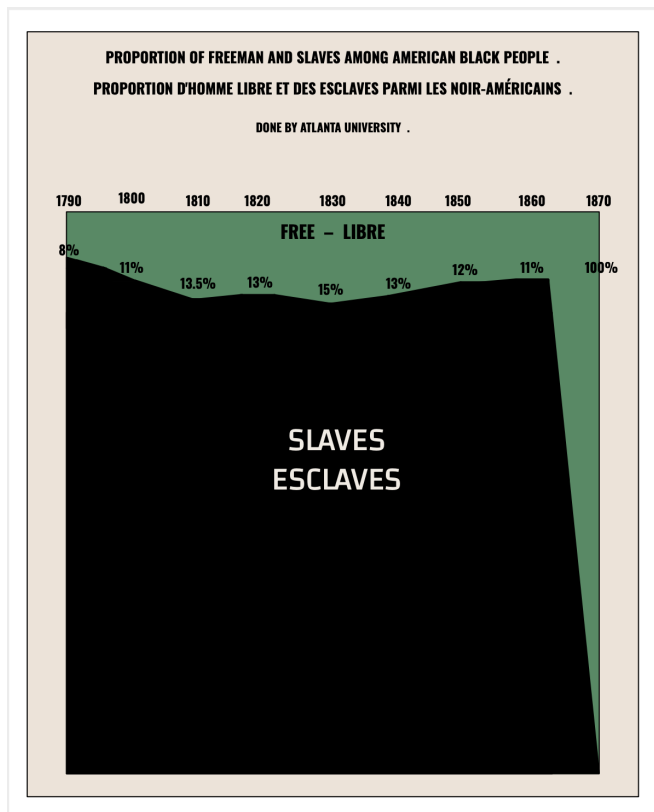
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Reflection 7

Honors 220 B

Reflect on what you have learned during this week in class. Some prompts that might be helpful to get you started (or not! Feel free to go rogue!). What have you learned about possible motivations Du Bois might have had when designing the visualizations for the Paris exhibit? What struck you about Du Bois the man? What surprised you about what you have learned this week? What do you wonder about? What are you learning about that is the most satisfying? The most frustrating? What do you want to know more about?

This week, I finished up my 4 final DuBois plate recreations, so I wanted to take this opportunity to talk about one of the ones I chose, and why. The first portrait piece I chose was “Proportion of Freeman and Slaves Among American Black People,” as seen below. This is an iconic piece that is quintessential to the



exhibit’s methodology: “an honest straightforward exhibit of a small nation of people, picturing their life and development *without apology or gloss*, and above all *made by themselves* [W.E.B. DuBois].” This plate is from the latter segment of his visualizations, “A Series of Statistical Charts Illustrating the Condition of the Descendants of Former African Slaves Now in Residence in the United States of America,” and it effortlessly, unapologetically addresses the cryptic international and national role of chattel slavery– which Europe openly participated in up to 1836. I think that’s why this is one of the several chosen documents to use an additional global language, French. Denmark abolished slave trade first, in 1803. The British Empire and its colonies made the trade officially illegal in 1907, the US in 1808, and by 1836, the Dutch, French, Spanish, Brazilian, and Portuguese governments, as well as their territories, had also

abolished their trades. All in all, Europe held an intimate and soberingly recent connection to the slave trade and it’s impacts. Hence, the use of an additional global language. It pulls the audience into this constructive confrontation. This document is also an example of the precedent DuBois set. “Done by Atlanta University.” “Free.” Here is a piece documenting the double consciousness, the conflict facing Black Americans as they navigated their identity in a society that marginalized them– in a world that did. And yet, this image stood on a global platform, confronting millions of viewers with the intellect, capacity, autonomy, solidarity, and power of the Black community.