



Defending A Liberal: The Liberal Logic of Booker T. Washington’s Political Thought

Qi Shu^{[a],*}

^[a]Doctoral candidate, School of Political Science and Public Administration, China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, China.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

At present, the academic circles at home and abroad are locked in a binary judgment on Booker T. Washington. Generally, Booker T. Washington has also been being in the comments with two different faces in the field of the academic circle. Some scholars believed that Booker T. Washington was the one who pushed the black rights movement to the rock bottom. While, other scholars believed that his political thoughts appeared to be a kind of special product of a specific historical period. To get out of this dual trap, I believe that Booker T. Washington is absolutely not an accomplice of white racism, or just only a great black political leader having the tinge of a cult of personality; instead, from my perspective of view, he is a liberal fighter with black skin outside and white soul inside. Actually, behind Booker T. Washington’s political thought, there has been lying a set of deep-rooted liberal logic which makes him a liberal at any time. We have to say that it is an immutable truth which is the appearance and ending of each historical figure is the epitome of that era; and, the formation and development of his or her thoughts do not to be isolated from the enormous influence of social mainstream culture. More specifically, the American paradox of liberalism, the self-concept of liberalism, and the discourse hegemony of liberalism all profoundly influenced the formation and development of Booker T. Washington’s political thought, and all those have been defending such an ambitious black boy vigorously as an out-and-out liberal.

Key words: Booker T. Washington; The black; Liberalism; Self-concept; Discourse hegemony; Political thought

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INTRODUCTION

After a hasty return to the Union, the conservative right in the south created an injustice web of economy, politics, social and cultural for the black. And, almost all the black were in a state of political incompetence, economic proletariat and social helplessness. In this historical context, Booker T. Washington took over the leadership of the struggle and stepped on the historical stage as a new generation of the black political leaders.

Generally, the American academic circle began to pay attention to Booker T. Washington’s political thought in the early 20th century. Until the 1950s and 1980s, a large number of scientific research achievements successively emerged. In general, the American academic circle mainly focused on the research fields of the Tuskegee movement, Hampton-Tuskegee thought and Booker T. Washington conservative politics. Some great scholastic achievements were not difficult to find like *Booker T. Washington and the Negro’s Place in American Life* written by Oscar Handlin in the 1950s. This book tried to fully show Hampton-Tuskegee’s thought, and deeply discussed the profound influence of Hampton-Tuskegee’s thought by combining a lot of historical facts. In the 1960s, many scholars tried to attribute the formation of Hampton-Tuskegee thought to the special personal growth experience of Booker T. Washington. However, a considerable number of right-wing scholars deliberately avoided or even denied the negative impact of the white supremacists on the black race at that time. In 1969, Mathews published an academic monograph

named *Booker T. Washington: Educator and Interracial Interpreter*. This work comprehensively sorted out the basic contents of the Hampton-Tuskegee's thought and discussed the main causes of it from multiple perspectives. Until 1972, *The Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 1-13* was finally published by the university of Illinois press and edited by Louis R. Harlan, a renowned American historian. It was no exaggeration to say this great work was the largest collection of Booker T. Washington's manuscripts, letters, speeches and personal letters, and so far, it has been hailed as a valuable resource for a comprehensive and in-depth study of Booker T. Washington's ideas.

In the Chinese academic circle, there are not many significant academic studies of Booker T. Washington's thoughts. However, there still are some academic achievements like *African American Political Leaders and Their Political Thoughts* written by Professor Wang Enming, which definitely is a valuable scientific research achievement. In this book, professor Wang (2006) used a whole separate chapter to briefly summarize the origin and evolution of Booker T. Washington's political thought, and clearly pointed out that Washington's political thought had a certain characteristics of "compromise doctrine and incrementalism" (p. 77). In addition, Zhang Juguo (2000) in his academic article named *Dubois and Booker T. Washington Solutions to the Problem of the Black People* clearly noted that by comparing different approaches to solve the problems of the black, it is emphasized that "Booker T. Washington's plan had played a significant role in improving the economic situation of the blacks" (p. 73). Until now, for my part, few other academic articles can surpass Professor Wang's works.

However, the evaluation on the Booker T. Washington and his thoughts in Chinese academic circle appears to be trapped in a binary judgment. Consequently, Booker T. Washington has also been in the comments with two different faces in the field of academic circle at home. Some scholars believed that Booker T. Washington was the one who pushed the black rights movement to the rock bottom. While, other scholars believed that his political thought seemed to be a kind of special product of a specific historical period. While, the most important point is not being a judge who judges in right and wrong, but is being like a wise man who respects the natural law by telling the meaningful essence of beings from its various forms. To get out of this dual trap, I believe that Booker T. Washington is absolutely not an accomplice of white racism, or just only a great black political leader having the tinge of a cult of personality; instead, from my perspective of view, he is a liberal fighter with black skin outside and white soul inside. Actually, behind Booker T. Washington's political thought, there has been lying a set of deep-rooted liberal logic which makes him a liberal at any time. Specifically, the American paradox of liberalism, the self-concept of liberalism, and the discourse hegemony

of liberalism all profoundly influenced the formation and development of Booker T. Washington's political thought, and all those have been defending such an ambitious black boy vigorously as an out-and-out liberal.

1. UNDER THE PARADOX OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM: THE REALISTIC BASIS OF BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

1.1 A Truth of Freedom in North America: A Historical Liberal Paradox

Since the birth of racial slavery in North America, the ordinary and noble value of freedom has been posted in the cage of abnormal growth. Subject of freedom is limited by gender, race, and property and so on, which makes freedom itself lose universal applicability. Therefore, liberalism, with freedom as its core idea, gradually falls into the paradox of history, that is, freedom is enslaved and revised. Obviously, white Americans weave an unerring web of injustice in order to exclude blacks from mainstream society. Meanwhile, liberalism has also been deconstructed layer by layer, and freedom, equality, justice and other basic values have been reconstructed step by step on the basis of the principle of utilitarianism. Consequently, the spirit of American liberalism is swallowed up ruthlessly. As American liberalism fell into the paradox of history, the second-generation black political leader Booker T. Washington, with his focus on reality, blazed a moderate path for the black rights struggle.

1.2 Under the Real Situation: the Survivalism of Booker T. Washington's Political Thought

Actually, the formation and development of Booker T. Washington's political thought is a certain historical product of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. Meanwhile, it is also a set of survival rules based on survivalism in the context of the paradox of American liberalism. We all know that Booker T. Washington was born a slave, and as a boy, he lived with other slaves in a wooden box. Just as Booker T. Washington once recalled in his works, "we suffered in the bitter cold of winter from this humble cottage" (Washington, trans., 2007, p.2). And, the freed man named Booker T. Washington followed his mother to his stepfather in West Virginia and was engaged as a servant by the Puritan lady Louise Rufner. During this time, Booker T. Washington first touched upon the ethics of the white middle class, such as self-discipline, diligence, moderation and so on. However, going to Hampton school was a real turning point for Washington since the educational philosophy of Samuel Armstrong, the first headmaster of the Hampton school, was important to the early enlightenment of Washington's thoughts.

As Booker T. Washington's political thought became mature, he always hoped that the black people establish the moral ethics of the white middle class whose basic content was hardworking, assiduous temperance and proper behavior; master production techniques through vocational education for workers and peasants; put aside the unnecessary struggle for political rights for the time being, and take economic development as the primary goal, and realize the independence of the black economy, and then open up a road of multi-racial harmonious coexistence driven by economic development and political progress. Moreover, from Washington's part, the black need live in harmony with the white in a humble and submissive manner, in order to obtain as many effective resources as possible, and then gradually realize a beautiful long-cherished wish integrating into the white mainstream society through continuous improvement of their self-owned literacy and economic status. However, after Washington went deep into the southern society for many times, he deeply realized that there had been being much the racial exclusion and even the strong hatred of the white conservatives in the south, as a result, the values of freedom, equality and justice had never fully and truly benefited the majority of the black community.

Why is it quite important to develop the economy of the black, even at the expense of political rights? Easy to answer, politics is always prepared on the basis of economy. Let us see together the actual economic situation of the black during such a black history. Actually, the agrarian revolution failed, social conflicts ensued, and the blacks naturally fell into the vortex of poverty and destitution. Additionally, due to the sudden break in the relationship between master and slave, blacks had almost no basic means of production, and most blacks were illiterate at that time. Accordingly, the vast majority of blacks had no survival skills other than the ability to operate in the fields and serve as domestic servants. Besides, the southern conservative forces cruelly oppressed the black and squeezed high profits by making use of the malpractices of the black in terms of labor skills and education, by making unreasonable tenancy system, and by employing inhumane means such as labor compensation, false accounting and deception. Therefore, most black Americans were in debt and became economic slaves. "We get nothing but freedom" lamented Mary Gaffney, a former slave (Foner, trans. 2010, p.710). Therefore, only vigorously developing the economy was the fundamental way for the black to rescue themselves. And, black economic independence and self-determination were the most urgent priorities, not the pursuit of "something specious and superficial" (Washington, 1965, p.192), that is, black political rights. However, we have to know that the compromise doctrine of Washington only temporarily abandons the pursuit of social equality, which is only to gain more effective resources for the economic independence and autonomy of the black.

From what we have discussed above, it is undoubted that Washington's temporary policy of compromise just reflects the reality of the paradox of American liberalism at that time; in turn, it is the paradox of American liberalism that just constitutes the realistic basis for the formation of Washington's conservative political thought with survival feelings. Specifically, under the paradox of American liberalism, Washington realized that the primary problem facing black people was not the problem of rights, but the problem of survival. Encountered the failure of freedom and equality in American politics, Washington tended to save the whole blacks through an indirect path, which vigorously developed the black economy to fight for much more survival opportunities, even at the cost of political rights. Therefore, it was very unfair to just judge such a liberal as a black traitor since he had been never turning his eyes away from black rights. Meanwhile, conversely, it was Booker T. Washington who creatively blazed a new trail on the way towards freedom and liberation for the black in America during that special history.

2. THE SELF-CONCEPT OF LIBERALISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S ECONOMIC THOUGHTS

2.1 "Self" and "Property" in the Context of the Liberal Theoretical System

All knows that individualism is a core concept of liberalism, and the basic question of individualism lies in the concept of self. Just as Wu Yujun (2012) noted that "the individual is the very essence, and then the society is the derivation" (p. 25). Under the context of contemporary liberalism, self-development and self-improvement appear to be quite important almost in all fields of producing and living. Yet, other crucial value is no doubted the property, which ensures the whole processing of self-development and self-progression goes smoothly and even protects self from being slaved and harmed. Thus, it is so vital to ask for considerate protection for property rights, and also it is no cause for much criticism to pursue for it.

2.2 The Main Contents of Booker T. Washington's Economic Thoughts

Under the influence of both modern self-concept of liberalism and Armstrong's educational thoughts, Washington gradually created a set of understandings and methods in coping with the black economy, which the main idea lie in vigorously developing the black economy, spreading the educational concept of the vocational and technical education, and ensuring that black people have certain economic status in American society, even temporarily abandoning the basic rights of social equality.

Although at the time his viewpoint of self-development and self-improvement was strongly conservative, Washington firmly believed that the fast and independent development of black economy had to be a current priority since it was an important basis for self-development and could also accumulate economic momentum for further rights struggle. Samuel R. Spencer, Jr. (1955) quoted Washington's words that were "there must be for our race, as for all races, an economic foundation, economic prosperity, economic independence" (p. 94). Under the guidance of the liberal self-view, Washington gradually constructed a set of compromised economic view that economic development was superior to the rights movement and paid considerable attention to the vocational education.

After inspecting Washington's economic thoughts, we can see that this set of compromised economic view is consisted by two main parts. First of all, black people cannot abandon the land of the south which is the stronghold of black economic development, and only focusing on the development of agricultural economy is the last straw for the whole black in the North America. Once the close tie between black people and lands is broken suddenly, the black must be in terrible darkness for their totally new social status, economic refugees; besides, in terms of the relationship between economic development and the appeal of political rights, economic development temporarily takes precedence over the acquisition of political rights. David H. Jackson, Jr (2008) quoted Washington's words that were "to make the negro, first of all a property-holding, industrious, intelligent, virtuous citizen, and a Republican, or Democrat afterward" (p. 32). However, why does Washington take the south as the stronghold of the black? Some points maybe explain. On the one hand, it was mainly due to the fact that for such a long time black people were much more familiar with the environment and mode of life in the south than in the north; On the other hand, it was the inevitable outcome of Washington's speech in Atlanta. Besides, it is also tied to Washington's firm belief in the peaceful coexistence between the white and the black, as well as his optimism in the whites' kindness that they could help poor blacks with moral attention. In other words, Washington had always believed that white people with ideals of racial equality should assist black people. In his view, this had to be in conformity with the American spirit of justice. Therefore, in Washington's mind, there were always an everlasting love and great expectations for the south. However, even so, it was the self-development and wealth accumulation of the black that would be a real shock absorber to ease the pressure of racial relations, and it would also be the first link to start the follow-up rights struggle.

Secondly, another aspect of Washington's economic thought of compromise was to pay much attention to the cultivation of vocational education of agriculture and industry, and closely combine theory and practice, so

as to promote the rapid growth of the black economy. "Becoming a landowner through the mastery of agricultural techniques and hard work" (Wang, 2006, p.70). For Washington, property itself means a technique to strive for political rights. However, this pragmatic idea of vocational education is not the original work of Washington. Actually, it can be traced to the late civil war. After the civil war, with the great progress of industrialization, reformers gradually expanded the field of struggle to the field of education. Most reformers felt that the growth of modern society required more skilled workers and scientific agricultural techniques. Therefore, vocational and technical education had been paid more attention to. In 1862, Morrill Land-Grant College provided more convenient conditions for the development of agricultural and industrial education. Before 1890, Hampton and other vocational colleges were established successively, and the idea of vocational education was widely spread. From the perspective of ideological inheritance, the idea of vocational education of Washington was mainly originated from his earliest teacher Samuel Armstrong. At the time of founding the school, Armstrong attempted to alleviate the racial conflicts between white southerners, white northerners and black compatriots by developing vocational education. Armstrong believed that mainstream white values could cleanse black people of such natural defects as selfishness, backwardness and low status. In addition, Armstrong also believed that vocational education was a type of moral and ethical indoctrination, which could gradually integrate the black culture into the mainstream culture. From this respect, these political and economic ideas of Armstrong are the rudiments of Washington's economic thoughts.

On the whole, it has to be said that this kind of political idea emphasizing the determinism of economic wealth is a powerful response to the self-concept of liberalism. Obviously, Washington bases the black political struggle on economic success. If black people want to obtain much more political resources in the political system reasonably and legally, they must establish the American political mainstream values firstly and vigorously develop the agricultural economy secondly, and focus on vocational education always. In short, self-help as a crucial concept of liberalism is essential for success.

3. THE INTEGRATION AND RESPONSE OF BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S POLITICAL THOUGHTS TO THE HEGEMONY OF LIBERAL DISCOURSE

3.1 How to Understand the "Discourse" and the "Hegemony of Discourse"

What is the discourse? Foucault equates the "discourse" with power and holds that "discourse itself is a kind of

power” (Wu Yujun, 2012, p.170). As for the concept of the “power of discourse”, it is mainly used to “examine the formation of discourse power within the knowledge system and its relationship with the external knowledge system” (Pan Xiaojuan, 2001, p.164). Generally speaking, hegemony of discourse in liberalism is mainly reflected in two dimensions: the externally constructed “colonial discourse system” and the internally constructed Anglo-Saxon discourse system (Wu Yujun, 2012, p.170). In the process of combining discourse with power, whether the participants of discourse can equally obtain the right to intervene is often influenced by gender, ethnicity, race, property, identity and qualification.

3.2 How to Understand the “Anglo-Saxon Discourse System”

In the context of the mutual impact and overlap of American multi-cultures, it is generally manifested as the maximum exclusiveness and minimum tolerance of the white mainstream culture to its subculture. As the discourse initiator, Anglo-Saxon culture has historically been in the center of power, controlling the discourse power for a long time and trampling on the discourse power of black people, women and immigrants. For example, the Declaration of Independence, the epitome of American liberalism, did not expand the limits of freedom and equality to such minorities as slaves and women. “The individuals who join in the social contract are those educated and property-owning whites who speak the national language” (Meng Fan, 2001, p.178). Multiculturalism criticizes the Anglo-Saxon cultural centralism as the theory of cultural hegemony and holds that the cultural hegemony of liberalism completely ignores the growth of other community cultures. Therefore, the hegemony system of liberal discourse subtly conceals the important contributions of blacks, women and other minorities in the development of American history.

3.3 The Real Living Condition of the Black under the Hegemony System of American Liberal Discourse

Under the hegemony system of American liberal discourse, white people have a positive image of being positive, hardworking, thrifty and trying their best to obtain more wealth, however, black people are portrayed as lazy, ignorant, dirty, ignorant of the law and deliberately undermining social security. So, white people seem to be entitled to natural rights to educate, restrain, control and even enslave the blacks. Actually, in the context of the hegemony of American liberal discourse, White Americans see themselves as parents and masters of the black, and gradually control black people in the economic, political and social spheres; even some right-wingers deny the contribution of black people to American history, and openly claim that the reconstruction period is a serious

setback for American history. What else? What is more frightening is that under the influence of social Darwinism and ethnocentrism, an extremely solid system of apartheid is gradually established. By 1896, the Supreme Court had established the “separate but equal” principle in the case of “Plessy v. Ferguson” (Eric Fonna, trans., 2010, p.829). The states enacted laws one after another, developing a system of segregation throughout the whole society, from hospitals and schools to toilets and theaters, to railway stations and public transportation. But it never ended. Finally, this kind of discourse hegemony with racial discrimination was also extended to the political field. In other words, between 1890 and 1906, southern states successively passed legislative proposals and launched a movement of disenfranchising blacks. Specifically, in the process of election, there were a lot of technological roadblocks prepared for the black. Besides, it was just so common to find the news report about poll taxes, literacy tests, an understanding of the state constitution and so on. In addition, the right-wing forces in the south, such as the Ku Klux Klan, a terrorist group, forced the blacks out of politics through quite brutal acts such as mutilation, beating, hanging, and lynching. Thus, the fifteenth amendment was wantonly undermined by southern conservatives. And, in 1883, the Supreme Court ruled that the fourteenth amendment to the constitution applied only to the behavior of government, which mean that there was no doubt that this was an indulgence of racial discrimination, and at this point, the fourteenth amendment to the constitution also existed in name only.

3.4 Booker T. Washington’s Response to the Hegemony of American Liberal Discourse

However, under the high pressure of the cultural system of white supremacy in American discourse, Booker T. Washington seemed never to abandon, but always maintained a positive and optimistic political attitude towards it. Just as Frederick Douglas expected the democratic political system in America, Washington completely recognized and accepted the mainstream of the American political culture, and also placed the hope of achieving the harmonious coexistence of the blacks and the whites into the self-adjustment mechanism of the American democratic political system. Even from Washington’s point of view, white chauvinism was not entirely to be blamed for the discrimination and persecution of black people. After all, there were all kinds of problems in the black race itself. Interestingly, in the eyes of Washington, the hegemony of white discourse was not a groundless thing, but could serve as a counterforce to spur the continuous progress of black people. Therefore, Washington believed the key to ease and smooth the racial conflicts between the blacks and the whites rested with reconstructing the image of black people and improving the overall quality of the black race with the ethical values of the white middle class and the spirit of capitalism.

3.4.1 Booker T. Washington's Conservative Attitude in the Context of the Hegemony of American Liberal Discourse

Yet, facing with the hegemony of liberal discourse and even brutal acts of the whites, Booker T. Washington still chose to believe and placed rather high hope to the political culture and the political system of capitalism in North America. In 1911, a vicious incident happened in Pennsylvania in which a black man was burned to die by a mob of white who together murdered the black people with lynching (David H. Jackson, Jr., 2008, p.129-130). After that, although Booker T. Washington as well as other Tuskegee leaders strongly condemned such a brutal case, they still insisted that the better solution to racial tensions should depend on the political and judicial system, not just in a bloody revolution. Obviously, we can easily to find out that the shadows of conservative of Garrison and Frederick Douglas have been drawing subtle influence on Washington's political thought and behavior, however, it is no deniable that Washington considered any kinds of hardships as weapons to fire on weakness of black selves, even some hardships are included by racial battles. In that sense, it seems that a sort of spirit of self-reflection and the concept of obligation and right are formed gradually.

3.4.2 Accepting and Self-revising: Booker T. Washington's Attitude towards the Mainstream of Moral Values and Behavior Norms

Here comes a question which is why it is Washington who could accept and recognize the mainstream culture of America as well as the moral values of capitalism in America so fast and profound. It seems that from the perspective of growth experience, Washington's recognition of American mainstream culture and moral and ethical values originated from his study experience in Hampton school, where the white racial hegemony deliberately invaded in the cultural field. In some perspective, it is clear to know that Booker T. Washington is no doubt the typical black one nourished and cultivated by this kind of delicate cultural invasion. In turn, Because of this set of mainstream values that contributed to his political success, Washington came up with the idea of spreading his personal success experience to the entire black community, that is, the gradual intellectualization of the black community by the set of white cultural values, so as to achieve interracial integration and symbiosis. Beyond all doubt, Washington indeed benefited from learning moral values and behavioral norms of the whites so that he could not only start his political career smoothly through accepted by some renowned white people including the authority in top, but also provide a relatively new method for the black rights movement. But, what did Washington learn in Hampton school? During his time at Hampton school, diligent Washington fortunately received the headmaster Armstrong's attention, and worked so hard to learn academic all subjects. And, gradually

Washington cultivated some typical white moral habits, such as industrious and simple, clean and tidy, punctuality and other ethical and moral concepts. As Mr. Armstrong frequently stressed the importance of personal hygiene and checked daily, so that his students had to fasten their buttons, clean duty stains and tighten shoelaces. However, just entering Hampton school, it was a big challenge for Washington because he almost had little knowledge of these critical moral norms of the whites. Over time, Washington step by step learned about how to use a toothbrush and why people need to take a bath. Now, for most of us, those little stories of him make us laugh, but just those minor trivial and unimportant seemingly make today's Washington. It was those moral values and codes of conduct that shed a light of enlightenment to Washington's soul and gradually made him came to realize that these daily rules did not just make him look like a gentleman; What's more, these codes of conduct enable him to gain respect from others. Obviously, in the young man Booker T. Washington, the influence of white cultural hegemony has been most vividly demonstrated.

Honestly, living in the era of all-pervasive hegemony of liberal discourse, Booker T. Washington was undoubtedly sucked into the spiral of the Anglo-Saxon cultural hegemony. From the perspective of the theory of cultural hegemony of liberalism, the formation and development of many thoughts of Booker T. Washington can be regarded as a kind of internal integration of the dominant discourse of the Gilded age, and then turn it into a specific discourse which is rather conducive to the development and growth of the black community. Thus, for Booker T. Washington's part, the black community must develop some important characters including self-reliance, industry, restraint, and hard work, and actively define their thinking and behavior by the mainstream of American moral values. What's more, within the framework of the mainstream values of the white people, the image of the black race should be remolded radically, and the cultural integration between the two different races should be promoted, so as to realize the ultimate goal of the harmonious coexistence of the black and white race. Therefore, it is obvious that Booker T. Washington's unique solution to the problem, which how the black community accepts the mainstream culture of the North America and how to integrate into the mainstream society is undoubtedly a clear "reflection of the idea of cultural hegemony from other external sources" (Wang, 2006, p.86).

CONCLUSION

From what we have discussed above, we have to say that it is an immutable truth which is the appearance and ending of each historical figure is the epitome of that era; and, the formation and development of his or her thoughts

doom not to be isolated from the enormous influence of social mainstream culture. In the historical period of the vigorous development of modern liberalism, the second generation of black political leader Booker T. Washington gradually weaved black politics, economy and culture into the progress of liberalism of the North America. At the same time, according to the real situation of the blacks at that time, Washington also blazed a great new and meaningful method of the black rights movement. As a result, blacks not only obtained relatively much time and opportunities to grow in economic and education to some extent, but also accumulated quite much strength and resources to continuous political rights battle in the following days. No matter how conservative the strategies are, and no matter how much blood on the way to liberty and equality, but we have to join hands on an important point, which Booker T. Washington's primitive dream is to bring freedom and equality to the blacks as same as the whites enjoined, and he undoubtedly put his high hope not to other places such as African continent like other black leaders do, but their birthplace of the North America. Washington also has his own dream, which he hoped one day black and white could be hand in hand with a smiling face, shining peace and living together on their same beloved land. Unfortunately, in his fantastic dream, so many problems came to. Fraud, kill, slaughter, and even separation for such a long time appear to be a cluster of diseases which have been ferociously spreading across the whole country. What could we do? It is "we", such a simple word in a dictionary for almost each and every person, which is the most crucial vocabulary for Washington which is lying in the central location of Washington's dreaming place. "We" means together, integration, assistance, sharing, respect as well as the same rights of freedom and equality. In respect of the dream of liberation, Washington has not any different with any other black leaders who have been struggling for breaking the chains of racial discrimination and separation; but they are running at different roads with their own understanding and ideas. Some are aggressive, and some are conservative. And, Washington is owned by the latter. What's more, in the respect of the black political practice, Washington has blazed a progressive path for the black political movement, which the black economy and self-development lay in the dominant place; in the aspect of American political culture, Washington's thoughts, to some extent, further enriched the content of American liberalism.

Obviously, it is not difficult to find there is a set of liberal logic behind Booker T. Washington's thoughts. More specifically, it was just the American paradox of liberalism laid a realistic foundation for the development of the black economy and the establishment of the road of political development of compromise and reconciliation. In the context of liberal paradox in North American, the

blacks and other minorities were not as the same as other white people to be eligible for the rights of freedom and equality in this country. Thus, the first question to be answered for the black was how to survive without the protection of the basic rights. The answer Washington found out was to be self-reliance and self-development, of course, with the necessary help of the white. That's to say, only if the black economy gradually established and the black became an essential part of the white society, the survival opportunity and even some sound changes would come to the black community in America. After all, it was the actual social situation which woke Washington up, which nobody could win a battle without any money and help. From this perspective, in fact, what Washington was doing was just to centralize effective resources including political, economic, and social one as much as possible and make them available, so as to obtain opportunities to survive firstly and then to live with legal citizenship in the following days.

Besides, it was the liberal self-concept which laid the theoretical foundation for Booker T. Washington's adherence to the south, for the development of agricultural economy, for the development of vocational education, and for the promotion of black economic independence. Actually, the rudimentary formation of Washington's thoughts was based on two crucial aspects which had been influencing Washington so much. One was the moral values and behavior norms of capitalism in the North America, and the other one was Armstrong's thoughts of vocational education. Fortunately, Washington was favored by fortune, and was educated in Hampton school, so that he could learn how to be polite and how to win favor from the white and the black. And, it was just the experience of Hampton for education that awoke Washington to realize the close relationship between moral values and behavior norms and self-development of the black. Actually, the contents of self-development seemed to be established on those capital moral values and behavior norms. At this point, it is reasonable to say that in Washington's mind, it is a wonderful dream to be accepted by white society and integrated into the political mainstream society, and Washington's conservative political thoughts was also characterized vividly.

In addition, as a double-edged sword in Washington's eyes, the hegemony of liberal discourse provided a kind of cultural support for Booker T. Washington to reconcile the hegemonic culture within the framework of the white mainstream culture, reshape the image of black people, and establish such moral ethics as industriousness, moderation, hard work and self-reliance. Interestingly, facing with the huge damage of cultural hegemony, unlike some other blacks, Washington actively met the enormous challenges of it and rebuked not only the white people unkind but also the black people to be civilized. Seemingly, Washington was unfortunately swallowed by

the cultural hegemony and dragged far away from the black camp; however, it was not the truth. The truth is that in Washington's mind, wrapped into the hegemony of liberal discourse and bullied and humiliated by the white unkind although, the black should not just complain or even wage bloody battles, but be wise and understand the time. What the black should do was be much stronger through establishing their own economy, receiving vocational education as soon as possible, and be needed during the process of racial integration. Actually, Washington's life philosophy seems that if you are not enough strong to break the rules and win out, you have to learn to how to obey, and then learn from it as much and soon as possible for making enough preparations for the future when you are strong enough to rule and win out. To some extent, it might explain the logic of Washington's moderate political thought. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that Booker T. Washington, with his black skin and white soul, is an out-and-out liberal.

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