MODERN US HISTORY EXAM

Write an essay on one topic from Part I and one from Part II (2 hours per question). Be specific about historical episodes and evidence and include reflections on the relevant historiography of the topic. Take care to avoid overlap in your choice of examples and evidence for your two essays.

Part I:
1) The Civil War represents only the most violent and contested aspect of a century’s long expansion of the powers and purposes of national government. Trace these and discuss the transition from state to federal supremacy in the nineteenth century.

2) FROM THE POST CIVIL WAR TO THE PROGRESSIVE ERA PERIODS, TRADITIONS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY AND POLITICS HAD TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE PRESENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GROUPS OF PEOPLE CLAMORING FOR GREATER INCLUSION, INCLUDING, AMONG OTHERS, WOMEN, AFRICAN AMERICANS, WAGE WORKERS, NON ENGLISH SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS. How did government policies (state and federal), educational philosophies and practices, reform movements, and political parties deal with these changes and contribute to (or interfere with) the reformation of American nationhood to include these new groups of peoples?

Part II:
1. Crises-- whether defined as primarily economic, political, social, or intellectual, domestic and/or international-- have both facilitated and retarded, illuminated and distorted change in the twentieth century United States.

Identify and analyze the historical significance of any three crises, in three different periods across the twentieth century. [1900-1930; 1930-1960; 1960-1990 or 2000] Identify and explain the extent to which these crises illuminate or distort and retard or facilitate change in each period and across the entire twentieth century.

2. A variety of “Isms” have endured a long and tortured history across the twentieth century, both as they have come to be defined and understood by intellectuals who have tended to identify and apply them, and as they have come to influence the histories of particular regions and the nation as a whole. Choose one of the following paired “isms” from the list below and analyze how and why they have mattered to the histories of particular regions and to the nation as a whole in the twentieth century.
   a) conservatism/liberalism
   b) pragmatism/modernism
   c) capitalism/socialism
d) consumerism/producerism

e) imperialism/militarism