

Bush, Roderick D. 2009. *The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 258 pages. ISBN 978-1-59213-573-8, Paper (\$28.95).

[Ed. note: Rod Bush received the 2010 Marxist section's The Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award for 2010].

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White world supremacy is both a metaphor for racial domination on the global level and an expression of the structural and social conditions of racial hierarchies, racist practices, and subordination by race within historically constructed conquering systems. This ambitious and wide-ranging book about the "End of White World Supremacy" particularly within the lens of "Black Internationalism" and the "Problem of the Color Line" written by Professor Bush manages to present these arguments in a cogent, well-developed work that analyzes the Black international tradition using world-systems theory.

Black social movement history, ranging from Fanon's critique of colonialism in both the Caribbean and in Africa, through the struggles of the Jim Crow south and emergence of racial stratification on a global level, is developed as a central theme of the modern world-system, and a primary problem of systems that see themselves as democratic and free. Bush's discussion of the Black intellectual tradition and its many scholars, especially W.E.B. Du Bois, is particularly brilliant and will remain as a major contribution to race studies on its merits alone.

Bush develops his work within two large and familiar analytical constructs of Theory (part 1) and Radical Social Movements (part 2). Within the first couple of chapters, he takes us through World War I and into the struggles between the great wars, with the gradual emergence and early development of Black internationalism and some of its leading voices, such as the evolution of the New Negro radicals. Later, with terms such as the "Blackening and intensification of U.S. radicalism" (p. 178) Bush demonstrates linkages between movements, including the Black Power and Civil Rights movements. Here is where he observes how neoliberal globalization intersects with an official and popular "color blindness" (p. 88) as the structuring of power and socioeconomic position, found in "strata that exist in all of the core states of the world-system" (p.179). Further, in a trend that correlates well with Wallerstein's observation of hegemonic decline over the same period, Bush sees that: During the past twenty-five or thirty years, the bottom layers of the populations of the core states have been devastated by policies of neoliberal globalization that have reversed the social regimes of the power-World War II period (p. 180).

Especially pertinent to world-systems theory, and powerfully set into a colonialist development into the modern world-system as conquest over the Americas, is the application of Quijano's fundamental historical processes as racial domination (pages 127-130). This includes a "massive extermination" (p. 128) of indigenous peoples in the western hemisphere, and a maximized system of labor control including race-based slavery, that helped to build capitalism and the world market.

These analyses are primarily critiqued through an adapted Marxist framework that considers capitalist development as ridden with racism that is deeply embedded in the entire system. Here it proves useful to provide the essence of the work, in a larger quote, that this reviewer not only completely agrees with but believes would be well-served to develop into a larger work:

I have argued here that systemic racism is the foundation of the new world formed with the European conquest of the Americas, the destruction of the Amerindian civilizations, and the capture of Africans to serve as slave labor in the colonial societies. It was at this time that the concept of race was introduced into scientific and public discourse as a means of naturalizing the relationship between the conquerors and the conquered, and was generalized to the entire

world-economy during the subsequent European conquest of the rest of the world (page 216).

Perhaps the only real issue that could be taken with the world supremacy, or globalization part of the overall discussion is that Blacks, while becoming the primary subordinated groups in the core of the modern world-system, are not the only nor probably even the first. The general ideological analysis of this struggle therefore is somewhat limited, brilliant and comprehensive as it is in terms of the color line for Blacks. In Latin America, and indeed in Africa itself, it is the indigenous peoples, or what some term the tribal nations, that constitute the bottom strata of society. With the gradual decline of “white world supremacy” (p. 165) as a hegemonic phenomena, some of these differences may be important to tease out.

However, in linking what Bush identifies as the “spirit of Bandung” (p. 193) with the important voices of DuBois, Malcolm X, Aime Cesaire, and Franz Fanon, among others, he observes the critical moments when Africans, Blacks from America, and the “dark world” (p. 15) in general, begin to see their common struggles, especially in terms of various forms of decolonization and challenges to systems of global stratification. Imperialism in its post-modern form of “invisible” (p. 216) racism is thus threatened, and takes note of this common detestation of colonialism. Various individual caveats demonstrate this, such as when he notes how DuBois and Robeson were kept from attending Bandung by the State Department which did not allow them to travel. The mask is thus unveiled.

Near the end of the work the possibility of ending white supremacy emerges, but carefully within the construct of continuing struggle and the essence of movement, against the backdrop of the election of Barack Obama, also viewed within the global lens. Bush sees the election as a sign of this ongoing, progressive struggle, but one fraught with danger in how it can be utilized by conservative forces to deny racism. He calls for decolonization of the “U.S. Empire” (p. 219) in both its internal constructions and its external manifestations, and a shift from centrist policies that will reproduce current systems, toward an agenda of needed change that will address ongoing issues of social injustice, and an altering of the world-system in favor of subordinate forces. In this analysis, as in his major contributions toward understanding of how we have collectively reached this point of struggle against white world racism, we must hope that this is the beginning of the end of racial supremacy.

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