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Roderick D. Bush, *The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).

In *The End of White World Supremacy*, Rod Bush engages readers in a rich intellectual conversation, creating a quilt where each panel contains a story, a point, an example of its own, yet when one stands back, broader themes emerge. To benefit from the book, one needs to consider both the specifics of each conversation as well as the perspective of the whole discussion.

Bush, who died in 2013, was an activist as well as a scholar. In the 1970s, when he was a doctoral student in clinical psychology at the University of Kansas, he became involved in the Black Liberation movement. He moved to California in 1979 to devote himself to community work. He later completed his doctorate in sociology at Binghamton University (at the Braudel Center), and then taught at Seton Hall and St. John's Universities. In recent years, he was a member of the national council of the Black Radical Congress and the Executive Board of the Left Forum.¹

I worked with Rod in the early 1980s in the San Francisco Bay Area. We were members of the Democratic Workers Party, one of the numerous attempts to create a disciplined cadre party in the 1970s and '80s.² We worked for the Institute for the Study of Labor and Economic Crisis, the Grassroots Alliance, US Out of Central America and South Africa, as well as the Full Employment Project of Oakland and other initiatives. Rod was clearly as comfortable leading a graduate-style seminar on world systems theory as he was going door to door in San Francisco's diverse communities registering voters and getting out votes to raise taxes on big business.

The End of White World Supremacy builds on several themes:

- *Understanding the contemporary global economy as a product of the modern world-system* and taking the long view of historical time. Capitalism originated as a world-system – globalization is not something new! Capitalism is premised on exploitation; that process was organized from the beginning along the color line, and white supremacy is the ideology that structures and justifies it.
- *Understanding the struggle and resistance of Blacks and other communities of color in the US as a component of the global struggle* of the majority of the human race against domination by the white capitalist class based in northern Europe and the US. The geoculture of white world-supremacy provides the framework for bipolar race relations in the United States. Black voices have long articulated this point and defenders of white supremacy have been worried about it for just as long. The struggle against white supremacy and Euro-dominance is far from over, despite contemporary declarations of post-racialism.

¹ Bush describes his political and intellectual development in “Black Internationalism and Transnational Africa” in *Globalization and Transnational Africa* (2011) and other writings that can be found at <http://rodbush.org>.

² On the DWP and other formations, see Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao, and Che*. New York: Verso, 2002. Some of Bush's analysis in *The End of White World Supremacy* – such as his articles “Racism and the Rise of the Right” and “Racism and Changes on the International Division of Labor” – appeared earlier in *Contemporary Marxism, Our Socialism* and other DWP literature.

- *Untangling yet simultaneously recognizing the deep relationship between race and class on a global scale*, asserting that race has been and remains the fundamental fault-line around which the class structure of the capitalist world economy is organized. In historical capitalism, race and class are inseparable; neither one is more important than the other. Because racial formation was constitutive in class formation, resistance to capitalism in the form of Black Internationalism is the means for transformative change to occur.
- *Locating the basis for the coalition that can overcome this system at the intersection of race, class and gender*; putting a spotlight on gender in the functioning of the historical capitalist world-system and creating a dialogue among partial perspectives in which none of these dynamics is either hegemonic or marginalized.

The End of White World Supremacy draws heavily on the work of writers and activists including but not limited to W.E.B. Du Bois, Malcolm X, Patricia Hill Collins, Bernard Magubane, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Anibal Quijano. Bush discusses major intellectual and political debates among Black intellectuals and others regarding race, class, and gender in the context of the 600-year history of the capitalist world system. He draws upon Wallerstein's general framework to explain how capitalism became dominant. He references Quijano in showing how, during colonial conquest of the Americas, white supremacy became the ideology justifying that global system.

In the early 20th century, W.E.B. Du Bois brought sharp focus to the global nature of the color line and its fundamental role in the capitalist world system. Bush credits Du Bois for an expansive and inclusive vision of democracy and for his forceful advocacy of the leading role of Blacks and women in the struggle to achieve that vision. With regard to women, Bush cites also Patricia Hill Collins' concept of the "outsider within." Collins argues that African American women as a group have experiences that provide them with a unique angle of vision, which offers a powerful framework for breaking out of competitive modes of debating the way forward.

Bush also brings out the importance of Malcolm X in putting the question of civil rights for blacks in the US firmly into an international framework of human rights for the global majority.

The End of White World Supremacy is a rich tapestry that historicizes the contemporary political, economic and social juncture. It is deliberately framed in the long view, recognizing the particular position and leadership of peoples of African descent as part of an international class who struggle against white world supremacy and historical capitalism.

Rod Bush provides a framework for understanding multiple axes of domination/subordination.³ He looked forward to exploring the links between struggles

³ Bush's influence can be seen in works such as Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), and in studies by and about black women in the internationalist framework, such as Dayo F. Gore, *Racialism At the Crossroads: African American Women Activists in the Cold War* (New York University Press, 2011), and Cheryl Higashida, *Black Internationalist Feminism: Women Writers of the Black Left, 1955-1995* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

on different continents and among the movements of different oppressed groups. Some of these questions are addressed in his forthcoming posthumous study, co-authored with Melanie E.L. Bush, *Tensions in the American Dream: Rhetoric, Reverie or Reality*, which explores the perceptions of ordinary people in the US about social and racial inequality in the context of the crisis of the capitalist world-economy. How do they perceive the state of the American Dream, and its potential? What is particularly “American” about it? How do people view capitalism in general, and particularly its current crisis? Where does hope reside?

The authors assert that the crisis involves all humanity and that its resolution depends on an understanding of our mutual interconnectedness. As in *The End of White World Supremacy*, the authors argue that we must simultaneously recognize the temporality of the here-and-now crisis *and* the long historical arc of capitalism, white supremacy, and patriarchy. US hegemony is the most recent articulation of those systems. Social transformation depends on challenging not just one of them, but all three simultaneously.

The End of White World Supremacy provides us with paths to understanding and to action. Bush’s desire to center research and scholarship in the needs of the community provides us with an essential role model.

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