The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line. Rory McVeigh.
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The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line, by **Roderick D. Bush.** Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2009. 258pp. $28.95 paper. ISBN: 9781592135738.

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Over the years, I have given quite a bit of attention to ways in which leaders of white supremacist organizations explain their goals and justify their actions. Contemporary racists often speak of global conspiracies involving elite actors collaborating with and/or manipulating nonwhite people to enrich themselves at the expense of the "white race." In the 1920s, leaders of the Ku Klux Klan seemed to be particularly alarmed when describing the potential danger posed by alliances between labor radicals and African Americans. For example, a headline in the Klan's national newspaper proclaimed, "Bolshevists Fear Power of Klan; Tampering with American Negroes" (*The Imperial Night-Hawk*, April 18, 1923). The Klan writer expressed grave concern about the rise of a radical black organization called the African Blood Brotherhood which, he proclaimed, "proves that there are black Bolsheviks as well as white and that the call of the Klan for the maintenance of White Supremacy is not an idle

one." Similarly, Klansmen of the 1960s, not to mention FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, seemed to be obsessed with alleged ties between Communists and African American civil rights leaders.

Exaggerating and manufacturing threats posed by African Americans to white interests is common practice for racist groups seeking to generate support. Yet Roderick Bush's provocative book, *The End of White World Supremacy,* suggests that the prospect of an alliance between African Americans and leftist radicals generates high anxiety and fear among whites (and not just among racist extremists) precisely because such an alliance fundamentally threatens the actual processes that sort the "haves" from the "have-nots." Writing from a world systems perspective, Bush argues that, historically, racial oppression developed hand-in-hand with class-based oppression in a global economy. Any organization that seeks to fight simultaneously race-based, class-based, and gender-based oppression is particularly threatening to beneficiaries of the status quo. In order to transform the social order significantly, it is first necessary to develop an understanding of the how race, class, and gender intersect in processes of exploitation and domination. With such an understanding, however, comes not only the possibility of change but also fierce resistance from those who are charged with protecting the interests of privileged actors and from those who sense that they will pay a price if societal rewards are distributed more justly.

The title of the book is a nod to Malcolm X who, in a 1963 speech, declared that we had arrived at the end of white world supremacy. Like W.E.B. Du Bois, and several other black leaders before him, Malcolm saw the oppression of African Americans in global, rather than solely national terms. He also recognized a strategic advantage in aligning African Americans, a minority in their own country, with an oppressed majority in a global system. Bush offers an intellectual history of black radicalism, as he explores the roots of global consciousness in African Americans' struggle for equality. Bush focuses on key historical tensions and debates among African American leaders, such as questions about whether integration or black empowerment would be the most effective means of achieving desired ends. Those who embraced various strains of Marxist thought disagreed on whether class or race should be prioritized in the struggle. Bush argues that both must be addressed, and warns that the welfare state and reformist strategies in the United States and in western European nations have, to a great extent, aligned capital and a privileged segment of labor in opposition to poor nonwhite people who reside in nations located in the periphery of a global capitalist economy or who are victims of interior colonization within core nations.

The last two chapters focus on the black power movement in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and on the more radical elements of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Bush notes how, toward the end of his life, Martin Luther King Jr. became increasingly conscious of how the fate of African Americans was linked to the fate of nonwhite people across the globe. Although Bush is analyzing social movements, he does little to engage contemporary social movement theory. Yet his work does shine new light on the civil rights struggle by focusing attention on those who sought more than assimilation and who pressed for radical transformation of American society. Bush's attention to the ways in which social movements are influenced by a long history of idea development (as opposed to short-term framing processes) is also refreshing.

Bush's argument may be hard to follow in places, and his own voice can get lost among all of the historical voices. Yet these historical voices had important things to say and are instructive when it comes to understanding how far we have come in a quest for greater freedom and equality, and also how far we still have to go.