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Barnes, J. Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power New York: Pathfinder, 2009. 413 pp.

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power is written within the context of the Socialist Workers Party, of which the author is national secretary. The book addresses the complex ideological thought of Malcolm X, particularly during the last year of his life, 1965. "The task confronting Malcolm X during the final months of his life was to build a political cadre" (p. 25), based on universal, progressive nationalism and populated with a racial rainbow of industrial and agricultural workers. This perspective appears as the evolution of self-serving black nationalistic thought and a step toward a more universal struggle for justice and self-determination. The latter is similar to universal revolution, composed of many peoples and struggles against colonialism, capitalism and imperialism, systems now encapsulated in neo-liberalist policies and globalization. The backbone of dismantling of the old and building of new societies and international cooperation is unity. The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) is an example.

Parallel struggles, unified under the banner of similarity encourage mutual support and grassroots unity in the quest for change. Those who fought with Fidel Castro varied racially, yet, the color line existing before the triumph of the island revolution was replaced by a sense of Cubaness, assuring the participation of all in a new society. Coming from a Jim Crow society, this gathering of color was what impressed Malcolm in his travels, in the Middle East, in particular Mecca. Here he witnessed a kaleidoscope of colors and genders co-existing as Muslims, an experience which greatly influenced his political thought.

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power is a four part book, composed of interviews with Malcolm and past writing by the author, describing the relationship between Malcolm X thought, Black political struggle, and the importance of workers' unity. Part two of the book, provides an interesting addition to our knowledge of American history through its discussion of the rise of post-Civil War Radical Reconstruction and the role of Black Americans whom "provided leadership in substantial parts of the South to both the freed slaves and to exploited farmers and anti-slavery workers who were white" (p. 157). In this context, the unity that existed among southerners regardless of color, during this period saw the short-lived beginnings of what could have resulted in democracy.

Radical Reconstructionists, supported by the Union Army advocated for Black self-determination under the banner 40 acres and a mule. They "repealed the Black Codes [version of earlier slave codes that had regulated that institution] and adopted legislation barring some of the onerous provisions of the labor contracts that had been imposed on Black agricultural laborers" (Barnes, 2009, p. 159). The adoption of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution is attributed to the Radical Reconstructionists as are other reforms, universal education and medical care for the poor. Unfortunately, this progressive segment of American history ended too quickly. In 1877 Union troops withdrew from the south. This "accelerated a reign of terror by the Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Camelia, and other racist gangs beholden to the interest of the exploiters" (p. 165); the exploiters were the landed class and capitalists. "The defeat was engineered by the dominant section of industrial and rising banking capital, a class that was incapable of carrying through a radical land reform in the old Confederacy and rightly feared the rise of a united working class in which black and white artisans and industrial workers would come together as a powerful opposition force, allied with free working farmers" The rural poor and working class were forcibly divided along color lines in the years following 1877" (p. 166).

While the book uses political rhetoric that is tedious, the messages of racism, political injustice, exploitation of the working masses, in particular Black populations, describe the basis of Malcolm's world. Such messages bring to mind other significant, current writings Chomsky (2008), Fitting, (2011) and Lopez (2012), adding a description of the destruction of traditional lifestyles and cultures, and the physical and emotional injury that the conglomerate powers, with government blessing, inflict on our daily lives. These authors describe the links between--globalized profits, displacement of American workers, outsourcing, the exploitation and brutal suppression of workers in Latin America, the destruction of the unions in

the U.S., and the toxification of basic foods by the genetic modification (GM) food machine. Such machinations impact not only our daily tortilla intake but also expose us to toxins. This non-traditional manner of corn growing, that is the GM modus operandi, and the expense of the modified seed for farmers, has accelerated rural Mexican immigration to the U.S., heightening racial profiling, racism, xenophobia, and creating fear and racial tension amongst its populations.

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power, is clearly written and easy to read. It provides several history lessons, photos, graphics, and interesting notes on Malcolm and the sources. While the reader needs to keep in mind the rhetorical jargon that is a characteristic of the book, each reader will grasp different threads that add to the continued interest and literature on Malcolm. For this reviewer, the book is a reminder that no one wants to advocate for or live within the bounds of circumstances that based on toxic nationalism created the Nazi state, Stalin Russia, the disasters of Mao's Great Leap Forward, South Africa, Israel, or an English only U.S.. What is most desired is a peaceful and subsistent world that encourages the development of education, culture, the arts, coexistence, and eradicating the colonial habits of force-feeding dominant culture language, lifestyle, religion, political systems, and Jim Crow. How this can be achieved, is the question of the ages, one that Malcolm was trying to solve on the eve of his assassination.

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