



Q&A with Jason Hill:

Q: What compelled you to write this book?

A: I had grown very personally upset with the growing anti-American sentiments coming out of the radical American left, especially from writers such as Ta-Nehisi Coates and Cornel West. The American Dream and America itself were being denigrated as intrinsically racist, unjust, oppressive and exploitative. I wanted to correct that narrative and show that America had matured morally and had evolved to the point where immigrants and blacks could not only embrace the American dream, but contribute to it in a constitutive way. I thought that Coates and West and others on the far left were false prophets painting a very nefarious picture of who and what America was. As a black conservative liberal I wanted to show that blacks and immigrants had overcome the virulent racism they had fought in the early part of the nation's founding. We had overcome as a result of America's moral evolutionary and maturation. I wrote this book out of an overflowing love and deep admiration for the United States of America. I love this great nation passionately. It has brought me where I am. I want to be known as the greatest salesman of The American Dream and of American Exceptionalism.

Q: What specifically do you want readers to take from this book?

A: I want readers to see the magnificent exceptionalism that is part of the American identity. In this book, I explain exactly what is truly exceptional about America, her values and, above all, her national treasure trove—her people. I define once and for all the moral meaning of the United States of America! The book is dedicated to the American people. I want people to read this book and feel hope and vitality in their bodies again for the magnificence of this amazing republic of ours, to see that it is indeed a benevolent country that has made it possible for immigrants of all stripes and for blacks to accomplish superlative achievements in their lives. I want them to truly understand the moral meaning of

this country once and for all; to see that in the history of humankind America is an unprecedented phenomenon. In the book, I also tell my story, and the story of several immigrants who came to this country with nothing and made it. I came to America with \$120 in my pocket and worked up to 45 hours per week while going to school full time without any government help. I graduated *magna cum laude* and after won a scholarship to pursue a doctorate in philosophy. I went on to become an Honors Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and the author of several books in ethics and political philosophy that are taught in universities all over the world. How was that possible?

Then there is the darker side to the pursuit of the dream I tell in the book. I tried to take my life once and, paradoxically, the salvific and intoxicating pull of the American dream saved me. It's all there in the book. Salvation and redemption! Those are very American experiences. It's a mystery that America solved for me.

Q: How would you describe the immigrant experience in America?

A: The immigrant experience in America is an experience that's filled with endless possibilities. America gives you the chance to start your life from scratch, and to create your humanity from beginning to end. It does care not one bit where you come from; it only cares where you're heading. Americans value a strong work ethic, and they will, for the most part, reward frugality, grit, resilience, tenacity and perseverance. The immigrant experience is one in which you will be invited to have a say in who and what it means to be an American in the 21st century. That's a luxury and a privilege one should never relinquish or squander.

Q: What advice would you give other immigrants coming to America?

A: I would advise immigrants coming to America to resist the current climate of entitlement and victimology philosophy. Immigration is not a right; it is a benevolent privilege granted to you. Be frugal. Remember the country owes you nothing but a chance to be free. Take advantage of the myriad opportunities and life's better possibilities that are part of America's core identity and run with

them. Do not capitulate to bitterness and pessimism when you fail in your efforts. America offers you many chances to reinvent yourself, and several opportunities for a second and third and fourth chance. Remember that your life is your responsibility, and that your greatest responsibility is to protect its inviolable sacredness. That responsibility lies with you—not the state. Capitalism and the free market system can and will work for you because, above all, it is a moral system between and among voluntary traders. Be an individualist. I would tell immigrants coming to America that the world you desire can be won. It exists. It is real. It is possible. It is yours.