



THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN ISLAMIC COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *The purpose of the following historical survey is to present the basic realities of the Muslim Experience in the West. I have chosen several methods of looking at these present realities and past experiences. Some of these are case studies and still others are from readings in history. Today as a community we are at a point where we can either succeed or fail to a much greater extent than in the past. We have schools, professionals, Islamic centers and well-read Muslims. What we lack is a core of brothers and sisters willing to try to organize Muslims into cohesive voting blocks and into strong neighborhoods and communities where the Muslims are visible and have a voice in the destiny of the greater society and to some degree in the foreign policy of America.*

Keywords: *Islam, Islamic Civilization, Islamic History, Islam in United States.*

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INTRODUCTION:

The history of Islam concerns the religion of Islam and its adherents, Muslims. Muslim is an Arabic word meaning one who submits to God. Muslims and their religion have greatly impacted the political, economic and military history of the Old World, especially the Middle East, where its roots lie. Though it is believed by non-Muslims to have originated in Mecca and Medina, Muslims believe that the religion of Islam has been present since the time of the prophet Adam. The Islamic world expanded to include people of the Islamic civilization, inclusive of non-Muslims living in that civilization. In pre-Islamic Arabia, Arab people lived on the Arabian Plate. In the south of Hedjaz (principal religious and commercial center of post-classical Arabia) the Arabic tribe of Quraysh (Adnani Arabs) to which Muhammad belonged, had been in existence. Near Mecca the tribe was increasing in power[3]. The Quraysh were the guardians of the Kaaba within the town of Mecca and was the dominant tribe of Mecca upon the appearance of Islam . The Kaaba, at the time, was used as an important pagan shrine. It brought revenues to Mecca because of the multitude of pilgrims that it attracted. Muhammad was born into the Banu Hashim tribe of the Quraysh clan a branch of the Banu Kinanah tribe, descended from Khuzaimah and derived its inheritance from the Khuza'imah. There are by various estimates between two and thirteen million Muslims or non-practicing descendants of Muslims in North America. Unfortunately most of them are not well versed in the literature and doctrines of their religion. Most of them would like to pass Islam on to their children and grandchildren, but this is unlikely without parents who have a strong knowledge about the Islamic faith and practice it in their daily life. One method of analyzing our current situation is to study our past. In order to develop my theme (along this line), I will divide the history of Islam in America into five eras: before 1800, 180-1890, 1890-1910, 1910-1950, and 1950-present[6].

1. BEFORE 1800:

- The Navigator of Columbus, who during the famous voyage, brought along a copy of a travel narrative written by Portuguese Muslims who had sailed to the New World in the 12th century. The narrative by al-Idrisi was called "The Sea of Tears". In this narrative he discusses the voyage of 80 muhagharrun (explorers) who lived in Lisbon during the reign of the Murabit amir, Yusuf ibn Tashufin. In the narrative it mentions visits to fourteen islands. Over half of these islands were later traced to be in either



the Canary Islands or the Azores. However, the ones not traced could have been as far away as the Azores. However, the ones not traced could have been as far away as the Caribbean. An early travel from 942 A.D. is mentioned in the *Annals of al-Mas'udi* [8].

- Istafan, the Arab, was a guide for the Spanish that wished to settle the area that would later be called Arizona in 1539. Istafan was from Azamor, Morocco and had previously been to the New World in the ill-fated expedition of Panfilo de Narvaez to Florida in 1527. Brent Kennedy mentions him in his article in *Islamic Horizons* as being one of the first Moors and Muslims in America. Istafan was one of four to survive a five thousand mile tour of the American Southwest. Originally he was part of a three hundred member exploratory group. He would go on to become the first visitor from Europe or Africa among the Pueblo Indians. He was also a guide for the Franciscan friar, Marcos de Niza and was in this capacity until he was killed in an Indian attack in Arizona and New Mexico in 1539.
- Another early Muslim in this period was Nasruddin. He is famous for having killed a Mohawk princess who refused to marry him and for being the earliest permanent Arab settlers in the New World.
- Ayub Sulaiman ibn Diallo became a go between for his people and the British after his repatriation. I mention him because he continued to practice Islam during his two years of slavery in the 1730's in Maryland. He was versed enough in Arabic to write at least a half dozen letters in that language, translate coin inscriptions for the British Museum, and draw a map of West Africa writing place names in Arabic.
- Salim the Algerian, who was a Muslim from a royal family of Algiers that studied in Constantinople. After returning from a visit to Constantinople, he was captured by a Spanish Man of War and later sold into slavery to the French in New Orleans. Eventually he became free after running from slavery, lived among American Indian tribes, and settled in Virginia. Salem was found in rags, almost naked, and was taught English. Eventually, it was ascertained that he knew Greek and he was given a Greek New Testament. Several future members of the U.S. Congress befriended him and he converted to Christianity. A new convert to Christianity he decided to go back home to spread the Gospel. After a disastrous journey to his homeland (where he was



shunned as an apostate), he returned to America, met Thomas Jefferson, attended the 1st Continental Congress, and died an insane man having given-up his family and religion for America. While he was at the Congress his picture was painted by a Mr. Peale after the intervention of a member of the Congress Mr. Page. Near the end of Salem's life, he regained his long lost sanity[4]. He had been insane since his trip to his homeland after his conversion to Christianity. Some say he renounced Christianity, other say died a Christian at the Page estate, and still others say he died in an insane asylum. It should be noted that none of these men tried to spread Islam and only Ayub tried to preserve his own belief. The Wahhab brothers were shipwrecked on the coast of North Carolina in the 1770's. They settled married and started a farm. Their ancestors today own one of the largest private hotel chains in North Carolina. The only contemporary reference I have on them is a letter from the North Carolina historian Thomas Parramore. Whether they or their ancestors stayed in the Islamic faith is something that I can not answer at this time. Around this same time a ship of 70 odd Moorish slaves landed in Maryland. No more is known on these Moors. An important point is that these Muslims were not unique in being able to read and write Arabic. In fact, in many slave quarters in the Caribbean and Brazil there were clandestine Arabic and Islamic schools. One can find references to these in the works by Nina Rodriguez and in the two volume book TWELVE MONTHS IN JAMAICA by Robert Madden[3].

2. 1800-1890:

During the era of 1800-1890, there was documentation of the Islamic presence in the slave quarters by four individuals:

- Theodore Dwight, Jr. wrote about a slave named Lamén Kebe who was a school teacher in Africa. He was the focus of two articles by Dwight. Lamén Kebe gave him a list of over twenty texts used in his schools and some information on teaching method used in those Islamic schools (much of it still valuable today). At the end of one of articles he also attached one of the earliest glossaries we have of the Serrechuleh language. Dwight also mentions Abdul Rahman and Ayub b. Sulaiman Diallo in passing.



- James Cooper wrote the story of Salih Bilali which was published with other ethnological writings in William Brown Hodgson's *NOTES ON NORTH AFRICA* (NY: Wiley and Putnam, 1844). Salih was a Fulani (as are all the others mentioned) and his story is only found in a letter by Cooper. This letter is republished in *AFRICA REMEMBERED* by Philip Curtin. Here we have an oral remembrance of Africa and a vocabulary of Fula but nothing about his training or practice in Islam [7].
- William Brown Hodgson was perhaps the most important of these documenters. The main characters Hodgson documented were the following: Bilali Muhammad, who wrote the only extant book of Islamic Law written in America and contributed several Islamic terms to the Gullah dialect of English. He gave his descendants Muslim names and taught them until the generation of his grand-children.; 'Umar ibn Said was a butler of a brother of a former Governor of North Carolina that lived at Fayetteville, N.C. and who wrote a 13 pp. autobiography in Arabic. What he wrote shows that he might have been a Qadiriyyah Sufi, trader, and school teacher who feigned conversion to Christianity under difficult circumstances.; Abdul Rahman Ibrahim Sori who wrote 2 autobiographies, 2 copies of the Fatiha, signed a charcoal sketch of himself by Henry Inman and dictated several letters to his family while he was traveling the U.S. to raise money to return to Africa. None of his Arabic writings show the least formal education but it is surprising that he remembered the little Arabic he knew after forty years in slavery before he returned to Africa to die. His story is documented in *PRINCE AMONG SLAVES* by Terry Alford. A slave named London was detailed in a pamphlet by Hodgson called *THE GOSPELS WRITTEN IN THE NEGRO PATIOS OF ENGLISH IN ARABIC CHARACTERS BY A MANDINGO SLAVE NAMED LONDON*. This was perhaps the only systematic try at writing English in Arabic letters up to that point. He was held in slavery by the Maxwell family of Savannah, Georgia. They latter moved to Florida where he died.; and an unknown slave correspondent from Georgetown, S.C. who wrote 5 chapters of the Qur'an from memory. This was translated by Hodgson [1].
- Wm. Caruthers author of *THE KENTUCKIAN IN NEW YORK* where a slave who wrote the Fatiha at the request of a traveler is mentioned.



One Muslim of this era not covered by these writers was Hadji Ali (Philip Tedro) a Greek convert to Islam and one of six camel handlers (three Arabs, Two Turks, and Hadji Ali) in the short-lived U.S. camel calvary corp in 1856. The Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis introduced a bill in Congress, that passed in 1855, to import camels for military purposes in the Arizona desert. During the experiment, 77 camels and six handlers were brought over from the East. When the War between the States broke out, this experiment was abandoned. It was called off due to the impending Civil War. Hadji Ali was the only of the cameleers to remain in the U.S.. The others returned to their homelands. Circuses and Zoos acquired some of the camels and others were turned loose. The camels that were turned loose in the desert terrorized live stock and wild animals for years. Hadji Aji became a prospector in the Colorado River Area. He eventually became a legend under the corrupted name given to him by soldiers in the U.S. calvary- Hi Jolly. The legacy of this experiment are a highway gravemarker for Hadji Ali, some U.S. Army Manuals and a movie by Walt Disney called Hawmps starring Slim Pickens and Denver Pyle. Hadji Ali lived to 1903 in Quartzsite, Arizona where he was a Prospector and resident Imam. His three daughters were raised as Muslims but I have yet to verify how many generations Islam continued in his family. The Omani Embassy published a pamphlet about the exploits of the first Arab traders to the United States during the 1840's. They did not settle here, however. One Muslim mentioned in a book by Allan Austin (African Muslims in Antebellum America), Yarrow Marmout, was poorly covered by writers and deserves mention as he was perhaps one of the longest lived individuals in this country (He died at over 130.) and he was one of the first shareholders of the Washington, D.C. Columbia Bank which was the second chartered bank in the United States[10].

3. 1890-1910:

In the era of 1890-1910 the only movement we can truly talk about is that of Muhammad Alexander Russell Webb. Many trace him to be first "white convert" to Islam in America. Before he became Muslim, he was a newspaper editor and later the consular to the Philippines for the U.S.. He accepted the post of consular in 1887. While a consular he began to read books on Eastern and Oriental religions. Soon afterwards he began written correspondence with Indian Muslims and in 1888 he publicly declared his Islam. He resigned his post in 1892 and went to India where he had a lecture tour of four cities: Delhi, Bombay,



Calcutta, and Hyderabad. These lectures were published in the books: *The Three Lectures* and in *Lectures in Various Locations*. The topics for these lectures included: Islam, The Better Way, and Philosophical Islam. Upon returning to the U.S. he set up the Oriental Publishing Company which published at least a half dozen of books including *Islam in America* and his short lived periodical "Moslem World". He had a Mosque on upper Broadway which failed prior to his death in 1915, his being appointed Turkish Emissary to the U.S., and writing of a still very pertinent book *The Armenian Problem and Where the Responsibility Lies*. The last being the views of Webb in the conflict between the Turks and the Armenians. One possible reason his group failed is that it did not address the needs of the generality of people, it was a movement of philosophers[4].

4. 1910-1950:

1910-1950 saw several Orthodox Sufi, Ahmadiyyah, Bahia, Shia, and so-called Black Nationalists groups arise. To speed the process I will talk about the Orthodox Mosques (in Ross, N.D., Detroit, and in Cedar Rapids, Iowa), Sheikh Dawood, Sufi Abdul Hamid, Noble Drew Ali, and Elijah Muhammad. In historical order, the Ross Mosque is the earliest and longest lasting Masjid in America. The congregation at its largest was 100 persons. The Masjid was built in 1930 and remained standing until 1978 and in use till the late 60's when conversions and mixed marriages had decreased the numbers of Muslims till a point where Arabic was no longer used, the cemetery had gophers, and there were no practicing Muslims to attend Juma. An earlier mosque was built in 1915 in Maine by Albanians as was one in Connecticut, but they are not as strongly documented or publicized. In Brooklyn the Polish speaking Tatars built a mosque which was still in use in 1926. The Red Crescent was founded in Detroit, in 1920 and a Mosque was built there which lasted from 1926-1932 and as far as I know still stands. The main problem at that point was not lack of numbers but lack of finance. Only a few brothers kept the Masjid afloat and the Depression proved it to be too much of financial liability for them. The Lebanese Masjid in Cedar Rapids, started in 1935 and still in operation, suffered few of these problems. Going overseas to marry was common, Arabic was widely used, finance was freer, and fewer persons drifted from Islam[1].



5. EARLY ORTHODOX SUFIS:

Sheikh Dawood and Sufi Abdul Hamid represent homegrown Orthodox Islam. Sheikh Dawood founded the Islamic Mission Society on State Street in 1934 Brooklyn. Over 75,000 persons accepted Islam under his tutelage before his death in 1981. His controversial theory of Islam being genetic ingrown was to be adapted later by the likes Elijah Muhammad and Imam Isa. His success was due to his willingness to suffer personal abuse and financial difficulty for the sake of Islam. His writings and theories are contained in his self-published books *al-Islam the Religion of Humanity* (1950) and *Islam the True Religion of Humanity* (1965). His contemporary, Sufi, and his teacher Mandaly from Egypt had similar success in Harlem but their work was cut short when Mandaly had a heart attack and died. Sufi died in a plane crash. The shortcoming of their work was that they failed to train proper successors and the movement died with them. more material on these individuals is found in the chapters on Sufi Abdul Hameed and Sheikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal. Noble Drew Ali and Elijah Muhammad represent the Islamic Nationalist side to Islam between 1910 and 1950. Both movements outlasted their founders. Ali started his movement, the Moorish Science Temple in May of 1913, with the short lived Canaanite Temple. He gave an answer to the question of who the recently freed African were, how they could have self esteem, and allowed them to be part of a movement not under the former slave masters control. His main error was to fail to fully bring people into the reality of the Arabic Language, Qur'an, and Ibadat, but he gave them a clear concept of a Jesus that they could accept and of Tawheed which Christianity failed to give them[4].

6. THE NATION OF ISLAM:

Elijah Muhammad's organization, the Nation of Islam, was begun in Paradise Valley (a Black Ghetto of Detroit) on July 4, 1930 by one Mr. W.D. Farrad. A mysterious peddler from the East and one- time contestant for Drew Ali's leadership of Islamic Nationalism in Newark, N.J.. W.D. Farrad was reputed to have been born of a white mother and black father (Mimi and Alfonso) on February 28, 1877 in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. His education supposedly received at U.C.L.A. and Oxford. Farrad was to have been a member of the diplomatic corp in the Hijaz but decided against it in order to go to the "Wilderness of North America to find his Uncle (the Black Man)" and teach him (his Uncle) Islam and the true history of the Black Man. After teaching for three years he left the U.S. to points unknown[9]. He left behind a



successor, Elijah Muhammad, and some written teachings set down in several lesson plans of which seven are somewhat assessable today. This was a way of teaching not uncommon to church catechisms, Masonic degrees, or Moorish American Koran Questionnaires. By 1934 Farrad became a sort of hidden Imam common to the doctrines of the Druze and Ishmaeli versions of Islam. He seemed to expound rhetoric similar to military manual directives, Moorish Science, Masonry, and some vague Eschatology and doctrines (such as blood atonement) somewhat similar to that of early Utah Mormons. His movement succeeded due to dedicated individuals and strong leadership that was willing to suffer for the movement. His weaknesses were failure to teach proper rules for prayer and fasting and preaching the concept of Ali reincarnated through the Imams and the Mahdi (later he was considered Allah incarnate)[12].

7. 1950-PRESENT:

The next forty years saw the rise and fall of the Nation of Islam and its rebirth (primarily with Silas Muhammad, Farrakhan, John Muhammad, W.D. Muhammad, and Imam Isa). The groups that resurrected tended to try and revolutionize the teachings. Two groups came out of the Nation before its fall: Calistran and the Five Percenter Nation[3].

8. FIVE PERCENTERS:

Started in Harlem by a former Korean War Veteran -- Clarence Jowers (Clarence 13X or Puddin'). He disassociated himself from the Nation and founded his own group (which still exists) in the early 1960's. According to numerous detractors (police, Orthodox Muslims, etc.), the Five Percenter Nation is little more than a gang using Nation of Islam mythos mixed with some new lessons that Clarence compiled. Their flag is an eight pointed star with a circle seven in the center (from Moorish Science) and the words "In the Name of Allah" above it. Clarence 13X was assassinated by some disgruntled members in 1968 and he became the departed spiritual leader -- now incarnate within the body of all male members (Black Gods). Many Rap stars such as Kool Moe Dee, Poor Righteous Teachers, and Queen Latifah derive their material from his writings and teachings[9].

9. SILAS MUHAMMAD:

A favorite West Coast minister of Elijah Muhammad. The Nation paid for his education at UCLA. He is centered in Atlanta and has several thousand followers in twenty one temples nationwide. He claims to be the spiritual son of the Virgin Mary (Elijah Muhammad) and has



written a book (The Wake of the Nation) to support his claims. He works with Whites for a restitution for the wrongs of slavery and publishes a newspaper called "Muhammad Speaks"[11].

10. FARRAKHAN AND THE NATION OF ISLAM:

Farrakhan is perhaps the loudest and most articulate of all former Nation of Islam leaders. He separated from Warith Deen Muhammad in 1977 and started his Final Call Newspaper and organization in 1979. The name of the newspaper was derived from an early Nation paper called "The Final Call to Islam". He is the most interesting and contradictory among former Nation leaders. According to detractors, Farrakhan has accepted and rejected Orthodox Islam at a whim whenever it would benefit him. He has: made Hajj; belonged to Warith Deen Muhammad's group; called for unity between Hispanics, Native Americans and Blacks; played Jewish violin concertos even when denouncing certain aspects of Jewish life and culture; and fights a war to end the drug problem (a war he started only after he found out his own son was a drug abuser). His inner circle reputedly includes Black Nationalists, American Indians, Gangbangers, and other so-called dangerous and disreputable individuals. Currently almost one hundred temples are under his leadership and he has perhaps as many as fifty thousand members nationwide. His position in the African American community was recently strengthened by his highly successful "Million Man March" on Washington, D.C.[1].

11. W.D. MUHAMMAD:

W.D. Muhammad is the leader of the largest group to come out of the Nation of Islam. He has led the members of his organization to Orthodox Islam over the years and changed the name of his group to the World Community of Islam to the American Muslim Mission and now each mosque/temple has its own name and leadership. His paper also changed names from "Muhammad Speaks" to "Muslim World News" to "Bilalian News" to "American Muslim Journal" to "Muslim Journal". The organization underwent numerous changes under his leadership. Members of his group also changed their ethos from being Black Muslims to being Bilalians to being just Muslim. The best study of Warith Deen Muhammad and his ties to Orthodox Islam is found in the work by Zafar Ishaq Ansari "W.D. Muhammad.[5] W.D. Muhammad has begun the needed work of teaching proper Islam based on Qur'an and Sunnah and he is somewhat hindered by the legacy of his father and his tendency to give the teachings of the Qur'an as mostly symbolic as he was taught the Bible was[10]. The



changes in the teachings were wide and varied, they included: allowing white members, an end to a call for a separate "nation of blacks" in this country, a call to voter registration, an end to beliefs that Allah was incarnated in the form of Master Farrad and the belief in Elijah Muhammad being a Messenger of Allah. Warith Deen was excommunicated several times from the Nation and only gained the ability to step in a position of leadership in the last year of his father's life when he was reinstated as a minister in the Nation of Islam[2]. Fasting in Ramadhan, an end to the December fast, changing the dietary taboos to Qur'anic based ones, and a standard Muslim salah (prayer) were other changes he instituted. In 1978 he stepped down as spiritual head and became a minister at large. His organization has become decentralized and his rhetoric is less spooky and mystical and more in line with Orthodox Islam. In 1985 he dismantled the leadership council he had setup and each mosque became an independent entity. He works as a kind of liaison between the Black Muslims and the Immigrant community. Several collection of his speeches such as: Religion on Line, An African American Genesis, and Leadership and Islam are widely available. (see From Black Muslims to Muslims by Clifton E. Marsh for details.) Numerous former Nation of Islam leaders disagreed with his changes. Most were people who returned to the old teachings such as Farrakhan, Silas Muhammad, John Muhammad, and Caliph Emmanuel Muhammad. One who turned to Orthodox Islam was Siraj Wahaj[12].

12. SIRAJ WAHAJ:

Siraj Wahaj was a former minister of the Nation of Islam who initially accepted the leadership of Warith Deen Muhammad. He later split over issues where he felt that Warith Deen Muhammad was being too accomodating to American society. Siraj Wahaj supports polygamy and full implementation of the Shariah where as Warith Deen Muhammad rejected polygamy and favored a more gradual move toward implementation of Shariah. Since the split Warith Deen Muhammad allegedly has moved his group closer to the Wahhabi sect and called for the reestablishment of the Caliphate[1].

13. JAMIL AL-AMIN:

Jamil al-Amin was born as H. "Rap" Brown in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1943. In 1964 he joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and rapidly moved up through its ranks. In 1967, at the age of 23, he succeeded Stockley Carmichael as leader of the SNCC and its ranks swelled. He allied himself



and his group with the Black Panthers and this was where he began to learn Islam. The Black Panthers accepted the political and economic views of the Nation but were slow to accept its moral, ethical, and dietary edicts. When he turned the movement from non-violence to Urban Guerilla Warfare he was placed on the FBI's most wanted list. After his 1973 arrest he decided to accept Orthodox Islam. In 1976 he left prison and had placed the violent non-Muslim lifestyle behind him. Today he is leader of over thirty Islamic centers which were (for the most part) members of the Dar ul-Islam Movement - a group which came about from the work of early students of Sheikh Daoud) and has documented his feelings about Islam in the work *Revolution by the Book*[12].

14. JOHN MUHAMMAD:

Warith Deen Muhammad's uncle John Muhammad acts as the "orthodox" Nation of Islam teacher as he allegedly does not teach anything except what Elijah Muhammad distinctly taught. He joined the Nation in 1930 with his brother Elijah. He is the only one of his immediate family of fourteen children and a wife who follows the old teachings. His wife is a follower of Warith Deen Muhammad. His movement has less than a thousand members and only a handful of active temples. The headquarters is in Highland Park, Michigan and a newspaper called "Muhammad Speaks" is published by his organization. A full length story (by Linda Jones) on his group can be found in *The Detroit News* of July 17, 1988[2].

15. CALIPH EMMANUEL MUHAMMAD:

A group with less than two hundred followers centered in Baltimore. The leader Emmanuel Muhammad claims to be the successor or Caliph of Elijah Muhammad. His group publishes a paper called "Muhammad Speaks" out of Baltimore, Maryland[8].

16. IMAM ISA:

Imam Isa is a Unitarian Universalist, Spiritualist, Jewish, Ansar, Black Nationalist successor to the self-proclaimed Messenger of Allah, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. He claims to be the successor of Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammad and Noble Drew Ali! Over 300 of his books and pamphlets are peddled on the street by his followers. A heavily armed camp/retreat was located in upstate New York. No count of his membership has been attempted. His group has now openly proclaimed themselves to be Black Jews even though they still claim lip service to the Qur'aan and the Prophet Muhammad[9].



17. OTHERS WHO CAME OUT OF THE NATION OF ISLAM:

Others came from the Nation and we must remember them as orthodox Muslims. These orthodox Muslims include: Muhammad Ali, Hamas Abdul Khaalis, and Malcolm X. Muhammad Ali went on to become one of the greatest sports men in this nation and a great contributor to the spread of Islam. Hamas Abdul Khaalis re-founded the Hanafi Madh-Hab Center in New York in 1958. It was originally started by Dr. Tasibur Uddein Rahman in the late 1920's. In 1947 Ernest Timothy McGee joined, he was later sent by Dr. Rahman to join the Nation of Islam to guide them to Orthodox Islam. By 1956 he became National Secretary for the nation of Islam. He left in 1958. It was later moved to Washington, D.C.. At his height he had over a thousand followers and led protests for several Muslim causes. His most famous follower is Kareem Abdul Jabbar. In 1977, Khaalis and some of his followers seized some buildings in D.C. as part of a protest and held them for some hours. One hostage was killed. He is currently serving a sentence of 41 to 120 years[5].

18. AL-HAJJ MALIK AL-SHABAZZ (MALCOLM X):

One of the greatest Muslim leaders ever in America was, of course, Malcolm X (or according to his true Muslim name- Al-Hajj Malik al-Shabazz). He started the political street organ of the Nation of Islam--the "Muhammad Speaks" newspaper and influenced several generations with his eye-opening auto-biography. Till the end of his life he was dedicated to the struggle for the rights of all oppressed people of the world. He was allegedly killed at the hands of FBI sponsored infiltrators into the Nation of Islam[2].

CONCLUSION:

It is strange that the religion of peace is always faced with violent confrontation from both within and without. Allah says, "And thus We have made you a middle Nation that you may witness to all people and We made the Apostle a witness to you...", in Sura 2 of the Holy Qur'an. How could this history with its' successes, failures, and disappointments exist when we are instructed to be a middle of witnesses to mankind and propagate Islam. In summary, this historical briefing on Islam in America focused on American Muslims and Muslims that were becoming Americans. This information points to the needs of dawa'h, Islamic schools, fighting assimilation, bi-lingual education, masjids, and taking part in the greater society. This ground work is outreach, developing schools and businesses, adult education, and programs to teach Arabic and Qur'an to such an extent our community here becomes bi-



lingual and stays that way. Next we need to have Islamic holidays recognized in public schools in much the same way Jewish and Christian holidays are and finally we need to make that sure proper books on Islam are in every single public and private library in the U.S. and books on Islam are placed in as many non-Muslim homes as feasible.

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