

AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL, ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, ISLAMIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Malcolm X Was A Muslim

As the release date for Spike Lee's new movie "Malcolm X" approaches, we are witnessing a renewed effort to deny the Islamic nature of El-Hajj Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X). Even those who praise his legacy see him as a "Black Nationalist," a humanist, an anti-imperialist fire brand, or even a Marxist; anything but what he was at the end of his life: a Muslim.

The current media term used when referring to Malcolm X is "slain Black leader." This term does not take into account the transformation Malcolm X under-

went when he came in contact with true Islam, not just the pseudo-Islamic teachings of the late Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad. It was in the city of Mecca that this transformation took place.

"At Makkah I saw the spirit of unity and true brotherhood displayed by tens of thousand of people from all over the world, from blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans. My religious pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah has given me a new insight into the true brotherhood of Islam, which encompasses all the races of

mankind."

The Muslim community in America, numbering some 6-8 million people of all races and backgrounds, is concerned that the legacy of our slain brother has become just another commodity to be sold at a profit. Millions of "X" hats, shirts, and buttons are now worn by those who have little or no understanding of El-Hajj Malik Shabazz's deep commitment to Islam and racial justice. We are also concerned that the movie "Malcolm X" will not increase the public's knowledge of this commitment.

To paraphrase Elijah Muhammad, "X" marks the spot where treasure is buried. It is our hope that movie-goers do not just take away the "X" and leave behind the treasure of Islam. In that treasure is a cure for the racism that afflicts this society. As El-Hajj Malik Shabazz himself said:

"America needs to understand Islam, because it is a religion that erases the race problem from its society. Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and eaten with people who would

have been considered 'white' in America, but the religion of Islam in their hearts has removed the 'white' from their minds. Before America allows herself to be destroyed by the 'cancer of racism' she should become better acquainted with the religious philosophy of Islam..."

Letter from Saudi Arabia, 1964.

Representatives of the Islamic community in America have requested a screening of Spike Lee's movie. To date there has been no response to the request. We sincerely hope the movie will portray our brother's true Islamic character. To make sure movie-goers have access to accurate information, those who go to see the movie on its release date will be offered Is-

lamic materials as they enter theatres in selected cities around the country.

If you would like to contact Muslim leaders in this country who can describe the Islamic transformation Malcolm X underwent as he became El-Hajj Malik Shabazz, you may call Ruqiyah Abdus-Salam, American Muslim Council, (202)789-2262; Kamran Memon, Islamic Society of North America, (317) 839-8157, ext. 236 or (317) 838-0887; Ibrahim Hooper, Islamic Information Service, (612) 721-4762; Yaser Elmshawy, Islamic Public Affairs Council, (908) 264-6482; Imam Jamil Al-Amin, National Community, (404) 758-7016; Imam Abdul Karim Hasan, Masjid Bilal, (213) 233-7274.



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POET'S CORNER

BLACK MAN, FIRST MAN

Black man, first man what's wrong with you?

Get up off your back!

You've been mislead and lied to.

You're caught in a mental trap.

Why are you discussing and countering things that have no meaning?

You're discussing peace while your children lay in the streets bleeding.

Black man, first man.

Black man the first man to set the standard of life, you even let the enemy name your Queen: he made you call her wife.

Black man, first man where is the strength you gave to the world?

How did they dog your mind so that they got you to answer to "Girl"?

Get up Black man, your ancestors are calling you from the grave.

There is no reason for you to live if you're just a Twentieth Century slave.

Get up Black man I command you with every ounce of my royal blood, though you have slipped and fallen there is no reason to lie in the mud.

I make you a challenge here and now, for ever more.

If you are not willing to die for your liberation then Black man, first man speak of it no more.

Kamau Khalfani

"X" MARKS THE SPOT (A tribute to Malcolm X)

"X" marks the spot,

For a race of people -

Robbed of their ancestors real names,

The spot is marked in honor,

And should bare no shame.

"X" marks the spot,

For a man who changed Black America,

By filling it with awareness and pride.

Mark that spot for my people -

Who choose to vote and refuse to hide.

"X" marks the spot,

For the fist and consciousness,

That is often raised.

In a hostile society,

That doesn't give the black man all his deserved praise.

"X" marks the spot,

For a people who continue to fight on -

By supporting the cause.

Of "X"-ing out hatred on this planetary ball,

In hopes that harmony will bind us all.

By Derick Wickliffe

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.