

# Defining Legends

Analysis of Afrocentric Writings on Islaam



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## Acknowledgements

All praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him and seek His aid and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. To begin:

Thanks to: ‘Abdul-Maalik Edwards, Jibreel ‘Abdus-Shakoor, Hamzah Lewis, ‘Alee Sierra Leonee, ‘Eesaa Caliste, Yoosuf Adam and ‘Abdur-Raheem Green, for their support during writing this project five years ago in 1420 A.H./1999 C.E.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.H stands for ‘*After Hijrah*,’ the Islamic dating beginning after the *Hijrah* of Muhammad and his companions to Madeenah correlating to 622 C.E. C.E. stands for ‘*Christian Era*,’ Muslims do not use ‘A.D.’ as it stands for ‘*Anno Domini*’ a Latin word meaning ‘*in the year of our lord*,’ ‘*lord*’ here meaning Jesus. However Jesus, *peace be upon him*, is not ‘*lord*’ for Muslims rather the Lord of Jesus is also the Lord of Muslims and the Lord of all people.

## Introduction

Since the rise of Afrocentric ideology in the West amongst people of African origin, there has been the argument that Islaam itself was a religion of Arab conquerors that plundered Africa to the detriment of the African peoples themselves. Moreover, Afrocentrics have initiated writings with reference to Islaam and have claimed that Islaam as a religion had, and has, no benefit.

*Defining Legends* will critically evaluate Afrocentrist claims about Islaam and bring new evidence to challenge their false assumptions. The documentary evidence presented in Afrocentric literature about Islaam will be analyzed and dismissed where necessary.

This study will manly dismiss Afrocentric perceptions of Islaam with recourse to more corroborated criteria and demonstrate the incoherence of their arguments against Islaam.

*Defining Legends* also demonstrates how much of Afrocentric thought regarding Islaam is in fact entrenched in a Eurocentric origin, from anti-Islamic European Christians and Freemasons.

Towards the end of the study, it is shown that one of the main architects of pan-African thought, Edward Wilmot Blyden, had great respect of Islaam and viewed it as the only religion that could provide a real change for the whole continent of Africa.

‘Ubayy ibn Ka’ab, *may Allaah be pleased with him*, narrated that the Messenger of Allaah, *may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*, said ‘If anyone proudly asserts his descent in the manner of the people of Jaahiliyyah (pre-Islamic days of ignorance) tell him to bite his father’s penis, and do not use a euphemism.’<sup>2</sup>

Aboo Hurayrah, *may Allaah be pleased with him*, reported the Messenger of Allaah, *may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him* said ‘Let the people cease to boast about their ancestors who have died, who are merely fuel for the Hell-fires, or they will certainly be of less account with Allaah than the beetle which rolls dung with its nose. Allaah has removed from you the pride of the pre-Islamic period and its boasting of ancestors. One is only a pious believer or a miserable sinner. All men are sons of Aadam and Aadam, peace be upon him, came from dust.’<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sharh us-Sunnah of al-Baghawee in Mishkaat ul-Masaabih

<sup>3</sup> ibid. transmitted by Aboo Daawood and at-Tirmidhi

## The Afrocentric Assault on Islaam

The most vehement Afrocentric writer who criticized Islaam was the late Chancellor Williams, especially his book *Destruction of Black Civilisation*.<sup>4</sup> This book is important as it is used by the hostile Afrocentrics when attacking Islaam and Muslims. The book has also been heavily relied upon by Christian evangelists in their missionary work. Williams himself was a committed Christian and he admits this in the book, this probably explains his deep hatred for Islaam and this effectively made his book emotionally biased.

Joseph 'Jay' Smith,<sup>5</sup> the Anglo-American evangelical flag-bearer of contemporary Christian polemic against Islaam in the UK has also used on this book.

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<sup>4</sup> First published in 1971, then re-printed in 1987

<sup>5</sup> Joseph 'Jay' Smith is the 'arch-deacon' and senior Christian missionary polemicist against Islaam in the UK. He is an Anglo-American born in India from an evangelical background and has a variety of degrees and diplomas. He has studied 'divinity theology' in America and also studied at the *School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*. Smith however is not even regarded highly by the de-mythologiser orientalist at SOAS. When asked, a former lecturer of Smith's, G. Hawting, described Smith as being: "A Christian missionary with his own agenda, obviously extreme in his theories, too radical in his claims to be accepted at a scholarly level and a trouble maker." Enough said!



One of Smith's side-kicks who goes by the peculiar name 'Brother Banda,' even wrote a feeble criticism of Islaam and alleged racism within Islaam and William's work was heavily relied upon.<sup>6</sup> This propaganda tract was distributed at Hyde Park Speaker's Corner.

Chancellor Williams' book is a fictitious race war between black Africans and Arabs. The front cover of the book displays an Arab on a horse with a sword fighting a semi-naked African in leopard skin with a spear in his hand. (!?) Even this image is not exactly Afrocentric as it seems to be based on medieval and colonial European stereotypes of both peoples. Williams argues, with no solid historical evidence, an amazing story reminiscent of medieval European Christian polemical writings against Islaam. Williams mentioned that the Arabs used tactics such as interbreeding with Africans in order to create an Islamically brainwashed mongrel hybrid race that he calls a 'Mulatto.'

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<sup>6</sup> This was called '*An African Asks Some Disturbing Questions of Islam*,' and was made into one of the *Hyde Park Christian Fellowship's '99 Truth Tracts*.'

Destruction of black artworks, monuments and writings, enslavement of Africans and invasions also typified the 'Arab Muslim' invasions.

### Sudan

The civil war in Sudan<sup>7</sup> greatly affected William's mind even though the Sudan situation has nothing to do with Islaam, but rather power and politics. The stereotype that has been given in the West through the media is that the civil wars in Sudan are between 'Arabs' and 'black Africans.' The southern Sudanese Marxist Socialist, John Garang and his SPLA have used Christianity in order to gain wider support from Western agencies such as *Tearfund*, *World Vision*, *Christian Solidarity International*, Caroline Baroness Cox and others. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury illegally visited southern Sudan during the civil war and gave his support and backing to the SPLA.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> When I had written this a few years back the civil war in Sudan was still going on. But recently the civil war in Sudan is currently over as a peace deal has been made between the government and the southern Sudanese rebel groups.

<sup>8</sup> "Christian have no right to dictate to Muslims," in *The Muslim News* (28th August 1998), p.2

The civil war in Sudan, which is now over due to the peace deals, furthered the *Islamophobia* agenda and the amount of articles written by the media in the West reflect this. Many people had obviously blindly accepted these reports and the Afrocentrics maintain exactly the same as the Western media did. For example:

- a) Peter Graff in *Time Magazine*<sup>9</sup> stated: **“On one evening in 1987, Arabs in Khartoum were calling for a holy war against the blacks.”**
- b) Bruce W. Nelan, with additional reports from William Dowell of the United Nations, Clive Mutiso in Khartoum and Douglas Waller in Washington DC in *Time Magazine*<sup>10</sup> again, state: **“Africa’s largest country is really two: an Islamic and Arabised north and a Christian and Animist African south.”**
- c) Patrick Sookhdeo, director of the obscure think-tank named *The Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity* stated: **“The tragic suffering of Sudan arises from a war which is a response to a ruthless campaign by the northern government**

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<sup>9</sup> November 3rd 1997, pp.50-51

<sup>10</sup> July 27th 1998, pp. 24-28

**to Arabise and Islamise the non-Muslim black African south of the country.”<sup>11</sup>**

d) Sam Keily writing for the *London Times* quoted a Christian minister who claimed: **“The slavery is racially biased. Black people are considered as slaves by the regime...”<sup>12</sup>**

The same hugely inaccurate claims are still being now regarding the issue of the Darfur region in Western Sudan. Again journalists have made the inaccurate claim that ‘Arabs’ are committing genocide on ‘black Africans.’<sup>13</sup>

(See:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3496731.stm>)

Suffice to say that both in this case are ‘Arabs’ and ‘Africans’ (!) Yet the media are just not mentioning the *colour* of these Arabs. In Darfur the so called oppressed ‘black Africans’ speak only Arabic. This issue will be dealt with later.

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<sup>11</sup> "The Blood of the Martyrs," in *The Daily Telegraph* (Wednesday June 3rd 1998) p. 26

<sup>12</sup> "Sudanese Children Sold as Slaves," in *The London Times* (16th March 1996)

<sup>13</sup> An excellent example of these inaccuracies can be seen here:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3791713.stm>

The southern Sudanese SPLA themselves were guilty of slavery and oppression, if not more so than they and their Christian evangelical cohorts were claiming were happening to them. Yet as usual biased accounts only detail the abuses enacted by ignorant Muslims and nothing else is mentioned.

- a) Sean Gabb, director of the *Sudan Foundation* in London, has noted that since John Garang has led the *SPLA* from 1983 he has yet to account for kidnappings, abductions, forced labour, forced conscriptions and other slavery-related practices that his Christian organization has been involved in.<sup>14</sup>
- b) The 1990 *US' State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* records that the SPLA forced southern Sudanese men to work as labourers or porters and forcibly conscripted them into *SPLA* ranks.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See: *MSA News, Sudan Foundation - Allegations of Slavery and Slavery-Related Practices, Part 2; Open Letter to Caroline Baroness Cox* (Saturday 22nd March 1997). [www.sufo.demon.co.uk](http://www.sufo.demon.co.uk) and can be contacted at [main@sufo.demon.co.uk](mailto:main@sufo.demon.co.uk)

<sup>15</sup> *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1990*, p. 387

- c) Inter *SPLA* fighting also resulted in the taking of slaves.<sup>16</sup>
- d) The *1991 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* placed on record that the *SPLA* had “forcibly conscripted at least ten thousand minors.”<sup>17</sup>
- e) *Human Rights Watch – Africa* in its 1994 report entitled *Civilian Destruction – Abuses By All Parties in the War in Southern Sudan*, a 279 page study, reported that: “The *SPLA* has conducted forcible recruitment...since at least the mid-1980s...forcing civilians to porter supplies is a chronic abuse.”<sup>18</sup>
- f) *Human Rights Watch – Africa* further noted that the *SPLA* was guilty of, amongst other things, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, abducting civilians, mainly women and children, torture, summary executions, the deliberate starvation of civilians, forced recruitment, forced labour, theft of civilian animals, food and grain and the holding of long term political prisoners in prolonged arbitrary detention.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1991, p. 391

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.* p. 382

<sup>18</sup> *Civilian Devastation*, pp. 174, 189, 192

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.* p. 3

Are these the actions of ‘oppressed black African Christians under the rule of Islamic extremists,’ or exploitation by those who are following their own interests and desires for power? The answer is clear.

Importantly, it has to be known that the actions of ignorant Muslims in any country cannot be taken to be representative of Islaam. For example in Sudan, Hasan at-Turaabee has been refuted by Muslim scholars for his *Mu'tazilah* (rationalist) understanding of Islam which have led him to reject sound and authentic *hadeeth* from the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*). Thus, the late Ethiopian scholar of *Madeenah University*, Shaykh Muhammad Amaan al-Jaamee (*raheemahullaah*) exposed the philosophical leanings and modernist interpretations that Turaabee has.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Amaan al-Jaamee, *Rud 'alaa't-Turaabee* (lecture in Arabic)

## **Black Arabs and Afrocentric Confusion**

The Afrocentrics also need to study more in depth into what exactly an ‘*Arab*’ is. The Prophet Muhammad said “*I was sent to every red and black.*”<sup>21</sup> In Sudan for example, it is clear that many in the north are ‘*black*,’ if we mean by this dark skin complexion. Northern Sudan has many different tribes, yet it should be noted that ‘*Arab*’ does not exclude having a dark skin complexion.

There are Arabs from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Palestine and North Africa that are just as ‘*black*’ as the average ‘*black person*.’ An Arab is better defined as a linguistic group as opposed to a race.<sup>22</sup> Aboo ‘Uthmaan ‘Amr ibn Bahr al-

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<sup>21</sup> Saheeh Muslim

<sup>22</sup> Sudan for example is composed of many tribes, some of these tribes mixed with Arabs in the past and some of the tribes are originally from the various tribes of Nubia (the name for what constitutes where northern and central Sudan now is). They are ‘Arabs’ now in the linguistic sense but not in the ethnic sense. As many of the north Africans, some of them are descended from people that mixed with



Fuqaymee al-Basree al-Jaahiz<sup>23</sup> (160 AH – 225 AH/ 776 CE – 869) wrote one of the earliest books in Arabic against Arab nationalism and racism entitled *Risaalah Fakhrus-Sudan 'Alaa al-Baythaan* (*Treatise of the Pride of Black People Over the White People*).

In the book, al-Jaahiz has a chapter called **“Arabs Are Amongst the Black People,”** he notes: **“There are black tribes amongst the Arabs, such as the Banu Sulaym ibn Mansoor. All who dwell in the Harrah other than the Banu Sulaym are also black. They use Ashban<sup>24</sup> slaves as shepherds, water carriers, workers and servants and take Byzantine women for wives.”<sup>25</sup>** Al-Jaahiz was a famed scholar of mainly science and history and especially in regards to Arabic prose.

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the Arabs, yet many of the north African Berbers for example are now ‘Arabs’ linguistically, but ethnically they are Berber.

<sup>23</sup> His grandfather was Fazaarah who was black and possibly Ethiopian, a freed slave of 'Amr ibn Kila'. Al-Jaahiz was one of the greatest writers in the Muslim world and is credited with the authorship of two hundred works in several disciplines. His early years were spent in the prosperous and culturally diverse town of Basra, where he was born. He was a Mu'tazilee so his Islamic belief was influenced by rationalism as opposed to the Qur'aan and Sunnah. We quote him however here as he refers to a fact that can be assessed which also refutes the claims of non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims.

<sup>24</sup> This is what the translation stated in English, yet maybe what is meant here is Asbahaan/Isfahaan which is located in Persia.

<sup>25</sup> T. Khalidi (translator), *Fakhrus-Sudan 'Alaa al-Baythaan* (The Islamic Quarterly; Vol. 25; 1981), p. 3-26

With regards to Chancellor Williams then, it can be observed that he makes a massive contradiction in his book as he ‘flips the script’ and begins praising the great Islamic trade and education center of Timbuktu in Mali.

Thus, Williams is in a dilemma, as on the one hand he cannot deny that Timbuktu was African and Islamic and Arabic was studied as well as spoken, an issue that Williams discretely neglects contemplation on, and on the other hand Williams wants to assert that the Muslims and Arabs systematically destroyed African civilization throughout the continent!?

In a TV series aired on BBC2 in July 1999 entitled *Wonders of the African World (Into Africa)*, the Afrocentrist Henry Louis Gates Junior made a brief tour of Africa. Gates Junior also made some snide comments about Islaam. Yet at the same time, Gates Junior constantly felt the need to praise what he called “the black achievement of our ancestors in Timbuktu who had knowledge of Arabic and science.” The pragmatism that characterizes the Afrocentrics clearly indicates that they follow their own desires and use whatever they want from African history

when it suits them. Gates Junior despite his ‘Afrocentric’ agenda fell into the trap of applying simplistic Western concepts of racial classifications onto Africa. For example, when Gates Junior went to Zanzibaar he asked one of the people there “are you black?” The Zanzibaaree man was clearly puzzled and simply replied that he was of Zanzibaar. Similarly, whilst in Timbuktu, Gates Junior asked the library keeper of the old Arabic manuscripts whether the authors were “black or not.” (!?) This is one of the major problems with the Afrocentrics, due to their Western education and reliance on anti-Islamic European sources they also apply simplistic Eurocentric and Western classifications onto Africa. So it shocks them when a ‘black man’ regards himself as an Arab. As stated before, an Arab is more of a linguistic group than a race as such and thus the skin colour demarcations are not adequately pertinent.

The Afrocentrist Molefi Asante has also made historical mistakes and wild claims: **“The Arabs with their *Jihaads*, or holy wars, were thorough in their destruction of much of the ancient culture. It is also as if small bands (of fleeing Egyptian priests) keeping ahead of the Islamic onslaught managed to preserve certain**

aspects of the traditional culture of Egypt.”<sup>26</sup> Molefi Asante thus asserts that these ‘aspects of ancient Egyptian culture’ were kept amongst the Wolof, Yoruba, Ashanti etc. Other characters that have axes to grind are writers such as Wole Soyinka, but his deep hatred for Islaam and Arabs owes a lot to his internal Nigerian political schism, though this is never openly acknowledged or admitted by Soyinka.

### **Does Islaam Teach Racism?**

It should also be noted, in order to refute the Afrocentrics, the Orientalists and the Christian missionaries, that throughout the history of Islaam, Muslim scholars have written monumental works to do with slavery, racism and equality. These issues were never even discussed by any of the world’s religions and civilisations until the last two hundred years or so, let alone books written on such issues. At times when ignorance was rife, it was only the Muslims

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<sup>26</sup> *Afrocentrism – Mythical Pasts and Imagined Homes*, pp.234-235

who carried the light of knowledge and some of the examples that will be presented here should indicate to people that Islaam has to be judged upon the Qur'aan and Sunnah, not on ignorant Muslims.

Ibn ul-Jawzee<sup>27</sup> (*raheemabullaah*) a Muslim scholar of Baghdaad wrote a book in the late 12th century CE called *Tanweer al-Ghabash fee Fadl is-Sudan wa'l-Habash (The Illumination of the Darkness on the Merits of the Black People and the Ethiopians)*.<sup>28</sup> It is an historical summary of the social history of sub-Saharan Africa and the meritorious deed of some well known persons of African origin in the Islamic world. At the time of writing this book, Baghdaad was becoming colour conscious and racism was beginning to

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<sup>27</sup> Abu'l-Faraj 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Hasan ibn ul-Jawzee (597 AH/ 1114 CE – 1200 CE). He was raised in the 'Iraaqee metropolis of Baghdaad where he was educated by his family who were scholars and other scholars of the *Hanbalee* school of Islamic *fiqh*. He became outstanding in the fields of Qur'aanic commentary, Arabic language, history and hadeeth. His works cover diverse areas and among the most notable of his published works are: *Sifah us-Safwah*, a biography of the companions of Prophet Muhammad and the early scholars of the Salaf; *Taqseem ul-Lisaan*, in Arabic language and linguistics; *Zaad al-Maseer fee 'Ilm ut-Tafseer*, commentary on the Qur'aan; *al-Mawdoo'aat*, in hadeeth; *Talbees Iblees*, about extreme and heretical understandings and practices; *Rooh ul-Arwaah* and *Sayd ul-Khaatir*.

<sup>28</sup> It has been edited by Mohamed Barakat (Sudan: Omdurman Islamic University Printing and Publishing House, 1993 CE/1412 AH). It has also been translated into English as a Ph.D degree thesis at the *School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, by 'Imraan Hamza Alawiye. It was translated by Dr. Alawiye as *Ibn al-Jawzi's Apologia on Behalf of the Black People & Their Status in Islam: A Critical Edition and Translation of Kitab Tanwir al-Ghabash fi Fadl as-Sudan wa'l-Habash* (August 1985). It is in the SOAS library thesis section.

set in, deviating from the justice and equality that Islaam emphasizes.

Before the contents of the book are looked at, it must be noted that Ibn ul-Jawzee was not just any simple Muslim scholar writing a book to be pious, rather he was one of the most prolific writers and erudite scholars to have existed in Islamic history. He was a specialist in *hadeeth*, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and history. He was also famed for his *Da'wah* activities (calling to Islaam), teaching and writing. In 1965 CE, 'Abdul-Hameed al-'Ajoolee produced a comprehensive account of Ibn ul-Jawzee's works, wherein he classified them and stated where they could also be found, he listed 384 books to Ibn ul-Jawzee's name.<sup>29</sup>

Shaykh ul-Islaam Ahmad Taqiyyuddeen Ibn 'Abdul-Hameed Ibn Taymiyyah<sup>30</sup> (*raheemahullaah*) said that Ibn ul-Jawzee wrote over one thousand books.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Arabic text entitled *Mu'allafaat Ibn ul-Jawzee (A Study of the Works of Ibn ul-Jawzee)*, 1965

<sup>30</sup> Ahmad ibn 'Abdul-Haleem Ibn Taymiyyah (1263 CE – 1328 CE/ 728 AH) was born in Harraan near Edessa which was in northern 'Iraq but is now called Orfa and is a part of Turkey. His father and grandfather were themselves leading scholars of the *Hanbalee* school of Islamic jurisprudence. He grew up in Damascus where he mastered at an early age the various sciences and disciplines of Islam. Much of his time and effort was spent in defending the early Islamic understandings against the deviations that were current during his era. Apart from being incredibly well versed in the Islamic sciences he also refuted with scholarly endeavor the tenets of Christianity, Shee'ahism, Soofism,

Ibn ul Jawzee in *Tanweer* tried to restore the purity of Islaam and raise the morale of some of the black community in Baghdaad at that time by reminding of their role in history.

The contents of the book are as follows:

- (a) *Those Who Belong to the Sudan*
- (b) *The Cause of Their Dark-skin*
- (c) *The Enlivening of Shem, the Son of Noah, by Jesus the Son of Mary*
- (d) *The Kingdoms of the Black People and Their Extent*
- (e) *The Collective Moral Excellence of the Character of the Black People*

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*Kalaam* (speculative theology, philosophy and rhetoric) etc. He was also prominent in fighting the Mongol invaders whilst other Muslims were fleeing Syria with their wealth. Due to his strong stand for the truth against those who were distorting Islaam for their own desires, a great deal of his later life was spent in prison in Cairo and Damascus. His outspoken lectures against the excessive theological and philosophical scholars of his time cost him his post as professor. Whilst in prison in Cairo, Ibn Taymiyyah was responsible for changing the prison into more of a library for the other prisoners, teaching and helping them to study instead of waste their time. This further angered his pitiful enemies from amongst the *Soofees* who had already taken to praying to dead ‘saints’ in graves, it would be those *Soofees* who would instigate futile arguments against him. Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah refuted these fault finders with clear evidences, leaving them dumb-founded to this day. However, even in jail Ibn Taymiyyah was still a prolific writer. Some of his famous published works are: *as-Siyaasah ash-Shar’iyyah*, *al-Eemaan*, *Minhaj us-Sunnah*, *al-Furqaan*, *ar-Rasaa’il*, *at-Tawassul wa’l-Waseelah*, *al-Jawab as-Saheeh*, *Iqtidaa Ahl us-Sunnah and Majmoo’ al-Fatawaa*. It was this massive intellect and extraordinary ability to keep Islaam in its pure form inherited from the early Muslims, whilst still master other sciences without incorporating them into Islaam itself, which earned Ibn Taymiyyah the title ‘*Shaykh ul-Islaam*.’

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalee, *Kitaab ad-Dayhl ‘Alaa Tabqaat ul-Hanabilah*

- (f) *Things Distinguished by Darkness from Amongst Animals, Trees and Plants*
- (g) *The Obviousness that there is no Preference for Light-Skinned Peoples Over Dark-Skinned People Based Upon Colour; Indeed Preference is Based Upon Piety*
- (h) *The Companions Who Migrated to Ethiopia*
- (i) *The Deputation of Quraysh to the Negus (Najaashi) to Retrieve the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah*
- (j) *The Correspondence of the Prophet with the Negus (Najaashi)*
- (k) *The Arrival of the Ethiopians to the Messenger of Allaah...And Their Play With Hiraab (Lances) in the Mosque During His Presence*
- (l) *Qur'aanic Words of Ethiopian Origin*
- (m) *What the Messenger Heard of the Ethiopian Language That Pleased Him*
- (n) *The Assignment of the Call to the Ethiopians*
- (o) *The Prophets Who Were Black*
- (p) *The Eminent King of Ethiopia*
- (q) *The Distinguished Black Males Amongst the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad*
- (r) *The Distinguished Black Females Amongst the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad*



- (s) *Prominent Black Learned People*
- (t) *Poets and Those Who Composed Poetry Amongst the Black People*
- (u) *Groups of Clever, Intelligent and Generous Black Males and Females*
- (v) *The Pious and Ascetic of the Black People*
- (w) *The Famous Black Females*
- (x) *Those Who Preferred Black Concubines to Light-Skinned Ones and Who Loved and Died From Their Love of Them*
- (y) *Quraysbees Who Were Sons of Ethiopian Women*
- (z) *Some Exhortations and Injunctions*
- (aa) *Some Invocations and Glorifications of Allaah, Mighty and Majestic*
- (bb) *Some Transmitted Supplications*

All of this from a Muslim scholar writing in the 12th century C.E. and by the contents one could assume that Ibn ul-Jawzee is even more ‘Afrocentric’ than the Afrocentrics, without even once having to refer to European Christians and Freemasons!! Rather, Ibn ul-Jawzee was writing from Islamic sources.

Other Muslim scholars who wrote similar books include Jalaaluddeen as-Suyootee<sup>32</sup> (*raheemabullaah*) who wrote three books about black people which were: *Raf’ Sha’n al-Hubshaan* (*Raising the Status of the Ethiopians*), *Azhaar ul-Uroosh fee Akhbaar ul-Huboosh* (*The Flowers of the Thrones Concerning Information About the Ethiopians*) and *Nuzhat ul-Umr fee’t-Tafdeel Bayna al-Bid wa’s-Sood wa’s-Sumr* (*The*

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abee Bakr, known as Jalaaluddeen as-Suyootee (1145 CE – 1505 C.E./ 911 A.H.) was a hadeeth scholar, historian, linguist and Faqeeh (jurist). He was born in Asyoot (Assiut) in Upper Egypt and was of Persian and Circassian origin. He flourished in Cairo during the declining years of the *Mamluk* dynasty. In that city, as-Suyootee was taught by some of the most prominent scholars of his time and he became known for his erudition at an early age, later becoming a teacher of high repute himself. At the age of forty he was a leading scholar in all of the various Islamic sciences, secluding himself and devoting his time to writing. About 400 works are attributed to him the most notable are his Qur’aanic commentary that he wrote along with Jalaaluddeen al-Mahaalee, the famous commentary known as *al-Jalaalayn*. As-Suyootee’s other noted works are *al-Itqaan fee ‘Uloom il-Qur’aan*, *Tadreeb ur-Raawee*, *al-Jaami’s-Sagheer* and *ad-Durr al-Manthoor fee’t-Tafseer bi’l-Ma’thoor*.

*Promenade of a Lifetime Concerning Preference for Light-Skinned, Dark Skinned and Brown Skinned Peoples).*<sup>33</sup>

These scholars were arguing and writing as Muslims using the Qur'aan and Sunnah as their main sources. Other Arab scholars who made racist and so called 'rationalist,' comments were not basing their foolish claims on the Qur'aan and Sunnah, but rather upon the ideas and methods of Galen,<sup>34</sup> Hippocrates, Strabo<sup>35</sup> and Ptolemy.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, some scholars relied heavily on the Israa'eeliyat (Jewish sources) and they thus regurgitated distorted ideas from the Biblical and Talmudic sources.

Thus, we find that scholars that lived in the Muslim world in the past who relied on Greek and biblical-Talmudic sources echoed racism in their writings. But this racism

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<sup>33</sup> For more info on these works see: Akbar Muhammad, "*The Image of Africans in Arabic Literature – Some Unpublished Manuscripts,*" in *Slaves and Slavery in Muslim Africa, Volume 1 – Islam and the Ideology of Enslavement* (Frank Cass Publisher: 1985), John Ralph Willis (ed.), pp.67-65

<sup>34</sup> A Greek physician who died circa 199 CE

<sup>35</sup> A famous Greek geographer and traveler, died circa 24 CE

<sup>36</sup> Greco-Egyptian geographer, astronomer and mathematician of the 2nd century CE

For example, scholars such as Ibn Khaldoun, al-Mas'oodi (in *Murooj ul-Dhahab*), Ibn Qutayba (died 276 AH/ 889 CE), Avicenna/Ibn Sinaa (died 1037 CE), al-Ya'qoobi (died circa 284 AH/ 897 CE) contain many unacceptable stories and analysis. This was due to their over-use of non-Islamic sources in order to understand certain phenomena.

could not have been justified from the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

Even today the Islamic world displays how Islam unites people from all over the world and an example of this can be seen at Madeenah Islamic University. Being one of the sacred places on the Earth for Muslims, Madeenah itself is a centre for the Muslims. The Islamic University of Madeenah includes Islamic scholars from all over the world such as Ghana, Nigeria, Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, India, Bukhaara in central Asia, China, Afghaanisataan and many other countries. It is a learning centre that demonstrates how Islamic knowledge has been spread across the world and not exclusive to any particular group of people.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> See the biographies of such scholars at: [www.al-manhaj.com](http://www.al-manhaj.com) and [www.fatwa-online.com](http://www.fatwa-online.com)

## Slavery and Early Islaam

Slavery has also been an issue that the Afrocentrics have attacked Islaam for. As usual they cite the examples of ignorant Muslims as the result of Islamic teachings. This is not to deny that Islaam allows slavery, as Islaam clearly allows the enslavement of war captives etc. Yet Islaam does not allow the enslavement of free-people of whatever religion and does not allow the enslavement of Muslims.

This is important as many who criticize Islaam for slavery are unaware that many gluttonous Muslims who traded and kept slaves also enslaved Muslims and this is forbidden in Islaam.

The huge ‘trading,’ kidnapping and enslavement of free people outside of warfare with Muslims has nothing to do with Islaam at all. The *Lajna ad-Daa’imah* (Permanent Committee for Islamic Research) of the top Islamic scholars in Saudi Arabia issued a *Fatwaa* wherein they were asked about the issue of slavery and why does not Islaam outlaw slavery, from their reply:

**“By this it is known that the basis of slavery is only through prisoners-of-war or captives obtained when**

fighting Jihad against the disbelievers. Its purpose is to reform those enslaved by removing them from an evil environment and allowing them to live in a Muslim society, who will guide them to the path of goodness, save them from the clutches of evil, purify them from the filth of disbelief and misguidance, and make them deserving of a life of freedom in which they enjoy security and peace.”

They furthered stated: “And if there are no lawful Islamic wars, then it is not permissible to establish or institute slavery.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Fatawa Islamiyah, Islamic Verdicts [Volume 5]* (Darussalam: 2002), pp.96-99

Therefore in order for slaves to be taken in Islaam there must have been a legitimate war between Muslims and their non-Muslim enemies. In this case, the disgusting slave trading, which in reality was through kidnapping free people, that took place in Mauritania, Morocco and the ‘sultaans’ of Omaan in Zanzibaar throughout history are only examples of how these former Islamic countries strayed from the correct understandings of Islaam. This straying from the correct Islamic understandings contributed to these countries only to be later destroyed themselves by the superior fire-power of the Europeans, leaving their own Islamic societies and traces of Islamic culture totally destroyed up until today.

Shaykh Ahmad Baabaa at-Timbuktee<sup>39</sup> (*raheemahullaah*) a Muslim scholar of Berber origin from Mali wrote a book on slavery in 1614 CE called *Mi’raaj us-Sood illa Nayl Hukm Majloob us-Sood*<sup>40</sup> which he condemned the enslavement of Muslims.

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<sup>39</sup> 1556 – 1627 CE

<sup>40</sup> Also known as *al-Kashf wa’l-Bayaan lee Ansaaf Majloob us-Sudan*

Furthermore, in the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) we find that he encouraged those who kept slaves to make contracts which facilitated the release and manumission of slaves. For example, when Seereen, the father of Muhammad Ibn Seereen asked his master Anas to make a manumission agreement with him, Anas refused. On hearing about this, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab whipped Anas saying, ‘*It is Allaah’s command to enter into a manumission agreement.*’<sup>41</sup>

Early Islaam, the epoch of the *Salaf*, shows many examples and appeals to emancipate slaves. People were also obliged to free slaves as expiation for sins and to achieve salvation in the next life.

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<sup>41</sup> Bukhaaree



Even though there are racist statements from certain ‘Muslims’ these have nothing at all do to with Islaam. Racist poems and proverbs to exist in some Arab literature, these statements are not exactly from good practicing Muslims and contradict what Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) taught.

For example, these racist Arab proverbs were collected by writers such as al-Maydaanee (d. 1124 CE) in his *Majma’ al-Amthaal* ,<sup>42</sup> al-Askaaree (d. 1005 CE) and Ibn ‘Abdur-Rabbih (d.940 CE) in *Iqd ul-Fareed*. Yet is should also be known that these authors were merely relaying what others say and not their own belief or ideas.

The Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) however said, “*Feed slaves from the food you eat, and clothe them from the clothes you wear.*”<sup>43</sup> One hadeeth mention that a person will have two rewards in the after-life if they had slaves and then educated them and then freed them.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Published in Egypt in two volumes in 1352 AH

<sup>43</sup> Bukhaaree, Muslim and Aboo Daawood

<sup>44</sup> Bukhaaree, Muslim, an-Nasaa’ee and Ibn Maajah

The Prophet Muhammad also said “*slaves are your brothers...never give them more to do than they are capable of doing. If you ever do so, then help them do it.*”<sup>45</sup> He also said (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) “No one should say “my slave,” as all of you are slaves of Allaah.”<sup>46</sup> He also said (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*), “Whoever frees a slave, Allaah will free his body from the hellfire, just as he freed the body of the slave.”<sup>47</sup> There are many other hadeeth to this effect from the Prophet Muhammad.

There is also a very interesting example from the time of the early Muslims, the *Salaf us-Saalih* found in the book *Zuhoor ul-Basaateen Tareekh as-Sawaadeen (Flowers in the Garden Regarding the History of the Blacks)* by Shaykh Moosaa Kamara (*raheemahullaah*).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Bukhaaree, Muslim, Aboo Daawood, Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah

<sup>46</sup> Bukhaaree, Muslim, an-Nasaa’ee and Ibn Hibbaan

<sup>47</sup> Bukhaaree

<sup>48</sup> He is Shaykh Moosaa Ibn Ahmad al-Habeeb al-Kamara of Senegal, 1864 – 1945 CE. He was born in Gouriki, Samba-Diom, in a small village in the Damga encompassed by the Futa-Toro region in Senegal. He studied Arabic and the Qur’aan at a young age in his village and he also studied with scholars of the region and Mauritania. He is regarded as an heir to the literary traditions of Timbuktu and Songhay and he lived at a period which witnessed many Islamic confrontations with the encroaching European penetration into West Africa. His book *Zuhoor ul-Basaateen* is his most voluminous work and is a massive ethno-historical study of his region in West Africa. Another historical work authored by him was *al-Majmoo’ an-Nafees Sirran wa ‘Alaaniyya ‘an ba’d as-Saadaat al-Baydaaniyya wa’s-Sudaaniyya (The Precious Collection, Secret and Public, on Some White and Black Notables)* which is a history of the scholarly Tordobe clan in West Africa and parts of it have been translated by Constance Hilliard. Hilliard says, “**His works offer the most sizeable unpublished reservoir of indigenous intellectual history and commentary existing today in West Africa.**” For an English translation of parts of *al-Majmoo’ an-Nafees* by Hilliard see the French journal/periodical *Islam Et Societies Au Sud du Sahara* (Paris: Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l’-Homme, 1997) p. 175

He quotes a passage from a book by Muhammad Ibn Moosaa Ibn ‘Eesaa Kamaaluddeen ad-Dameeree<sup>49</sup> called *Hayaat ul-Hayawaan al-Kubraa*.<sup>50</sup> In *Hayaat ul-Hayawaan, ad-Dameeree* in turn quotes the *Rihlah* of Ibn as-Salaah<sup>51</sup> who narrated a report from az-Zuhree<sup>52</sup> (*raheemahullaah*), who related as follows:

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<sup>49</sup> Abu’l-Bakr Muhammad Ibn Moosaa Ibn ‘Eesaa Ibn ‘Abdul-Qadir Kamaaluddeeb ad-Dameeree, born in Cairo in 750 AH/ 1349 CE or 742 AH/ 1341 CE. He was from Dameerah in Egypt and studied under numerous teachers, principally focusing on the sciences of hadeeth, jurisprudence and philology. He went on to lecture in Cairo and delivered sermons and exhortations in many other places in Egypt. He composed several works, mainly commentaries including a four volume work on the methodology of Imaam Yahyaa an-Nawawee called *an-Najm ul-Wahhaaj (The Shining Star)*, and a commentary of the *Sunan* of Ibn Maajah. He became one of the main scholars of the *al-Azhar* University and died on the 3rd of Jumadaa 808 AH/ 1405 CE at the age of 58 or 66.

<sup>50</sup> *Hayaat ul-Hayawaan* is probably the most important work that gained ad-Dameeree his recognition. It was the first attempt to give in a systematic form the mass of knowledge of the nature of the animal and plant kingdoms in Arabic literature. The book is mainly a para-zoological encyclopedia but it is also full of detailed accounts from the early Muslims. It has been translated into English as *Hayat al-Hayawan – A Zoological Lexicon; translated by ASG Jayakar of Bombay University* (London: Luzac & Co., Bombay: Fort Printing Press; Volume 1: 1906 CE/ Volume 2: 1908 CE).

<sup>51</sup> Aboo ‘Amr ‘Uthmaan Ibn Abdur-Rahmaan Salaahudden Ibn ‘Uthmaan Ibn Moosaa ash-Shahrazuree. Born in Sharkhaan in 577 AH/ 1181 CE and he was of Kurdish descent. He was a hadeeth scholar and studied in Mosul, Baghdaad, Nishapoor, Merw and in Damascus under Ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdisee. Ibn as-Salaah composed many works on *fiqh* and excelled in other areas. He taught at the Salaahiyya school in Jerusalem and then later went on to teach in the *Daar ul-Hadeeth* in Damascus. He died in 643 AH/ 1245 CE.

<sup>52</sup> Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn ‘Ubaydullaah Ibn Shihaab as-Zuhree 50 AH – 124 AH/ 742 CE. He was one of the early hadeeth scholars and writers of Islamic literature. His grandfather, ‘Abdullaah Ibn Shihaab fought on the side of the polytheists against the Prophet Muhammad and his companions at Badr and ‘Uhud, and his father was on the side of ‘Abdullaah Ibn az-Zubayr against the ‘Umayyads. Az-Zuhree himself along with other scholars, including al-Hasan al-Basree, were later accused of being ‘government scholars’ as az-Zuhree accepted office with the ‘Umayyads. Even though az-Zuhree was poor in wealth he was rich in knowledge having memorized the whole Qur’aan in three months and constantly engaged in searching for knowledge. He also studied the genealogies and the poetry of the Arabs, much of which he had also memorized due to his tremendous memory. Aboo Zinaad

*‘I introduced myself to ‘Abdul-Maalik.*

*‘Where do you come from, Oh az-Zuhree?’ he asked me.*

*I responded, ‘from Makkah.’*

*Whom have you left in your place to lead (as Imaams and teachers) their inhabitants?’ he asked me.*

*‘Ataa Ibn Abee Rabaah,’ I answered.*

*‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’ he asked.*

*‘A freed slave,’ I said.*

*‘How can he lead the Makkans?’ he asked.*

*‘By Deen (religion) and Sunnah,’ I replied.*

*‘Certainly it is suitable that those who possess Deen and Sunnah lead men. But who then leads the people of Yemen?’*

*‘Ta’oos Ibn Kaysaan,’ I answered.*

*He asked, ‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’*

*‘A freed slave,’ I responded.*

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(*raheemahullaah*) said of az-Zuhree, **“When I would be with az-Zuhree he used to go about with tablets and sheets of paper with him, writing down everything that he heard, we used to laugh at him for that.”** A student of az-Zuhree, Ma’mar reports that his teacher would even write on the soles of shoes when paper was not available. The first **Mujaddid**, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azeez (*raheemahullaah*) admired az-Zuhree and advised people to attend his study circles. Other scholars testify that az-Zuhree was a major hadeeth scholar and was trustworthy. Az-Zuhree was also very benevolent and gave much to the needy, having known poverty himself. One other early scholar, al-Layth Ibn Sa’d (*raheemahullaah*) stated that **“I have not seen anyone more generous than Ibn Shihaab. He used to help anyone who came to him and if he had nothing he used to borrow.”** Ibn Sa’d in his *Tabaqaat* noted that az-Zuhree collected so many *ahadeeth* that after his death his manuscripts needed several large animals to transport them. For more on az-Zuhree and the Arabic sources where his life and achievements are recorded see: Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (American Trust Publications, 3rd Edition, 1992) pp. 279-293.

*‘How can he lead them?’ he asked.*

*‘In the same way as ‘Ataa,’ I responded.*

*He then said, ‘It is suitable that people of this kind lead men, but then who will then lead the people of Egypt?’*

*I replied, ‘Yazeed Ibn Abee Habeeb.’*

*He asked, ‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’*

*It was the same response as for the others. Then who will lead and command the people of Syria?’ he asked.*

*I said ‘Makhoot ad-Dimishqee.’*

*He asked, ‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’*

*I replied, ‘He is a Nubian that was a slave and released by Hadooyl.’*

*The same discussion continued, then ‘Abdul-Maalik asked, ‘Who will then lead (in prayer as Imaams and teachers) the people of Iraaq?’*

*The response, ‘Maymoon Ibn Mahraam.’*

*He asked, ‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’*

*[The same discussion]*

*Then who will lead the people of Khurasaan?’*

*‘Ad-Dakhaah Ibn Muzaahin,’ I replied.*

*He asked, ‘Is he an Arab or a freed slave?’*

*‘A freed slave,’ I replied.*

*[Same discussion]*

*“Then who leads the people of Basrah?” ‘Abdul-Maalik asked.  
I responded, “al-Hasan Ibn Abi’l-Hasan.”  
He asked, “Is he an Arab or a freed slave?”  
“A freed slave,” I responded.  
“And who leads the people of Koofah? Is he an Arab or a freed  
slave?”  
“An Arab,” I replied.  
Abdul-Maalik said, “Oh aḏ-Zuhree you relieve me. By Allaah the  
freed slaves rule the Arabs to such an extent that they preach to them  
from the pulpits whilst the Arabs remain beneath them.”  
“Oh commander of the faithful,” I responded, “such is the will of  
Allaah and such is the Deen. Whoever practices it is the leader and  
whoever ignores it shall fall.”<sup>53</sup>*

This is an example of the reality of Islaam as it was practiced by the early Muslims, *as-Salaf us-Saalih* and thus this archetype represents the veracity of how Islaam liberated people from slavery to men to scholastic height and achievement. Islaam took people out of the degrading servitude to men to servitude to Allaah with knowledge and scholarly endeavor.

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<sup>53</sup> *Hayat ul-Hayawan* (Volume 2, Part 1) pp.224-225

Quite simply, Islaam is about liberation and the Qur'aan contains many verses about equality and human dignity. Later generations of Muslims had not remained true to the teachings of Islaam and thus the horrific and terrible examples of rapacious and miserly Muslims can be seen with the histories of Zanzibaar, Morocco, Mauritania and 'Iraaq, all attesting to this.

## ‘Abdur-Raheem Green’s Response to ‘An African Asks Some Disturbing Questions of Islam’<sup>54</sup>

This is a response to one of the tracts distributed by the ‘Pharisee’ Joseph Smith<sup>55</sup> *al-Kadhaab*<sup>56</sup>: ‘*An African Asks Some Disturbing Questions of Islam.*’

This pamphlet is just one example of the hypocrisy, lies and falsehood of the Christian missionaries and in particular the infidel Smith, whose papers are rampant with such falsehoods. We pray that Allaah allows us to expose every single one of their lies to the world, and especially to

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<sup>54</sup> Aboo Abdullaah ‘Abdur-Raheem Ibn Green is a Muslim *da’ee* (caller to Islam) noted for his powerful talks at Hyde Park Speaker’s Corner in London over the last decade wherein many people embraced Islaam. He is currently in charge of Islamic propagation at *Central Mosque* Regents Park. The original work ‘*An African Asks Some Disturbing Questions of Islam*’ was by an evangelical Christian pamphleteer by the name of ‘*Brother Banda.*’ ‘Banda’ utilized many Afrocentric arguments mainly borrowed from Chancellor Williams and the leaflet was distributed at *Hyde Park Speaker’s Corner*. This particular work also indicates the unity of Islaam as ‘Abdrur-Raheem being a white English Muslim, took it upon himself to refute the simplistic allegations that Islaam was an ‘intrinsicly racist religion.’

<sup>55</sup> Joseph ‘Jay’ Smith is the ‘arch-deacon’ and senior Christian missionary polemicist against Islaam in the UK. He is an Anglo-American born in India from a radical Evangelical background and has a variety of degrees and diplomas. He has studied ‘divinity theology’ and its like in America and also studies at the *School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*. Smith however is not even regarded highly by the de-mythologiser orientalist at *SOAS*. When asked, a former lecturer of Smith’s, G. Hawting, described Smith as being: “**A Christian missionary with his own agenda, obviously extreme in his theories, too radical in his claims to be accepted at a scholarly level and a trouble maker.**” Enough said!

<sup>56</sup> An Arabic term for a compulsive liar.



those who innocently trust their slanderous writings, so the truth of the reality of the worst of created beings can be known. The Bible says a lot of nice things, but it also contains some horrifyingly brutal and racist comments as well. The fact is that Western Christianity has often used the Bible to support its racist ideals. Indeed, the God of the Old Testament often seems to be portrayed as an exclusive God of the Israelites:

**“There is no god in all earth, but in Israel.”**

{Kings 5: 15}

**“You (Children of Israel) are a holy people unto the Lord your God, The Lord has chosen you to be a special people that are upon the face of the earth.”**

{Deuteronomy 7: 6}

Some of the sayings attributed to Jesus seem to reflect this attitude. When a non-Jew Samaritan asks him for help he refers to them as dogs. Jesus also stated that he was only

sent to the lost sheep of the *Children of Israel*. Interestingly, the passage where he is supposed to have told his disciples to “go unto the nations,” is not found in any of the most ancient manuscripts and is now considered spurious. Furthermore, the concept that Jesus was the acclaimed “Son of God,” and so called “*manifestation of God*” does have some racist overtones, i.e. that ‘*God made flesh*’ was a Jew. Now concerning the Cushite wife of Moses mentioned in *Numbers*, without trying to dismiss entirely the proposition that “the God of the Bible hates racism,” the context seems to be more suggestive that God’s anger was for their upsetting Moses than any hatred of racism. Not that I believe the Bible is inherently racist (God’s favour to the Israelites has other acceptable explanations) but there has been a history of racism associated with Christianity that has caused many to flee, and often in numbers, to Islaam.

What follows in *A Disturbing Question Concerning the Muslim Qu’ran* is illustrative of the idiotic type of problems these monkeys use in their desperate attempts to slander God’s final revelation, the Qur’aan. The verse quoted (Soorah 3 ‘Alee Imraan: 106-107) clearly has nothing to do with skin

colour or race. If a white man was thrown into a fire, what colour would he become? And if a dark-skinned person were to be put under an intense light his skin would shine with that light. What's racist about that? Interesting enough, there is another passage in the Qur'aan which the Black nationalist '*Nation of Islam*,' another group of perverters of the true meanings of God's word, use to support their racist ideals that all white people are damned. This verse describes the unbelievers on the *Day of Judgement* as being blue-eyed!<sup>57</sup> In fact, the words are only common Arabic idiomatic usage to describe terror, as in the English term '*green with envy*.' Only misguided fools would use such passages to support claims of racism. It becomes all the more incredible in light of the clear verse of the Qur'aan that states:

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<sup>57</sup> This is the verse in the Qur'aan wherein Allaah, Most Wise, says, "**The Day when the Trumpet shall be blown, and We shall gather the criminals (sinners), blue-eyed**" {*Soorah 20 Taa Haa: 102*}. The Arabic word here '*Zurq*' is a plural form of '*Azraq*.' This verse has been interpreted by some commentators of the Qur'aan to mean that out of fear all human beings on the Day of Judgement will turn blue. Because of fear, their blood would dry up and it would seem as if there was no blood left in their veins making them look bluish-white. The other, and much stronger opinion, is that the horror of the Day of Judgement will turn eyes bluish-white, the sense of horror will seize them causing their eyes to petrify. The verse has never been understood by the early Muslims to mean 'white blue eyed Europeans' will only be punished and gathered on the Day of Judgement!!

**We made you into tribes and nations that you may get to know one another (not that you should hate each other) And the best of you in the sight of Allaah are those who are most conscious of Allaah**

*{Soorah 49 al-Hujjooraa: 13}*

And the well known authenticated statement of the Prophet Muhammad: **“There is no difference between the white and the black, the Arab and non-Arab, except in Taqwaa (God-consciousness).”**<sup>58</sup> Also the verses in the Qur’aan that clearly state that it is a revelation for all mankind, that all mankind is descended from Adam and Eve, and Adam was made from dust, are more than sufficient proof to dispel concerns of racism in the Qur’aan or the religion of Islaam. Furthermore, the lack of racism is something found practically manifested amongst the Muslim nations, as epitomized in the *Hajj*, where pilgrims from all over the world join together in the worship of the One True God, Allaah, dressed in the same two pieces of seamless white cloth. The sight was enough to change

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<sup>58</sup> Musnad Ahmad

Malcolm X from a racist black nationalist to a true *Sunnee* Muslim.<sup>59</sup>

How could this Christian be blind to these facts, when even the scholars amongst his co-religionists have recognized the distinctive non-racial quality of Islaam?

**“The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world there is a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue.”<sup>60</sup>**

**“No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, or opportunity and endeavor so many and so varied races of mankind. The great Muslim communities of Africa, India and Indonesia, perhaps also the small community in Japan, show that Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition.”<sup>61</sup>**

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<sup>59</sup> Refer to The Autobiography of Malcolm X, by Alex Haley

<sup>60</sup> Civilisation on Trial, by AJ Toynbee

<sup>61</sup> *Whither Islam*, by HAR Gibb

It seems to me that Banda is either willfully blind, or merely trying to slander Islaam with anything he can lay his hands on, and if he can't find anything he'll happily lie and invent it! We need to ask if this is truly the way of one who claims to be a follower of the *Prince of Peace* the one who praised meekness, humility, honesty and justice, and condemned the lying hypocrisy of the Scribes and the Pharisees? This Christian writer reeks of that very same type of lying hypocrisy that Jesus, *peace be upon him*, was so vocal in condemning.

In the light of what we have discovered so far, can we trust those comments that follow?

In the next section *‘A Disturbing Question Concerning African History,*<sup>62</sup> Banda is puzzled about the lack of unbiased historical research by Muslims concerning the African people. We have already witnessed how ‘unbiased’ Banda has proved to be, and his own complete lack of objectivity will become even more apparent when we further examine his claims. The first lie we find is in his accusation that Islaam destroyed the African churches. If he means by that that Islaam destroyed them because when Islaam came people voluntarily left Christianity in droves and embraced Islaam through their own realization that it is indeed the true religion, then emphatically **“YES!”** And no Muslim would fail to be proud of that. But this is not what Banda means, as he clearly shows further on when he gives his reasons for the disappearance of the Christian Church as

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<sup>62</sup> Banda stated: *“As an African I am very puzzled at the lack of balanced historical research by Muslims concerning the African people.”* This statement displays the clear lack of any real historiographical knowledge that fools like Banda have. If Banda knew ‘African historical research’ himself he would have known that there is a mass of literature in Africa written in Arabic by African Muslims. Such as *Tareekh as-Sudan* written in 1653 by ‘Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sa’dee at-Timbuktee, *Tareekh al-Fattaash* written in the 18th century CE by Mahmood al-Kaatee, and also the work of Ahmad Baabaa at-Timbuktee and Moosaa Kamarah. Not to mention other scholars such as Ibn ul-Jawzee and as-Suyootee and Muslim historians, travelers and geographers such as Ibn Munabbah, Abu’l-Fida, Ibn ul-Mukhtaar, Ibn Fadhlallaah al-‘Umaree and al-Bakree. This basic evidence can be found in any concise West African history book regarding Islaam, so Banda has little excuse to make this pathetic claim.

forced conversion and slaughter at the hands of the Muslims. This, you guessed it, is another complete lie.

De Lacy O' Leary wrote in his book on Islaam: **“History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islaam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.”**<sup>63</sup>

The Qur'aanic verse that Banda quotes are, of course, quoted out of context, and the correct understand is established by reference to other Qur'aanic verses and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Without a doubt Islaam calls upon Muslims to fight against the forces of disbelief, oppression and tyranny. This is nothing new in fact, Banda could find some even more brutal verses in his own book if only he had eyes to see:

**“And the Lord said, “Go through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have you pity. Slay**

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<sup>63</sup> De Lacy O'Leary, *Islam at the Crossroads – A Brief Survey of the Present Position and Problems of the World of Islam* (1923)



utterly the old and young, both maids and little children, and women”.”

{*Ezekiel 9: 5*}

And as for not taking friends those who have insulted Allaah by saying that he has a “Son” and committed the crime of ascribing divinity to His creation, the ultimate evil, then does Paul not say something similar? **“Do not be yoked together with the unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”**<sup>64</sup>

What becomes even more laughable is when he quotes the names of so-called ‘*African*’ Christians, such as Augustine of Hippo (whose mother’s name was Monica and father Patricius), Tertullian, Clement and Athanasius. Now do they sound like African names to you? A little ‘unbiased’ historical research will show the origins of these names and the racial origins of these ‘*Great thinkers.*’ They are Greek and Roman colonialists, which is rather like quoting Pit Bota or Cecil Rhodes as founders of ‘African’ civilisation.

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<sup>64</sup> Corinthians 6: 17

Now for a real ‘African’ church we might turn our attention to Ethiopia, but the Christian would rather ignore that, since Negus, the King of Ethiopia at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (*may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) and a good number of his bishops, as well as many of the Ethiopians, became Muslims, voluntarily, recognizing Muhammad as a true Prophet. Indeed, large numbers of the Muslim armies that liberated north Africa from the tyranny of the Christian Byzantine empire were Ethiopians. The very same Roman colonialist stock that Banda quotes as examples of ‘African’ Christianity actually complained to the Muslim ‘Ameer about the large numbers of blacks in his army and asked him to keep them well away because they were frightening them. **“Take away that black man, I can have no distinction with him,”** exclaimed the Christian Archbishop Cyrus when the “Arab conquerors” has sent a deputation of their ablest men to discuss terms of surrender of the capital of Egypt, headed by the companion of the Prophet Muhammad, ‘Ubaadah Ibn as-Saamit, *may Allaah be pleased with him*, as the most ablest of them all, ‘Ubaadah Ibn as-Saamit was black.<sup>65</sup> To

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<sup>65</sup> These facts refute the mass of Afrocentric and Orientalist literature that mention “Arab” invasions, conquests and ‘rises,’ in North Africa, when the main leaders and many of those fighting to spread Islaam were in fact black. Usaamah bin Zayd (radi Allaahu anhu) who was one of the young

the sacred archbishop's astonishment, he was told that this man was commissioned by the General, 'Amr Ibn al-'Aas; that the Muslims held blacks and whites in equal respect, judging a man by his character not his colour. **“Well if the black man must lead, then he must speak gently,”** ordered the prelate, **“so as not to frighten his white auditors.”**<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, Banda and his evangelical brethren must be walking with blinkers on their eyes and cotton wool in their ears when he asks, **“So why do we not hear of this African church, and why do we not see any remnants of it today?”** I lived in Egypt for ten years. One third of the population, after one thousand and four hundred years of Muslim rule, is still Coptic, which is one of the oldest Christian Churches. I passed their Churches many times and visited their monasteries in the desert. The Ethiopian Church is still existing, as are the Catholic, Orthodox, Syriac, Maronite and numerous other Churches still

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commanders of the companions of Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) was of African origin, 'Ubaadah Ibn as-Saamit (*radi Allaah anhu*) for example, the commander of the Muslims that went into Egypt, was a 'black' (dark-skinned) Arab and Taariq bin Ziyaad (*radi Allaahu anhu*) who was the commander of the Muslims that went into Spain was also originally from one of the north African tribes.

<sup>66</sup> SS Leeder, *Veiled Mysteries of Egypt*

existing all over the lands liberated by the Muslims.<sup>67</sup> Historical records show that Christian Churches actually wrote to the Muslims inviting them to come and liberate them from the tyranny of their Christian brethren – the Byzantines!

Banda goes as far as to expose himself with a blatant contradiction when he mentions the three Christian mini-states of Sudan having their own written language, centres of learning etc...from 350 CE to 1500 CE, yet claims that it was all destroyed by Muslim invaders in 1275 CE? As for the present war, we ask all inquiring minds to ponder what “peace-loving, turn-the-other-cheek, resist-not-your-enemies” Christians are doing fighting a civil war against the legitimate government of Sudan, and what the “peace-loving, turn-the-other-cheek, resist-not-your-enemies” European and American Evangelists are doing funding these rebels. It is also noteworthy that over half of the deaths in that civil war, and much of the destruction, has been caused by the rival Christian groups fighting each other!

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<sup>67</sup> For example in Muslim Spain, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, with these last three countries still home to large communities of Jews.

I suggest anyone who is interested in reading a truly unbiased account of the treatment of Christians by the Muslims get hold of *The Preaching of Islam* by TW Arnold. Alexander Powell says in his book *The Struggle for Power in Muslim Asia*, **“In their wars of conquest, however, the Muslims exhibited a degree of toleration which puts many Christian nations to shame.”**

Through my reading of Joseph Smith’s papers, I have developed a method for predicting Evangelical Christian lies about Islaam. When you read, *“The Muslims say...”* or *“The Muslims believe...”* or something similar, then there is about an 85% chance that what will follow will either be a complete lie or gross distortion. The section on slavery is an excellent example. In the second line he sates that, concerning slavery, wait for it, ***“Muslims say it was only a Christian phenomena.”*** Do they? Which Muslims is he talking about? I don’t think that there are any Muslims that say slavery was only a Christian phenomenon, since slavery existed before Christianity came along. The facts are that the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments approve of slavery and there is not one single Biblical verse

condemning it. The only verse that comes within a hundred miles is Paul's recommendation to Christians to try and free themselves if they are slaves because they should be slaves to Christ alone. In fact Biblical teachings approve of slavery and even enjoin it. If the hypocrite Banda condemns Islaam because of slavery, then he also condemns his own book. Let's browse through a few examples:

*“And the Lord said unto Moses, “Avenge the children of the Midianites,” They warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses, and they killed the males. And they took all of the women as captives, and their children, and took the spoil of their cattle, and took all of their flocks, and all of their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they*

*dwelt, and all their goodly castles with fire. Moses said, “Have you kept all of the women alive? Now kill every male among the children, and kill every woman that has known a man by lying with him, but keep all of the young girls for yourselves”.*”

{Numbers 31: 1}

*When you draw near to a city fight against it, offer terms of peace to it, and if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all of the people that are found within it shall do forced labour for you and shall serve you. But if the city does not make peace with you, then you shall besiege it...you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the children, the cattle and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourselves; and you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies.”*

{Deuteronomy 20: 10-17}

“Oh no! That’s the Old Testament,” cries the Christian! “The New Testament has replaced all that!” Not so. Paul actually instructs the flock on how to behave as slaves:

***“Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would Christ...Serve wholeheartedly...And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them...”***  
{*Ephesians 6: 5*}

*Nota Bene:* Paul does not order Christian masters to release their Christian slaves, just to be nice to them! What reeks even more of hypocrisy is that Banda tries to use the secular Western nations condemnation of slavery to show how “*Christianity*” condemned slavery. Yet this very liberal, non-literal, non-Biblical based form of “*Christianity,*” - followed by the likes of Livingstone and Wilberforce<sup>68</sup> – is the very same type of Christianity these evangelicals, like Banda and his bunch, so vehemently attack for their understandable refusal to believe the Bible is the Word of God, and their readiness to accept the modern scientific criticisms of the Biblical texts.

When one shows the short-comings and corruption of Imperialism and the Western consumer societies they cry

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<sup>68</sup> William Wilberforce of Hull was active in the 19th century CE abolition of slavery movement and called for the ending of New World slavery and British involvement in it.



“this is not Christianity and they are not true Christians.” But when, as in this article, they wish to condemn Islaam, or any other religion, they produce statistics to show how much better the “*Christian*” Europe is. They want to have their cake and eat it too. Now let us not forget that the USA fought a civil war against the Southern ‘*Bible Belt*’ States just over one hundred years ago, and partly over the issue of slavery (Southern white American Christians approved of it and found support in the Bible).

Islaam does not encourage slavery, nor does it forbid it. It does however, encourage the freeing and kind treatment of slaves. A slave in Islaam is treated as a member of the household, and must be fed with the same food and clothed with the same clothes as the master or mistress. It is forbidden to overwork a slave and the slave has the right to buy his or her freedom and the owner does not have the right to refuse. In fact, the way slaves are treated in Islaam, as one European writer commented, was better than the way servants were treated in Europe. **Slavery in Islaam has never been a racial issue.** In fact, North

African black Muslims, as well as Turks and Mongols, had Caucasian slaves. Those are the facts. As for slavery being a means of people coming to the true religion, then I swear by Allaah, on the Day of Judgement, Banda will wish that he had been enslaved and become a Muslim than meet Allaah as a Christian.

## Culture and Conclusion

Banda's "Truth Tract" proudly points out that Moses was married to a *Cushite* "African," according to the Bible. Muslims also believe, and in fact the Prophet Muhammad, *may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*, described Moses as being "Black with curly hair."<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, this same "Truth Tract" completely fails to point out that Abraham was also married to an "African," Hagar,<sup>70</sup> whose son Ishmael, is descended. Joseph 'Jay' Smith, one of the Evangelicals responsible for other "truth tracts," is in love with a book called *The Haggareenes*<sup>71</sup>, which was another

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<sup>69</sup> These *ahaadeeth* are in Bukhaaree and Muslim. In *Kitaab ul-Eemaan* in *Saheeh Muslim* for example, it is narrated from Ibn Abbaas, referring to the miraculous Night Journey (*al-'Israa wa'l-Mi'raaj*) of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*), that the Prophet met Prophet Moosaa. About Moosaa's appearance Muhammad said: "**Moosaa was Aadam (dark brown) and he had curly hair, like a man from Shaanooshaah (one of the old tribes in Yemen).**"

<sup>70</sup> In Islaam, her Arabic name, peace be upon her, is Haajaar

<sup>71</sup> What 'Abdur-Raheem meant here was the book *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge University Press: 1977) by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook. 'Abdur-Raheem forgot the exact name as he wrote this refutation from memory. The book argues that the Arabs invented Islaam and that Islaam was not fully solidified until two hundred years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*). Additionally, the book claims that in inventing their new religion and culture, the Arabs took bits from other established and past civilizations to help them in building their own new 'Islamic civilisation.' The book is a popular reference work for ignorant and anti-Islamic Jews and Christians who wish to further their futile and vain polemic against Islaam. The book is even studied on the 'Origins of Islam' course at the *School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*! Furthermore, in 'Abdur-Raheem's devastating 73 page refutation of Joseph Smith's writings, 'Abdur-Raheem collected the statements of **16 other non-Muslim scholars of**

name for the Arabs – who were therefore named after an African. This title “*Haggareenes*” was used by the Christians as a derogatory term against the descendants of a son and daughter of Africa, as was the term “*Saracens*” (the term that the Crusaders used for the Muslims), which means “*Those rejected by Sarah.*”

Now a closer look at Christian/Pauline theology concerning Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael, would have leave one wondering why Sarah’s racism went unpunished? Islaam teaches the true history, corrupted by the Jews<sup>72</sup> and Christians, of Abraham and Ishmael. It was Ishmael, the half-African, who was the first son of Abraham. It was both Abraham and his half African son Ishmael that were tested and favoured by Allaah. It was Abraham, the *Friend of God*, and his half-African son Ishmael that raised the foundations and built the first house, the *Ka’abah*, for the worship of the One True God, Allaah. Muhammad, *may the*

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**Islamic history** that have strongly rejected the claims of the book *Hagarism*. The book is not even recognised by their own Orientalists!

<sup>72</sup> For example a contemporary and popular orthodox Jewish Rabbi has verified this. Rabbi Schmeul Botech, or “*Schmuelee*,” of Oxford, head of the Jewish *L’Chaim* Society of Oxford University, who is popular in the West as a Rabbi up-to-date with modernity, recognized by his New York accent, wrote an article in the *Guardian Newspaper’s* religion column in 1998 stating: “*Ishmael had already gone off the path*”

*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*, a descendent of Ishmael, returned the *Ka'abah* and the world to the pure monotheism of Abraham.

In this same city, Makkah, whenever anyone visits, they must circumbulate the *Ka'abah*, and make “*Sai'ee*,” that is running between the two hills of Saffaa' and Marwah in remembrance of Hagar, daughter of Africa, who ran from one hill to the other looking for help, as Ishmael lay crying in the sand. It is from the well of *Zamzam* that every pilgrim drinks, where none other than the Angel Gabriel dug with his wing and the water started to flow, and Hagar and Ishmael drank. What better reason can one think of for the sons of Africa to turn up there to pray?

As for the “Arab dress” which Banda complains that has to be worn (another lie!)<sup>73</sup> it is no different from that which was worn by Jesus, and most of the people of North Africa and Ethiopia. In fact Nigerian and East African Muslims have their own, immediately identifiable, African dress.

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<sup>73</sup> Banda stated in his leaflet: “*Yet why is it that we are obliged to start wearing 7th century Arab dress once Islaam is taken on? What's wrong with my good African cultural dress?*” In addition to what 'Abdu-Raheem has stated about this foolish comment, it is also noteworthy to mention that none of the *Hyde Park Christian Fellowship* “Africans” (in fact only about three of the main Speaker's Corner Evangelicals are “African” anyway) wear “*good African cultural dress.*” Rather they parade about Hyde Park in Western suits, cowboy hats and some not even bothered about their appearance!

As for Banda's other idiotic statements,<sup>74</sup> then the Qur'aan is also translated into many languages, and no Muslim doubts that Allaah can communicate in and understand every language also, but Allaah, in His infinite wisdom, chose to reveal His final revelation in the Arabic tongue, and he has preserved that language. Banda talks about his Bible, but compare some of these translations with their "most ancient manuscripts" which are in Greek (not an African language I think) which itself was not the original language of Jesus and the Prophets, you will see how they have fulfilled exactly God's accusation in the Qur'aan of changing and perverting God's word. Now if Banda and his like have so little regard for God that they feel free to pervert His message, then do you think they will feel shy to lie to you and me?

Banda and his Evangelical bunch do not love the truth, nor do they love you. They love only their father, the father of lies, the Devil, who wants to mislead you from the true

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<sup>74</sup> Banda said: "*Furthermore, why are we required to read God's word and only speak to Him only in Arabic? Does God only speak Arabic? Is He not capable of understanding my African language? Thank God that the Holy Bible is now in over 2000 known languages around the world. Because I*

religion, the pure monotheism of Abraham and Ishmael and Muhammad, *may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon them all.*

As for Banda's final question,<sup>75</sup> I will let some unbiased non-Muslims answer:

*“Truly if the question must be put, whether it is Mohamman<sup>76</sup> or Christian nations that have done most for Africa, the answer must be that it is not the Christian. Christian travelers, with every wish to think otherwise have remarked that the Negro who accepts Mohammanism acquires at once a sense of dignity of human nature not commonly found even among those who have been brought to accept Christianity. Here we find in central Africa, the use of decent clothing, the arts of reading and writing and, what is more, which had forbidden and to a great extent, has*

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*know my God is able to speak every language. It's not a problem for Him.”* Suffice to say that Banda did not mention what “African language” he understands?!

<sup>75</sup> Banda's final remark in his petite leaflet was: *“Now that I have asked my questions, you too ask yours. Who indeed has helped me as an African the most: Islam or Christianity? You need to choose wisely, because your life depends on it.”*

<sup>76</sup> At the time Reverend Bosworth-Smith was writing, the ignorant term ‘Mohamman’ was used to describe a Muslim and ‘Mohammanism’ for Islaam.

*abolished immodest dancing and gambling and drinking, which inculcated upon the whole a pure morality, and sets forth a sublime and at the same time, a simple theology, is surely deserving of other feelings than the hatred and the contempt which some portions of our religion's press habitually pour onto it.*"<sup>77</sup>

*"As a religion the Mohamman religion, it must be confessed, is more suited to Africa than is the Christian religion; indeed, I would even say that it is suited to the world as a whole."*<sup>78</sup>

*Wa'al-Hamdulillahi Rabbil al-Ameen*

*And all praise is due to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds*

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<sup>77</sup> Reverend Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammad and Mohammadanism*

<sup>78</sup> Lancelot Lawton, *The Sphere*



## Edward Blyden

One of the most important Pan-Africanist thinkers of the 19th century was Edward Blyden (1832 – 1912 CE). Born in St. Thomas, West Indies, he spent most of his life on the African continent. He was an accomplished linguist, writer, educator and world traveler who strongly defended Africa and its cultural and social heritage. Not only was he clearly more knowledgeable but he was also more active in actual realities than the Afrocentrists and other armchair black historians. Most important here though is the fact that Blyden had positive attitudes towards Islaam and viewed Islaam as a major vehicle for regenerating Africa, despite the fact that Blyden was recognized as being a Christian. Blyden believed that Islaam gave Africans, and black people in general, more of an identity as opposed to Christianity. Blyden had experience himself of the hypocrisy of Christianity as he as even refused entry as a student to enroll at the *Rutger's Theological College* by fellow white Christians because he was West Indian.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Richard Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience* (1997)

Blyden's book *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*<sup>80</sup> is a collection of his writings on race, culture and the African personality. Blyden mentions that under Christianity, **“African avenues to intellectual improvement were closed,”** and thus **“Africans were doomed to perpetual ignorance.”**<sup>81</sup> Blyden also notes that, **“The Negro<sup>82</sup> in Christian lands, where he has been under the training of the white man, exhibits a cringing and servile spirit.”**<sup>83</sup>

Further, Blyden's research and eyewitness accounts refute the simplistic arguments put forward by the anti-Islamic and *Islamophobic* Afrocentrics and black Christians. For example, Blyden states, **“The political and social institutions of the Arabs had already been tried and found suitable to the wants and tastes of the Negro tribes. Indeed, the two peoples, if not of cognate origin, have protracted inter-communications, and by the similarity of the physical influences which have, for ages, operated upon them, become similar in tastes. And it was not difficult for the Arabs to**

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<sup>80</sup> This book was first published in 1888 and the re-published in 1994 by *Black Classic Press*.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.* p.15

<sup>82</sup> During the time that Blyden was writing, the Spanish word 'Negro' was used in the English language to describe people dark skinned African descent.

conform to a great extent to the social and domestic customs of the Africans: by their teaching, by their intelligence, by their intermarriages with the natives, by the trade and generosity of their merchants, they enlisted so many interests and such deep sympathies that they rapidly took root in the country.”<sup>84</sup>

Blyden further stated in *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*: “Every traveler who enters the Muslim regions of West and Central Africa with sufficient basis of information is forced to admit that the man makes a great mistake who approaches the Negro Muslims with the idea that they are “benighted Africans.” Islam in Africa, instead of being treated in the offhand and contemptuous manner adopted by some, who seem to have gathered all their knowledge of Islaam from the Arabian Nights, ought to be approached with earnestness and respect; for there is much in Islam which Christians may profitably study, and from which Christians might learn important lessons.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *ibid.* p.22

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* p.23

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.* p.73

From Blyden's positive remarks about Islaam are:

**“It is certain that many of these West African tribes have received the religion of Islaam without it being forced upon them by the overpowering arms of victorious invaders.”<sup>86</sup>**

**“The introduction of Islam into Central and West Africa has been the most important, if not the sole, preservative against the desolations of the slave trade. Islam furnished a protection to the tribes who embraced it by effectively binding them together in one strong religious fraternity and enabling them by their united efforts to baffle the attempts of powerful pagan slave hunters. Enjoying this comparative immunity from sudden hostile incursions, industry was stimulated among them...Large towns and cities have grown under Islam's energy and industry. Dr Barth<sup>87</sup> was surprised to find such towns or cities such as Kano and Sokoto in the centre of Africa – to**

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<sup>86</sup> *ibid.* p.199

<sup>87</sup> Heinrich Barth was one of the early European Saharan and West African travelers. His published works include the five volume *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa – A Journal of an Expedition Undertaken Under the Auspices of H.B.M's Government in the Years 1849-1855*

discover the focus of a complex and widely ramified commerce, and a bust hive of manufacturing industry, in a region which most people believed to have been a desert.”<sup>88</sup>

“Islam extinguishes all distinctions founded upon race, colour or nationality, “I admonish you to fear Allah” said the Prophet Muhammad to his companions, “And yield obedience to my successors, even if he is a black Ethiopian slave.”<sup>89</sup> And therefore, throughout the history of Islam, in all countries, race or “previous condition” has been no barrier to elevation.”<sup>90</sup> Blyden then gives the example of the former slave Kaafoor<sup>91</sup> who governed and ruled Egypt and Syria after proving to be a great soldier and statesman.<sup>92</sup>

“An American missionary, residing in Egypt, calls attention to the entire absence of all colour and race

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<sup>88</sup> *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, p. 215

<sup>89</sup> This hadeeth is found in *Mishkaat al-Masaabih*, at-Tabreezee

<sup>90</sup> *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, p. 281

<sup>91</sup> Abu'l-Misk Kaafoor al-Ikhsheedee ruled Egypt from 334 AH/ 945 CE – 356 AH/ 966 CE.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary, Volume 2, translated by Baron de Slone* (Paris: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland) p. 524

prejudice in the country, which seems to have struck him the more from his experience of the unreasonable and superstitious caste prejudices in the land of his birth.<sup>93</sup> Ibn Khaldoon, a celebrated Muslim author, makes the following observations: It is a curious circumstance that the majority of learned amongst the Muslims belonged to a foreign race, very few persons of Arab descent having obtained distinction in the sciences connected with the law, or in those based on human reason. And yet the promulgator of the law was an Arab and the Qur'an, that source of so many sciences, an Arabic book".<sup>94</sup>

“The “religion of the Jews,” after 800 years, nowhere furnishes such practical evidence of cosmopolitan adaptation and power.”<sup>95</sup>

“There is nothing in the original teachings of Islam that requires hostility to Christians. There are, no doubt, bigots and fanatics among Muslims, as there

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<sup>93</sup> Lansing, *Egypt's Princes*

<sup>94</sup> *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, p.282

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.* p. 283

have been and are now, bigots and fanatics among Christians; but the spirit of Islam, as taught by in its original records, is tolerant.”<sup>96</sup>

All of these remarks from an African centered scholar writing in the 19th century refute the radical black Christian and Afrocentric tale of events about Islaam put forward by many.

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<sup>96</sup> *ibid.* p. 297