
The Racialization of Religion in America Because of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

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Abstract

This paper seeks to interrogate through the application of a religious study oriented nomos the religion-historical character and nature of the racialized membership paradigm present within modern-day Judaism, Islam and Christianity in America. A sociocultural point overlooked by some scholars is in what ways the human trafficking of Africans into the United States and elsewhere facilitated the creation of a peculiar religio-racial disposition within said Abrahamic religions. Discerning how the inculturation consequences of this racialized religious temperament are now being applied to oppress people of a darker-hued complexion within American society functionally is relevant to present-day rapprochement efforts concerning social justice.

Keywords: Slavery, Transatlantic Slave Trade, Islamic Slave trade, Judaism, Christianity, Black, Religious Studies.

1. Introduction

In the current social context of the United States, issues originating from the practices of religious racism in the context of the transatlantic slave trade remain relevant. Whether reinforcing the physical separation of humans into superior and inferior races or advocating for patriarchy, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism have shaped the world. The biblical pretext supporting slavery and the subsequent racialization of these faiths form present-day prejudices and systemic imbalances. Whiteness has become the assumed norm within these religions therefore those of darker complexion have felt the pinch through exclusion and making them outcasts similar to what is witnessed among religious groups and in other organizations and institutions.

The attempts of the contemporary focus on social justice within these religious paradigms have to take this racial history into account. Race, religion, and power are three areas that define who people are and how they experience their beliefs even in the modern world. The knowledge of how religious tradition has been racialized will also help scholars and practitioners develop a more progressive way of approaching religious faith that can be liberated from historical oppressive structures. This interrogation is important for religious communities but also for the

democratic pursuit of justice in a society that is still recovering from the effects of slavery and racism. This study seeks to highlight the various hidden and obvious strategies used to justify systems of racial domination through religious ideologies of domination and practices and to look at what it means for the current attempts at race relations and justice.

2. Literature Review

The Stakeholders of Slavery Christians, Jews and Muslims

The participants in the [African] slave system included Arabs, Berbers, scores of African ethnic groups, Italians, Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch, Jews, Germans, Swedes, French, English, Danes, white Americans ... Responsibility, in short, radiated outward to [all] peoples of every sort who had access to the immense [pecuniary] profits generated from the world's first system of multinational production for a mass market— production of sugar, tobacco, coffee, chocolate, rum, dyestuffs, rice, spices, hemp, and cotton ... The small number of Jews who lived in the Atlantic community took Black slavery as much for granted as did the Catholics, Muslims, Lutherans, Huguenots, Calvinists, and Anglicans (Edmondson, 1976). A penetrating social justice-oriented survey of Abrahamic

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faith traditions within the United States historical context illuminates a startling race-relations reality and truth: Christianity, like Islām, and to a much smaller degree Judaism, took religio-historical root within the African American (Black) community and imagination as a Black religion because of human trafficking (Pierre, 2020). Enslaved Africans forcibly transported via the Middle Passage were provided a disingenuous and nuanced vision of Christian slavery—a polysemic religio-racial notion that “drew on biblical descriptions of slavery as well as the ideal of the godly household to encourage [white] enslavers to assume responsibility for the spiritual lives of their [Black] enslaved labourers,” and, by so doing, accentuating how enslaved Africans would through their conversion to Christianity be more spiritually docile and industrious in their work (Asante, 2001). At the time when America was first colonized, the [Christian] opinion was widely held that the [Black] inhabitants of an infidel [African] nation could be rightfully enslaved by those of a [white] Christian nation ... the enslavement of the negro was an act of mercy, because only through slavery could large numbers be brought to Christ (Jernegan, 1916).

As saliently noted by Bernard Lewis, András P. Hámori, et al., “for every gallon of ink that has been spilt on the trans-Atlantic [Christian] slave trade and its consequences, only one very small drop has been spent on the [religio-historical] study of the forced migration of Africans into the Mediterranean world of Islam”—the Islamic Slave Trade.⁵ Objective and impartial religion-historical research concerning the human trafficking of Africans by Muslims corroborates how “from the 9th to the early 20th century, probably as many Africans were forcibly taken across the Sahara, up the Nile valley, and across the Red Sea as were transported across the Atlantic in a much shorter period (Falola & Salau, 2021).” Ironically, Judaism in America for a few African American families—in a manner similar to Christianity and Islām—also hearkens back to the early days of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, when enslaved Africans adopted the religion of their white owners, a small percentage of whom were Jewish Americans (Curtis, 2002).

A distant [Jewish] relative sent me a page of the 1860 Louisiana slave census, the first documentary proof for me that an ancestor — my great-great-great-grandmother, Magdalena Seeleman — was a [Jewish] slaveholder ... She is listed in the 1860 U.S. Census as living in the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Simon and Caroline Shlenker, in Trinity, Catahoula Parish, Louisiana. According to the list

of parish slaveholders from June 22, 1860, M. Seeleman was the owner of a 29-yearold [Black] woman described as “mulatto.” Right above, Simon is described as the owner of a Black woman, age 25 (Weisenfeld, 2015).

A social justice query not often scrutinized by Religious Studies scholars within the Academy is how and why certain American religious traditions (Christianity, Judaism and Islām) have become peculiarly religio-historically racialized; whiteness is assumed within the United States to be the defacto expression and societal identity norm of Judaism, Christianity and Islām (Abrahamic religious traditions) within our nation’s (Sarna, 2019) Trade) and Judaism (Transatlantic Slave Trade) was directed towards people of a darker toned (Black) epidermal complexion (Haddad, 1994). The inhumane religiohistorical enslavement, castigation and debasement of Black (African) bodies within all three Abrahamic religions has had a profound race relations impact upon how ethnicity and religion as intersectional social science categories has been socioculturally apperceived within modern-day society—a prejudicial national milieu characterized by rampant bigotry, ethnic intolerance and social injustice towards people of African (Black) descent.

A religion-historical point overlooked by some scholars within the Academy is in what furtive ways the human trafficking of Africans into the United States and elsewhere facilitated the creation of bigotry, intolerance and prejudice towards Blacks within their respective nation states. Discerning the failure of inculturation by people of African descent within America and elsewhere is relevant because of present-day social justice conflicts, disputes and disagreements concerning race relations (Hilson & Melling, 2000). This paper seeks to critically interrogate through the application of a religious studies oriented nomos the religio-historical origins, abstruse nature and racialized membership present within modern-day Judaism, Islām and Christianity in America.

3. Methods

The paper utilizes a “religious study oriented nomos” to interrogate the religio-historical character and nature of the racialized membership paradigm present within modern-day Judaism, Islam and Christianity in America. The analysis examines how the transatlantic slave trade and the trafficking of Africans facilitated the creation of a racialized religious temperament within these Abrahamic faiths.

4. Results and Discussion

Human Trafficking

Taking a Step Back in Time

Human trafficking was and still continues to be within some contemporaneous Muslim nations (e.g., Islāmic Republic of Mauritania, Federal Republic of Somalia, State of Libya, Republic of Senegal, et al.) a highly lucrative economic enterprise that materially benefits the Muslim ruling elite and, more importantly from a religious studies context, has not been abolished since the death of the Khātam An-Nabīyīn (i.e., Prophet Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim) in AD 632; a human rights violation that is occurring within the Muslim world despite Prophet Muḥammad’s oft-cited Farewell Address exhortation that “there is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a non-Arab over an Arab, and no superiority of a white person over a black person or of a Black person over a white person, except on the basis of personal piety and righteousness (Mosaad, 2017).

While the [academic] lecture was supposed to be about slavery in Islām, Brown spent the majority of the lecture talking about [racial] slavery in the United States, the United Kingdom and China. When discussing slavery in these [nonMuslim] societies Brown painted slavery as brutal and violent (which it certainly was). When the conversation would briefly flip to historic slavery in the Arab and Turkish World, slavery was described by Brown in glowing terms (Adel et al., 2012). Indeed, according to the modern-day Muslim reality concerning human trafficking is quite the opposite of what some Islāmic scholars may disingenuously have you believe because being born Black within Islām evolved with time to become religio-racially conflated with an unusual form of religious iniquity (i.e., Christianity: sin, Hebrew: חַטָּאָה *chata’ah*, Arabic: حَطِيئَةٌ *ḥaṭī’ah*) that the esteemed Muslim followers of the Prophet Muḥammad did not choose to reproach, challenge religio-culturally nor historically expunge from their collective Muslim social imagination—”The Blacks do not earn their pay with good deeds and are not of good repute. The [African] children of a stinking Nubian Black; God put no light in their [epidermal] complexions (Mangera, 2013).

Islām created a new [caste system] situation by prohibiting the enslavement not only of freeborn Muslims but even of freeborn non-Muslims living under the protection of the Muslim state. The children of slaves (*hajin*) were born slaves, but, for a number of reasons, this source of

recruitment was not adequate (Mosaad, 2017). The growing need for [chattel] slaves had to be met ... This gave rise to a vast expansion of slave raiding [within Africa and the Mediterranean] ... It is for this reason, no doubt, that the massive development of the slave trade in Black Africa and the large scale importation of Black Africans for use in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries date from the Arab period (Yahaya, 2012).

Judaism

Judaism, in a manner similar to both Christianity and Islām, is also not immune to the immoral practice of human trafficking having occurred within its past. It should be noted at this time that indentured servitude within Judaism was problematic because the forfeiture of human liberty, freedom and independence was very much dependent upon a slave’s religious affiliation (ISch & SAC). But, how a Jew addressed, approached or treated a slave was conditional upon if she or he was an alien or a Jew and, with this now having been said, cruelty expressed by the master towards those slaves considered outside of Judaism (i.e., the alien) was considered religiously permissible under both the Mishneh Torah (Laws of Slaves 9:8) and the Torah itself (Lev. 25:44-46).

It is a religio-historical falsity that human trafficking under Judaism became miraculously extinct after the Diaspora, as factually chronicled by the presence of Jewish slaveholders during the Transatlantic Slave Trade as “the majority of Southern Jews owned enslaved [Black] people, mostly in their homes.” Speaking Truth to Power the first Jewish senators in America, like their Christian counterparts, were also enslavers themselves (Bookman, 2019). Quite a few American Jews within our nation’s slave trading past are complicit of moral hypocrisy by their religio-historical support, cruel participation and tacit acceptance of the human trafficking of Africans within the United States.

Unbeknownst to some scholars within the Academy, the early Black Jews, in a manner ironically similar to their African American Abrahamic counterparts (i.e., Black Muslims), also fervently believed that the “so-called Negro is misnamed, that they have recovered their true [Jewish] identity and religion that had been robbed from them by the slavemasters, and that Christianity is the religion of the whites (Cantor, 2012).” Many non-Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Jews within the modern era had a difficult time imagining that a human being could be both African American (Black) and Jewish within the United States, and, sadly, this racialized ethnic disposition

towards Judaism has not changed much as the vast majority of U.S. Jews still racially pass as being white because “from the earliest days of the American republic, Jews were technically considered white, at least in a legal sense (Schotten, 2022). Under the Naturalization Act of 1790, they were considered among the ‘free white persons’ who could become [American] citizens.”

What does a Jew look like? If you ask this slightly suspicious question, most people’s minds will conjure a [non-BME] stereotype. There are as many as 1.2 million Black [African] American Jews, whose Jewishness is so often ignored, including by Jews themselves, because they do not ‘look’ the part [the] vague blueprint for Black Jewishness rests on an indigenous African version of the religion. Ethiopian Jews, isolated from the rest of the Jewish universe, also face racism in Israel (Weisberg, 2019). The double consciousness of being both Black and Jewish remains [my emphasis].

The factual reality is that “Black Jews have been a part of American history since before the colonial era [my emphasis]. In fact, Jews of Roman-African or Afro-Caribbean descent, of diverse lineage, or who have converted continue to contribute to the rich and multi-faceted history of the Jewish people,” and, consequently, despite what many non-BME Americans may still believe concerning Judaism and Jews, not all Jews are white (Rottenberg, 2013). Sadly, the modern-day religio-racial reality is such that Jews of African (Black) descent are often discriminated against within their own Jewish religious community and, because of this, present-day racist behavior exhibited by non-BME Jews towards Black Jews highlight how such “refusal to fully acknowledge the Judaism of Ethiopian [African] Israelis even now cannot be detached from the fact of their [Black] skin colour (Lee, 2002).”

Christianity

The Abrahamic faith tradition, Christianity, like Islām and Judaism, was not immune to the moral sin of the human trafficking of Africans into the Americas and, having now said this, religiously condoned slavery through the disingenuous use of Scripture (e.g., Ephesians 6:5-9). Paradoxically, as demonstrated by iconic American historian Marcus W. Jernegan, one of the many specious religious studies arguments offered in defense of the both slave trades—Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Islāmic Slave Trade—was predicated upon the same disingenuous religio-racial belief that Africans were infidels. The

racialization of Blacks (Africans) as “heathens and barbarians were placed by the circumstance of their infidelity without the pale of spiritual and civil rights and that their souls were doomed to eternal perdition” became firmly entrenched within the non-BME American religio-social imagination—simply being born Black (African) meant you were deprived of salvation within both Abrahamic religious traditions (Christianity and Islām) and thus eligible for human trafficking (Freedman, 2008)

The evolution of racial slavery [and human trafficking], first in Europe, then in the Caribbean, and finally in the Americas was a process that was always building on the experiences of the past. It may be reasonably posited that the multitudinous Christian excesses of colonialism—a sociopolitical, socioeconomic and socio-religious expansionary impulse whereby various European powers surveyed, conquered and then materially exploited the continent of Africa—disingenuously co-opted papal letters or documents (Kim & Leavitt, 2016) (e.g., Doctrine of Discovery) to articulate, legitimize and promulgate “religious and ethnocentric ideas of European superiority over other cultures, religions, and races of the world,” which in turn, then led to the human trafficking of Africans. Such a bigoted disposition also established prejudicial notions of membership, stigma and identity within the United States that was oriented towards the religio-racial creation, propagation and validation of a hierarchal and racial binary schemata championing whiteness, racial slavery and white racial superiority. A plausible scholarly argument may be posited that because of colonialism “Christopher Columbus introduced two [Christian] phenomena that revolutionized race relations and transformed the modern world (Gilman, 2001): the taking of land, wealth, and labor from indigenous people in the Western Hemisphere, leading to their near extermination, and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which created a racial underclass.”

The pecuniary recognition of the sizable financial returns to be realized through the human trafficking of Africans to the Americas (North, Central and South) enlarged the foundational size, scope and development of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and, more importantly, turns a much-needed social science spotlight upon the racialization of religion responsible for the enslavement of Blacks due to colonialism (Ukah, 2018). If I am going to speak Truth to Power I must now also recognize how human trafficking, “slavery and extreme violence against Black bodies were the foundation of American capitalism.”

The economic trajectory and development of capitalism

in the United States are inextricably linked to the brutal institution of [Black] slavery ... the work of enslaved Americans was an important driver of growth not only in the South but also for the national economy as a whole.

One should not forget that within present-day American society “anti-Black feelings, ideas, and actions are widely developed and disseminated by parents, peers, the media, and the educational system. They have been passed from generation to generation now for more than three centuries [my emphasis]. Whites can avail themselves of this racialized thinking as needed. Racial categories form part of this Eurocentric [Christian] culture of off-the-shelf taxonomies that classify and organize certain features of the social world into a coherent whole (Demps, 2021) The post-racial rise of white Christian nationalism, bigotry, xenophobia, etc. now occurring within America is not coincidental but, rather, a direct religio-historical consequence of the Transatlantic Slave Trade through which some white conservative Christian pundits have deliberately promulgated whiteness as an American religio-racial inheritance and norm; a problematic human trafficking legacy advocating a homogenous white national racial presence and identity that conserves the racialized “construction of American life and, ironically, its [associated] democratic institutions and values (Council, 2021).”

A chiseled block of sandstone in the U.S. Capitol’s visitor center serves as a [Transatlantic Slave Trade] reminder that the home of the nation’s Congress was built in part by enslaved Black people. A bronze plaque says the stone, originally part of the building’s exterior, “commemorates their important role in building the Capitol.” Many [white American] lawmakers need look no further than their own family histories to find a much more personal connection to slavery in America, a brutal system of oppression that resulted in the deadliest conflict in U.S. history. In researching the genealogies of America’s political elite, a Reuters examination found that a fifth of the nation’s [white] congressmen, living presidents, Supreme Court justices and governors are direct descendants of ancestors who enslaved Black people (Swartzfager, 2020).

Trade hastened the construction of a formidable American economic enterprise—a capitalist oriented venture to usher in a prosperous era of American mercantilism—an inhumane act of incalculable cruelty that disingenuously harnessed the forced labor of enslaved Africans. It is not a historical falsehood to say that America would not be what it is today without the moral sin of slavery and the

Transatlantic Slave Trade; Edward Baptist prophetically notes how “the idea that the commodification and suffering and forced labor of African Americans is what made the United States powerful and rich is not an idea that people necessarily are happy to hear (Koku, 2018). Yet it is the truth [my emphasis].”

The key findings indicate that Christianity, Islam, and to a lesser degree Judaism, took root within the African American community and imagination as “Black religions” due to the forced migration and enslavement of Africans. The paper highlights how enslaved Africans were provided a distorted vision of Christianity that tied it to slavery and white supremacy. Similarly, the Islamic slave trade across the Sahara and Nile Valley is shown to have had significant religio-historical impacts. Even for some African American Jews, the religion was adopted from their white slave-owning masters during the transatlantic slave trade (Tometi, 2020).

The paper argues that the racialization of these Abrahamic faiths in America is a crucial yet often overlooked aspect of their religion-historical development. It suggests that discerning how this racialized religious temperament is applied to oppress people of darker complexion is relevant to present-day efforts towards social justice and racial reconciliation. The analysis aims to shed light on the complex interplay between religion, race, and the legacy of slavery in the United States.

I define the religious studies term, Abrahamic faith tradition, as an inclusive communal oriented religious designation that describes, labels and establishes shared intersections of religio-historical overlap between Judaism, Christianity and Islām . As a Black Catholic scholar within the Academy, I am acutely sensitive to the systemic racism, violence, marginalization and oppression directed towards African Americans within our nation and, as a consequence, my intentional capitalization of the linguistic term, Black, is used in a manner similar to the New York Times, Associated Press, USA Today, Los Angeles Times and other major news organizations to describe people and cultures of African origin, both in the United States and elsewhere (Akram, 2012).

My intentional use of the linguistic term, Islāmic slave trade, is deployed in an holistic, inclusive and encompassing manner similar to that posited by other prominent Religious Studies scholars, for example, William Russell, Ronald Segal, et al. in referring to the massive importation of Africans via the Trans-Saharan slave trade, East African

slave trade, Indian-Ocean slave trade and other such odious forms of human trafficking—the buying and selling of Blacks as chattel by non-Black Muslims (Marcus, 2019) that have occurred over a thousand year plus period within Islām—into the Middle East and elsewhere for Muslims of non-African descent. My use of the linguistic term, Middle Passage, explicitly refers to the forced voyage of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World. It was one leg of the triangular trade route that took goods (such as knives, guns, ammunition, cotton cloth, tools, and brass dishes) from Europe to Africa, Africans to work as slaves in the Americas and West Indies (Mikhail, 2004).

I define whiteness in a manner similar to that demarcated by the National Museum of African American History & Culture (NMAAHC) — a Smithsonian institution — where it is posited as: Whiteness and white racialized identity refer to the way that white people, their customs, culture, and beliefs operate as the standard by which all other groups of are compared. Whiteness is also at the core of understanding race in America. Whiteness and the normalization of white racial identity throughout America’s history have created a culture where nonwhite persons are seen as inferior or abnormal (Kincheloe, 1999). This white-dominant culture also operates as a social mechanism that grants advantages to white people, since they can navigate society both by feeling normal and being viewed as normal. Persons who identify as white rarely have to think about their racial identity because they live within a culture where whiteness has been normalized. Thinking about race is very different for nonwhite persons living in America. People of color must always consider their racial identity, whatever the situation, due to the systemic and interpersonal racism that still exists (Middleton et al., 2016).

My use of the philosophical term, social imaginary, is used in a manner first posited by Charles Taylor to denote the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others ... and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.

The problematic practice of slavery in antiquity did exist among the Israelites, however, it was not predicated upon racial complexion per se until the advent of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. My definition of the religious studies term, inculturation, is used in an inclusive manner broadening the definition posited by George C. Nche1, Lawrence N. Okwuosa1 and Theresa C. Nwaoga1. Nchel, Okwuosal and Nwaogal note how over decades, the concept of inculturation has been on the front burner of theological discourse in the African continent and beyond.

This was largely triggered by the Second Vatican Council held on 11 October 1962 at St. Peters Basilica in the Vatican in which a strong case was made for the cultural adaptation of Christianity in Africa (Bush, 2011). This idea has spawned into several concepts such as ‘Acculturation’, ‘Enculturation’, ‘Interculturation’, ‘Incarnation’, ‘Africanisation’, ‘Adaptation’, and ‘Indigenization’ of Christianity [Judaism and Islām] ... These concepts revolve around the idea of making the Christian [Jewish and Islāmic] faith culturally permissible and acceptable.

The discrete linguistic term, nomos, was first coined by acclaimed theologian and sociologist Peter L. Berger to describe the unique mental processes by which human beings experientially organize their surrounding world. Worldview is a contemporaneous linguistic term that is analogous to nomos. The discrete Islāmic religious term, Khātām An-Nabīyīn, refers to a sacred title—typically translated as the “Seal of the Prophets”—that is employed within the Qur’ān to designate the Prophet Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh, regarded by many, but not all Muslims, as being the absolute last of the prophets sent by God. My use of Islāmic religio-historical term, Farewell Address, refers to Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh (Prophet Muḥammad) last known public lecture where he exhorts his Muslim followers to not succumb to ethnic racism, racial prejudice, bigotry, discrimination or mockery.

It should be noted that acclaimed Middle Eastern religious scholar, Ahmad ibn `Abd Allāh ibn Ahmad ibn Ishāq ibn Mūsā ibn Mahrān al-Mihriānī al-Asbahānī alAhwal al-Ash`arī al-Shāfi`ī (aka Abu Nu`aym al-Asfahānī), within his seminal book, Hilyat al-awliya wa tabaq at aī -asfiy a, alludes to how the slave, Mahran, was callously renamed Safina (i.e., cargo ship) by the Prophet Muḥammad himself and, more importantly, treated like a pack animal. حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ، ثنا عَمْرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ، ثنا عاصمُ غَلِي، ثنا حَسْرَجُ بْنُ نُبَاتَةَ، ثنا سَعِيدُ بْنُ جُمَهَانَ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ سَفِينَةَ عَنْ اسْمِهِ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّ يَ مُحَمَّدًا بِاسْمِي، سَمَانِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَفِينَةَ، قُلْتُ: لِمَ سَمَّاكَ سَفِينَةَ؟ قَالَ: خَرَجُ وَمَعَهُ، أَصْحَابَهُ فَقُلُّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَنَاعُهُمْ فَقَالَ: «: ابْسُطْ كِسَاءَكَ فَيَسْطِنَهُ فَجَعَلُ فِيهِ مَنَاعَهُمْ ثُمَّ حَمَلَهُ عَلَيَّ فَقَالَ: «: اَحْمِلْ مَا أَنْتَ إِلِ سَفِينَةَ»، قَالَ: فَلَوْ حَمَلْتُ يَوْمِي دُ وُقُرُّ بَعِي سِتة مَا ثَقُلُ عَلَيَّ (Umar ibn) Sulaiman ibn Ahmad through ‘Ali through Hashrj ibn Nubāta though Sa`īd ibn Juhmān). See al-Asfahānī, Abu Nu`aym. Hilyat Al-Awliya Wa Tabaqat Al-Asfiya.

My use of the Christian theological term, sin, is deployed in a religious studies context to refer to an act not in accord with reason informed by the Divine law that is committed

against God (Hebrew translation: חַטָּאָה -- chata'ah, Arabic translation: *خطيئة* -- *ḫaṭī'a*)

Human trafficking was and still continues to be within some contemporaneous Muslim nations (e.g., Islāmic Republic of Mauritania, Federal Republic of Somalia, State of Libya, Republic of Senegal, et al.) a highly lucrative economic enterprise that materially benefits the Muslim ruling elite (Panah, 2007).

My re-imagined usage of the religio-historical term, faith slavery, first coined by religious studies historian Robert C. Davis to describe how, for hundreds of years, men throughout the Mediterranean enslaved each other, not because of the color of their skins but because of their religions [my emphasis] ... it was at its fiercest where Christianity and Islām came in direct contact. In Islāmic warfare, men are, for the most part, slaughtered and the women are frequently enslaved as concubines.

The Arabic term, jihād, is a highly complex word whose precise etymological intention, meaning and signification is highly dependent upon context because it possesses multiple and numerous linguistic meanings. I am employing it in a religious studies context that emphasizes its religio-psychological hermeneutical idiosyncrasy as it appertains to Islāmic military campaigns waged against unbelievers (Gould, 2005).

It is worth noting from a BME social science perspective that the [derogatory] term commonly used by the ancient Arabs for the offspring of mixed unions was hajin, a word which, like the English 'mongrel' and 'half-breed,' was cruelly used to disparagingly refer to both animals and human beings, especially those of African descent. For example, hajin would indicate a horse whose sire was a thoroughbred Arab and whose dam was not. It had much the same meaning when applied to human beings, denoting a person whose father was Arab and free and whose mother was a Black slave (Koger, 2010).

Hebrew slaves were limited by Jewish law to only serving six years in human bondage whereas alien slaves served in perpetuity. "Ye may make them an inheritance for your children after you, to hold for a possession, of them ye may take your bondmen forever" (Lev. 25:46). "It is permissible to work a heathen slave relentlessly" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Slaves, 9:8).

It should be noted that Mishneh Torah—Hebrew: *הַשְּׁנֵי תּוֹרָה*, lit. 'repetition of the Law (Torah)—is a fourteen-volume legal code of Jewish beliefs and practices written by iconic Sephardic Jewish philosopher, jurist, physician and intellectual Moses

Maimonides during the Middle Ages. The Misneh Torah also known as Sefer Yad haHazaka (Hebrew: *סֵפֶר יָד הַחֲזָקָה*, lit. 'book of the strong hand'). Moses Maimonides is commonly referred to within many religious studies history books as Maimonides or the acronym, Rambam (Hebrew: *רמב"ם*). The Book of Leviticus is the third book of the Pentateuch and is predominately concerned with the concerns of the priests, who are members of the Hebrew tribe of Levi. Leviticus 25:44-4.

5. Conclusion

My use of the African American Civil Rights Movement linguistic term, Speak Truth to Power, emphasizes its implicit sociocultural origin and inference to stand up for what's right and tell people in charge what's what. That is the idea behind the phrase ... an expression for courageously confronting an authority, calling out injustices on their watch, and demanding change. This BME term is credited to the Black Civil Rights icon and social justice pioneer, Bayard Rustin, in 1942

I define the UK sociocultural acronym, BME, as a linguistic term that intentionally refers to "Black and Minority Ethnic," and, another key point to remember, refers to those British citizens not of Eurocentric descent.

My use of the discrete sociological term, post-racial, intentionally refers to an illusionary period or society in which racial prejudice and discrimination no longer exist. This is widely attributable to the time interval following the historic election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States. Ironically, less than a month after this historic event a racially charged white backlash to the Obama presidency began fomenting within the American populace.

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