The Influence of African Religious Thought on Social Justice Issues

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Introduction
This research project reviewed the ideology of two of the nation’s most important African American religious leaders and their influence on social justice issues in Africana communities.

Research Question
As per Dr. James H. Cone, are Dr. King’s views of America a dream, or are Malcolm X’s view of America, as a realized nightmare, real?

Methodology
A comparative analysis of the ideology of Dr. King’s Christianity and Malcolm X’s then religious belief of Islam.
- Both ministers died at the age of 39 years old.
- Civil Rights Leaders
- Non-violence vs. self consciousness
- Proponents of the right to register and vote
- Militancy in the Civil Rights Movement vs. militancy in the conservative Black Church
- Both traveled globally.

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Was a minister and a civil rights leader.
- Led the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the mid-1950s till the 1960s.
- His philosophy and theology were influenced by the black churches “social gospel” which sought to alleviate societal problems based on Christian ethics.
- He is one of the top ten most influential Christians of the 20th century.
- Martin Luther King Jr. took great inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi in pushing forward the Civil Rights Movement.

Malcolm X
- Was first generation American born in Omaha, Nebraska.
- Was born a Baptist and raised by a Baptist minister then converted to the Nation of Islam.
- His philosophy and theology were influenced by the Nation of Islam’s “social gospel” which sought to alleviate societal problems based on Islamic ethics.
- He is one of the top ten most influential Muslims of the 20th century.
- Malcolm X’s views of America, as a realized nightmare, real?

Findings
- According to Pew Research Center Religion and Public Life, the number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world.
- Christianity and Islam are the most practiced religions in the World.
- Malcolm X was a leader that followed the Islam religion and had a big impact on Africana communities.
- Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was a Christian leader who fought for many civil rights. His first application of non-violent movie campaign came in 1935 during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Christainity and Islam
- According to the Pew Research Center Religion and Public Life (2015), during the next four decades, Islam will grow faster than any other major world religion.
- By 2050, Christians and Muslims will make up nearly equal shares of the world’s population.
- The fact that Christianity and Islam are the most practiced religions shows that these two religions may birth other leaders in the future.

Conclusions
Based on the number of Christians and the fact that the Muslim faith is predicted to increase faster than the world’s population, as a whole, a significant religious leader from either the Christian faith or Muslim religion will become a leader in the Africana community.

Acknowledgements
http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/
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"If you can’t fly, then run. If you can’t run, then walk. If you can’t walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward."
— Martin Luther King Jr.