

NOTES

One Afro-Eccentricity and Autobiography

1. Jan's birth name is Janice Dean Willis. She goes by "Jan," which I use throughout the text.
2. Both Rorty and Derrida criticize the claim that the subject (including the autobiographer) has a privileged access to his own thoughts. See R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981) and J. Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
3. J. Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton University Press, 1972), 37.
4. R. White, "Autobiography against Itself," *Philosophy Today* 35, no. 3/4 (1991): 297.
5. P. Ricoeur, "Narrative Identity," trans. Mark S. Muldoon. *Philosophy Today* (Spring 1991): 73.
6. Ricoeur, 80.
7. R. Porter and H. R. Wolf, *The Voice within: Reading and Writing Autobiography* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1973), 4–5.
8. H. L. Gates, ed., *Bearing Witness: Selections from African-American Autobiography in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon, 1991), 4.
9. J. D. Barbour, "Character and Characterization in Religious Autobiography" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 55, no. 2 (2001): 307–27.
10. Barbour, 306.
11. Barbour, 309.
12. Barbour, 310–11.
13. Barbour, 312.
14. Barbour, 313.
15. Barbour, 314.
16. Barbour, 314, 316.
17. J. Willis, *Dreaming Me: From Baptist to Buddhist, One Woman's Spiritual Journey* (New York: Riverhead, 2001), 165.
18. Barbour, 313, 316.
19. Barbour, 317–18.
20. Barbour, 324.
21. T. Parsons, ed., *Max Weber: The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations* (New York: Free Press, 1964), 154.
22. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folks* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), 123–9.
23. C. West, *Prophesy Deliverance!* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), 5–6.
24. DuBois, 123–9.

25. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Negro Church: Report of a Social Study Made under the Direction of Atlanta University; together with the proceedings of the Eighth Conference for the Study of the Negro Problems* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1903).
26. Two rich studies—A. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) and T. Smith, *Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994)—exceed the limitations of the Standard Narrative.
27. See B. Lincoln, “Theses on Method,” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 8 (1996): 225–7.
28. N. J. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 260.
29. D. Gallen and C. Carson, *Malcolm X: The FBI File* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 1991), 30.
30. See *Black Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*, ed. A. Meier, E. Rudwick, and F. L. Broderick (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), 469–84.

Part One The Spiritual Journey of Malcolm X

1. The first three quotations are from G. Breitman, ed. *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Statements* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1965), 7–8, 126, 148. The fourth quote is from B. Perry, ed. *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1989), 156.

Two Jahiliyyah and Jihad

1. See R. J. Rickford, *Betty Shabazz* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2003), 14.
2. In his *Autobiography*, Malcolm X describes his father as a Baptist minister and a dedicated organizer for Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (AMX 3). There is a lot of disagreement on this point. See Jan Carew, *Ghosts in Our Blood: With Malcolm X in Africa, England, and the Caribbean* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1994), x. Also see L. A. DeCaro, *On the Side of My People: A Religious Life of Malcolm X* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).
3. S. Freud, *Future of an Illusion*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), 24.
4. B. Perry, *Malcolm X: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America* (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, 1991), 3, 5–6. In his semihagiography of his uncle, *Seventh Child: A Family Memoir of Malcolm X* (Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group, 1998), R. P. Collins, the son of Malcolm’s older half sister Ella, does not mention his grandfather’s abuse; nor does Malcolm’s third daughter, Ilyasah Shabazz. See I. Shabazz, *Growing Up X: A Memoir by the Daughter of Malcolm X* (New York: One World/Ballantine, 2002).
5. Perry, 8, 11. Perry’s biography is controversial. For two strong critiques, see L. A. DeCaro, 298–9 and Bill Younman, “Who Owns Identity? Malcolm X, Representation, and the Struggle over Meaning,” *Communication Quarterly* 49 (2001): 1–18. <http://web4.infotrac> (last accessed on December 24, 2007). I agree with the critics of Perry as far as his jaundiced reading of Malcolm’s significance is concerned. He seems hell-bent on undermining Malcolm’s importance as a political figure and gives scant attention to his religious significance. In this regard I think that Perry is an unreliable guide. On the other hand, the scope of his research and his often insightful analyses cannot be denied. I rely on Perry for biographical information and psychological insights not for ethical-political analysis.
6. When I first wrote this Freudian, primal horde account of Malcolm’s relation to his father, I was not aware of a similar account by Eugene Victor Wolfenstein. See E. V. Wolfenstein,

- The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 94–6.
7. S. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans. A. A. Brill (New York: Vintage Books, 1918), 170–1, 181–9.
 8. Perry, 12–13.
 9. Perry, 13.
 10. DeCaro tries to impugn the legitimacy of Earl Little's Baptist faith by suggesting that it was merely cover for his Garveyism. I disagree. The complex relations between New Yoruba traditions of Orisha worship, such as Santeria, and Catholicism is a better model for understanding the relation between black Christianity and the religion of Garveyism. Here as elsewhere in his account, DeCaro's evangelical, pseudoscholarly notion of "orthodoxy" undermines his analysis. See DeCaro, *On the Side of My People: A Religious Life of Malcolm X*, chapter 4: "Early Life and Religious Training."
 11. After Earl's death, she would join a splinter group (sect) of the Adventist church known as the Seventh Day Church of God. See Perry, 21.
 12. Perry, 12.
 13. Object Relations is a psychoanalytic theory that privileges relationships over instinctual drives. This theory holds that "the early formation and differentiation of psychological structures (inner images of the self and the other, or object)" are crucial to the development of self and that these inner structures are evident in interpersonal relations. The mother is an especially important "object" within this theory. A healthy object relationship with the mother, specifically, with her breast is the basis of all relationships. See M. St. Clair, *Object Relations and Self-Psychology: An Introduction* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1986), 2, 10, 42, 74.
 14. Carew, x.
 15. Carew, ix.
 16. Carew, 6.
 17. Color appears to have been a major issue in Malcolm's life. According to Perry, he appears to have been racially marginal: "A loner, he mixed infrequently with pupils of either race." In Lansing, blacks were no more accepting of him than whites had been in Mason. I think that Perry's interpretation betrays his relative ignorance of color dynamics among black Americans. Malcolm's light skin color was as likely a badge of pride and source of envy as a cause of marginality. See Perry, 4–5, 16, 32, 40.
 18. Perry, 24.
 19. Perry, 18.
 20. Perry, 31.
 21. See DeCaro, 67–8.
 22. See Cornel West, *Prophetic Fragments* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1990), 43.
 23. There are significant differences between historical memory, which relatively speaking is disciplined, orderly, and logical and autobiographical memory, which is not. See D. C. Rubin, ed., *Remembering Our Past: Studies in Autobiographical Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
 24. Indeed, Louis X a.k.a. Louis Farrakhan had written a popular Nation of Islam song in 1958 entitled: "White Man's Heaven is a Black Man's Hell." See V. L. White, Jr., *Inside the Nation of Islam* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2001), 40.
 25. See A. H. Fauset, *Black Gods of the Metropolis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) and H. Brotz, *Black Jews of Harlem* (Knopf Publishing Group, 1998).
 26. Like other sectarian forms of religion, Christian, Islamic, and Jewish, Pentecostalism emerged in the big city, among the lower socioeconomic classes. "Sect" like "cult" is a technical term in religion study; used properly, it is neither normative nor invidious. To call a group sectarian or cultic is only to say, respectively, that it has splintered from another religious group or that it, like the primitive Jesus movement, has a charismatic leader at its

- center. Many readers of Malcolm's autobiography do not properly distinguish between the scholarly and the popular uses of these terms, especially "cult," which in popular usage carries an invidious significance. Pentecostalism has long since transcended its early status as a sect, and is now, perhaps, both institutionally and transinstitutionally, the most important movement within Christianity worldwide.
27. Conjure is the residual presence of the "African sacred cosmos" in the cultural practices of black Americans.
 28. According to Perry: "Neither Ella nor Earl was as dark as Malcolm claimed. His insistence that they were was indicative of the way he equated blackness with the strength his light-skinned mother had lacked." Perry, 42.
 29. Perry, 70.
 30. DeCaro, 71.
 31. Perry, 87.
 32. Perry, 50.
 33. DeCaro, 71. In his earlier, more comprehensive, but thoroughly controversial biography, Bruce Perry takes Malcolm's claim of having been run out of Harlem at face value. He suggests that it was Malcolm who had trouble acknowledging this fact. See Perry, 89.
 34. Transcribed from *The American Experience*, "Malcolm X: Make It Plain" part I. (© 1994 WGBH, Boston, MA and Blackside. Distributed by PBS VIDEO).
 35. Fanon refers to Hegel's famous "master-slave" dialectic as well as his account of self-consciousness and the role that mutual recognition plays in the process. Fanon questions the adequacy of the account and its inability to account for the psychopathological depths of white supremacy. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 111–19.
 36. F. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 63.
 37. Malcolm's relationship with Sophia occurred in the 1940s. By the late 1940s, lynching was nowhere near the cataclysm it had been when [Ida B.] Wells had begun her antilynching campaign. See P. Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003), 406.
 38. See S. Cotta, *Why Violence? A Philosophical Interpretation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1985), 59.
 39. My comments have nothing to do with whom Malcolm ought to have desired or loved. We desire whom we desire and love whom we love. My comments go to the construction of his desires and his level of self-knowledge.
 40. Perry, 77–8. Perry writes: "Like a prostitute, he sold himself, as if the best he had to offer was his body" (83.). This aspect of Perry's analysis seems to especially vex DeCaro, 65.
 41. See http://www.afro-netizen.com/2005/05/malcolm_x_gay_b.html, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,3604,1486997,00.html>, <http://www.marclamonhill.com/mlhblog/?p=424> (last accessed on December 27, 2007).
 42. The gun was not loaded, AMX, 478.
 43. C. Cullen, *The Black Christ and Other Poems* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929), 83.
 44. W. R. Jones, *Is God a White Racist?: A Preamble to Black Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 28–36.
 45. Cullen, 84.
 46. DeCaro, 78.
 47. R. L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 53, 55–6, 58–62, 66, 201.
 48. R. King, *Orientalism and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1999), 35–9.
 49. "Accuser" is one of Satan's names.
 50. Malcolm was imprisoned for six and a half years: February 1946 to August 1952. Why he claims eleven years of incarceration is unclear.

51. DeCaro, 78.
52. For a similar view, see V. Harvey, *Feuerbach and the Interpretation of Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).
53. G. E. Kessler, *Studying Religion: An Introduction through Cases* (Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003), 86, 89.
54. C. Holmes, "Women: Witnesses and Witches," *Past & Present*, no. 140 (1993): 45–78.
55. For Fanon's comments on the Devil as a black man, see F. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 146, 167, 188–190.
56. J. B. Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 40, 45, 62, 170, 173, 190.
57. R. E. Hall, "Cutaneo-Chroma (skin color) as Post-Colonial Hierarchy: A Global Strategy for Conflict Resolution," *IFE Psychologia* 9, no. 3 (2001): 139–152.
58. M. Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature* (La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1931), 45. Rudwin quotes a passage from Anatole's autobiography in which his daughter describes the Devil as a nigger (119). Also see Teresa of Avila who describes the Devil as a "hideous little Negro." See *The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila by Herself* (London: Penguin Books, 1957), 222.
59. The demonization of black people is not only a white problem but is also multiracial. See R. E. Hall, 139–152.
60. See T. Harris, *Exorcising Blackness: Historical and Literary Lynching and Burning Rituals* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) and O. Patterson, *Rituals of Blood: Consequences of Slavery in Two American Centuries* (Washington, DC: Civitas/CounterPoint, 1998).
61. Malcolm's Nation of Islam demonology is heir to the Jewish and Christian traditions of demonization that E. Pagels describes in *The Origins of Satan* (New York: Random House, 1995).
62. C. H. Johnson, ed., *God Struck Me Dead: Religious Conversion Experiences and Autobiographies of Ex-slaves* (Philadelphia: Pilgrims' Press, 1969), 59.
63. See W. Proudfoot, *Religious Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 122–4, 188, 224–5.
64. See M. C. Taylor, ed. *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 334.
65. Taylor, 335.
66. T. K. Beal, *Religion and its Monsters* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 17.
67. Taylor, 337.
68. Taylor, 338.
69. J. S. Strong, *The Buddha: A Short Biography* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2001), 52–4, 60, 63, 65–6. Also see K. Armstrong, *Buddha* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2001), 66–97, and R. A. Mitchell, *The Buddha: His Life Retold* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 32–47.
70. Strong, 67–76.
71. J. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 8.
72. Watt, Montgomery W., *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985), 10.
73. The muezzin calls Muslims to prayer.
74. According to Perry, Malcolm claimed to trust Betty 75 percent. Perry, 190.
75. See J. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lipincott, 1970), 199.
76. T. Khalidi, *The Muslim Jesus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 9–14.
77. Khalidi, 26, 34.
78. Transcribed from The American Experience, "Malcolm X: Make It Plain" part I. (© 1994 WGBH, Boston, MA and Blackside. Distributed by PBS VIDEO).
79. Gallen and Carson, 243.

Three Hijrah and Hajj

1. S. H. Nasa, *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 120.
2. “Ho” is Black English for “whore.” However, anyone who gets used is a “ho” and those who use them are hustlers, pimps, or players.
3. While each man respected the other, Wallace and Malcolm were as much rivals as friends. See Perry, 365.
4. See J. L. Esposito, ed., *The Oxford History of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 77–86.
5. For a description of this tradition of using Biblical figures and metaphors in appealing for justice for black people, see D. Howard-Pitney’s *Afro-American Jeremiad* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993).
6. According to Perry, Malcolm knew about the slave-trading history of Arabs. Indeed, he had used this knowledge to deflect criticism of the Nation of Islam by Arab Muslims. He charged that Arab Muslims were just as guilty of enslaving black people as European Christians. We must assume that he ignored Muslim complicity in the slave trade for strategic reasons. See Perry, 268. For an informative account of Arab-Islamic slave trading, see Ronald Segal’s *Islam’s Black Slaves* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2001).
7. C. Fluehr-Lobban, *Islamic Society in Practice* (Gainesville: University of Gainesville Press, 1994), 101–2.
8. See R. Segal, *Islam’s Black Slaves: The Other Black Diaspora* (Hill and Wang, 2002).
9. See http://www.archives.state.al.us/govs_list/inauguralspeech.html (last accessed on December 27, 2007), George Wallace’s 1963 gubernatorial, inaugural address
10. Theophus Smith, *Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 67.
11. Smith, 58, 62–3, 65–6.
12. See *David Walker’s Appeal* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995).
13. Smith, 238–40.
14. Perry, 214, 225.
15. Gallen and Carson, 125.
16. Gallen and Carson, 95.
17. The State Department, CIA, and various military agencies also place Malcolm under surveillance. See Perry, 324–5.
18. Gallen and Carson, 97.
19. Gallen and Carson, 100.
20. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 35.
21. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 72.
22. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 69–70.
23. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 36.
24. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 38.
25. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 39.
26. <http://foia.fbi.gov/malcolmx/malcolmx1.pdf>, 42 (last accessed on December 27, 2007).
27. Gallen and Carson, 225.
28. E. E. Curtis, *Islam in Black America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 103–4, claims that Malcolm was not successful in integrating his religious commitments as a Muslim with his political commitments as a Pan-Africanist.
29. Curtis, 110–11.
30. Curtis, 111.
31. Perry, 233–4.
32. Rondell P. Collins, *Seventh Child: A Family Memoir of Malcolm X* (Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing, 1998), 135.

33. Collins, 136.
34. If we have any doubts about the strictness of Malcolm's religious commitments, consider the following: "As an Islamic leader, Malcolm's personal routine was uncompromising. For example, his dietary regimen rigidly followed Elijah's laws; he ate only one meal a day, fasted several times during the month, and did not chew gum or eat snacks between meals. His views on entertainment, women, and general sporting activities had also changed from the days when he was a thief, pimp, and dope user. He refused to go to dances and parties, frowned on sporting events as activities only for the enjoyment of whites, and perceived women as liars who used their bodies to exploit men of leadership. His views were fixed and extreme. Nonetheless, he expected all Muslims, especially in Boston, to adhere to his views. Malcolm's uniqueness made him an exotic and strange figure among people in the black community. However, it was Malcolm's social, political, and religious language that caused the greatest stir." See V. L. White, Jr., *Inside the Nation of Islam* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2001), 36–7.
35. Collins, 160.
36. Collins, 160.
37. Collins, 162.
38. Collins, 162–3.
39. Bruce, 344.
40. Perry, 365.
41. Transcribed from The American Experience, "Malcolm X: Make It Plain" part I. (© 1994 WGBH, Boston, MA and Blackside, Inc. Distributed by PBS VIDEO).
42. C. E. Marsh, *From Black Muslims to Muslims* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1984), 112, 118.
43. Marsh, 118, 119.
44. J. Baxter and Jefri Aalmuhammed's film documentary, *BrotherMinister* (© BrotherMinister 1997). This film contains an extended clip from Louis Farrakhan's 1993 Savior's Day speech. The words from the epigraph are transcribed from that speech, which renewed the controversy surrounding the assassination of Malcolm X and the role that Louis Farrakhan may have played.
45. Shabazz, 9.
46. I have sought without success to corroborate this claim.
47. O. Davis, "Our Shining Black Prince." A eulogy delivered at the Funeral of Malcolm X, at Faith Temple Church of God, February 27, 1965. <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/071.html> (last accessed on December 27, 2007).
48. T. Insoll, *The Archaeology of Islam* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 176–7, 180, 183–6.
49. G. Orwell, *Shooting an Elephant, and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950), 171.
50. D. Chidester, *Patterns of Transcendence* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1990), 206–8.
51. J. Ashston and T. Whyte, *The Quest for Paradise: Visions of Heaven and Eternity in the World's Myths and Religions* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), 95.
52. Chidester, 206–8.
53. K. Holloway, *Passed On: African American Mourning Stories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 207–9.

Part Two The Spiritual Children of Malcolm X

1. See A. Rampersad, *Ralph Ellison: A Biography* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2007).

Four Julius Lester: Blackness and Teshuvah

1. J. Eisenberg and E. Scolnic, eds., *The JPS Dictionary of Jewish Words* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2001 ★ 5761), 164.
2. See J. Lester, *All is Well* (New York: William Morrow, 1976).
3. For a fascinating account of the way that boredom in contrast to Lester's claim can spur the religious imagination, see M. Raposa, *Boredom and the Religious Imagination* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1999).
4. I have my doubts. On the other hand, Robert Cole suggests that young children may be more spiritually sophisticated than we imagine. See R. Cole, *Spiritual Life of Children* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991).
5. John Lewis, former head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), more or less confirms Lester's account of his role in the movement. See J. Lewis and M. D'orso, *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 394.
6. See J. A. Gordon, *Why They Can't Wait: A Critique of Black-Jewish Conflict over Community Control in Ocean Hill-Brownsville (1967-1971)* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001) for an insightful analysis.
7. See P. Chesler, *The New Anti-Semitism: The Current Crisis and What We Must Do about It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 78.
8. See F. Jameson, "The Vanishing Mediator: Narrative Structure in Max Weber," *Working Papers in Cultural Studies* 5 (1973): 111-49.
9. Kessler, 171.
10. Willis, 199.
11. Julius refers here to the Lakota Sioux's concept of "Wakan Tanka." According to Gary Kessler, "Wakan Tanka is better translated as 'Great Mysteriousness.' It is a collective name for a number of different 'wakan (powerful and sacred) beings.'" See Kessler, 10. In a comment that seems apropos of Julius, Kessler adds: "To identify Wakan Tanka with the monotheistic god of nonnative religious traditions obscures important and instructive differences."
12. Compare Julius' statement with Emerson's famous claim: "I am God in nature; I am a weed by the wall." R. W. Emerson, "Circles" in *Emerson: Essays and Lectures* (New York: The Library of America, 1983), 406.
13. See T. Fitzgerald, *The Ideology of Religious Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
14. See M. S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002).
15. *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, trans. A. A. Brill (London: G. Routledge & Sons, limited, 1919). The subtitle of the book says all you need to know on this point.
16. See M. Torgovnick, *Primitive Passions: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1997).
17. For the sad case of an African man from the Congo who was displayed to white audiences in a cage along side "other" animals, see P. V. Bradford, *Ota Benga: The Pygmy in the Zoo* (New York : St. Martin's Press, 1992). Zoo officials placed him somewhere between monkey and man on the great chain of being. In fact, he was part of the Monkey House exhibit at the Bronx Zoo. Born in the Congo region of Central Africa in 1883, he committed suicide on March 20, 1916.
18. See Lester, 301, 307, 312.
19. Lester, 318.
20. Lester acknowledges this point elsewhere. See J. Lester, "Blacks and Jews: Where Are We? Where Are We going?" in *Strangers and Neighbors: Relations between Blacks and Jews in the*

- United States*, ed. M. Adams and J. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 814–16.
21. J. Lester, *Look Out Whitey, Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!* (New York: The Dial Press, 1968), 137–8.
 22. See A. Camus, *Neither Victims Nor Executioners*, trans. Dwight McDonald (Philadelphia: New Society publishers, 1986).
 23. For an unflattering portrait of King, see Lester, *All Is Well*, 218–26. Julius refers repeatedly to King's empty eyes (219–20). Eyes are commonly regarded as windows to the soul, revealing what is deep and essential about a person. In Julius' view, King's eyes were blank, void of spirit, and lifeless. He contrasts King invidiously with Fidel Castro: “[W]ith Fidel, I felt no distance between us. His eyes were not empty. There was very definitely a person in those big-pocketed Cuban military fatigues. I had no problem imagining him in bed with his girlfriend” (223). During his first encounter with King, he claims to have fallen asleep twice while King was speaking (218). He encounters him a second time in the mid-1960s and refers to him derisively as Christ (218). He refers contemptuously to the “old-line nigger,” bourgeois-style and bearing of King and his entourage, to the royal way that King reacted to subjects such as Bayard Rustin, and to Rustin's inappropriate familiarity with King (219). Is this a homophobic jab at Rustin? Like many people, Julius was moved by King's eloquence; behind the words, however, was only death. Or as Julius puts it: “I couldn't feel a living person there” (222). King, he continues, had many defects: “I knew that he wasn't a great leader, and that history may determine that Martin King was the worst thing that had happened to black people since Booker T. Washington” (222). In death Malcolm X looked like the “shining black prince” that Ossie Davis said he was; In contrast, King looked like a lynching victim. A victim all the more because, “[u]nlike Malcolm, he did not immerse his being in the soul of his people. Failing to do this, he was forever lost” (225). Julius implies that King was slavish. With a Nietzschean jab, Julius writes: “On Martin Luther King's tombstone are inscribed the words: ‘Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty! I'm free at last!’ Those are strange words for an epitaph. They're appropriate for King, though. He *is* free now. Myths can live more easily when there is no person who has to represent the myth. He is free now and I'm glad. He suffered long enough” (226). The point of these citations is not that King is above this sort of critique or that what Julius says is not true. My only point is to illustrate Julius's sensibility. He claims that his Soul did not believe in the movement. I have my doubts.
 24. Compare the logic of this passage, where Julius conflates Palestinian identity and the merit of the Palestinians' claims with acts of terrorism with Adolph Reed's critique of the logic underlying the notion of “Blackantisemitism.” See A. Reed, “What Color is Anti-Semitism” in *Strangers and Neighbors: Relations between Blacks and Jews in the United States*, ed. M. Adams and J. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 26.
 25. Julius' assumption that his status as a black Jew was distinctive if not unique did not emerge out of thin air. Rather, it is part of a long-standing cultural common sense. Katya Gibel Azoulay underscores this point in *Black, Jewish, and Interracial: It's Not the Color of Your Skin, but the “Race” of Your Kin and Other Myths of Identity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), where she offers the following commentary: “The dispersion of Jews across the globe produced a diaspora of people whose skin color ranges from dark African and Asian to the pale northern European Jews. Why, then, are those who are identifiably black seen as ‘different’ or ‘unique’ when they present themselves as Jewish?” (11). While exploring the complexities of Black, Jewish, and Interracial identities, Azoulay identifies three conditions for the possibility of Black, Jewish, and Interracial identities. First, the Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia* struck down laws prohibiting marriages between blacks and whites. The male plaintive in the case, Richard Loving, was Jewish. Thus the Court gave constitutional legitimation to the idea that Jews were white, even if their whiteness was of a different shade and of an inferior kind (54–5). The second condition of possibility

is black people's status in America as "the primary racial other" against which the same, the normal, the racially neutral, "unmarked," and unremarkable is defined (55). Third, "the idea of 'Black and Jewish,' as a specific and unique identity, results from the political activities of Jewish radicals, particularly in the labor movement of the 1930s and '40s, the Communist Party (CP) of the 1950s and, most important, the civil rights movement of the 1960s" (60).

26. See Matthew Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), where Jacobson presents this complex issue as follows:

"Are Jews white?" asks Sander Gilman. The question gets at the fundamental instability of Jewishness as a racial difference, but so does its wording fundamentally misstate the contours of whiteness in American political culture. From 1790 [with the passage of the "Naturalization Act"] onward, Jews were indeed "white" by the most significant measures of that appellation: they could enter the country and become naturalized citizens. Given the shades of meaning attaching to various racial classifications, given the nuances involved as whiteness slips off toward Semitic or Hebrew and back again toward Caucasian, the question is not *are* they white, nor even how white are they, but how have they been both white and Other? What have been the historical terms of their probationary whiteness? (176).
27. Sammy Davis Jr. converted to Judaism in the 1950s.
28. Y. Chireau and N. Deutsch eds., *Black Zion: African American Religious Encounters with Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 16.
29. "What do American Jews Believe? A Symposium." (part 2) P. Knobel; N. Lamm; R. Langer; D. Lapin; J. Lester; J. D. Levenson; N. Lewin; D. L. Lieber; M. Medved; M. A. Meyer; J. Neusner; D. Novak; J. A. Polak; D. Prager; R. L. Rubenstein; I. Schorsch; D. Singer; D. Steinmetz; S. L. Stone; D. A. Teutsch; H. J. Weschler; J. Wertheimer; E. H. Yoffie; S. Zimmerman; *Commentary* 102, no. 2 (1996): 57–96.
30. "What do American Jews Believe? A Symposium" (part 2).
31. See Jonathan Serna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). According to Serna, there was widespread "[i]gnorance of Jewish law and the absence of rabbinical authority" during the colonial period, which underwrote a diversity in "religious observances and attitudes" (22). The rhythms of American culture made keeping the Sabbath and observing Jewish holidays difficult (24). "[F]rom the very beginning of Jewish settlement, Jews and Christians . . . fell in love and married" (27). This violated the prohibition on intermarriage. Indeed, America's largely Protestant and "democratic" culture was unavoidable. Jewish law underwent a process of Americanization. "The freedom that produced this 'anyone can do what he wants' attitude reinforced the diversity in Jewish ritual practice that, we know, already existed in colonial times" (45). To be sure, this laissez faire situation provoked a traditional (Orthodox) movement and neotraditional (Conservative and Reconstructionist) movements in response. But these responses only confirmed the degree of actually exiting diversity within American Jewry. In addition to these circumstances, black Jews faced the full force of white supremacy.
32. On the occasion of Jimi Hendrix's death and several years before the earth-shaking death of his father, Julius describes the deaths of Malcolm X and John Coltrane as "the only deaths that I have ever felt in the fiber of my being." *All Is Well*, 254.
33. Elsewhere, Julius writes: "Malcolm was John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness. We still wait for a savior and, this time, I don't think he's coming." See J. Lester, *The End of White World Supremacy* (review). *New York Times*, May 16, 1971.
34. See Lester, *All Is Well*, 105; *Falling Pieces of the Broken Sky* (New York: Arcade Publishing Inc., 1990), 134–5; "Beyond Ideology," *Whole Earth* (2000). http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0GER/is_2000_Summer/ai_63500750/print (last accessed on December 30, 2007).

35. See J. Lester, *The End of White World Supremacy* (review). *New York Times*, May 16, 1971.
36. According to Lester, "There was an occasional anti-Semitic remark in the speeches of Malcolm X but not until Louis Farrakhan did the anti-Semitism come to the forefront." See J. Lester, *Falling Pieces*, 161–2.
37. "Black Politburo" is Debra Dickerson's term. See D. Dickerson, *The End of Blackness* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004), 250.
38. Lester speaks of a "politic of blackness." He claims that Jimi Hendrix helped him avoid the dehumanizing consequences of that politic: "I often referred to him jokingly to my friends as 'my leader.' But it wasn't a joke. . . . He helped me to keep struggling to be me because he chose to be himself." See Lester, *All Is Well*, 254.
39. Lester makes these points in a variety of places and ways. The following two will suffice: "The present generation of blacks is unworthy of its forbearers. That is a harsh judgment, but in finally letting ourselves be unashamedly angry after centuries of repressed anger, we have lost what was absolutely essential—a way of being in the world and living with adversity, without being controlled or dominated by it." To a group of black students at a small liberal arts college in Maine, upset by his marriage to a white woman, Julius remarks: "Love is its own justification. . . . To call myself black was to do no more than modify a definition imposed on me by centuries of Western history. If one knew himself as nothing but black, he'd simply inverted nigger, Negro, and colored, not transforming himself but continuing to live by someone else's description of his reality." "He who hates whites, however, may only be hating the whiteness in himself, thereby not loving black people, but loving hatred of whiteness. . . . One hates injustice, loves humanity and kills only because the killing is forced upon him" See Lester, *All Is Well*, 293, 285, 162.
40. The closest Julius comes to a radical revision of his views of Malcolm X occurs in fictional form when Malcolm X makes a cameo appearance in Julius' novel, *And All Our Wounds Forgiven* (1994). I hesitate to put Julius' views into the mouth of a character. However, this is not just any character but the protagonist and hero. In Julius' fictional judgment, Malcolm is held accountable for the deadly spirit of demonization, especially in-group, black-on-black demonization that he did more than anyone else to unleash, and that he polished with unmatched rhetorical skill.
41. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0GER/is_2000_Summer/ai_63500750/print (last accessed on December 30, 2007).

Five Jan Willis: *Dukkha* and Enlightenment

1. D. Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 81.
2. Cf. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folks* (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2003), 135–6 on the frenzy of the Black Church.
3. See R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) for an influential analysis of the concept.
4. A "taste of power" is the title that Elaine Brown chose for her memoir. She is the former girlfriend of Huey P. Newton, the cofounder of the Black Panther Party and the only woman to lead the organization. See E. Brown, *A Taste of Power: A Woman's Story* (New York: Pantheon, 1993).
5. M. Abu-Jamal, *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004), 161–4, 174, 182.
6. Abu-Jamal, 162.
7. Abu-Jamal, 162.
8. Abu-Jamal, 184.
9. J. Guy, *Afeni Shakur: Evolution of a Revolutionary* (New York: Atria Books, 2004), 76–7.

10. Abu-Jamal, 182. This is not to say that men did not play “penis games.” What it says, rather, is that gender relations are complex choices that both men and women make, even when these choices are structured by male dominance.
11. In his excellent study, *Waiting ‘Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006), P. E. Joseph, apropos the gender politics of the Panthers, remarks: “Her [Kathleen Cleaver] glamorous public image did much to obscure the party’s ambiguous treatment of black women. Internally, Panthers debated women’s role in a revolution designed to provide black men with the positions of respect and authority that white society had historically denied them. Pivotal players in the development and maintenance of the organizations growing infrastructure, women in the rank and file waged an intense uphill struggle to be considered full partners in the revolution” (231).
12. The Sangha is the community of those who follow the Dharma—the teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni.
13. See S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 11. This phrase suggests that we must make what we love unattractive (or, in the case of a baby, have it made unattractive; blackening the breast makes it appear odd and perhaps taste badly) to detach ourselves.
14. See G. Deleuze and F. Guataari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1983), 23.
15. M. L. King, Jr., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. James Melvin Washington (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 295.
16. D. Brazier, *The New Buddhism* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 146–7. For a scholarly treatment of karma see W. D. O’Flaherty, ed., *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
17. Jan sometimes writes as if she were the only black Buddhist. In fact, there is a significant black Buddhist community, including a “cyber sangha” of which Jan is a member.
18. A “karma formation” is a set of habits, conditioned by past habits that influence future habits.
19. O. C. Cox, *Caste, Class, and Race* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1948; repr. New York: Modern Reader Paperback Edition, 1970), 91.
20. As my colleague Charlie Orzech said to me in conversation, “no reputable scholar today accepts the Aryan thesis.” For a critique of the Aryan thesis, see B. Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
21. Cox, 84, 89.
22. Cox, 93.
23. Cox, 93.
24. See Jones, *Is God a White Racist?*
25. Jones, 71, 80, 99, 122, 132, 156.
26. H. Dumoulin, *Christianity Meets Buddhism* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1974), 35–42.
27. Dumoulin, 90–2, 96–7.
28. E. West, *Happiness Here & Now: The Eightfold Path of Jesus Revisited with Buddhist Insights* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 19.
29. T. Gyatso (Dalai Lama XIV), *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1996), 105.
30. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992), 43.
31. Such experiences are often called “religious experiences.” I understand such experiences as John Dewey rather William James understands them, certainly not as Richard Rorty and Robert Brandom do.
32. E. Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Boston: Little Brown, 1960), 702.

Coda My Point of View as an Author

1. J. Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), 10.
2. Dewey, 26.
3. L. Bennett Jr., *The Challenge of Blackness* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing, 1972), 305.
4. G. Santayana, *Interpretation of Poetry and Religion* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1900), v.
5. J. Royce, *The Problem of Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 62.
6. See R. Corrington, *Nature's Religion* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Little field Publishers, 1997), 151.
7. I borrow this concept from R. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), 152.
8. Dewey, 86, 87.
9. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Samtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe* vol. 10, selection s[1] number 68, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: de Gryter, 1980), 195. Unpublished fragments dating to November 1882 to February 1883.

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