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CAMPUS

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A&M students react to Malcolm X

By ANAS BEN-MUSA
Reporter of THE BATTALION

The increased interest in the controversial Muslim leader Malcolm X by young African-Americans is mostly a fad and reflects poor leadership in today's African-American community, said several Texas A&M students and an African-American history professor.

"Most people who concentrate on Malcolm X, Brother Shabazz as I like to call him, do it because everybody else does it," said Antar Salahuddin, a senior electrical engineering major. "They have no real idea about what the man is or what the man is about."

Salahuddin said the biggest problem with the sudden interest in Malcolm X is that people equate orthodox Islam with the Nation of Islam, of which Malcolm was second-in-command between 1952 and 1964.

"I have to spend a lot of time telling the difference between the two," Salahuddin said. "In 1975 when the honorable Elijah Muhammad passed away and his son W. Deen Mohammed took over, W.D. Mohammed felt that we needed to be brought into a more orthodox form of Islam. For the most part, the Nation of Islam is not recognized by the Islamic world."

"We had to slowly introduce the truth about Islam," W.D. Mohammed said. "(Orthodox) Islam is not a black thing or a white thing. Its about Allah the one God," said Greg Denby, a senior civil engineering major.

Yet, Salahuddin said the interest is a good start and has created some positive results.

"People are starting to question things more," Salahuddin said. "People have become more mentally, spiritually and morally conscious about the things around them."

But the questioning has still created confusion and misunderstanding about Malcolm and his beliefs, Denby said. Many people have misunderstood many of Mal-

colm's speeches, especially his speech "By Any Means Necessary," he said. Malcolm said in the 1963

rights of a human being in this society, on this earth, in this day, which we intend to bring into existence by any

means whatever it takes - education, by ballot or by let. It's going to be one or the other."

"By any means necessary" doesn't mean just go kill the white man. It means whatever it takes - by education, by ballot or by bullet. It's going to be one or the other"

- Greg Denby, a senior civil engineering major

speech, "We declare our right on this earth to be a man, to be a human being, to be respected as a human being, to be given

means necessary." "By any means necessary" doesn't mean just go kill the white man," Denby said. "It

Many young African-Americans have taken an interest in Malcolm X because of frustration in the lack of leadership and direction among them at the national and level, said Dr. Albert Broussard, associate professor of history.

"Young blacks are looking for someone to come and constantly offer a solution to the 33 percent poverty in the black community, drug epidemic, and the tos," Broussard said. See Students/P

ALL ABOUT MALCOLM

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska in 1925. He was raised in a tenement home and moved to Boston at the age of 12 to live with his aunt.

During the next five years Malcolm became a drug user, drug seller and burglar. He was caught at the age of 21 and sentenced to prison for several years. During his prison stay, Malcolm learned about the Nation of Islam from his brothers and sisters.

Malcolm joined the Nation of Islam and leaving prison around 1952. He began to preach for total segregation from whites and was soon appointed minister of the mosque in Chicago and became second-in-command in the Nation of Islam.

The Nation of Islam was created by Elijah Muhammad. In 1931, Elijah Muhammad was given God's message and divine guidance from Master W.D. Fard, God incarnate. In this message, Elijah Muhammad said that was told the true history of mankind.

The message said original man was black and among these people was a scientist named Dr. Yacub who created the "white race" - the white man. This "devil" soon took over the world and enslaved black man. Elijah Muhammad believed man was chosen by God to help African-Americans.

Malcolm X broke away from the Nation of Islam in 1964. He doubted Elijah Muhammad and his authenticity as a prophet. It was to Elijah Muhammad's sexual relationship with his secretaries, the jealousy among other ministers in the Nation of Islam and Malcolm's popularity in the media, and Malcolm's careful study of Islam.

Malcolm went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia to learn more about his religion that same year.

In this pilgrimage, Malcolm learned Islam never considers one race better than another.

Malcolm X said in his autobiography, "Brotherhood! The people of all races, colors from all over the world coming together as one! It has proved to me the power of the God."

Malcolm X said the "color-blindness" experienced during the pilgrimage influenced and shaped his way of thinking. He came to believe Islam had the ability to break down racial barriers.

On Feb. 21, 1965, before Malcolm could implement these changes in his beliefs with his new organization, he was assassinated.



Friend remembers leader's life

By ANAS BEN-MUSA
Reporter of THE BATTALION

The current interest in the life and struggles of the controversial Muslim leader Malcolm X has created some misperceptions about the civil rights leader, said his friend Imam W. Deen Mohammed.

W.D. Mohammed is the son of the Elijah Muhammad, the late leader of the Nation of Islam. W.D. Mohammed knew Malcolm from 1952 until his assassination. They became good friends when Malcolm worked for the Nation of Islam.

W.D. Mohammed said that most intellectuals interested in the life of Malcolm are trying to make it a "black thing."

"Malcolm was a person drawn more to Islam than anything else," Mohammad said. "He respected Islam

more than anything else." Many educated Blacks are not focused on Malcolm, he said. Rather, they are focused on Africa and the idea of blacks having their own God and their own Islam, he said.

"They are going into myths and creating their own stories of Islam," W.D. Mohammed said. "This discredits the Islamic faith and discredits interest in Africa. A real intellect accepts the truth."

Malcolm traveled to Mecca in 1964 with the help of two Egyptian friends to learn to understand more about Islam, W.D. Mohammed said.

"He returned convinced that he should not be identified with that facet of Islam that was surrounded by misinformation," W.D. Mohammed said.

"The pilgrimage helped clarify his views," said Mal-

colm's widow, Betty Shabazz. W.D. Mohammed said Malcolm realized the meaning of being a Muslim and the diversity and history of the Muslim world.

"Malcolm contributed to broadening American people's minds to face the reality of the Muslim world," W.D. Mohammed said. "There is a great, big Muslim world out there of over 1 billion people. Malcolm helped bring that out."

"He had a great impact on all people, not just a particular organization or religious affiliation," said Shabazz.

W.D. Mohammed said many people try to follow Malcolm but fail because they are not truthful to themselves or what's going on around them.

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