

# Dr. C. Eric Lincoln



**DR. CHARLES ERIC LINCOLN-** who was instrumental , in the year 1994, in aiding Brother Levi Karim of Muhammad Temple of Islam in Detroit, MI, & Brother Michael Malik Allah , who was incarcerated in Graterford, PA to help incarcerated Muslims in the state of Pennsylvania, who are followers of Messenger Elijah Muhammad's Teachings to be recognized as "religiously different" from "Farrakhan's Nation of Islam" and Wallace Deen Muhammad's group, thus allowing the Messenger's followers practice Islam according to the Teachings of Messenger Elijah Muhammad, which included the observance of Ramadan in the month of December EVERY YEAR, without interference, **has passed away at the age of 75.**

The following is the **Declaration of C. Eric Lincoln, Ph. D** that LEGALLY paved the way in Civil Court for Messenger Elijah Muhammad's Followers from being classed with deviators and hypocrites of Messenger Elijah Muhammad's Teachings:

1. My name is C. Eric Lincoln. I am the William Rand Kenan Professor of Religion (Emeritus) at Duke University. A copy of my curriculum vitae is attached.
2. I have studied the Black Muslim movement since 1956, when I was teaching courses in religion and philosophy at Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia. Indeed, I coined the phrase "Black Muslims" in 1956.
3. I am the author of the book, *The Black Muslims in America*, which was first published in 1961, and is currently in its third edition.
4. Most simply, a Black Muslim is an African American who is a follower of Elijah Muhammad, "Spiritual Leader of the Lost-Found Nation in the West." **Black Muslims are distinguished from Orthodox Muslims by their belief that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, directly commissioned by Allah himself, who came in person (under the name of Fard) to wake the sleeping Black Nation and rid them of the whites' age-old dominion.**
5. The Black Muslims have also been referred to as the Nation of Islam. The Nation of Islam is an example of a "cosmocentric community." In such communities, the religion is embodied by

its leader, not by a sacred text, as in Christianity, Judaism, or Orthodox Islam. **The leader is the source of all value and all truth**, and is the person in whom all responsibilities inhere.

"Salvation," or ultimate reward, is essentially recognition or approbation from the leader and is therefore largely achievable in this life.

6. In a cosmocentric community, there is no intrinsic commitment to any book, creed, ritual, or doctrine apart from its identification with the leader, and that identification does not transcend death. All loyalty is to the living. A dead leader dispenses no approbation, no security, no salvation.

7. In a cosmocentric community, a dead leader is a prima facie contradiction in terms. The dead cannot lead. That is why credulity is so often stretched to such extraordinary extremes to account for the continuing absence of a leader who is no longer visible. Farad, Father Divine, and Elijah Muhammad, like countless others through the ages, have all been deified or immortalized by their followers in an attempt to stave off the powerlessness of death.

8. Minister Jabrill Muhammad, biographer and theologian for the Nation of Islam, makes this point clear in his biography of Elijah Muhammad, *This is the One*, when he writes. "I have not, and do not believe for one moment that the Honorable Elijah died on February 25, 1975" (p.155). Within Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, it is a tenet of deep belief that Elijah Muhammad is still alive.

9. The ascendancy of **Wallace Deen Muhammad left the Nation of Islam reduced to competing fragments**, at least a dozen of which are distinctive enough to be separately identified. Four of the fragments made separate claims to be either the legitimate continuation of the Nation of Islam or its only authentic resurrection, and each operates in its name. The lion's share of the Wallace reformation went to Louis Farrakhan, whose Nation is based in Chicago. **The plaintiff in this lawsuit represents a smaller, separately identifiable fragment of the original Nation of Islam, Muhammad's Temple of Islam, which is based in Detroit.**

**10. Muhammad's Temple of Islam's rejection of the belief that Elijah Muhammad is still alive represents a major religious difference between the followers of Muhammad's Temple of Islam and the followers of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam.**

**11. The refusal of the followers of Muhammad's Temple of Islam to accept the leadership of Louis Farrakhan is also a major religious difference between the two groups.** Unlike in the Judeo-Christian tradition, where the primary allegiance is to a sacred text, cosmocentric communities like the Nation of Islam revolve primarily around their leaders. In such communities, a difference in leadership comprises a critical difference but essentially the same beliefs. People from the outside who compare Farrakhan's Nation of Islam with Muhammad's Temple of Islam and observe that their beliefs appear to be the same are missing the point, and fail to understand the fundamental importance of leadership in cosmocentric communities. For members of a cosmocentric community, it would be unthinkable to worship with another cosmocentric community whose leaders are different.

12. Farrakhan has done more than keep the faith of Elijah Muhammad: he has enlarged and enhanced it with a new vision and new perspectives. Perhaps Farrakhan's most far-reaching development was leading the Nation of Islam to full participation in the political life of America. In 1983, he registered to vote -- a first for any member of the Nation of Islam -- and then committed the Fruit of Islam to provide security for presidential candidate Jesse Jackson. By

contrast, **Elijah Muhammad forbade his followers from participating in American politics.** The continuing belief of the members of Muhammad's Temple of Islam that they are forbidden to participate in American politics is another important differences between their beliefs and those of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam.

**13. It is my opinion, based upon my knowledge of the Black Muslim movement and my understanding of the facts of this case, that Muhammad Temple of Islam and Farrakhan's Nation of Islam are religiously different.**

**14. It is my opinion, based upon my knowledge of the Black Muslim movement and my understanding of the facts of this case, that the religious needs of the members of Muhammad's Temple of Islam at Graterford cannot be satisfied by participation in the religious activities of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam.**

**15. It is my opinion, based upon my knowledge of the Black Muslim movement and my understanding of the facts of this case, that the members of Muhammad's Temple of Islam at Graterford should be recognized as a separate religious group from Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, and should be permitted to worship separately from the members of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam.**

I declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on October 4, 1994.

Signed

C. Eric Lincoln, Ph.D.



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