

African american history:religious influences 1770 - 1831

[History](#)



African American History (Religious Influences 1770 - 1831) Africans have been one of the most insulted people in the history. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a German philosopher. Having studied the past of Africa, he said that the Black Africa had neither developed nor changed over the centuries, and this challenged its status as a historical continent. Therefore, Hegel coined the term “ non-historical peoples” for the Black Africans. Slaves from Brazil and Angola were brought to the Hudson Valley by the Dutch settlers. The Dutch needed the slaves to work in their farms. Slavery sustained in different parts of the world including New York, New Netherland and the British colony for the next two hundred years. Slaves were maximal in number in New York than in any northern state by the time the 18th century ended. That was a time of revolution and the African Americans were striving for their rights. Consequentially, the law declared freedom for any child born to the slaves after 4 July 1800. Things started to change for the better after the second half of the 18th century when African American protagonists started to frequently make use of the religious texts and refer to the religious anecdotes in order to fight for the rights of African Americans. It all primarily started in 1789 when the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano was published. Equiano actively participated in the movement of the slave trade abolishment. Amongst his numerous efforts to abolish the slave trade was a robust abolitionist autobiography that he wrote in 1789. The end of American slavery and the emancipation of African Americans in the northern and the southern communities is fundamentally an outcome of such leaders that used religion as the basis of their claims and arguments. African American women have played a fundamental role in the pro-African American

movements. Some of the African American women that particularly fought for their rights through their speeches and writings were Sojourner Truth, Frances E. W. Harper and Maria Stewart. Truth's speech *Ain't I a Woman* that she made in 1851 reflected upon the numerous ways in which the gender oppression affected the life of Black women in the manipulative racist system. " Since slavery, they have struggled individually and in groups, spontaneously and in formal organizations, to eradicate the multiple injustices that they and their communities face" (Danto, 2004). The movement started by the Black women in the 1970s coined the term Black feminism. Since then, this term has been frequently applied by the Black feminists to the survival strategies. The term Black feminism characterizes the pragmatism and courage shown by the Black women in the days of slavery. David Walker (1785 to 1830) was one of the most active protagonists of the emancipation of African Americans. Having witnessed the subjugation of African Americans' rights in the society all his life, he wrote an appeal to the African American slaves to stand up and raise their voice to gain their rights. Walker (1829) addressed his fellow Africans with an intention to make them realize that as slaves, they did not enjoy the rights that other people did. [A]ll the inhabitants of the earth, (except however, the sons of Africa) are called men, and of course are, and ought to be free. But we, (coloured people) and our children are brutes!! and of course are, and ought to be SLAVES to the American people and their children forever!! to dig their mines and work their farms; and thus go on enriching them, from one generation to another with our blood and our tears!!!! (Walker, 1829, p. 9). Walker (1829) frequently referred to the anecdotes and accounts of the

ancient nations to make the audience believe that no nation had ever been treated by another the way the white Americans were treating the slaves. Walker said that anybody who had read history knew that. But just to make it clear, he reiterated the history of religion. Referring to the people of Pharaoh in Egypt, Walker says that most of them were the people of color. Some looked like pure Africans while others were paler. Many were the children of biracial marriages between the Egyptians and the Ethiopians. " I say, I call your attention then, to the children of Jacob, while I point out particularly to you his son Joseph, among the rest, in Egypt" (Walker, 1829, p. 10). Joseph was given so important and powerful position in the government by the Pharaoh that the only person more powerful than him was the Pharaoh himself. The Pharaoh gave the whole of Egypt in control of Joseph. Drawing references from the history, Walker drew a comparison between the people of color of the past and those of his time. Walker appealed to the opponents of African Americans' social advancement to find him one person of color that had a respectable job in the society, leave aside the posts in government. The Pharaoh did not only gave Joseph a powerful position in government, but also married the daughter of Potipherah priest to him. Referring to this part of the religion's history, Walker (1829) said that in his time, the African Americans could not even think of marrying a white woman. What to talk of allowing marrying across race, the Christian Americans did not even let the African slaves convert to Christianity, unlike the Jews, Pagans and Muslims who welcomed other people to their religion. References: Danto, E. (2004, Aug. 21). Black Feminism in the US. Retrieved from <http://www.rastafarispeaks.com/cgi-bin/forum/archive1/config.pl?>

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