

“Black People in America’s Minority Religions”

Speaker: Mansa Bilal Mark King, Associate Professor of Sociology, Morehouse College

Dr. Mansa Bilal Mark King, Associate Professor of Sociology at Morehouse College, joined 25 scholars, students, and community leaders via Zoom on September 11, 2020 to present his research entitled “Black People in America’s Minority Religions.” King’s presentation focused on encapsulating the diversity of the Black religious community and highlighting the range of religious traditions that Black Americans may practice outside of Christianity: from Muslim-identified groups, to Black Hebrews, to traditional religious groups, and many more. Existing within a predominantly Christian country, these religious groups are often not recognized or taken into account when religious diversity in America is discussed, especially religion amongst Black communities. It is important to consider this diversity within Black American religious communities, because, as King argued, “so many [of the] broader African-American demographic think of their ethnic group as inherently religious.” Exploring the different types of religious traditions and communities Black Americans participate in further allows us to understand what it means to be Black in America by providing insight into these communities’ lived experiences. As a student listener, I thought that King’s presentation was timely and relevant to current political events, and I learned how essential these minority religious traditions are to the identities of Black Americans. This type of knowledge is quintessential in fostering a diverse and inclusive society.