

# COURSE SYLLABUS **BLACK LIBERATION THEOLOGY**

Spring 2007 ♦ Saturdays, 12n – 1p

Place: Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center & Bookstore and on-line

Instructor: Aswad Walker

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine, compare and contrast the theologies and resulting programmatic actions taken by persons espousing Black Liberation Theology. Though the field of Black Liberation Theology received its name in the 1960s, the course will broaden the definition of its practitioners to include Pan Africanists from earlier eras who used the teachings of Christianity and/or the vehicle of the Black Church as foundational to their efforts for securing a self-determining existence for Africans at home and/or abroad. Individuals and movements to be discussed include: Denmark Vesey, David Walker, Henry McNeal Turner, Nat Turner, Richard Allen (AME Church), Edward Wilmont Blyden, J.E. Casely Hayford, Paul Cuffe, Sojourner Truth, the Maroons, Marcus Garvey (UNIA), Bis. George Alexander McGuire (African Orthodox Church), Elijah Muhammad (NOI), Rev. Albert B. Cleage Jr. (PAOCC), James Cone, and others.

## **OBJECTIVES**

In this course, we seek to:

- ♦ Unearth the origins and meaning of the term “Black Liberation Theology”
- ♦ Chronicle proponents of Black Liberation Theology past and present
- ♦ Compare churches, organizations and movements founded upon the beliefs espoused by Black Liberation Theologians
- ♦ Examine Black Liberation Theology in Practice
- ♦ Discuss Womanist Theology and Black Liberation Theology
- ♦ Compare other global theologies of liberation with Black Liberation Theology
- ♦ Discuss Black Liberation Theology in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- ♦ Students will attain an appreciation for the history and theological development of the Black Liberation Theology.
- ♦ Students will develop an awareness of the mission and purpose of churches and movements espousing Black Liberation Theology.
- ♦ Students will develop an awareness of the scope of the influence Black Liberation Theologians have had upon the Black Church and society in general.

## **TEXTBOOK**

Black Theology: A Documentary History: Volume Two: 1980-1992 by James Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore

Black Christian Nationalism: New Directions for the Black Church by Rev. Albert B. Cleage, Jr.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS**

David Walker's Appeal by David Walker

Black Rebellion: Five Slave Revolts by Thomas Wentworth Higginson

Living Stones in the Household of God edited by Linda E. Thomas

\*Plus supplemental readings

### **TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

The teaching methodology for this course will include lectures, video-tapes, small group exercises, on-line research and discussion, guest lectures, and instructor-student classroom discussion.

### **EVALUATION**

1. Attendance & Participation (10%)
  - ◆ Engaged Class Discussion
2. Mid-Term Assessment (40%)
3. In-class Oral Presentations (50%); Topics include the following:
  - ◆ Black Liberation Theologian of your choice
  - ◆ Movement or organization based upon Black Liberation Theology
  - ◆ Black Liberation Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - ◆ Origins of Black Liberation Theology
  - ◆ Womanist Theology
  - ◆ Liberation Theologies from Around the Global

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS**

*January 20<sup>th</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Course Introduction – Defining Black Liberation Theology

Preparation: *Black Theology*, pp. 1-60

*January 27<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Defining Black Liberation Theology

Preparation: *Black Theology*, pp. 1-75

*February 3<sup>rd</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Proponents of Black Liberation Theology – Walker, Turner, Vesey, and Prosser

Preparation: *David Walker's Appeal; Black Rebellion: Five Slave Revolts*, pp. 73-214

*February 10<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Proponents of Black Liberation Theology – Marcus Garvey, Bis. George Alexander McGuire, Elijah Muhammad & Malcolm X

Preparation: *Black Christian Nationalism*, Chs 6-7; supplemental readings

*February 17<sup>th</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Proponents of Black Liberation Theology – Rev. Albert B. Cleage Jr. and James Cone

Preparation: *Black Christian Nationalism*, Chs 8-14; supplemental readings by James Cone

*February 24<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Movements Based Upon Black Liberation Theology – Jerusalem Church; Maroons, UNIA & African Orthodox Church, NOI, and PAOCC

Preparation: TBA

*March 3<sup>rd</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Re-defining Black Liberation Theology – Second Generation Voices – Fighting Against Classism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Ecologism

Preparation: TBA

*March 10<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Re-defining Black Liberation Theology – Second Generation Voices – Fighting Against Classism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Ecologism

Preparation: TBA

### **Mid-Term Assessment**

*March 17<sup>th</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Global Theologies of Liberation – Latin America, Asia, Africa

Preparation: *Black Theology*, pp. 357-409

*March 24<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Liberating the Scriptures

Preparation: *Black Theology*, pp. 177-253

*March 31<sup>st</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: Black Liberation Theology's Critique of Capitalism and Response to Globalization

Preparation: *Black Theology*, pp. 410-424; selected readings from *China Inc*, *Globalization Gap*, *Revolutionary Wealth* and *The World is Flat*

*April 7<sup>th</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: Black Liberation Theology's Response to Globalization

Preparation: Selected readings from *China Inc*, *Globalization Gap*, *Revolutionary Wealth* and *The World is Flat*

*April 14<sup>th</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

Topic: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Black Liberation Theology – Making it Relevant for the Masses

Preparation: TBA

*April 21<sup>st</sup> (On-line)*

Topic: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Black Liberation Theology – Making it Relevant for the Masses

Preparation: TBA

*April 28<sup>th</sup> (@ Cultural Center)*

**All-Class Pot-Luck & Group Presentations**