

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO
POLITICAL SCIENCE 118B/218B (500892)
THE POLITICAL THEORY OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY
DR. GERMAINE A. HOSTON
SPRING 2004
V. 2.1

Office: 376 Social Science Building	Hours: Tuesdays 2:15-3:45 p.m. & by appt
Tel.: 858-449-0455	E-mail: gghoston@ucsd.edu
Class Meeting: T-Th 12:30 to 1:50 p.m.	Class Site:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/libtheo	
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Political scientists have generally associated secularization with the notion of “modernization”, or political development; yet the end of the second millennium has seen the resurgence of the role of religion in politics. From the role of ecclesiastical leadership in ending *apartheid* in South Africa and promoting the downfall of state communism in Eastern Europe, to the assertion of competing territorial claims and resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East, and judgments in American domestic politics on issues from abortion to the legitimacy of socioeconomic inequality, religio-philosophical perspectives have reasserted their influence on political affairs. Thus, where the theologies of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas were among the most important contributors to Western political theory in the ages past, religious activists and theologians are continuing to make such contributions in response to the challenges associated with modernity.

This course offers a critical examination of one of the most significant and influential currents of such thought today: the theology (or, more accurately, *theologies*) of liberation. In North America, liberation theology is commonly misapprehended as *passé* and limited in scope to Latin America. In fact, the roots of liberation theology can be traced back to European philosophers of the crisis of Western modernity at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, while inspired by the challenges of doing effective ministry in the harsh economic and political realities of Latin America in the 1960s, Latin American liberation theology has both (1) inspired and strengthened numerous variations on its core themes, in the forms of Black theologies, feminist theologies, and, theologies of liberation and change in support of indigenous rights movements, on the one hand; and, on the other, it has (2) come to be drawn into challenging and productive discourse with modernist and postmodernist paradigms of man and the world in the Europe and North America. As we parse the elements that distinguish the political theory of liberation theology from its orthodox predecessors, we will also analyze in non-Christian philosophico-religious settings, such as East Asia, South Africa, and the Middle East, analogues to the Latin American endeavor to marry Marxist-influenced perspectives with philosophico-religious systems of thought that the conventional wisdom has long held to be fundamentally antithetical. We will explore these efforts as they address liberation from oppression along gender, ethnic, and cultural, as well as economic axes.

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Our approach will be at once historical and thematic. In our second class session, a viewing of the classic film "The Picture of Dorian Gray" (based on the book by Oscar Wilde) will launch a consideration of how various religious and cultural traditions have conceptualized the relationship between human life in the material world and the relationship in which men and women live with God or the transcendent. We will analyze how efforts to respond to challenges engendered by socioeconomic change and the challenges of "modernity" gave rise to new bodies of political thought—"theologies of liberation"--beginning with their genesis in the crisis of modernity and the work of the new theologians of 20th century Western Europe through Latin America and their extension to other socio-economic, cultural, and gendered contexts. In each case, we will address and assess the political theory in these perspectives in light of their implications for current debates between modernists and postmodernists, liberals and communitarians, and multiculturalists and their critics.

PREREQUISITES

Students are not required to have any specific familiarity with Latin America, with systematic or liberation theology, or with Marxian or other Western political philosophy, although such knowledge would be helpful.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class will meet every Tuesday and Thursday, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:50 p.m., and will be held in a combination lecture-discussion format. This requires that all required readings be completed **before** the dates on which they are to be discussed so that discussions can be wide-ranging and productive. The following items that have been ordered and are available for purchase from Groundwork Books:

Robert C. Tucker, *Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton)

Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve and the Serpent* (New York: Random House, 1988)

Recommended: *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)¹

Readings that are included in the reader available from University Readers² are required and are indicated with an (R); other availabilities are as indicated. All materials will also be available on reserve, including the reader. Electronic materials (internet articles) will be available on the Yahoo Group site for the class (see below). Readings listed as "Recommended" (see below under Grading) will be available through E-reserves only. The

¹ Please note that the Bibles that have been ordered are the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) (in English), but students are free to use whatever Bibles they might have on hand (including Spanish, Korean, or other foreign language versions), provided that they include both the Old and New Testament (and ideally the Apocrypha). I have also posted a link to the NRSV (in English) online on our Groups site.

² Readers will be available for purchase in class during the first or second week. University Readers can also be reached by telephone at 858.552.1120 and by e-mail: info@universityreaders.com.

Qurān and the *Lotus Sutra*, the primary text of Mahayana Buddhism (the prevalent form of Buddhism in China and Japan)³ will also be placed on Reserve at Geisel Library for those who wish to consult them.

Attendance is required at all class meetings,⁴ and all students are expected to participate actively. In order to give us more opportunity to discuss the course material, I have created a group for the class on Yahoo Groups at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/libtheo>. You will be subscribed to the group automatically, using the UCSD e-mail address indicated on the class roster. If you do not already have a Yahoo ID, you will want to establish one by logging onto our site and registering there. This will get you a free Yahoo e-mail account, which you are not obliged to use at all, but which means that you will have a Yahoo ID (what precedes the @ in the free e-mail address). You can access the group then by going directly to our group site and logging in there with your Yahoo ID and password. Then, you can click on "Edit my Membership" to specify another e-mail address that you consult more frequently, if you like. You are encouraged to begin taking advantage of this wonderful resource immediately, posting messages with questions, answering questions posted by other students, or just engaging in informal discussion of the course material online. As long as appropriate etiquette and standards of civility are observed in all online exchanges, the list will be unmoderated, so that your contributions can be posted immediately.

To get you started quickly, a brief assignment to be completed online will be made within the first two weeks of class. A short written assignment (6-7pp.) will be due on Tuesday, May 4, at 12:30 p.m. at the beginning of class), and a final paper will be due on Tuesday, June 8, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. in the instructor's office. In both instances, the paper topics will be distributed in class and available online at our class website as well (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/libtheo>). Both papers will be thought pieces based solely on materials assigned for this course and class lectures. The final paper will give you the opportunity to select two or more of the cases of liberation theology that we have studied.

³The Burton Watson translation of the Lotus Sutra is available online at the following URL: <http://buddhism.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.sgi%2Dusa.org/buddhism/library/Buddhism/LotusSutra/>. This site also has links on basics of Buddhism, etc. *The Qurān* (English translation by A. Yusuf Ali) is available online at: <http://wings.buffalo.edu/sa/muslim/quran/yali/>. I have also posted each link to our site, so you can go to the group site and click on it to go to the *Sutra* or *Qurān* from there. I have also requested to have placed on reserve at Geisel library both the Soothill translation of the Lotus Sutra (*The Lotus of the Wonderful Law*), and the English translation of the Qurān by Muhammad Asad, (*The Message of the Qurān*), which is highly praised for its clarity and poetic style..

⁴The exception to this rule is in case of illness. If you are ill, please do not come to class and expose others to your illness. When you have recovered, simply bring a doctor's note to verify your illness. If you anticipate missing class for some other reason, please notify the instructor in advance.

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Although all students must complete all the required readings, you should try to incorporate one or more of the recommended readings listed for the cases that you choose to treat in your final.

The formula that will determine the final grade is as follows:⁵

Class attendance and participation:	30%
Short written assignment:	30%
Final paper:	40%

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND LECTURE TOPICS

Week 1: Tues (Mar 30) Course Introduction: Political Theory, Theology, and Ideology: An Analytical Framework

Thus (Apr 1) Showing of "The Picture of Dorian Grey"

Required Readings:

In *The Holy Bible* read and/or review:

* *Genesis*, chaps. 1-17 (18-27 optional), 28, 32-48, 50:15-26 (The Creation narratives, and the Covenant with Abraham that is the shared root of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam)

*The Gospel according to *Mark*

**Romans* 4-5

Recommended Readings for Students Desiring More Biblical Background:

*The Gospel according to *Luke*

*1 *Samuel* chaps. (1-15), 16-24, 2 *Samuel* 7: 4-29 (The Covenant with David)

**Isaiah* 9, 11

The Apostle's, Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds (Available at group site)

PART I. THE POLITICAL THEORY OF ORTHODOX JUDAIC AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Week 2: Paradigms, Paradigmatic Change, and the Development of Roman Catholic Orthodoxy on Church, Society, and Politics

Apr 6 (Passover): The Exodus as Model of Liberation and Revolution

Apr 8: The Reformation and the Hegelian Paradigm of History

Required Readings:

⁵The grading formula will vary slightly for graduate students, as indicated in the special section at the end of the syllabus.

Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, pp. 10-22 (R)

*Marx on the History of His Opinions," and "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *Robert C. Tucker, *Marx-Engels Reader*

Read and/or Review:

**Exodus* 1-25

**Daniel* chaps. 1-3

Recommended Readings:

**Hebrews* 8-11 (on the Old and New Covenants)

PT II. MODERNITY, POSTMODERNITY, AND THE EMERGENCE OF THEOLOGIES OF LIBERATION

Week 3: Apr 13 The Threefold Challenge of Marxism: The Critique of Religion, Capitalism, and the Capitalist State
Apr 15 Papal Responses to Marxism

Required Readings:

"The German Ideology," "On the Jewish Question," "Contribution to Marx's Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," "On British Imperialism in India," "On Social Relations in Russia," all in *Robert C. Tucker, *Marx-Engels Reader*
Pope Leo XIII, *Quod Apostolici Muneris* (Encyclical Letter, 28 December 1878) (online at Yahoo group site)

Skim the Following Papal Encyclicals (available online)

Pope Pius XI, *Quadresimo Anno* (15 May 1931), §§2-4, 10-11, 27-30, 45-46, 49, 44, 48, 65-74, 83, 92-94, 110, 120, 125-126, 137 (online, Group site)

Centigesimus Annus (Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter on the 100th Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*) (May 1, 1991), §§6-24, (29-31), 33, last two paragraphs in §39, §49 (online, Group site)

Week 4: Apr 20 The Crisis of 20th-Century Modernity and the Emergence of a New Theological Paradigm
Apr 22 Vatican II and the Challenge of Liberation Theology

Required Readings:

Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Truth in Myths," pp. 15-31; "Theology and Political Thought in the Western World," pp. 55-66; and "The Spiritual Life of Modern Man," pp. 67-76 in *Faith and Politics* (R)

Schillebeeckx, *The Language of Faith*, chaps. 5, 6 (R)

Roberto Oliveras, "The History of the Theology of Liberation," (Chap. 1), and

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Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Option for the Poor," (Chap. 12), both in Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino, eds., *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology* (R)

Recommended Readings:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, pp. 45-76 (E-reserves)

Week 5 (Apr 27 & 29): An Alternative Ecclesiastical Paradigm in Comunidades de Base

Required Readings:

Carlos Torres, Charts entitled "Proposed Typology of Internal Tendencies of the Latin American Church" & "Ideological Tendencies in the Latin American Church" (R)

Marcello de C. Azevedo, "Basic Ecclesiastical Communities," in Ellacuría and Sobrino, eds., *Mysterium Liberationis* (R)

Leonardo Boff, *Church: Charism and Power*, Chaps. 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 10 (R and on Reserve at Geisel Library)

Recommended Readings:

José Miranda, *Marx and the Bible: A Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1974), "Prologue," "Introduction," and chap. 1: "Private Ownership Under Challenge" (E-reserves)

José Porfirio Miranda, *Marx Against the Marxists*, chap. 9: "Marx's Thought as a Conscious Continuation of Early Christianity" (E-reserves)

PART III: CROSSING BORDERS, CONTESTING FRONTIERS: CULTURE, ETHNICITY, GENDER, AND NON-JUDEO-CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIES OF LIBERATION

Week 6: May 4 SHORT WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS (NO LATER THAN 12:45 P.M.)

May 6 Asian Theologies of Liberation

Required Readings:

Germaine A. Hoston, "A 'Theology' of Liberation?", in *Ideas Across Cultures*, eds. Cohen and Goldman), pp. 165-221 (and notes, pp. 340-364) (R)

C. S. Song, "The Cross and the Lotus," pp. 300-323 (R)

Kim Yong-bok, "Messiah and Minjung: Discerning Messianic Politics over against Political Messianism," pp. 373-383 (R)

Recommended:

Paul Yunsik Chang, "Christianity and the Minjung Imaginary" (Internet document http://hcs.harvard.edu/~yisei/backissues/spring_99/religion2.html)

**Week 7: The America – Africa Nexus: The Problem of Racism and the Twin Legacies
Colonialism and Slavery**

May 11 “African Consciousness” and African Theologies of Liberation
May 13 Black Theology and the Black Church in the United States

Required Readings:

James H. Cone, “The White Church and Black Power,” pp. 112-132, and
Choan-Seng Song, “The Black Experience of the Exodus,” pp. 568-583, both in
Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone, eds. *Black Theology: A Documentary
History, 1966-1979* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979) (R)

Frantz Fanon, “On National Culture,” pp. 206-248, in *The Wretched of the Earth* (R)

Allan Boesak, “Liberation Theology in South Africa,” pp. 265-271; and

Allan Boesak, “Black and Reformed: Contradiction or Challenge?” pp. 272-284,
both in Ferm, ed., *Third World Liberation Theologies: A Reader* (R)

Recommended Readings:

James H. Cone, “Black Theology and the Black Church: Where Do We Go From
Here?” in Wilmore and Cone, eds., *Black Theology*, pp. 350-376 (E-reserves)

Cornel West, “Black Theology and Marxist Thought,” Wilmore and Cone, eds., *Black
Theology*, pp., 552-567 (E-reserves)

Week 8: (May 18) Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Islam
(May 20) *Jihad* and Islamic Liberation Theologies

Required Readings:

“Islam, Fundamentalism, and Modernism,” pp. 90-94;

Mahmud Shaltut, “Socialism and Islam,” pp. 108-116;

“Introduction to Political and Social Thought in Iran,” pp. 463-472;

Ali Shariati, “A New Understanding of Islam and Man,” pp. 516-528;

“Revolutionary Fundamentalism in Action: The People’s Mojahedin Organization of
Iran,” 528-535, all in *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed.

Kemal H. Karpat (R)

Michael G. Knapp, “The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam,” *Parameters* 33.1
(Spring 2003): 82-94 (R)

Recommended Readings:

The Qurān, surats (chaps.) 1, 2: 1-7, 28-39, 47-103, 124- 136, 177, 188, 193, 254-257

Introduction to chap. 26, “The New Islamic Fundamentalism and Social Revolution in
Iran,” and Ayatollah Khomeini, “Islamic Government and Society,” in
Political and Social Thought, ed. Karpat, pp. 496-516 (E-reserves)

“Jihad.” *Sufism* (Web document.) (link available on Yahoo group site). URL:

<http://www.sufismjournal.org/practice/practice.html>

Week 9 (May 25) Contesting Gendered Orthodoxies

(May 27) Crossing Cultural Boundaries: Themes and Issues in Feminist Theology

Required Readings:

Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*, chaps. 1-3, 5, 6, Epilogue

Dorothee Soelle, "Mysticism – Liberation – Feminism," pp. 79-105, in *The Strength of the Weak: Toward a Christian Feminist Identity*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (Philadelphia, Pa: The Westminster Press, 1984 (R))

Recommended Readings:

Dorothee Sölle, *Thinking About God: An Introduction to Theology*, chap. 7, "Feminist Liberation Theology" (E-reserves)

Week 10 (June 1) Feminist Theology in the Gender/Culture Nexus

(June 3) Assessments and Prospects

Required Readings:

Ofelia Schutte, "Philosophy and Feminism in Latin America: Perspectives on Gender Identity and Culture," *The Philosophical Forum* 20.1-2 (Fall-Winter 1988-1989): 62-84 (R)

Pauli Murray, "Black Theology and Feminist Theology: A Comparative View," pp. 398-417; and

Jacquelyn Grant, "Black Theology and the Black Woman," pp. 418-433; both in Wilmore and Cone, eds., *Black Theology* (R)

Michael Budde, *The Two Churches*, chap. 3: "Anticapitalism and the Latin American Church," pp. 38-73 (R)

Carlos M. Vilas, *After the Revolution: Democratization and Social Change in Central America*, pp. 81-135 (R)

Recommended Readings:

Maryam Rajavi, "Women, Voice of the Oppressed" (Web document, URL:

<http://www.iran-e-azad.org/english/june21/june21-4.html>)