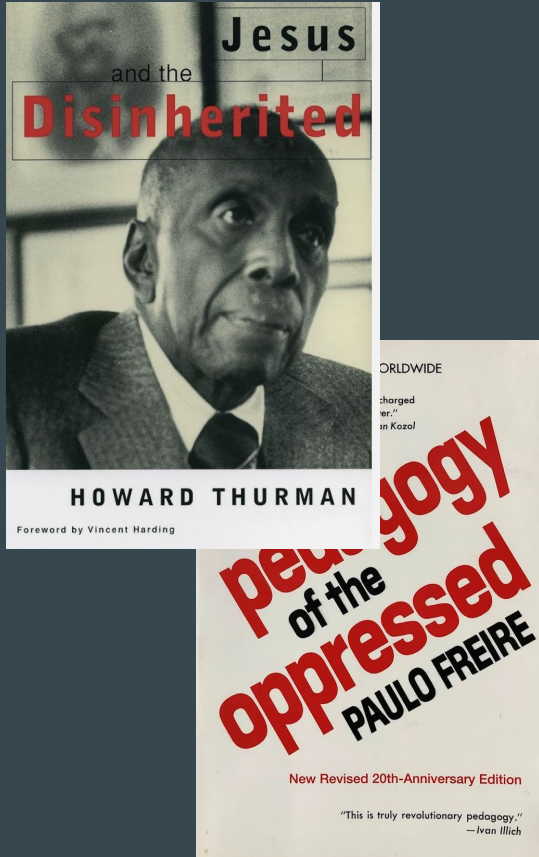


Jesus of the Disinherited and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in conversation:



In 1949, when Howard Thurman first published *Jesus of the Disinherited*, the nation's social and political life had entered into a deciding liminal state. The post-World War II era had ushered the country into new advancements in politics, economics, and human migration, and an emergent cast of Black leaders were beginning to mount their claims of redress to the nation's consciousness. Jim Crow, the legalized system of racial segregation that implicitly sanctioned civilian policing and violence, was beginning to collapse under the weight of this criticism and post-war anxieties over fascism. For many at the time, Thurman was considered to be a prophetic voice, and his writing, in particular, often circulated among them as a source of profound inspiration and guidance. When *Jesus of the Disinherited* appeared on shelves, Thurman had notably left his base at Howard University Rankin Chapel to form the nation's first deliberately interracial congregation, the Church for the Fellowship of All People, in San Francisco. This transition, in 1944, is just one example of Thurman's radical posture in defiance of Black separatism and white conservatism alike. Following its publishing, Thurman's "religion of Jesus" proved to be of incredible import in the movement to abolish Jim Crow and the development of the civil rights era. If the folklore is true, as multiple sources have indicated, Martin Luther King Jr. often carried a copy of Thurman's work whenever he traveled. While *Jesus of the Disinherited* was first immortalized in African American history for its influence on the abolition of Jim Crow and the civil rights movement, it should be equally recognized in African American religious thought for its role as the precursor to James Cones' theological interventions, Black Theology & Black Power and A Black Theology of Liberation. Although I completed a more thorough literature review on the subject of liberation theology and the role of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) during Apartheid, my primary interest this summer was in thinking about the connections between Thurman's theory of sacred intervention and Freire's theory of (secular) educational intervention. Both of these theoretical interventions proliferated the social and political discourse of their time and many of their ideas, although separated from their intellectual genealogy, continue to find traction in our public discourse today.