

MARCH 29:

“MUJERISTA THEOLOGY: A PREFERRED
FUTURE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE”

Dr. Ada María Isasi Díaz
Professor of Ethics and Theology
Drew University Theological School

APRIL 5:

“DREAMING IN COLOR, LIVING IN
BLACK AND WHITE”

The Reverend Michael E. Livingston
Director, National Council
of Churches Poverty Initiative

APRIL 12

(Gault Recital Hall – Scheide)

“OCCUPY RELIGION: THEOLOGY
OF THE MULTITUDE”

Dr. Kwok Pui Lan
William F. Cole Professor of Theology
and Spirituality
Episcopal Divinity School
Cambridge, Massachusetts

APRIL 19

“THE CRUCIFIED PEOPLE: NO SALVATION
EXCEPT THROUGH THE POOR”

Dr. Charles Kammer
The James F. Lincoln Professor of Religious Studies
The College of Wooster

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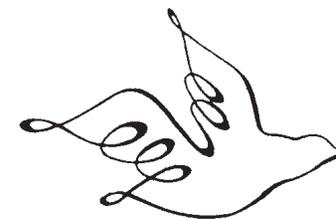
Location

Sessions on March 29 and April 5 and 19
will be held in the Lean Lecture Room on the
lower level of Wishart Hall. The session on
April 12 will be held in Gault Recital Hall
in Scheide Music Center on
The College of Wooster campus.

*The lecture series is free to all. Donations
will be accepted to help defray the costs.*

*The 46th Wooster
Spring Academy
of Religion 2012
(formerly Clergy Academy)*

PEDAGOGY FROM
THE OPPRESSED:
WISDOM AND VISION
FROM THE UNDERSIDE



7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Thursdays
March 29 – April 19, 2012

A free lecture series,
open to persons of all backgrounds.

THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

PEDAGOGY FROM THE OPPRESSED: WISDOM AND VISION FROM THE UNDERSIDE

As a people we have to understand that those who have suffered need to tell their stories, to have others witness to the horror that has been inflicted on them, in order to have their memories respected, to find a way of dealing with what they have endured, to regain their dignity and wholeness as human beings. Unless those who have suffered can be healed, the nation suffers by not being able to benefit from what they can contribute to the building of our common future. (Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, La Lucha Continues, Mujerista Theology)

1492 marks the symbolical beginning of a process now celebrated as globalization, the slow creation of a united global community. While the anticipated promise of globalization has not yet been fully realized, many see its glow on the horizon. In this vision, globalization will mean a world knit into a single interdependent economy in which, finally, all will benefit from unprecedented prosperity. Globalization also brings the anticipation of the end of violent conflict and an end to competing ideologies. From this perspective we have been involved in a long historical process that has, in the eyes of many, brought us to the verge of the future for which humanity has longed, a future of peace and prosperity for all.

One advocate of globalization, Thomas Friedman, notes a threat to this idyllic future, the issue of ecological nonsustainability. Still this is a challenge that can be met, as Friedman himself notes. "The era we are entering will be one of enormous social, political and economic change—driven in large part from above, from the sky, from Mother Nature. If we want things to stay the way they are—that is, if we want to maintain our technological, economic, and moral leadership and a habitable planet, rich with flora and fauna, leopards and lions, and human communities that can grow in a sustainable way—things will have to change around here, and fast." (Hot, Flat and Crowded.)

In this liberal sounding quote, we see a deeper truth. Globalization has been about the technological, economic and certainly political leadership of the United States and the European nations.

Globalization begins in colonization. All of the world's non-European peoples share one thing in common, at one time or another they have been under some degree of control by European peoples. All have shared the fate of being peoples and cultures exploited for the profit of a European and American elite. As many critics have pointed out, globalization is only the continuance of European and American colonization in a new guise. Economics and culture have replaced, in most cases, direct military intervention as the tool for creating a Europeanized, Americanized global culture. Globalization has a purposely hidden underside.

The current world order has been and is being built on the exploitation and oppression of the vast majority of the world's peoples. The United States built its wealth and power on the enslavement of Africans and the near genocide of North America's original inhabitants. History, since 1492, has been built on the backs and the suffering of those whom Ignacio Ellacuria has called, "the crucified people". Sadly, the exploitation and oppression have not ended. While Thomas Friedman notes that the modern world has been built on the exploitation of nature, he ignores the fact that the modern world was built and is sustained through the continued exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few.

Fifty percent of the world's people have an average income of less than two dollars and fifty cents a day. This low standard of living allows for the production of low cost goods, which benefits the world's affluent. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the world's forty-one poorest countries is less than the combined wealth of the world's seven richest persons. Ten percent of the world's people own eighty five percent of the world's assets. The poorest fifty percent own only one percent of the world's assets. Currently one of every two children in the world lives in poverty and one in four is chronically malnourished, with five children dying each minute of the day due to the effects of malnourishment. Women most certainly have and do bear the brunt of this exploitation. Seventy percent of the world's poor are women and women, who make up fifty-two percent of the world's popula-

tion, control only about one percent of its wealth. And, the inequality continues to grow.*

It is realities such as these that would lead many to conclude that they do not want things to continue as they are. These realities make clear that the issue truly is moral leadership. Blinded by their own power and privilege, the champions of globalization have failed to truly see the immorality of a system where the suffering of the crucified peoples is the hidden cost of others affluence.

To change this situation, the voices of those who have been victimized, who have been silenced, must be heard. The privileged elite must hear and understand the deep suffering that is at the core of the globalization process. Only, then, perhaps, can they be persuaded to adopt a different course, to put at the forefront the well being of all peoples and the earth itself rather than corporate profit, national power, and the accumulation of wealth by the few.

But the voices of the marginalized are also critical for it is those on the margins who see most clearly the faults and shortcomings of the system from which they have been excluded. They are the ones who carry the vision of new possibilities, who dream a better, more just, more inclusive human future and who can provide guidance as we attempt to change course. Critical among those voices are the voices of women for, in every culture to varying degrees, they are among the most oppressed. In this lecture series we will hear from persons whose own histories, cultures and identities allow them to speak for those who have been excluded.

Let us make a new covenant with one another and with God. Let us work together so that Moses' vision of a land filled with milk and honey will one day come true for every adult and every child on earth. It is precisely in this commitment to one another that the future of our hope lies. (Kwok Pui Lan, Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World, p. 100)

*These figures are from the 2010 Global Wealth Report.