Updated to reflect class cancellations

AAAS 128: Black Nationalism
Spring 2015

Instructor: Prof. Tommie Shelby (tshelby@fas.harvard.edu)
Class Meetings: Tuesdays 2:00-4:00; Emerson Hall 104
Section Meeting: To be arranged
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:30; Barker Center, Room 242, 496-8546

TF: Ernest Julius Mitchell, ejmitch@fas.harvard.edu

Course Description: This course surveys that diverse yet thematically connected set of social philosophies generally classified under the broad rubric “black nationalism.” We will take an interdisciplinary approach to reading the canonical primary documents in the tradition, focusing primarily on black nationalism as a social theory, a political philosophy, and an intellectual tradition. Though some attention will be given to black nationalist organizations and social movements, the main focus will be on black nationalist ideas. We will critically examine the ideas of a few key theorists and iconic spokespersons and take up the core themes of the tradition. Topics to be explored include the varieties of black nationalism; black self-determination; black capitalism; the ideas of “race” and “nation”; racial solidarity and group self-reliance; self-defense and political resistance; political violence; the construction of gender roles and configurations of class within black nationalist discourses; the relationship between black identity and black liberation goals; the role of black artistic and cultural expression in black freedom struggles; the significance of Africa for black nationalist ideals; and the relevance of black nationalism for contemporary African American politics. In addition to critics of black nationalism such as Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King Jr, we will discuss some contemporary critical assessments of the tradition and its legacy. The figures to be considered include David Walker, Martin Delany, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Frantz Fanon, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Amiri Baraka, and Huey Newton.

Requirements:

• Class participation (15%). This involves making regular and well-informed contributions to class discussion and section meetings, which of course requires doing the reading and regularly attending both class and section.
• 7-8 page essay on ideas articulated during the “classical” period of black nationalism (e.g., those presented by such figures as Martin Delany, W.E.B. Du Bois, or Marcus Garvey), to be uploaded to the course iSite by March 9th at 10am (35%).
• 7-8 page essay on black nationalist ideas articulated during the modern or contemporary period (e.g., those defended by such figures as Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, or Huey Newton), to be uploaded to the course iSite by May 6th at 5pm (50%).

Required Texts (all of which are on reserve at Lamont Library and available at the COOP):

• Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Press, 2005).
• Huey Newton, *To Die for the People* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2009).
• Various readings available on the course website.

**Reading Schedule:**

January 27 (Week 1): Cancelled due to storm

February 3 (Week 2): From Proto-Nationalism to Classical Nationalism

• David Walker, “An Appeal in Four Articles” (excerpts), in *Classical Black Nationalism*. (e-version: [http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/walker/walker.html](http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/walker/walker.html)) If you don't have the anthology, focus on the Preamble and Articles I and II.
• Martin Delany, *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* (excerpts), in *Classical Black Nationalism*. (e-version: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17154/17154-h/17154-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17154/17154-h/17154-h.htm)) If you don't have the anthology, read chapters XVI-XX and the Appendix.
• Wilson J. Moses, “Introduction,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*. (available in the Google books version: [https://books.google.com/books?id=UTvru7OfQHIC&pg=PT38&lpg=PT38&dq=wilson+moses+classical+black+nationalism&source=bl&ots=lehtMjyFrd&sig=nCxDL0mL1nSliBMZOhGFpjoKQ0&ch=en&sa=X&ei=LrrHVKSrGq_nsAT0nIEw&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=UTvru7OfQHIC&pg=PT38&lpg=PT38&dq=wilson+moses+classical+black+nationalism&source=bl&ots=lehtMjyFrd&sig=nCxDL0mL1nSliBMZOhGFpjoKQ0&ch=en&sa=X&ei=LrrHVKSrGq_nsAT0nIEw&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q&f=false))

February 17 (Week 3): Emigration and the Discourse of “Civilization”

• Roger Taney, “Obiter Dictum on the Dred Scott Case,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• Alexander Crummell, “The Progress of Civilization along the West Coast of Africa,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• Edward W. Blyden, “The Call of Providence to the Descendants of Africa,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• Frederick Douglass, “African Civilization Society,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• Henry Highland Garnet, “Address at Cooper’s Institute,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• Abraham Lincoln, “Address on Colonization to a Deputation of Colored Men,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*. 
• Henry McNeal Turner, “The American Negro and His Fatherland,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.

February 24 (Week 4): Du Bois’s Neo-Nationalism and Pan-Africanism

• W.E.B. Du Bois, “A Negro Nation Within the Nation” (course website).

March 3 (Week 5): Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association

• Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Exposition Address” (course website).
• Marcus Garvey, “Address at Newport News,” in *Classical Black Nationalism*.
• “Universal Negro Improvement Association, Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World,” in *Modern Black Nationalism*.
• Amy Jacques Garvey, “I Am a Negro—and Beautiful,” in *Modern Black Nationalism*.
• Carlos Cooks, “Hair Conking; Buy Black,” in *Modern Black Nationalism*.

March 9: First paper due at 10am

March 10 (Week 6): Communism and the Black Nation

• Richard Wright, “Blueprint for Negro Writing” (course website).
• C.L.R. James, “The Right of Self-Determination and the Negro in the United States of North America” (course website).

March 17 (Spring Break)

March 24 (Week 7): Fanon on Political Violence and National Consciousness

• Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Chaps 1, 4, and Conclusion.
March 31 (Week 8): The Nation of Islam and Malcolm X

- View selected speeches of and interviews with Malcolm X (course website).

April 7 (Week 9): Black Power and Its Critics

- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Black Power,” from *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (course website).

April 14 (Week 10): Cultural Nationalism and Black Art

- Jeff Donaldson, “The Role We Want for Black Art,” in *Modern Black Nationalism*.
- Linda Harrison, “On Cultural Nationalism” (course website)
- LeRoi Jones, “The Revolutionary Theatre” (course website)
- Larry Neal, “The Black Arts Movement” (course website)
- View video of Gil Scott Heron performing “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised” (course website).
- View Karenga video where he explains the meaning of Kwanzaa (course website).
April 21 (Week 11): Huey Newton and the Black Panther Party

- Huey Newton, *To Die for the People*, pp. 3-109, 149-156.
- “Panther Sisters on Women’s Liberation,” in *Modern Black Nationalism*.
- View Black Panther Party video (course website).

April 28 (Week 12): Leftist Criticisms of Black Nationalism

- Cornel West, “The Paradox of the African American Rebellion,” in *Is It Nation Time*?
- Adolph L. Reed Jr., “Black Particularity Reconsidered,” in *Is It Nation Time*?

April 30 (Week 13): Feminist Criticisms of Black Nationalism

- E. Frances White, “Africa on My Mind,” in *Is It Nation Time*?
- Wahneema Lubiano, “Standing In for the State: Black Nationalism and ‘Writing’ the Black Subject,” in *Is It Nation Time*?

May 6: Final paper due at 5pm