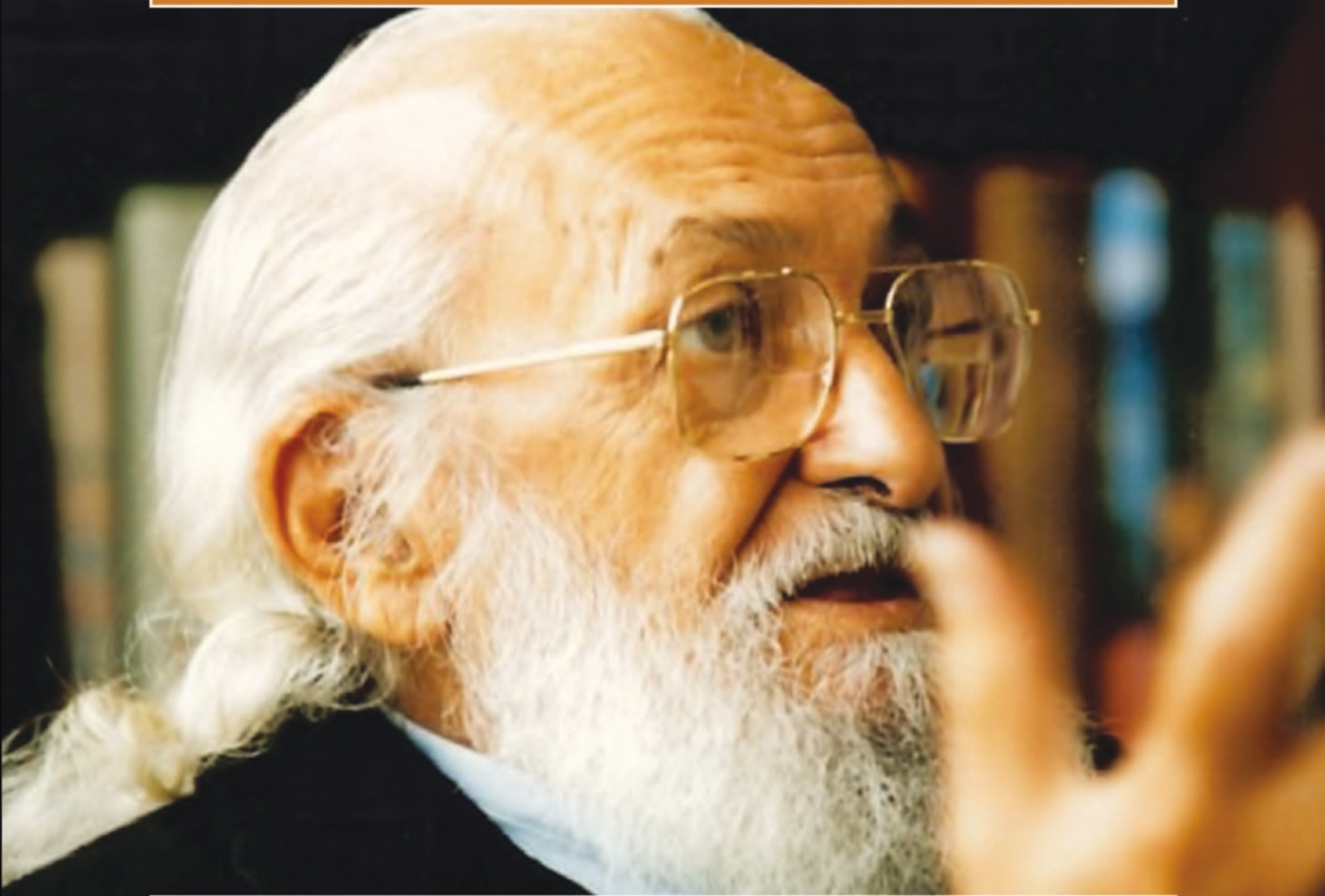


Paulo Freire

His Faith, Spirituality, and Theology

James D. Kirylo and Drick Boyd

Foreword by Ana Maria Araújo Freire



SensePublishers

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**ADVANCE PRAISE FOR
PAULO FREIRE: HIS FAITH, SPIRITUALITY,
AND THEOLOGY**

“James D. Kirylo and Drick Boyd’s powerful essays text on the faith, spirituality, and theology of Paulo Freire provide a unique and much needed contribution to our understanding of one of the most influential educational philosophers of the 20th century. By way of thoughtful engagement with Freire’s lived history, praxis, and political sensibilities, they reintroduce us to the man from Recife, through his radical sense of hope, undaunted faith, and the beauty of his implicit spirituality.”

– **Antonia Darder, Leavey Endowed Chair of Ethics & Moral Leadership at Loyola Marymount University and Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Johannesburg**

“Freirean orthopraxis has a redemptive as well as protagonistic role. To deny spirituality as part of Freire’s pedagogy of liberation is to enable the abscess of reason to pacify what can only be understood as Freire’s fundamental revelation: to take down from the cross all those who suffer from the crimes of the state. Thus, the generative power of Freire’s pedagogy presents us with a formidable weapon for unmasking the structural sins of the state (i.e., economic inequality, racism, patriarchy) and for emboldening our commitment to justice for those whom democracy has disinherited: the poor and the powerless. Kirylo and Boyd have made an important contribution to our understanding of Freire and his work, and in so doing have taken us further down the long road to justice.”

– **Peter McLaren, Distinguished Professor in Critical Studies, Co-Director, The Paulo Freire Democratic Project and International Ambassador for Global Ethics and Social Justice, College of Education, Chapman University**

“This book is indeed an invaluable read for anyone interested in exploring the often-overlooked spiritual dimension in the work of one of the most influential educators of the 20th century. Freire’s pedagogy was deep-rooted and substantiated by his Christian faith, which provided him the inspiration to work relentlessly to denounce all systems of oppression that dehumanize people and steal their agency and to announce the sacredness of life which implies dignity for all. Drawing from a wide range of religious thinkers and leaders, James Kirylo and Drick Boyd skillfully interweave Freire’s life, work, and spirituality offering us new lenses to see Freire’s praxis as a result of his ethical commitment to the world and the people in their material and spiritual aspects.”

– **Débora B. Agra Junker, Founder and Director of the Cátedra Paulo Freire at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary**

*Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed
by the renewing of your mind.*

(Romans 12:2)

*The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined
nonconformists, who are dedicated to justice, peace and
brotherhood. The trailblazers in human, academic, scientific
and religious freedom have always been nonconformists.*

*In any cause that concerns the progress of mankind,
put your faith in the nonconformist!*

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

*In the final analysis, the Word of God is inviting me to
re-create the world, not for my brothers' [and sisters'] domination,
but for their liberation.*

(Paulo Freire)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	xi
<i>Ana Maria Araújo Freire</i>	
Acknowledgements	xv
Introduction	xvii
Chapter 1: Spirituality and Paulo Freire	1
Introduction	1
What Is Spirituality?	1
Paulo Freire's Family and Religious Background	3
Freire's Adult Spiritual Development	4
Popular Education and Exile	5
The Nature of Freire's Spirituality	6
Conclusion	9
Chapter 2: The Easter Experience: Conversion to the People	13
Discovering Powerlessness	13
Conversion to the People	14
Freire's Easter	16
Easter Experience as an Ongoing Process	18
Stages of Conversion to the Poor	19
Liberating the Oppressor	20
Easter Experience Today	21
Paul Farmer	21
New Sanctuary Movement	22
Chapter 3: Personalism, Humanism, and a Freirean Spirituality	
Toward Humanizing Humanity	27
Personalism and Its Explicable Link to Humanism	28
Emmanuel Mounier	29
Informed by Humanist Thought	31
Making Visible in Practice the Spiritual Nature of God in Humanizing Humanity	32
A Visionary of Hope	35

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 4: Hope, History and Utopia	41
Introduction	41
Personalism	42
Utopia	42
Marxism	44
Freire’s Theology of Hope and History	46
The Prophetic Role of the Church	48
Denunciation, Annunciation and Action	48
Hope and Personal Faith	49
Chapter 5: Grounded in the Well of Love	53
An Overview of Virtue	55
The Virtue of Love	57
A Tramp of the Obvious Who Loved	59
Teaching as an Act of Love—Dialogue as Demonstration of Love	61
Conclusion	62
Chapter 6: A Man Who Humbly Lived in Authenticity	69
The Praxis toward Living Authentically	70
With Respect to the Educator	71
Humility	72
An Incredible Presence	73
Chapter 7: Conscientization: Inner and Outer Transformation for Liberation	77
Black Lives Matter	77
The Nature of Conscientization	78
Stages of Conscientization	80
Praxis and Community	81
The Implicit Spirituality of Conscientization	82
Conclusion	85
Chapter 8: A Freirean Imprint on Liberation Theology	87
Contemporary Historical Context	88
Synods of Latin American Bishops	89
Impact of the Protestant Church	90
The Formation of Ecclesial Base Communities	91
Taking a Position of Non-Neutrality	91
Five Concepts Identified with Liberation Theology	93
In Summary	96
Epilogue: A Call to Reinvent	105

ANA MARIA ARAÚJO FREIRE

FOREWORD

There are moments in my life when a longing for the presence of Paulo and the pain of his loss bring forth, in a seemingly contradictory manner, an outpouring of true joy from me.

Such is happening at this moment: the happiness and the immense longing for Paulo take form in a task, which although difficult, is at the same time pleasurable because it brings him back to me.

What awakens this feeling in me was the invitation from James D. Kirylo and Drick Boyd to provide the foreword for the book that four hands, two souls, and two heads, united as if as a single being, wrote about my husband Paulo Freire.

The title, *Paulo Freire: His Faith, Spirituality, and Theology*, invokes our curiosity and encourages us to read about a facet of Paulo, which in recent years has been ignored: his faith and his spirituality.

The search for this metaphysical side of Paulo, which was manifested in his acts, gestures, and practices, in his commiseration for and togetherness with the poor and those who suffered injustices, is, I believe, the life history of the authors. James had Catholic upbringings and almost became a priest. Drick describes his early work, some of the difficult challenges he faced as a youth worker, and his search for what his life would become leading to his becoming a Pastor. Today they have gone different ways. Both are teachers in the area of education concerned with religious development and social justice.

In the book, they narrate, analyze, formulate hypotheses, draw parallels, and contrast ideas of other authors with those of Paulo, and discuss the epistemological theory of the educator from Pernambuco with propriety, seriousness, and competence. And they delight and astonish us by their ability to simultaneously form a critical analysis, a deep search for the virtues of Paulo – demonstrated in his faith and spirituality, which forged a new theology, “wet”, as Paulo himself put it, in the experience of his life and praxis – with the enormous capacity of the educator to observe, learn, verify, think, reflect, and create things: absolutely new practices and ideas, putting them on paper as political and loving acts. Fortunately, James and Drick lovingly understood the cognitive path that is guided by intelligence and the ability to tap into Paulo’s thoughts as they demonstrate in their critical-comparative narrative of this excellent work.

The bibliography set down by the authors includes nearly all of Paulo’s work, surely all published in the English language; the attraction that they sensed through

A. M. ARAÚJO FREIRE

the writings of a man who broke the most hidden, and at times, the most obvious soul and utopian dreams of human beings; the sense of goodness and solidarity of a man who lived for 75 years searching for truth, with tolerance, simplicity, coherence, and generosity, from his love for human beings (of any origin, age, religion, or sexual orientation) that impregnated his theory and his praxis toward the pursuit of this greatest dream: social justice, and as such, authentic democracy. I affirm with no trepidation that this profound work will become a classic in the literature of pedagogy and even in religious literature including the study of the philosophy of religions.

They point to the influences of humanism, personalism, and Marxism in Paulo, but stay true to my husband's originality of thought, to his composition of a theory of knowledge, which is not a junction of different theories, but is, to the contrary, an educational theory: political, ethical, with a philosophical basis, anthropological, and theological.

Paulo worked at the World Council of Churches for 10 years in Geneva at the position created especially for him, as an educator surrounded by the great theologians of Christian churches, not just Catholic, who taught him a great deal. But his faith in God, his "camaraderie" with Christ came from the Catholic upbringings of his mother, who made the choice to raise her four children in this way.

His ethical, scientific, and anthropological development were made possible by my parents, Aluizio and Genove Araújo, who provided him with a scholarship at the school they owned, the *Colégio Oswaldo Cruz*, in Recife in the 1940s where I met him. This school, known for its highest moral, civic, and scientific qualities, has graduated hundreds of young people from the *Nordeste*, the Northeast of Brazil.

Paulo's political development was, in fact, self developed. Born not only from his studies, but also from books of the most varied ideological strains, which, through his own lens, forged a political pedagogy centered on compassion and engagement with the "esfarrapados" or "ragged ones" of the world and within his praxis that included the oppressed classes and with those of different genders, religions, races or ethnicities.

Finally, I want to highlight the incisive perception of the authors about Paulo's dialectical understandings, particularly when they address *conscientização*, which arises from Paulo's political understandings and not, as it might seem to many, arising from his spirituality. I also want to emphasize the authors' understanding of the denunciation-announcement concept as a concomitant act and not, as viewed by positivist thinkers, as one that follows from the other. For Paulo, conscientious and critical denunciation brings at its core the announcement of the new. Denunciation of the ugly and that which is evil is an act that also simultaneously announces the dreamed dream, the hope for a better future.

I conclude my words inviting potential readers and actual readers of this work to establish with James and Drick a loving dialogue comparable to how they established their own dialogue with Paulo seeking out the roots of things and the substantivity of phenomena.