

The history and the role of the Black Church in the Black Liberation movement in the USA 1620-1965

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Abstrak

ABSTRACT

In the classic study of revolution, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, by Crane Brinton, (Vintage Books, New York, 1938/1952), the author identified a number of uniform factors as a cause of all great revolutions. In my study of black liberation and the role of the black church, I have focused on three of those uniform factors associated with liberations in history because they seem to surface repeatedly in the subject of the role of the black church in black liberation. These three uniformities are Leadership, Organization, and Ideology, and to be more specific, my hypothesis is that **BY AND THROUGH THE BLACK CHURCH, ESPECIALLY THROUGH ITS IDEOLOGY, ORGANIZATION, AND LEADERSHIP, BLACKS EVENTUALLY SUCCEEDED IN LIBERATING THEMSELVES IN AMERICA**. This tentative statement will be proved by the data which I obtain from the books I have read in libraries. The hypothesis is in line with the topic of the paper.

The reason I chose this topic is:

1. It is and was a fact that in the black community the church is the only. legitimate institution by and

through which the blacks are and were improved.

2. The church allows opportunities for training in leadership and independence.(McPherson,1972:81).This means that the church provides opportunities for black clergies to preach, and their preachings in.-the church reflect their leadership, and. serve as a training ground to air their independent thought to lead their people to gain independence.

3. The church functions as the "fountainhead" for the improvement of blacks' social life.(Thompson, 1986: 98).

All the great revolutions of history required all three factors in a well-developed stage. In my readings on the Black Church in American history, it too seems to focus on these same three factors.

Definition of terms:

According to the Grolier International Dictionary, the terms "ideology", "organization", and "leadership" are explained as follows:

Ideology is "the body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture" (William Morriss, 1981: 654). Organization is "a number of persons or groups having specific responsibilities and united for some purpose or work" (Morriss, 1981 ; 926). Leadership is "capacity to be a leader; ability to lead; whereas a leader is one in command of others, or The head of political party or organization; or One who has an influential voice in polities" (Morris,

. 1981: 743)

What I would like to show is how the above three concepts were used by Black Leaders over time in order to form a successful black liberation movement in the United States.

Leadership: It was explained that leaders of a revolution are "often of striking respectability and excellent social standing" (Brinton, 1952:1067107). They are not political innocents; instead, "they have experience in leading organizations and even' pressure groups"(. Brintan, 1952: 109-110).

As men in their thirties and forties, "they are not newcomers to the world. They are idealists with a streak of realism. The men who act as political prophets are usually "men of words" who are gifted orators" (Brinton,

1952: 124) and "are skilled in the teaching of propaganda" (Brinton, 1952: 163-164). Despite their idealism, they are also capable of "managing organizations which can get things done" (Brinton:1952:166).They seek "to spread their

liberating gospel" (Brinton, 1952: 202) and are convinced that "they are the elect who are destined to carry out liberating will of God" (Brinton, 1952: 203).

Organization: It is argued that revolutions are "the product of careful organization and propitious circumstances" (Brinton,1952: 90). The key to the success of revolutions "lies in their monopoly of control over liberating organizations" (Brinton, 1952:156), Without organizations capable of "collecting the funds, followers, and attention for their political cause, there can be no revolution" (Brinton, 1952: 164,151).

Ideology: All revolutionary movements need "... an ideology, symbols, or myth" (Brinton, 1952: 49)? Revolutions are about ideals and dreams. Brinton says, "Revolutions contrast the current illegitimate, existing world with the good and inevitable world of the world to come" (Brinton, 1952: 150)?

