

TRUE THEOLOGY, FOR TRUE LIBERATION

"Christianity did not bring a message of social revolution like that of the ill-fated Spartacus, whose struggle led to so much bloodshed. Jesus was not Spartacus, he was not engaged in a fight for political liberation like Barabbas or BarKochba. Jesus, who himself died on the Cross, brought something totally different: an encounter with the Lord of all lords, an encounter with the living God and thus an encounter with a hope (even) stronger than the suffering of slavery, a hope which therefore transformed life and the world from within". (Benedict XVI, "Spe Salvi", 4)

Marx presumed that with the expropriation of the ruling class, with the fall of political power and the socialization of means of production, the "new Jerusalem" would be realized, ...all contradictions would be resolved... he omitted how this "new world" would be organized... After the overthrowing of the existing order, he did not say how matters should proceed thereafter...He forgot man and man's freedom...He also forgot that freedom always remains also "freedom from evil"...His real error is materialism...it is not possible to redeem (man) purely from the outside, not even by creating a favorable economic environment... (See: Benedict XVI, Spes Salvi, 19, 20, 21)

According to Immanuel Kant, the "Kingdom of God on earth" begins with the revolution from Ecclesiastical faith that will be vanquished and superseded by religious faith which is the simple rational faith... (Benedict XVI, Spes Salvi, 18, 19)

In general, Liberation Theology (LT) finds its inspiration in the theme of social "liberation" for the poor and the oppressed, as if from coming from God's Revelation. Biblical passages like Exodus, the Epistles of Saint Paul, etc., are taken from Scripture to justify a social revolution with political aims. It is rather an accommodation. LT does not grasp Salvation as *liberation from sin*.

Liberation theology has its origin, methodology and means from Marxist hermeneutics of historic materialism, rather than from the reflection on the Word of God, the evangelical message. It looks to change the social reality from the concrete fact itself, rather than to make all things new, from the conversion from the heart.

It is a reinterpretation of the Christian faith and life.

The divinity of Christ is reduced to being a man who is a political leader, a subversive man that defends the oppressed. Some LT affirm that Christ is

not a divine person; therefore, a heresy. They consider that He is a mere man of God that loves the poor as the oppressed people of God, and defends them.

Salvation then, comes from the mere horizontal analysis. It does not have the divine dimension.

Some TL, in Latin America, consider that the Church belongs to the poor and oppressed, only; that it is a "Popular Church", a sectarian Church formed by the oppressed class; and all others are excluded. It is also a Church opposed to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

For TL, the Eucharist is not the sacrament that reminds us to the sacrifice of Christ in the Cross and to His Resurrection, but a moment in which the oppressed peoples take conscience of their oppression and liberating struggle; so it is an ideological moment for conscientization. (See "*Libertatis Nuntius*", Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith).

Some theologians of liberation have abandoned priesthood, like Boff. Others, like Gustavo Gutierrez, still preserve it, though they have been alerted to correct their doctrines. Others have been definitely suspended from their priestly license like recently Fr. Gaston Garatea, from Peru.

It is not unusual that theologians of liberation attack the apostolic hierarchy of the Church, or the Magisterium. They consider that the Church has no interest in participating in the political/economic revolution. The "new world" ideology should also be brought into colleges, not only from the pulpit.

The most known theologians of liberation are: "the father of LT", Gustavo Gutierrez (Peru); Leonardo Boff, Juan Bautista Libanio, Pedro Casaldaliga-bishop and Helder Camara-bishop (Brasil); Jon Sobrino S.J. (El Salvador/Spain); Ronaldo Munoz (Chile); Juan Luis Segundo S.J. (Uruguay)...

For Gustavo Gutierrez "the poor" is the oppressed worker, the member of the proletariat class that struggles for liberation from oppression from the social class that causes exploitation and oppression. It is not the humble person, nor the one that trusts in the Lord. (See: "Teologia de la Liberacion. Perspectivas. Gustavo Gutierrez, 1988).

Gutierrez' problem is his Marxist ideological conception of "the poor". These are not the poor as in the Sacred Scriptures. (See: "La fuerza historica de los pobres", Gustavo Gutierrez, p. 79)

Gutierrez was recently in Miami's Barry University in his conference titled: "The Utopia of Vatican II". Many Catholics are still confused with his double discourse.

For its argument, TL uses social sciences with Marxist analysis, and LT theologians introduce some citations from the Magisterium, Encyclicals, etc. that support a part of their argumentation because of the works of Charity of the Church towards the poor and needy, as Christ's own call to love of neighbor, but as a reduction of the integral truth.

Marxists once approached Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, founder of Sisters of Charity, arguing that her work for the poor did not help eradicate poverty in the world.

Liberation theology has an ideological, conflictive, and frequently a violent character.

Some theologians of liberation have died in armed conflict (Fr. Gaspar Garcia, Nicaragua), or became part of terrorist guerrilla groups like Sendero Luminoso (Nelly Evans Risco, a religious woman who abandoned her congregation, in Peru, now in perpetual jail). Camilo Torres, a Colombian priest and friend of Gustavo Gutierrez, abandoned priesthood to bear arms and looked for justice through violence. Gaspar Garcia Gutierrez, a Nicaraguan priest, advocating the Sandinista revolution, died fighting with machine gun in hand.

Very often, theologians of liberation lost their priestly or religious identity, and worst of all, their faith.

But since Marxism has lost protagonism from few decades ago, some of these theologians have reformulated and changed their discourse, to recapture peoples' attention, acquiring new forms without abandoning the

Marxist principles that are in its origin. One example is the "Christology of Liberation".

New forms have traveled through all frontiers. First and Their World countries are affected by it, equally.

The dialectic of the oppressed-oppressor has taken forms like: the Indian theology (Mexico, Brasil), the feminist theologies (Catholics for a Free Choice, abortion movement, etc.), the eco-theology or "green" movement (earth oppressed by the activity of capitalism or neoliberalism).

In the year 2012, on July 11th, Pope Benedict XVI by order of a Decree, forbid the use of the denomination "Catholic" and "Pontifical" to the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, where the teachings of theology of liberation have been openly promoted.

(<http://www.aciprensa.com/noticias/es-oficial-vaticano-retira-titulos-de-pontificia-y-catolica-a-universidad-peruana/>)

The University of Peru also advocates socialistic ideology like gender equality and homosexuality.

(<http://www.aciprensa.com/Docum/decretopucp.pdf>)

Theologies of liberation are diverse and want to attract the attention of the faithful, because these theologians know that the Church highly considers the interest for the poor and disadvantaged. The poor and the needy have always been an important part of the Church's social doctrine and mission, and it has developed especially from Leo XII to Benedict XVI, including John Paul II, who as a polish citizen experienced the oppression of Marxism and Nazism.

Precisely from the Church in Poland, and the syndicated workers, emerged the most peaceful and prayerful *revolution* that *turned over* the communism regime, rather. It was the miracle of a new freely elected government based in principles of truth and justice, and freedom, born of all the polish people. It started the collapse of the eastern Wall, and the failed ideology of Marxism/Leninism revolution.

In order to be true Theology, it must begin in the Gospel; not in political analysis. If not, it is "sociology", not theology.

Nowadays, new forms are also the *dreamed equality* among the people, after a violent and inculturated confrontation, the "clash of the classes". First, as liberation from the economic/political difference from people in power, including unavoidable *natural* diversities that should also be forced "eliminated" according to them.

The struggle of classes as in its various forms: among sexes (woman vs. man, or viceversa); among races (black vs. white); among the different generations (children vs. parents); among people with inequality of health status (healthy vs. the sick; among people of different age (the young vs. the elderly; the born vs. the unborn); among the various religions (into the "one world" religion soup); inequality among species (person & monkey); inequality of "divinity" (man vs. God), and so on.

Now the revolution can use almost *anything* as means: even eliminating religious freedom and moral life itself, if the aim is to bring the dreamed *equality*. The indoctrinating propaganda of "free choice", is a pursue of Media's softer "freedom revolution".

The Catholic Church, through generous lay persons, and religious, is committed to mercy and Christian charity, emerged from Christ Himself in the Gospels, in the Sacraments, from the Magisterium and Tradition, renews herself in helping all the needy, soul and body. Redemption is Christ's own goal.

The Church is the only institution that since two millenniums ago has created and maintained schools, universities, charities, hospitals, missions, diners, orphanages, attention to aids patients, centers of aid to women, leprosariums, hospices, institutions for the elderly, etc, without the help of federal or state funds, and providing special care for the poor and disadvantaged. ie. Mother Teresa and the religious sisters of Charity, St. Vincent De Paul Society, Knights of Columbus, Mother Drexel's schools and universities for immigrants and colored students, Friar Motolinia technical schools, Dorothy Day's catholic workers foundations, Opus Dei works,

respect life ministries; the works of the Catholic Church in Pueblo Joven, in Lima, etc.

Before the birth of many nations in America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and Oceania; Catholic missions, orphanages, schools, center to aid immigrants, etc. have been founded by the Church, in all continents.

(This article has been written by Esther M. Sousa, MTS. Thanks to the contributions of Dr. Gustavo Sanchez Rojas, Theology Professor from the University of Lima. Other thanks to Manuel Ugarte Cornejo from "Fe y Familia"; and ACI Prensa Catholic News).