

Enrique Dussel

## An Ethics of Liberation: fundamental hypotheses

IF IT required an effort on the part of Paul Tillich to explain in the United States the different function of the Church in Europe, how much greater will be the effort required of a theologian from Latin America, from the peripheral world, to explain the critical function of ethics in situations in need of profound social change?<sup>1</sup>

### 1. MORALITIES INSIDE THE SYSTEMS

In the last 50 years there has taken place in the United States and Europe a shift from criticism of the system as a totality to merely reformist criticism of the social order. One significant date is 13th April 1931, when the name of Tillich<sup>2</sup> appeared on the list which Hitler's national-capitalist government had drawn up of intellectuals who were 'critical' of the system.<sup>3</sup> Tillich himself was to write later that 'the fact that National Socialism crushed the religious Socialist movement and drove it underground or into exile, as it did the many creative movements of the twenties, could not prevent the spread of these ideas in churches and cultures beyond the borders of Germany and Europe'.<sup>4</sup>

In 1932 Reinhold Niebuhr published his *Moral Man and Immoral Society*,<sup>5</sup> and Emil Brunner *The Divine Imperative*.<sup>6</sup>

The crisis of 1929—the crisis of capitalism and the growing repression of the working class of the 'centre'—the victory of the Russian revolution and the rise of Stalin produced an upheaval in theology. The 'early' Tillich, the 'early' Niebuhr (and a little earlier the 'early' Barth) talk to us about moving from a critique of the system to a prudent reformist morality, 'Christian realism': 'The illusion is dangerous because it encourages terrible fanaticism,' was the ending of Niebuhr's book,<sup>7</sup> and Tillich, who had written *The Socialist Decision*,<sup>8</sup> was subsequently to move much more towards a theology of culture. Another movement of great importance finally died in these years, the 'social gospel'<sup>9</sup> Richard Ely's *French and German Socialism* (New York 1883) or Washington Gladden's *Tools and the Man. Property and Industry under the Christian Law* remain impressive today, particularly Chapter 10 of Gladden's book, 'Christian Socialism',<sup>10</sup> where he explains, 'In the latest books on socialism we always find a chapter entitled "Christian Socialism". Has this phrase any meaning? Is Christianity in some sense socialist, or perhaps socialism is Christian?'<sup>11</sup> What is important today is not the explanations—nor even Gladden's

criticisms of Marx (which are excellent, because he knew Marx);<sup>12</sup> what is important is the Christian attitude of criticism of the capitalist system as a whole. Walter Rauschenbusch forcefully criticised 'our semi-Christian social order', which he described as 'under the Law of Profit'.<sup>13</sup> These Christians, who were linked with the social struggles of the period from the end of the nineteenth century to 1929, were buried by the violence of European and North American capitalism between the two wars (1914–1945) for the leadership of that capitalism from which the United States emerged victorious (and the Commonwealth, like Germany and Japan, defeated).

The postwar moral theologies could not break out of the reformist mould. They accept the system as it is; they suggest *partial* reforms. This is the inescapable conclusion of an examination of the main moral treatises.<sup>14</sup>

It is interesting to consider Brunner's book of 1932. While it is far superior in its treatment to the Catholic treatises of the period, it manages first to criticise capitalism ('Capitalism is a form of economic anarchy; the Christian is therefore obliged to fight against it and for a true social order'),<sup>15</sup> but subsequently also criticises actual socialism.<sup>16</sup> In the same way Helmut Thielicke, in his *Theologische Ethik*,<sup>17</sup> clearly shows his reformism in the section on 'revolution as a last resort'.<sup>18</sup> As in the works previously mentioned, and in those to be mentioned later, there is of course no reference to the oppression of the peripheral countries, even though it has been clearly posed theologically as long ago as the sixteenth century by Bartolomé de las Casas.

We find a movement from criticism of capitalism to a critical acceptance of it, leading finally, in the present crisis, to a moral justification of it. The whole of the North American neo-conservative movement (and the European conservative movement)<sup>19</sup> could assent to the conclusions of Robert Benne, in his book *The Ethic of Democratic Capitalism. A Moral Reassessment*.<sup>20</sup> In his Chapter 7, 'The Virtues of Democratic Capitalism', he writes, 'Democratic capitalism has been an undervalued social system, especially by the liberal intellectual community, both religious and secular. We have attempted to challenge that underassessment by emphasising the values and achievements that are often overlooked.'<sup>21</sup>

For these moralities which remain within the system, radical criticism of the system is anarchy, fanaticism; it is the irrationality of 'historicism' apparently refuted by Popper, translated into economic terms by Milton Friedman in the neo-capitalism of the 'self-regulating equilibrium of the free market'. Within this framework moral theologies have to consider 'norms' (laws), values, virtues, good and evil, the problem of language, of technology, and even of peace, without ever questioning the 'system' as such. Analytic thought is fundamentally hostile to any dialectical proposition.

## 2. THE ETHICS OF LIBERATION

In contrast, for the Christians of the countries which are peripheral to capitalism and the oppressed classes of those countries, the irreversible crisis came after the second war for the leadership of capitalism. Ten years after the end of the war the expansion of North American capitalism destroyed the endeavours of peripheral national capitalism. (In 1954 Vargas committed suicide in Brazil, in 1955 Perón fell in Argentina, Rojas Pinilla fell in Colombia in 1957. Nasser in Egypt and Sukarno in Indonesia are parallel cases in Africa and Asia. In the countries of the periphery 'populism' was the last effort of a non-dependent, autonomous *national capital*, under the leadership of a national bourgeoisie, such as the Congress Party in India.) The crisis of the model of 'dependent capitalism' in Latin America between 1955 and 1965 (from Kubitschek to Goulard in Brazil or from Frondizi to Illia in Argentina, and eventually to Onganía's coup of 1966) shows the inviability of peripheral capitalism. The pretence of aid in 'capital' and 'technology'

(confronting the 'capital' and 'technology' of poor and backward national capitalism) did not produce 'development', but implanted the 'transnational corporations' which increased the extraction of wealth (in economic terms 'profit', in theological terms the 'life' and 'blood' of the peoples and workers of the periphery).<sup>22</sup>

The *ethics of liberation* originated historically as a theoretical attempt (in theology and philosophy) to clarify a praxis which originated in the failure of 'developmentalism'.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, just as Karl Barth said of theology in general, 'The relation between such a God and such a man, and the relation between such a man and such a God, is for me the theme of the Bible and the essence of philosophy,'<sup>24</sup> to indicate the actual and existential nature of the relationship, for the ethics of liberation (and so for fundamental theology, as we shall see), the premise would be: The relationship of the *living* God with this *poor* person, and of this *poor* person with the *living* God, is what the Bible and theology are about. In this way we connect with, and continue on new foundations (no longer European and North American, but worldwide), the leading ideas of the 'early' Barth, Tillich, Niebuhr and so many others. But the theoretical connection is possible because there is a practical and historical connection. The Christians of the twenties and thirties opposed capitalism in crisis (and were buried by fascist capitalism in Europe and the United States). We too are opposing capitalism, but a capitalism in a crisis which is structural and much deeper, because autonomous national capitalism is now impossible at the periphery. The production of wealth in the underdeveloped countries of the periphery and its distribution to the vast impoverished majorities is impossible for capitalism. The ethics of liberation comes into being as a theory preceded and required by a praxis which opposes the system as a totality. Reformist 'developmentalism' puts forward—without success—alternative models (the varieties of 'developmentalism' represented by the UN Commission for Latin America, 'National Security', 'neo-populism', 'Christian democracy', and so on), but accepts the system as a whole. It is once more a moral system with 'norms', 'virtues' and 'values' as a basis. In contrast, the first task of the ethics of liberation is to de-base (to destroy the basis of) the system in order to arrive at another basis which transcends the present system. Analytic thought gives way to dialectical thought, and negative dialectics to the 'analectic' approach (affirmation as the origin of negation, as we shall see).

### (a) 'Flesh' (totality)

Reformist moral systems ask themselves, 'How is it possible to be good *in* Egypt?' Their answers are in terms of norms, virtues, etc., but they accept Egypt as the system in force. Moses, on the other hand, asked himself, 'How is it possible to *get out of* Egypt?' But in order to get out,<sup>25</sup> I have to be aware that there is a totality within which I am and an 'outside' to which I can move. In other words, the *ethics* of liberation (in contrast to the 'intra-systemic' moral systems)<sup>26</sup> starts by describing the system within which the subject always starts, whether the practical subject (oppressor or oppressed) or the theoretical subject (the theologian himself). In the Bible the system as a totality is 'this world',<sup>27</sup> or the 'flesh' (*basár* in Hebrew and *sarx* in Greek), which is not to be confused with 'body' (*sóma* in Greek), though the two are sometimes confused in the Septuagint and Paul. The 'sin of the flesh' or the 'sin of Adam' is, precisely, idolatry, fetishism; it is treating the 'totality' as the ultimate, absolute totality and by so doing denying the existence of the other (Abel) and so of God (the absolute Other). The absolutisation of the totality is the sin of the flesh because there has *already* been a denial of the other in practice: 'Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him' (Gen. 4:8).

Today in Latin America, without making invalid connections, we can say that 'the system' is Anglo-Saxon capitalism in society, machismo in sexual attitudes, ideological domination in education: idolatry on every level. The idea has the inexhaustible

profundity of reality, and in it is revealed the infinite human capacity to create 'systems' which may set themselves in opposition to God as idols.

### (b) The 'other' (analectical exteriority)

Ethics, before dealing ontically with the range of moral problems, has to clarify the fact and the reality of the continued presence of the other 'beyond' any totality. *Totalité et Infini* has demonstrated this in phenomenological terms,<sup>28</sup> but not in terms of political economy.<sup>29</sup> Contrary to the charges of its critics, the ethics of liberation is not—in the Nietzschean echo—a 'Marxism for the people', but has firm roots in metaphysics (Xavier Zubiri rightly maintains in *Sobre la esencia* that reality transcends being), in an ethics as a first philosophy. This is a favourite remark of Levinas, and, as we shall see, a theological ethics is fundamental theology in its primary essence. 'Beyond' (*jenseits*), transcendental (ontologically transcendental), on the horizon of the system (of the flesh, of totality), 'the other' appears (as an 'epiphany' and not a mere 'phenomenon'), as a person who 'provokes' (calls—*vocare* in Latin—from in front—*pro* in Latin) and demands justice. The 'other' ('the widow, the orphan, the foreigner', in the prophets' formulation, or under the universal name of 'the poor person') confronting the system is the metaphysical *reality* beyond the ontological *being* of the system. As a result he or she is 'exteriority',<sup>30</sup> what is most alien to the system as a totality, 'internal transcendence', in F. Hinkelammert's phrase;<sup>31</sup> he or she is the 'locus' of God's epiphany, the poor person. In the system the only possible *locus* of God's epiphany is those who are non-system, what is other than the system, the poor. Jesus' identification with the poor (Matt. 25) is not a metaphor; *it is a logic*. God, the other absolute, is revealed in the flesh (the system) by what is other than the system, the poor. The metaphysical (and eschatological) exteriority of the poor, which is both theological and economic, in the sense of a 'theological economy',<sup>32</sup> situates them as the key (historical) reality and (epistemological) category of the whole ethics of liberation (or of fundamental theology as such).

### (c) Alienation, sin, oppression

In the system (the first element of the method and the first concept) the other (the second element, but the 'key', more radical than the first) is *alienated* (the third element and category). The 'alienation' of the 'other' (making it 'other' than itself) is, metaphysically making it 'the same', a mere functional part within the system. The human being, the living and free subject of creative labour, sells his labour and *becomes* a 'wage-earner', an intrinsic, ontic element of capitalism, dependent on the *being* of capital. The 'other' (who is free) becomes other than himself or herself, a thing. Just as Christ 'became other than himself and took the form of a servant',<sup>33</sup> so the 'other' becomes oppressed, 'poor' as a complex category (as exteriority and interiority dominated in the *flesh*). The 'poor person', as the one who does not enjoy the fruit of his or her labour, is the manifestation of sin *in the system*. Sin, which is simply domination-of-the other, is revealed when someone is poor. The poor are the others stripped of their exteriority of their dignity, of their rights, of their freedom, and transformed into instruments for the ends of the dominator, the Lord, the Idol, the Fetish.

It is clear that the whole of this description is applicable to the social reality of exploited classes, oppressed countries, the sex which is violated, and so on, but this 'application' destroys the very foundations of the moral theologies current in Europe and North America. It starts by posing problems which cannot be 'conveniently' relegated to an appendix of ethico-social theology. Rather, since what is at issue is the very construction, the very *a priori* of the subjectivity which does theology—as a theory—and of Christian subjectivity in practice, they are the *primary* questions of all theology (as fundamental

theology). The question, 'Is it possible to believe?' is preceded by the question, 'What are the practical and historical conditions of this question itself?' If I ask this question from the point of view of the 'Pharaonic class' in Egypt, it is not the same as if I ask it from the point of view of 'the slaves'. *From what position* am I now asking my first question in fundamental theology? This 'From what position?' in historical and social terms is the first chapter of *all theology*, and not an additional question in the section on 'alms': 'aid to under-developed countries'. We know that our colleagues of the 'centre' do not agree about this. The next few decades will tell us who is right.

#### (d) Liberation, salvation, 'going out'

Only in this 'fourth' (methodological and real) element is it possible to understand the question of redemption (Christology), as salvation (eschatology) and liberation. Each of these concepts says the same thing, but in relation to different terms. 'Liberation' implies a relation with a previous term (*ex quo*), from where? from prison. The 'prison' is at the same time (because *it is the same thing*) the system of oppression and sin. The concept (and the reality) of liberation includes two terms and one actuality (like the concept of movement): departure *from* somewhere, *to* somewhere, and the journey itself. Theologically, metaphorically and historically these terms are: from Egypt, to the promised land and the journey through the desert. The concept of 'freedom'—as in Häring's moral theology—does not have the same dialectical density or the historical complexity or the practical clarity of the category (and praxis) of liberation. The fact that Abraham, Moses and so many others 'depart' from the 'land' of Chaldea or Egypt for another 'land' 'which I shall show you',<sup>34</sup> sets up a dialectic between *two* terms. Because the current moral theologies (those mentioned before) do not radically question the first 'land' (the 'old man'; in Latin America the *present* system of oppression, today, is dependent capitalism), because they do not set up as the *necessary* horizon of *all* their discourse the utopia of the future 'land' (the 'new man'), everything they deal with in their treatises is reformist morality, in the land of the Chaldeans, in Egypt. They will never 'go out' into the desert, nor will they receive, in the desert, the 'new' law (the 'new' norms of morals).

The question of norms, laws, virtues, values and even ends must from the start be placed 'within' the problematic of the *two* lands (totality/exteriority, current system/utopia, dependent capitalism/alternatives, etc.). Consequently the question of an ethics of *liberation* (objective genitive) is that of how to be 'good' (just, saved), not in Egypt or in the monarchy under David, but in the journey of transition from an 'old' order to the 'new' order which is *not-yet* in force. The heroes and the saints do not guide their conduct by the 'current' norms. If they had, Washington would have remained a good subject of the English monarchs, the priest Hidalgo would have obeyed the Laws of the Spanish Indies, the heroes of the 'French resistance' would have submissively carried out Nazi commands in France, or Fidel Castro would have allowed Cuba to continue being a 'weekend' colony of the United States. What is the ethical basis of the praxis of the heroes when they rise against laws, rules, alleged virtues and values, against the ends of an *unjust* system? This question, which for Europeans and North Americans can occupy an appendix in moral theology, is for the Christians of the periphery the first chapter of any fundamental theology, since it answers the question 'What is theology *as a totality* for?' Barth, Tillich, Niebuhr, before the crisis of 1929, glimpsed these questions, but remained a long way from any possibility of dealing with them in a way adequate to the complexity of the world situation.

The ethics of liberation is a rethinking of the totality of moral problems from the point of view and the demands of 'responsibility' for the poor,<sup>35</sup> for a historical alternative which *allows struggle* in Egypt, a journey through the desert in the time of transition, and the building of the promised land. This promised land is the historical promised land

which will always be judged by the eschatological land 'beyond any possibility of historical material production', the kingdom of heaven which will never be built *at all* in history, but which is already being built in the building of the lands which precede it in the same history.

### 3. A WORD ON METHOD

When one imagines (like Popper in *The Open Society and its Enemies*) that one has proved that any alternative social vision is a utopia, and that utopias are the root of all evil, the result in theology is an anti-utopian Christianity. It is then quite logical that the method of moral theology can only be analytic (in the tradition of Ayer, Wittgenstein, etc.),<sup>36</sup> more or less eclectic, taking something from sociology, from medicine, from politics, according to the branch of moral theology in question. These methods are valid, but provided they are treated as elements in a partial account of moral theology. They become ideological methods, methods which obscure reality, when they claim sole validity and when they criticise holistic methods as imprecise and unscientific.

Challenging the system as a whole is the characteristic of the dialectical method, from Plato or Aristotle,<sup>37</sup> via Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Hegel and Sartre. In reality, to use the language of Heidegger, whose concept of 'the world' is strictly dialectical, it is an attempt to situate ontologically every object or thing which appears to me ontically. Being ready to refer the means, the instrument, 'to the hand', the object to its basis (to being) is the characteristic of the dialectical method. In these terms, Marx is simply inquiring into commodities, money, production, etc. in the light of, in relation to the basis of the being of capital (the essence of capitalism). However, the ontological method, in this case an economic ontology,<sup>38</sup> has insisted on 'negation of the negation' or 'negative dialectic' (for example Adorno or the Frankfurt School, and even Ernst Bloch may be included). The revolutionary process, of negation of the totality in force (Lukács), is a praxis which arises out of the negation of the negation: out of the negation of the oppression produced by the system among the oppressed. In a sense, the negation of the negation has the system as its horizon and can only be transcended in terms of a utopia. This may be an artistic fantasy (Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation*) or a future alternative, but in fact it is a possibility in terms of 'the same' system. The origin of the negation is either the same system or an empty horizon (pure possibility or transcendent horizon: the kingdom of freedom as absolute free time).

The ethics of liberation, in contrast, starts from the affirmation of the real, existing, historical other. We have called this trans-ontological (metaphysical) positive element of the impetus, this active starting point of the negation of the negation, *the analectic element*. The Greek prefix *ana-* is meant to indicate a 'going beyond' the ontological horizon (the system, the 'flesh').<sup>39</sup> This *logos* (*ana-logos*), a discourse which has its origin in the transcending of the system, contains the originality of the Hebrew-Christian experience. If 'in the beginning God created' (Gen 1:1), it is because the Other is prior to the very principle of the cosmos, the system, the 'flesh'. The metaphysical priority of the other (who creates, reveals himself or herself) also has historical, political and erotic elements. The poor, the oppressed class, the nation on the periphery, the woman treated as a sexual object, have *reality* 'beyond' the limits of the system which alienates, represses and dehumanises them. The 'reality' which the people of Nicaragua embodied, 'beyond' the limits of the Somoza regime and dependent capitalism, is the basis for a negation of oppression and the motivation for a practice of liberation. The oppressed contain (in the structure of their subjectivity, of their culture, of their underground economy, etc., in their analectic exteriority) the trans-systematic (eschatological) impulse which enables them to discover themselves as oppressed *in the system*. They discover themselves 'as oppressed' if



they make attempts to be (eschatologically) other than the system in their exteriority to it. The analectical affirmation of their dignity and freedom (which is negated in the system), of their culture, of their labour, outside the system is the source of the very mobility of the dialectic. (They affirm what is 'unproductive labour' for capital, but real in its own terms, and affirm it outside the system, not because the poor have conquered the system, but frequently because the system considers them 'nothing', non-being; and it is out of this (real) nothingness that new systems are built.)

The method, and historical reality, does not begin with the negation of oppression, but negation of oppression begins with the analectical affirmation of the (historical and eschatological) exteriority of the other, through whose project of liberation the negation of the negation and the building of new systems is put into effect. These new systems are not simply univocal results of the actualisation of what was present potentially in the old unjust system. The new system is an analogical realisation which includes something of the old system (*similitudo*) and something absolutely new (*distinctio*). The new system was impossible for the old one; there is creation in the bursting in of the analectical otherness of the poor in their own liberation.<sup>40</sup> The method of the ethics of liberation is analectic, because it is an element in the creative action of the unconditioned freedom of God and in the redemptive act of the subsumption in Christ of the flesh (the system) by the analectic irruption of the Word, the negation of sin and the building of the kingdom. There is not merely a negative dialectic, but also a positive dialectic in which the exteriority of the other (the creator, Christ, the poor person) is the positive practical condition of the very movement of the method. Consequently the poor, and their own liberating praxis, are, as an analectical priority, the fundamental and initial element. The ethics comes afterwards, affirming as its first premise the absolute priority of the poor person, this poor person in whom we encounter, as an absolute challenge and responsibility, Christ, a poor person who is God himself.

In Latin America an ethics of liberation must justify the goodness, heroism and holiness of an oppressed people's action for liberation in El Salvador, Guatemala, Argentina or Brazil (in Egypt), of a people already journeying through the desert (as in Nicaragua) where 'Aaron the priest', wanting to return to Egypt, pays homage to the golden calf (the idol), while the prophet (Moses: the ethics of liberation?) has not only to destroy the fetish, but also to offer to the people who are liberating themselves the 'new' law. But the new law is born in dialectical opposition to the law in Egypt. It is not possible to begin by defining—as moral theologies do—the morality of an action by its transcendental relation to a norm or law. On the contrary, the absolute morality of the action indicates its transcendental relation to the building of the kingdom in the historical processes of the liberation of actual material peoples, 'who are hungry'. It is only subsequently, within this framework, that it becomes possible to situate all the problems of abstract moral subjectivity (with which all moral theologies start).

The publication of the encyclical *Laborem exercens* has given us a good foundation on which to build an ethics of liberation in the exploited flesh of poor workers, a eucharistic or economic radicalism which must be developed in the future.<sup>41</sup>

#### Notes

1. See Paul Tillich, 'The Social Function of the Churches in Europe and America' *Social Research* 3, 1 (New York 1936), and (in German) in *Gesammelte Werke* III (Stuttgart 1962) pp. 107ff. Tillich says: 'I know that the social functions of the churches cannot be fully understood without considering their social structure and their economic basis and examining the social order to which they belong' (translated from the German, p. 119).

2. It is impossible for the author not to remember 30th March 1975, when he was included in

similar lists and expelled from the 'National University of Cuyo' for similar reasons, and many other cases in Latin America.

3. Hitler's 'Nazism' was a right-wing government which made German *national* capitalism (Krupp, Thiessen, Siemens, etc.) viable and staked a claim for the world domination of the capitalist market. The military governments of Latin America (since 1964) have been ensuring the viability of a capitalism dependent on the USA, which is much worse.

4. Prologue to vol. II of his *Gesammelte Werke, Christentum und soziale Gestaltung* (1919–33), p. 11.

5. New York 1932.

6. (London 1937). Original: *Das Gebot und die Ordnungen* (Tübingen 1932).

7. See the work cited in note 5, at p. 277. The book is 'a social analysis which is written, at least partially, from the perspective of a disillusioned generation' (p. XXV). 'In Germany E. Bernstein . . . changed the expectations of catastrophe into hope of evolutionary progress towards equal justice' (p. 181).

8. Eng. ed. New York 1977. Original in *Gesammelte Werke* II.

9. See C. Howard Hopkins *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism (1865–1915)* (New Haven 1940); Robert Handy *The Social Gospel in America 1870–1920* (Oxford 1966); Aaron Abell *American Catholicism and Social Action 1865–1950* (Garden City, New York 1960).

10. Boston 1893, pp. 275ff.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

12. At pp. 257ff. there is a discussion on the concept of value in Marx (50 years before the publication of the 1844 manuscripts, which accounts for some naive misrepresentations). At one point he asks, 'We go part way with Marx and Robertus; then we part company with them. How far can we wisely go with them? How many of their projects may we safely adopt?' (p. 280). 'Socialism, as we have seen, is simply a proposition to extend the functions of the State so that it shall include and control nearly all the interests of life (sic). Now, I take it, we are agreed that, as Christians, we have a right to make use of the power of the State, both in protecting life and property, and in promoting, to some extent, the general welfare' (p. 281). This was written in the US in 1893. What happened afterwards? The working-class movement was brutally repressed (see James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America 1912–1925* (Boston 1967).

13. *Christianizing the Social Order* (New York 1919), pp. 222ff.

14. See for example Bernhard Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ. Moral Theology for Priests and Laity*, 3 vols. (Slough 1978–1981). Though much better than other Catholic moral theologians, Häring nevertheless treats as subsidiary questions of economic and political ethics (vol. III, ch. VII, pp. 244–325), and discusses 'life' solely in relation to medical matters and abortion (vol. III, pp. 4–113, not with work or social life (repression of the poor, etc.).

Similarly in the *Handbuch der christlichen Ethik*, ed. A. Hertz, W. Korff, T. Rendtorff and H. Ringeling, 3 vols. (Freiburg 1978–1982), the main problem is 'modernity', and the first moral topic is 'rules' (vol. I, pp. 108ff.). 'Life' has to do only with medicine. Politics is defined in terms of 'the principles of constitutional government' (vol. II, pp. 215ff.). There is a little on economics, but under the title (directed at the peripheral countries) 'Aid' (II, pp. 417ff.). The 'new international order' is given no biblical, ontological or anthropological basis, but defended solely on sociological grounds (III, pp. 337ff.).

15. Chapters 34 ('The Nature and the Task of the Economic Order') and 35 ('The Christian in the Present Economic Order'), pp. 395ff. The quotation is from p. 426 (translated slightly amended).

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 426ff. For the author the Christian position is a sort of social democratic 'third way' (pp. 431ff.).

17. (Tübingen), esp. vol. II/2 (1958). He leaves the problem of property to a separate appendix (vol. III, 1964, pp. 224ff.), showing a sort of 'economic blindness'. His analyses are exclusively in legal or socio-political terms. There is an abridged English edition of vols. I–II, *Theological Ethics*, 2 vols. (London and Philadelphia 1968–1969). Vol. II of the English corresponds to vol. II/2 of the German.

18. English ed., II, pp. 341–343.



19. See Jürgen Habermas 'Die Kulturkritik der Neokonservativen in den USA und in der Bundesrepublik' *Praxis*, II, 4 (1983), pp. 339 ff. See also Habermas's book *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* (Frankfurt 1981), but here he does not deal at all with the question of the peripheral countries—though it is intimately connected with that of 'instrumental reason'.

20. Philadelphia 1981, p. 174. Take the case of Michael Novak, who, after beginning his career as a liberal Catholic theologian with *The Open Church* (1964) and *The Men who make the Council* (1964), went on to write *Toward a Theology of the (transnational) Corporation* (1981), published by the American Enterprise Institute, and *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (1982). These neo-conservative theologies are not 'economically blind': 'The official documents of the popes and the Protestant ecumenical bodies are notably strong on moral vision, much less so in describing economic principles and realities. The coming generation will inherit as a task the need to create and to set forth systematically a theology of economics' (Novak 1981, p. 21).

21. At p. 174.

22. See my article 'The Bread of the Eucharistic Celebration as a Sign of Justice in the Community' *Concilium* 152 (1982) 56, where I demonstrate the relationship between life, blood, labour and production. A 'theology of money' and of the economy must start from these metaphysical and biblical postulates (see *zao*, 'life', 'live', in Kittel, TDNT II, pp. 832–875 (Bultmann and Bertram).

23. The disparaging term 'developmentalism' is meant to indicate the ideological and false character of the European and North American 'doctrine of development' (and of 'development aid') which dominates in Christian (and United Nations) circles. This is an attempt to provide a partial remedy for *effects*, aggravates the problem and does not attack the structural and global *causes* of the 'crisis'.

24. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed. (London, Oxford, New York 1968) p. 10.

25. The concept of 'going out', 'being brought out' (Gen. 21:1; Exod. 13:16, etc.) is a fundamental theological metaphor.

26. On the difference between 'morality' and 'ethics' see the end of this article in *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana*, Siglo XXI (Buenos Aires 1973), II, 20 (2nd ed., Mexico 1977, vol. II, p. 13), and 'One Ethic and Many Moralities' in *Concilium* 150 (1980) 54.

27. See *Para una ética de la liberación (EL)*, II, sect. 21, pp. 22ff. On the category of 'flesh' or 'totality', see *EL*, chs. 1–2 (I, pp. 33ff.); *El humanismo semita* (Buenos Aires 1969); *El dualismo en la antropología de la cristiandad* (Buenos Aires 1974); *History and Theology of Liberation* (New York 1976) ch. 1, etc.

28. The title of a book by Emmanuel Levinas *Totalité et Infini. Essai sur l'extériorité* (The Hague 1961).

29. For my view on Levinas, see *Emmanuel Levinas y la liberación latinoamericana* (Buenos Aires 1975) prologue.

30. In *Filosofia da Libertação*, 2.4 (pp. 45ff.); *EL* I, ch. III, pp. 97ff.; III, ch. VII, sect. 46, pp. 97ff.; *ibid.*, sect. 52, pp. 168ff.; IV, ch. IX, sect. 65, pp. 94ff.; V, ch. X, sect. 72, pp. 76ff.

31. *Las armas ideológicas de la muerte* (San Jose 1977) p. 61: 'Praxis is directed towards a transcendence within real, material life. It is a vision of community full of this real life without its negativity.'

32. See the article cited in note 22 above.

33. It is known that Luther translated the Greek of Phil. 2:7 by *äusserte sich*, 'dispossessed himself', a term characteristic of 'kenotic' theology, from where it came down to Hegel through his professors of Christology at Tübingen. It is a fundamental Christian concept.

34. The category 'land' (*'arets*) has a strict eschatological sense in the Bible. See Kittel TWNT I, 676, art. *ge*, 'earth'. This sense is present in Ps. 37:11; Matt. 5:5 and Heb. 11:9. Here, however I want to show the dialectic between the two lands: '... from the land (*me'aretskha*) ... to the land (*'el-ha'rets*) which I shall show you' (Gen. 12:1); 'out of that land to a good and broad land, flowing with milk and honey' (Exod. 3.8). It is a going 'out of Egypt' (*mi-mitsraim*, Exod. 3.10).

35. 'Responsibility' for the other, for the oppressed, in the *face* of the actual oppressive economic system (Hans Jonas *Das Prinzip Verantwortung*, Frankfurt 1982, does not give the contextual

meaning of 'responsibility', which remains at an abstract level. He considers 'technology', but never as an element 'of capital' (*als Kapital*). He does not understand this 'subsumption').

36. See *Handbuch der christlichen Ethik*, vol. I, pp. 68ff., F. Boeckle's contribution ('Der sprachanalytische Ansatz', etc.).

37. See my *Método para una filosofía de la liberación* (Salamanca 1974).

38. Marx's *Grundrisse* and, more recently, the manuscripts of 1861–1863, authorise us to reinterpret Marx in terms of an ontology in the strict sense: K. Marx *Grundrisse* (London 1973); *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Manuskripte 1861–1863)*, MEGA III/2, vols. I–VI (Berlin 1977–1982: 'Capital thus becomes a very mysterious creature,' p. 2163, line 11).

39. See my recent article on 'analectic', 'Pensée analectique en philosophie de la libération' *Analogie et Dialectique* (Geneva 1982), pp. 93–120.

40. *EL* sect. 25, vol. II, pp. 58ff.; sect. 47, vol. III, pp. 109ff; sect. 66, vol. IV, pp. 109ff; sect. 73, vol. V, pp. 91ff.

41. Polish thinkers have rightly taken 'labour' as the centre of theological reflection (see Josef Tischner *La svolta storica* (Bologna 1982), esp. 'Il lavoro privo di senso', pp. 76ff). For the Poles the problem is control of the product of labour by the producer. For Latin America the problem is the consumption (why there is a hunger as a result of oppression and structural theft) of the product of labour. In Poland the workers (the nation) want to know why they are producing bread, and want control of their production. In Latin America the nation (the people) want to possess the fruits of their work, the eucharistic bread. See John Desrochers *The Social Teaching of the Church* (Bangalore 1982), esp. pp. 637ff. It is clear that *Laborem exercens* allows the ethics of liberation to sharpen its arguments considerably.