

They [the temple authorities of Israel]
began their accusation by saying:
"We found this man Jesus]
inciting our people to revolt. ...

He [Pilate] then said to them:
"You brought this man before me. ...
as a *political agitator.*"

Pilate then gave his verdict:
Their demand was to be granted.

And though Herod [Hebrew puppet ruler]
and Pilate [surrogate of the Roman emperor]
had been enemies before,
they were reconciled that same day.

Luke 23:1, 4, 14, 24, 12-13; emphasis added

Lord, forgive me for getting used to seeing children
who seem to be eight years old
and are really thirteen.
Lord, forgive me for getting used to
sloshing around in the mud.
I can leave, they can't.
Lord, forgive me for learning
to put up with contaminated water.
I can get away from it, they can't.
Lord, forgive me whenever I switch on the light
and forget that they can't.
Lord, I can go on a hunger strike but not they;
how can the hungry go on a hunger strike?
Lord, forgive me for telling them
that "not by bread alone does man live"
and not fighting all out for their bread.
Lord, I want to love them for them,
and not for me. Help me.
Lord, I dream of dying for them:
Help me to live for them.
Lord, I want to be with them when the light comes.
Help me.

Prayer of Carlos Mugica (d. May 11, 1974),
member of the Movement of Priests for the
Third World in Argentina, liberation martyr,
incorruptible prophet of the dispossessed,
murdered by those who fear to face a people free from
oppression

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PREFACE

These chapters, which are a continuation of lectures published under the title *History and the Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1976), were originally delivered orally. They are part of a course I gave in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November 1972. Two lectures that I gave on other occasions have been included in this book. I have developed the theme of this book more in detail in courses given at the Latin American Bishops' Pastoral Institute (Quito, Ecuador), at the Theological Institute of the Catholic University of Valparaiso (Chile), to the theological faculty of Louvain (Belgium), to groups of bishops (fifty-two in Medellín, Colombia, in 1971, twenty-seven in Guatemala in 1972), to provincials of religious orders in Medellín on two occasions, etc. In the manner in which the lectures appear here, they were given in a course entitled "Church and Liberation," organized by the Justice and Peace Study Center (Nazareth House, Buenos Aires). There a group of laypeople and priests met for three days to listen to and discuss the reflections that make up this book. The oral style has not been eliminated, and the occasional imprecise choice of word should be attributed to the spontaneity of the moment.

The two lectures I have added are on women's liberation (chapter 4), given in a course for CIDOC (Cuernavaca, Mexico) in 1973, and on the task of Latin American thinkers (chapter 5), given in San Miguel, Buenos Aires, in 1970. The latter deals with a problem that ante-

dates liberation theology. I include it because it is a pre-
 sage of what was to come within a few months.

In an excellent contribution on the theology of libera-
 tion Hector Borrat spoke of the necessity of a "firm turn
 of the rudder" to get the people of God in exile back on a
 New Testament course (*Vispera*, no.30, 1973). These
 lectures, given months before his remark, already
explicitly had the intention of referring almost exclusively
 to the New Testament and even to the Apostles' Creed
 (quotations from which appear as epigraphs for most of
 the chapters of this book).

Second, Borrat points out that in this theology Christ
 has not come into his own. For my part, I had already
 determined to give a christological view of reality in these
 lectures. I was tempted to entitle one lecture "The Anti-
 christ" or "Demonology," that is, the pre-Christian situa-
 tion of sin under the reign of the "prince of this world."
 The second chapter in this volume is Christology pure
 and simple. The third is an "ecclesiology," as its title
 indicates, but considered from the christological stand-
 point as the theological moment of the Incarnation.
 Third, we are reminded by Borrat of a serious omis-
 sion in liberation theology-Mary. We have included
 consideration of her in the chapter on women's libera-
 tion but only to underscore what we would call "libera-
 tion Mariology," i.e., the Mariology of the Virgin of
 Guadalupe emblazoned on the banners of Hidalgo's ar-
 mies or of the one who subversively proclaimed, "He has
 pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the
 lowly."

The lectures have a certain order. In the first place,
 they deal with a theological anthropology in its negative
 aspect. It was necessary to get down to first things, and
 the first things are ethical options. Ethics-the first kind
 of theology-is a fundamental theology. Whoever hopes

to begin theology with a kind of "theory of theological studies," is simply opting ethically for a certain course; all future thought will be traceable to an initial option that was never questioned or even thought about. What you then have is ideological theology. This is the topic we take up in the first and second lectures. We go from a demonology to a Christology.

Arriving at theological fact and choosing to stay within the boundaries of revelation, we find ourselves from the beginning living in a community of faith, a prophetic institution. We thus go from ethics to theological politics as pedagogical function. For this reason ethics is followed by an ecclesiology, a matter of extreme timeliness and urgency in Latin America.

As noted above, I have added two lectures to the original course—one on women's place in the church, a topic treating the erotic (chapter 4), the other on epistemology (chapter 5), as an introduction to the last lecture.

Finally, in the sixth chapter, I go deeply into the epistemological level of liberation theology, since some people in Europe and Latin America are opposed to this theological manner of thinking. I have wanted to continue the debate and, from certain aspects, even open the debate, so that the theology out of Latin America will grow along with the continent in its agony of liberation. At any rate, as a French thinker and friend said, "Against wind and tide there was born in Latin America a theology that was its own, the first theology not exported from Europe."

History and the Theology of Liberation (1976) was a *historico-theological* interpretation of Latin America. This series of lectures, by contrast, is *anethico-theological* interpretation; I tend to stay on a somewhat more abstract level and I deal with categories that have already been outlined in their anthropological aspects in my

work Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 1973-74). My purpose has not been to attack new problems-even though there are new problems-but rather, to pull together the loose ends of liberation theology from an epistemological point of view. At any rate, we have so far only been stating the questions: We will have to wrestle with them for a long while before we have a well-built, lasting road.