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Explaining the principles and basics of social discourse from the perspective of the rebel church in latin America regarding social functions of religion

Mohammad Amin Naji

PhD in Islamic Philosophy and Theology, Qom University. Qom. Iran

Abstract---A theological movement took place in the Latin American region to fight general oppression in the Latin American society, socioeconomic injustice, exploitation and colonization of nations by international imperialism; however, it could not reach the goals of its movement as establishing social justice and eliminating poverty and oppression in society. The study was intended to explain the principles and basics of social discourse from the perspective of the Rebel Church in Latin America (RCLA) regarding the social functions of religion. It was examined from the first-hand sources of the theologians of the rebel church using the descriptive-analytical method. Despite being in line with the final goals and operational strategies, the movement of the rebel priests of Latin America failed to provide the basics for human awakening in Latin American because of the lack of belief in the development of justice in the context of a monotheistic society and the belief in sharing a school with Marxism and nationalist parties. According to the theology of the rebel church, salvation and liberation are the key principles and basics of the church's movement to eliminate oppression. To them, salvation is a joint action between God and humans throughout history that makes human relationships completely socialized. One of the critical concerns of this common function is that humans become like "brothers and sisters" - eliminating the unjust social system oppressing, exploiting and alienating them from themselves and using all social tools to take steps to eliminate oppression.

Keywords---*Social function of religion, rebel church, Latin America, liberation theology.*

Introduction

The Vatican used all its efforts to prevent the passivity and isolation of Christianity among the followers of this religion in the second half of the 20th century by forming a council known as the Second Vatican Council*. Those who considered the reason for the isolation of the church's teachings among the followers because of the church passive approach towards the social anomalies of human societies, in the final statute of this council, approved a reformation charter that obliged the Catholic Church to fight for the establishment of justice, peace and human rights and take any action required in this regard.† This statute was the first manifesto in which some cardinals of the Latin American Church had a key role in approving and including the view of the social function of religion. The leader of the world, Catholics in that time, took the first step in breaking the barriers of individual faith in the Church and opened the doors of the Catholic Church to the social teachings of religion by approving this manifesto. After the death of John XXIII, the initiator of the reforms of the Catholic Church, Paul VI, his successor, issued an official manifesto and strongly carried on the reforms of the late pope.

This manifesto addressed all the bishops, priests and followers of the religion of Jesus, declaring: “Today, the most important fact that everyone must be aware of is that the social problem has taken on global aspects, the hungry people today are suffering from poverty in front of the capitalists' eyes and the Church is suffering from watching this crisis and anxiety and calls all believers to respond to the call of their brothers.”‡

He allocates his manifesto to everyone's efforts to solve the hurdles and problems of the mass of people in developing countries, criticizes modern colonialism, and declares that it is the capitalist system and Marxist thinking disturbing the balance between rich and developing countries is getting worse every day. In this manifesto, he cites his objective observations of the miserable condition of the people during his trips to Latin America and Africa: “No room is left for individual, local and church activities. The current state of the world calls for a joint action that includes all socioeconomic, cultural and spiritual aspects.”§

This manifesto was a spark to create a revolutionary movement among the young priests of Latin America. However, although the tone of this manifesto did not invite priests to directly confront the domination system in establishing social justice and eliminating poverty conservatively, it was the onset of a new movement in the history of Christian theology in Latin America and the emergence of revolutionary priests' movement in the region.

† Gerardo Ferrari, “Clamor de Justicia Cristianismo y Revolución”, Macmillan Library Reference (1969): p 10-13

‡ Enrique Dussel, "Historia general de la iglesia en América latín", Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en Latinoamérica la Universidad de Michigan, (2009): p. 376.

§ *ibid* p 390.

The leaders of this intellectual movement eliminated the system of struggle against the oppression from their theological teachings and introduced reaching the poor of society as the key theological principle of the movement. By leaving the big cities and being in the villages, the young priests of the movement began their social activities by helping the poor and saving the ecosystem, which continues until now. On the other hand, the other branch of the revolutionary priests, who drew their theological policy with an independentist view to reach social justice outside of the Marxist and communist doctrines, argued that to reach this goal, they should unite with the nationalists and anti-imperialist governments. Hence, this group of revolutionary priests, mostly Argentinian, based their movement on the bed of parties and governments that, apart from the slogan of seeking justice, had no real affiliation with the Eastern and Western blocs.** Given the points stated, the purpose of the study is to explain the principles and basics of social discourse from the RCLA regarding the social functions of religion.

Theoretical basics of the study

1. The formation of rebel thinking in the Latin American church

On April 17, 1492, Christopher Columbus managed to get his plan approved by the Catholic King of Spain. With the subject of new investments in the heart of conquest, the plan was first presented to the king of Spain in 1486, which the king did not accept as a result of the empty treasury due to the war with Muslims. He sent this plan to the king of Spain several times, but it was not accepted. Finally, by the influence of the Catholic priests of the Spanish court, with an essential role in the desire of his plan, he could present his plan in the presence of Queen Isabel in the military camp in Granada, and besides approving it, he was granted the necessary financial resources for the plan.††

The presence of Christian priests alongside the conquering Spanish soldiers in Latin America, besides the spread of Christianity in the conquered lands, was due to strengthening the motivation of the Spanish conquerors to expand the territory of the Spanish kingdom so that they Spanish conquerors considered their conquest of the country as the result of God's will and the fulfillment of the scriptures and believed that the defeat of the American Indians was a divine thing in the expansion and propagation of Christianity.‡‡ However, this was rooted in the belief of the Christian priests of that time in Spain in the role of the unity of the two eras of religion and politics in the governance of the society and providing a model of religion to the people under domination. Thus, Christopher Columbus's conquest of Latin America was the fulfillment of a divine promise, and he introduced himself as "Christos Frenz," the messenger of Christ and the savior for the native Indians.§§

** Horacio Verbitsky, "La mano izquierda de Dios", *Sudamericana*, (2010): p. 67.

†† Henry Harrisse, "The Diplomatic History of America", *Stevens*, (1997): p. 26.

‡‡ Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Hispanoamérica y el comercio de esclavos", *Sevilla*, (1977): p 65

§§ *Ibid* p94.

The Spanish conquerors erected the cross next to the Spanish flag in all the conquered lands and justified all their conquests by expanding the Holy Sovereignty of the Pope. They used to select the best places in the city as Government House and gradually provided the beginnings of the Christianization of the conquered cities. Nonetheless, the Christianization of the conquered areas of Latin America was forced, so the Spanish believed that the wild Indians could only be forced to accept Christianity.***

This behavior of the Spanish conquerors, imposed on the natives with the religious permission of the Church, drew many criticisms among the priests and Christian missionaries present among the conquerors. They considered this violent behavior of Indians that led to their eternal deprivation of salvation against the Church teachings.

The resolution of the Spain King and the religious justifications of some court Christian missionaries failed to silence the protest movement of the priests against the crime against the native Indians, and the protest movement of the priests gradually spread in the rest of the conquered lands. One of these protestors was Dominican monk "Bartolome de las Casas," a Spanish priest (1474-1566 AD); in his famous book "History of the Natives of Latin America,"††† he wrote in protest against the reading of "Recri Minto" (Resolution):

"As it was dangerous to attack the Indians and read the resolution, the Spanish conquerors very quietly and without the Indians noticing in the middle of the night in the forest where no one would notice, read the resolution among themselves among the trees. Then the commander asked the scribe to read the resolution and call for Christianity to be held in a meeting about how he tried to obey the order of his Majesty the King to convert the Indians and their priests to Christianity, and they did not accept obedience to his Majesty and did not become Christians. At this time, the Spanish people attacked the native people at dawn. They burned the houses and killed those who ran away from them, stunned and half-burnt, and then the Spanish extinguished the fire and searched everywhere for gold, which was their all wish and happiness."†††

Las Casas argued to the king of Spain and the local authorities that the natives of the region are humans and were created in the image of God and thus deserve respect and just treatment.

Although with the spread of the protests of the Christian clergy and the news of their protest movement reaching the Pope, the King of Spain was forced to officially cancel the issued resolution in 1542, the thinking caused by the misbehavior of the natives of Latin America, institutionalized in the minds of the Spanish conquerors with the help of the justification of the church, did not

*** Wilcombe Washburn, "Indian Landlord, White Lawman", translation: Hengameh Ghaziani, first edition, Tehran: Thaleth Publications. (1999): 25.

††† Historia de las Indias.

††† Luis André Saint," De las Casas, Bartolomé, Historia de las Indias", Venezuela, Caracas: Fundacion Biblioteca Ayacuch, (1986): pp.243-244.

prevent the massacre and violation of the rights of the natives^{§§§}. The famous Spanish conqueror, “Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo” in his book “General and Natural History of the Indians,”^{****} describes the characteristics of Latin American Indians as: “Indians are inherently worthless, dirty, malicious, cowardly and often liars and..., idolaters, homosexuals. How can we expect such narrow-minded people to become believers - the Spaniards should be careful not to hit on their heads with swords because the swords get stuck in their hard skulls?”^{†††}

On the contrary, the missionaries were Dominican Orders and Jesuits who believed in the equal rights of the Indians and the same conditions for their intellect and wisdom as the white Spanish people. They argued that the only way to Christianize the Indians was to convey the message of Christ to them and propagate Christianity with the correct methods and by presenting Christian moral and spiritual models so that faith permeates the hearts and souls of the Indians. Hence, for preaching, Christian missionaries must get to know the language, culture and customs of the Indians and propagate Christianity among them humanely and morally.^{###}

Fray Tomás de Berlanga, a Spanish Dominican priest who was the special representative of the King of Spain to supervise the affairs of the Indians, wrote a letter to the Spanish court:

“Some Spanish people are as indifferent to killing Indians as if they were killing a dog; some even pay more attention to dogs than Indians. The dog here is more respected than the Indians. Here, killing Indian men and women is considered an honor and the murderers are admired instead of being punished. Did that God (our Jesus) not die (to the cross) for the sake of (saving) these Indians and these Spaniards. these murderers must be tried and punished; those responsible should prevent this process from continuing, and the Indians should not be enslaved.”^{§§§§}

The first council of bishops of Latin America was organized by Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo Robledo, 1538-1606 in 1583. It was formed in Lima, the capital of Peru, with the presence of all the bishops of the Latin American region. Robledo, who had been appointed as a special representative of the Pope in 1579 by Pope “Gregorio VIII”^{*****} and gone to Lima to baptize the natives, saw the moral corruption of the Spanish-speaking soldiers after arriving in Lima and criticized them and defended the oppressed natives. Thus, “Robledo” formed a council of

**** Historia general y natural de las Indias.

††† Gonzalo Fernández, “Historia general y natural de las Indias, Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano”, España, Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, (1995): pp. 513-514.

Antonio González Orozco, “Historia Quinto grado, México” secretaria de Educación publica SEP, (1999): pp. 164-165.

§§§§ Estrella Figueras Vallés, “Las contradicciones de la conquista española en américa el requerimiento y la evangelización en castilla del oro” España, Huelva, La Universidad de Huelva, (2007): p.380.

***** Gregorio XIII from was the pope 1572 to 1585.

bishops with the topic “Method of Christianizing the Indians.”†††† In this council, where most Jesuit priests were present, the methods of propagating Christianity to the Indians were examined, considering human dignity and social justice.

The conflict between the Christian missionaries in Christianizing methods of the natives of Latin America, who were mostly among the Franciscan missionaries of the Jesuits, caused the Jesuit missionaries to promote the teachings of the Catholic religion from the very beginning with a transformational and rebel approach. In other words, they promoted the social approaches of the religion as fighting against oppression, corruption, elimination of poverty and discrimination based on valuing human dignity and set them on their agenda. Although the pressure on the Christianization of the native areas of Latin America continued for several centuries, Latin America witnessed widespread crimes by the missionaries of the King of Spain in the massacre of the natives and the spread of poverty and discrimination until the 19th century. According to the statistics of Catholic sources, the population of 13 million people in the Americas in 1492 had decreased to less than 45% in the 19th century‡‡‡‡; Latin America witnessed the growth of revolutionary thinking in the Catholic Church over the course of several centuries. In the 19th, the first signs of the formation of this theological thought appeared among the Christian missionaries. Jesuit missionaries were among the Spanish missionaries who had a key role in the formation of the rebel theological thought of the Latin American Church.

During several centuries of presence and preaching in Latin America, the Jesuits successfully Christianized the Indians. This was while they were relying on their preaching methods that weakened the goals of the Spanish conquerors of the American continent. Therefore, with the efforts of the court missionaries Kingdom of Spain, the last Episcopal Council of Lima was formed in 1772. by order of “Carlos III,” the King of Spain, to expel the “Jesuits” from the territory of the Spanish Empire.§§§§§

At that time, when the scope of the Jesuits' religious and scientific prestige and position had discredited other Christian missionaries and their supporters in the court of the Kingdom of Spain because of their rebel theological thinking in the fight against systematic court oppression and corruption, the motivation to oppose this sect among the politicians and missionaries of other Christian sects started, and their actions and theological thoughts were severely criticized. This made the destruction of the Jesuit sect the agenda of the Church and the policies of the Kingdom of Spain from the mid-18th century.*****

The expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries from the Spanish colonies in Latin America, who were the only supporters of the native Indians, made the natives

†††† Mohsen Mojtahedzadeh, "Christianity in Latin America", Edian Publishing House, Qom, (2013):188

‡‡‡‡ Pablo Alberto Deiros, “Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina”, Orbis Books, (2003): p.283-285.

§§§§§ Mohsen Mojtahedzadeh, "Christianity in Latin America", Nash Edian, Qom, (2013): 277.

***** Antonio Vallejo Nágera, “Locos egregios”, la Universidad de Virginia, (2009) p:125.

revolt and flee from the Christian cities to disperse in the forests.††††† By placing pressure on the government to remove the Jesuit missionaries from the Latin American region, the missionaries of other denominations, including the Dominicans, had a great role in promoting Christianity in the Latin American region as supporters of the native Indians. Moreover, these missionaries significantly formed a rebel spirit among young priests and native Indians. By legitimizing the Spanish rule in colonial Latin America, besides turning the Kingdom of Spain into the wealth pole of the region, the Catholic Church had become much dependent on the Spanish government, which with the start of the French Revolution led to the isolation of the Catholic throughout Europe at the end of the 18th century.†††††

The natives and taxpayers in Latin America rose against the local Spanish rulers with the weakening of the central government in Spain, which was the first spark of the independence of the Latin American countries. With the help of revolutionary Christian missionaries, the natives of the region set the base of the rebellion against the puppet governments, and the countries of Latin America gradually became independent and separated from Spain until 1855.§§§§§ As the Catholic Church in Latin America - the key ally and supporter of the King of Spain - considered the independence of Latin American countries as the destruction of the economic and political system of the Church in the American region, it started to oppose the independence movements. Thus, the Catholic Church condemned opposition to the governors appointed by the Kingdom of Spain in Latin America and declared war against independence and freedom-seeking movements.***** The church used to issue decrees to avoid participation in the independence wars in the region and was against the oppressive and liberating activities of the Indians and blacks in the region. At this time, many native priests, along with some Spanish priests, started to support the freedom- and independence-seeking movements of Latin America, with some assuming the leadership of these movements.

The Catholic Church in the Latin American region had a different state than in the past, following the independence of some countries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In Central America, after the 1911 revolution in Mexico, people strongly opposed the church and religion, and the clergy took over the government and confiscated the church's property. Until 1935, in 14 of the 29 states of Mexico, priests did not have the right to perform religious ceremonies, but gradually these obstacles were removed; however, church property still belongs to the state and is managed by priests.†††††

††††† ibid

††††† Gustavo Morello, "cristianismo y revolución", Editorial de la Universidad Católica de Córdoba (2003). p 132.

§§§§§ Hans Kung, The History of the Catholic Church, Mohammad Hasan Ghanbari, (Bita): 203-221.

***** José María, Otro, "Guadalupe Rivera and Marin de Iturbe, La propiedad territorial en México1301-1810", First edition, (1986) :p.237.

††††††† Andrew Finley Walls, "Christianity in today's world", translated by Ahmad Reza Moftah, and Hamid Bakhshandeh, first edition, Qom, Center for Studies and Research of Religions and Sects. (2005): 70-71.

Holding the Council of Rio Bishops was the first step of the Christian clergy in the formation of the RCLA on August 15, 1967. Eighteen bishops from Latin America, led by Helder Kamala, Archbishop of Brazil, held the first Latin American Priests' Council in Rio. The purpose of forming this council was to support the manifesto of Pope Paul VI.***** A manifesto was issued in the "Rio" council stating the miserable state of poverty and social injustice of the citizens of third world countries as a result of the performance of global imperialism and the capitalist system ruling the world in colonization and exploitation of nations under the support of ruling governments and the silence of theological systems. In this manifesto, besides stating their firm position against the oppressors of the world, they invite Christians to reject the ruling social systems that are far from morals and biblical teachings.*****

In September 1967, two hundred and seventy Argentinean priests announced in a letter to the Archbishop of Brazil that the Rio Declaration could be a document for the founding of the movement of rebel Latin American priests for the Third World.***** This letter was signed by 400 Argentinian priests and 500 other Latin American priests at the first meeting of the Third World Rebel Priests Movement known as "MSTR" in May 1968 as an additional document to the Rio Declaration. The main points of this document were:

Strong criticism of the violence, social injustice and the miserable economic situation of Latin America, declaration of disgust with the imperialism ruling in Latin America and the capitalist system in the region, and the participation of the Catholic Church of Latin America in the mechanism of fighting against imperialism until the establishment of justice and the elimination of poverty, and inviting all Latin American priests to support changes in favor of justice.***** Accordingly, in September 1968, two meetings of the Council of Rebel Priests of Latin America were held in Medgin, Colombia.

2. Principles and basics of social discourse from the RCLA perspective

Christian teachings in the Bible see humans as a mixture of soul and body,***** yet Christian theology based on Paul's teachings stresses the three-dimensionality of human existence. In these teachings, the body is one of Paul's most important terms on Christian anthropology, which is stated more than 50 times in Paul's writings.

***** Alain Gheerbrant, "The rebel Church in Latin America". Editorial Penguin. España (1974). p 36

***** .Alain Gheerbrant, "The rebel Church in Latin America". Editorial Penguin. España (1974). p 36

***** ibid, pp37-39.

***** Rolando Concatti, "Teología para el Tercer Mundo, los cristianos, la violencia y la revolución", Ediciones Paulinas (1969): p 140

***** José Pablo Martín, "El movimiento de sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo", Rialp, (1992): pp 102-115.

***** Genesis 27

In Pauline's words, the term body in the sense of a material organ is not equivalent to a corpse. The word body is a related concept meaning that in Pauline theology, the body is a means of communication between man and his surroundings^{§§§§§§§§}, and in terms of meaning, it is equivalent to the word personality, which in humans is the ability to interact, balance and cooperate with the fellowmen. ^{*****}

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul considers the body of Christ's followers as the body of Christ in communication with him.^{††††††††} Hence, Paul argues that the body is opposite to the personality of mankind, it is his embodied existence, and it is this body that makes social life possible for him and takes on social and environmental aspects. Accordingly, in Christian theology, the concept of sin, body and Satan are considered connected, and human is always born with the eternal sin of the first Adam until he is cleansed of sin by obeying the second Adam "Christ" and understands the glory of God.^{#####}

Christian theology makes efforts to introduce the concept of liberation in the individual dimension of human life with rituals such as baptism, but achieving true salvation and liberation is only possible through union with Christ, and that will only be possible through interaction, balance, and just coexistence with fellow humans. This is the point of the Christian believers' challenge with the world around them that, on the one hand, the unjust social system ruling the societies has created a serious class gap among humans for centuries. The church retreatment in the face of this unjust social system ruling with individual rituals like baptism has made it gradually lose its credibility among Christian believers because it has not been able to take steps to establish social justice based on its theological teachings on the other. This made the Catholic Church put the review of social structures on the agenda of the Catholic Church by holding its council of bishops and rereading its theological teachings. They concluded that Christianity is only a set of old beliefs limited to individual faith and the religious rituals of the church, implemented by the clergy as the representative of the Pope, who consider themselves to be Christ's successor on earth. However, the extent of Christianity becomes meaningful with an emphasis on the reform of human societies so that the faith and religiosity of Christian believers reach perfection.

It is clearly stated about the principle of monotheism in the teachings of the Catholic Church: I believe in one God. God is unique. There is only one God. Christianity recognizes that God is unique in his nature and essence.^{§§§§§§§§} Regarding the meaning of monotheism, RCLA theologians believe that there is only one God, and he is the only one who has an unlimited and perfect existence. The idea of two unlimited or more existences is against reason and logic. ^{*****} In the

^{§§§§§§§§} Jose Robinson, "A Study in Pauline Theology", SCM, (1977):p 28.

^{*****} Eenst Kasemann, "Perspectives on Paul, London, SCM" Fortress (1971):p21.

^{††††††††} Corinthians 6:13-20

^{††††††††} Romans 5:12-21

^{§§§§§§§§} Teachings of the Catholic Church. Translated by Ahmad Reza Moftah. Hossein Soleimani. Hassan Ghanbari. Qom: Adyan University Publications (2014): 48

^{*****} Henry Theisen, Christian Theology, translated by Mikailian, Tehran: Hayat Abadi Publications, (Bita): 88

theological basics of the RCLA, derived from Christian theology, they explain the principle of monotheism along with a concept called the Trinity and return the concepts of monotheism to it. They argue that monotheism manifests in the three concepts of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - monotheism is gathered in three hypostases and three persons with a divine aspect. Indeed, all three persons or hypostases three have a single manifestation: monotheism.††††††††††

The theologians of the RCLA, like other Christian theologians, consider the divine attributes as proof of negative, natural, communicative, moral, and intrinsic traits.***** They consider proof attributes as attributes that represent the face of divine perfection; they consider attributes that free God from limitations as negative attributes. Christian theologians consider those attributes that express God's relationship with nature as natural attributes and believe that besides this natural attribute, God has an attribute called the attribute of communication, which appears in his relationship with his creatures. They call the attributes of God's actions such as omnipotence, justice, love, and mercy moral attributes and consider God's good actions to be related to them. §§§§§§§§§§

One of the key basics of the theology of RCLA is the existence of contextual theology, a theology that has a deep connection with the social and cultural conditions of a particular region and can adapt to the conditions of time and place, which is an accepted point seen in all works of the theology of the RCLA. The theologians of the rebel church believe that theology should be deeply associated with specific sociocultural conditions. Indeed, they state that this theology discusses the subject based on the concept of "sociology," and all theological components are always associated with the socio-cultural environment of a particular region; thus, the theological components are formed by such knowledge. To the theologians of this theology, it is possible to have a dynamic theology when the components of the knowledge of the social environment are limited. Whether this knowledge is associated with the ruling class or knowledge from the opposite class, which is a critical class against the ruling class, both groups depend on the conditions in which they live and think. Thus, cognition can change relevant theological components.

By adopting a critical approach to the universality of Christian theology and emphasizing the native theology of Latin America, Juan Luis Segundo, the theologians of the RCLA believed that the Bible and church theology should be interpreted and explained in the Latin American region so that they do not just repeat the teachings of the past, but talk about the current social state and change it.***** In all his works, he has a reform approach to Christian theology and considers it necessary to reform the components of Christian theology according to the prevailing social states in his region; and argues that the

†††††††††† Gustavo Morello, "Cristianismo y revolución", Editorial de la Universidad Católica de Córdoba (2003).p84 .

***** Henry Theisen, Christian Theology, translated by Mikailian, Tehran: Hayat Abadi Publications, (Bita): 77

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid: 78

***** Álvaro Mejía, Otro, "Teología y Teología Corregida: Homenaje a Juan Luis Segundo", Ediciones USTA, (2016): p 43.

components of theology in the Latin American region should be appropriate to the condition of artisans, workers, the poor, and the deprived and should be explained according to modern humanity.††††††††††

As another theologian of the RCLA, in his book "Christianity and Marxism, mutual challenges in the revolution" in defense of the principle of the contextualized theology of the rebel church, José Míguez Bonino argues that liberation theologians in Latin America have the right to accept Marxism for their theological systems and make the necessary changes in it to adapt it to their conditions and environment.*****

The principle of liberation and salvation is considered one of the most important theological principles of the RCLA, so the theological basics of this church are known as liberating theology or liberating theology among all Christian theological and social movements. The theological principle of liberation and salvation in the theology of the RCLA is the same as the fundamental principle of original sin and salvation from this sin in Christian theology. However, the theologians of the rebel church have defined and interpreted the concept of liberation and salvation according to the cultural and social needs in the region as they believe in contextual theology in Latin America. To this end, we will first briefly examine the concept of original sin and salvation in Christian theology to express the fundamentals of the rebel church. In the Christian scriptures, God created man at the start of creation in the perfection of truth and righteousness, similar to Himself§§§§§§§§§§. God placed Adam in a garden in the land of Eden and nurtured beautiful trees with tasty fruits in that garden. God placed the (tree of life) and the (tree of knowledge of good and evil) in the middle of the garden*****. According to the Bible, God told Adam (PBUH) to eat from all the fruits of the garden tree, except the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil - because be sure you will die if you eat its fruit.††††††††††

RCLA theologians argue that the concept of salvation and liberation is not an individual concept and the meaning of liberation is not just the inner liberation of humans. However, it also includes the liberation and salvation of humans from the miserable social situation prevailing in their society and inner liberation. The theologians of the Rebel Church have explained their theological basics regarding salvation and liberation based on the following four states. To them, emancipation and freedom are an inseparable part of Christian theology so way that the process of real human freedom and individual salvation depends on social liberation and freedom, and they argue that these principles exist in the foundations of Christian theology and holy texts; however, only the individual aspects of salvation and liberation are considered by the Vatican:

†††††††††† Lili Mostafavi Kashani, "The End of One Hundred Years of Solitude, A Survey of the Religious Beliefs of Latin American People", First Edition, Tehran: Center for International Studies and Research, (1995): 64-65.

†††††††††† José Míguez Bonino, "Christians and Marxists: The mutual challenge for revolution", Eerdmans, (1975): p76.

§§§§§§§§§§ Genesis, 1: 26-27

***** Genesis, 8: 2-10

†††††††††† Genesis, 2: 17-18

1- God is the liberating God, not outside history, unlike Greek philosophy. To them, God's role is not only limited to the stage of "dissolution" and "incarnation," but God gradually enters human history with time and plays his liberating role in the best way possible. God starts human history through creation, and then when he appears to Noah, he saves humanity from the flood and makes Abraham the father of the nation according to his covenant. Through Joseph, He saves the descendants of Abraham from famine, and through Moses frees the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and leads them to the promised land.+++++

Helder Karama says: "Belief in the Holy Bible is the same faith in the Savior God who is present in history."++++

Therefore, the event of "Exodus" is the manifestation of God's perfection in history and the manifestation of God's liberating power from the point of view of this theology, and this "Exodus" represents God's presence in history, which means God has acted for the freedom of the deprived in a completely political way.*****

To the theologians of the Rebel Church, the historical event of "Exodus" is a concrete experience of freedom from oppression. Oppression is man's driving force, and "Exodus" is true "the movement of the masses in the direction of achieving social justice."+++++

2- Based on the messages of the Holy Bible, God is on the side of poverty and united with them: "I tell you every time, what you did to one of the least of my brothers, you did to me,"++++ and God's sympathy does not only mean giving charity but knowing God is possible through the implementation of justice, not through giving charity. "He judged the poor and needy. Then he would be happy; is that not knowing me?"++++ This is the base of Christian theology in salvation and liberation, in being one with Christ. The way of salvation and liberation is faith and good deeds, which is the only way to join Jesus and become one with Christ, which cannot be reached except by sympathy and union with the poor. Examining the works and thoughts of Latin American church theologians shows that the concept of liberation and salvation is not an individualistic and spiritual concept that can be achieved in another world - as is stated in the Vatican theology - but an all-inclusive concept of the individual, spiritual, economic, political and social aspects attainable in this world.

Attention to the poor in the theological principles of the RCLA was a new development in the interpretation of the holy texts, so that the monopoly of the

++++ José Comblin, Otros, "Cambio Social y pensamiento cristiano en América Latina", Trotta, (1993): p173.

++++ Pikaza Xabier, Otros," El Pacto de las Catacumbas. La misión de los pobres en la Iglesia. Estella, Navarra" Editorial Verbo Divino, (2015):P 26.

***** José Comblin, Otros, "Cambio Social y pensamiento cristiano en América Latina", Trotta, (1993):p232.

+++++ ibid p246.

+++++ Matthew 40:25

+++++ Jeremiah the prophet 16:23

interpretation of the holy texts, especially regarding poverty, was taken out of the hands of the elite class. Now the poor class, suffering racial minorities, women and other underprivileged groups could correct the readings that the elite class had created by interpreting and distorting the texts in favor of the ruling systems and against the oppressed. Moreover, they all read the Holy Bible with the assurance that the same God who saved the Israelites from the captivity of Egypt still supports the weak and those who are deprived of their rights today. Thus, the theology of the RCLA considers the principle of paying attention to the poor and the oppressed to be taken from the source of Christian theology in understanding the truth of Christianity and acting on it and obliges the church to support the poor in human society. This is because, without any doubt, God has taken the side of the poor; hence, all Christian principles and missions must start with treating the pains and sufferings of the poor and the deprived.*****

This theology speaks of the God manifested among the underprivileged in history, as it arises from the experience of those who are deprived of God, and as Gustav Gutierrez emphasized, it is an experience dependent on God's choice to reveal Himself among the deprived.††††††††††††

On liberation theology, Bonino states: "Liberation theology has always been connected to poverty - connecting human faith to the condition of the poor, but we cannot only try to appease and fight with the deprived of the poor. Indeed, the poor must become the agents of history. They are the outcasts. There is a strong sense of helplessness among the poor. Yes, liberation theology is currently responsible for fighting this feeling of helplessness.*****"

The RCLA theologians blamed the church and the Christian clergy for the continued poverty and injustice of the people in this region and saw the poverty and injustice in the society as the outcome of the silence and non-protest of the church and the Christian clergy.§§§§§§§§§§§§

Conclusion

With the establishment of the Second Vatican Council in the second half of the 20th century, the Vatican realized the social functions of religion necessary to overcome the isolation of the Catholic Church. The result of the actions of that year was a manifesto that reflected the vision of this center for the future. The manifesto caused sparked the formation of the rebel church in Latin America in 1967 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the scope of this theological trend movement extended to other churches in that region within a year. The turning point of this movement was the Council of Priests of Medellin in 1968 in Colombia, considered the base of liberation theology in the Catholic Church in the Latin American region. The main followers of this theological thinking could be found in the

***** Juan Carlos Núñez Bustillos, "Cinco voces por la renovación de la iglesia", Editorial iteso, (2019): pp 124-137

†††††††††††† Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología desde el reverso de la historia", CEP, (1977): p56-149

***** Stanley Grenz, other, "Christian theology in the 20th century", translation: Robert Assarian, Michel Aghamalian, first edition, Tehran: Kitab Roshan, (2007): 325-326.

§§§§§§§§§§§§ Oriana Fallachi, "Interview with the historians of the world", translation: M.B., Nariman, Second edition, Tehran: Javidan Publications Organization, (1979): 32

Jesuit Church, such as Camilo Torres in Colombia and Pope Francisco (current Pope).

However, it should be stated that the emergence of the rebel church in Latin America is rooted in the historical presence of Christianity and European colonization in that geographic region. Christopher Columbus's journey and action in the new region could get the approval of the Catholic king of Spain with the help of the Franciscan priests and provide the base for the expansion of Christianity in the region.

The significant effect of the Second Vatican Council in the Latin American region was the establishment of the "Latin American Episcopal Conference and Council" and the first step to the formation of the rebel church. The conference stated was the starting point of new movements in this region. If once a part of the elite class of the society fought colonialism to regain the land's independence, now religion is a means for the whole society to get out of social problems, whose executor was the church. Like many social movements in the world, these movements have changed over the years too. One of these cases has been the acceptance of Marxism as a tool for the fight, but how was it realized?

Like other theologians of the Catholic Church, the theologians of the rebel church believe in one God in their principles of monotheism, but they explain and describe monotheism in essence along with a concept called the Trinity. They consider the divine essence manifested in three hypostases and three persons, with the three hypostases having a single manifestation; they introduce this as the truth of monotheism in nature. One of the most important monotheistic topics of the RCLA is that the principles of preference for the poor over the rich and love for the neighbor are stated in the light of this monotheistic topic. In expressing these moral attributes, they put forward the divine will, which they define as absolute sovereignty, considering it a necessary condition for realizing world affairs. By believing in the absolute sovereignty of God in the sense of divine will, RCLA theologians believe that although God's absolute sovereignty exists in the entire world system and he encompasses all the affairs of the world and determines them, he has not set a plan for Christian followers in the system of legislation and government in the world, and according to the words of Jesus (AS) has placed the formation of the government in the kingdom of heavens.

On the other hand, to the theology of the rebel church, salvation and liberation are the key principles and basics of the church's movement to redeem from oppression. To them, salvation is a joint action between God and humans throughout history, which leads human relationships to be completely socialized. One of the basic concerns of this common function is that humans should become like "brothers and sisters" - to eliminate the unjust social system oppressing individuals, making them exploit and alienate from themselves, and use all social tools to take measures to eradicate oppression.

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