

Pittl Sebastian

*Geschichte und Kreuz. Eine systematische Rekonstruktion des
Ortes der Theologie im Denken Ignacio Ellacurías*

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Abstract (English)

The presented thesis aims at a systematic reconstruction of the fundamental theological-historical perspective of the Spanish-Salvadorian philosopher and theologian Ignacio Ellacuría (SJ). It thereby hopes to contribute to the fundamental-theological foundation of liberation theology. The thesis proceeds in two steps: A first part analysis the extensive philosophical oeuvre of Ellacuría to identify the essential dimensions and structural characteristics of Ellacuría's concept of "historical reality", which is the central category of both the ontology and the philosophy of history of Ellacuría. Against the background of this analysis a second part develops Ellacuría's perspectives on the relationship between "historical reality" and "salvation". The main focus of this part lies on articulating adequately the relationship between profane history and history of salvation. The clarification of this relationship is regarded as the fundamental theological question of liberation theology par excellence. Ellacuría develops his concept of "historical reality" based on the philosophy of Xavier Zubiri. Therefore the first chapter starts with an investigation of Zubiri's understanding of "reality". Central aspects of this investigation concern the relationship between "reality" and "truth", the transcendental character of reality and Zubiri's understanding of reality as "structure". The chapter demonstrates how Zubiri's "philosophy of reality", starting from the perspective of philosophical phenomenology in the tradition of Husserl and Heidegger, tries to develop a category able to overcome the characteristic dichotomies of modern occidental philosophy (nature-spirit, sensuality-reason, subject-object, individual-society). A second chapter analyzes how Ellacuría transforms Zubiri's concept of reality to develop the concept of "historical reality". It outlines the essential dimensions and structural characteristics of "historical reality" and shows how Ellacuría understands "historical reality" as the "dynamic totality of reality" which reaches its highest ontological density in human praxis. The chapter analyzes the different definitions of "praxis" given by Ellacuría and demonstrates why for Ellacuría an "open" "liberating" praxis has to be considered the place, in which the "truth" of reality finds its highest expression. In this way it makes clear why "liberating" praxis is for Ellacuría not only of ethical but also of ontological relevance. The second part of the thesis sketches the consequences, which derive from Ellacuría's understanding of "historical reality" for the question of the relationship between profane history and salvation history. In dialogue with two paradigmatic positions of modern European theologies of history (Karl Rahner and Wolfhart Pannenberg) it develops the further characteristics of Ellacuría's theology of history. The first chapter identifies Ellacuría's Christology as the main matrix of his theological-historical perspective and develops it in the following respects: Christological interpretation of nature and history, the specific characteristics of a Christian understanding of transcendence, the relationship between history and eschatology, the "objectification" of sin and salvation in historical structures, the relationship between "theophany" and "theopraxis", the "subject" of salvation history and its relationship to the "subject" of profane history, the relationship between Christendom and (political) power, history understood as "sign". In the context of this encompassing historical-theological perspective the last chapter investigates Ellacuría's famous theologumenon of the "crucified people". It analyzes its essential characteristics and determines its systematic-theological position within Ellacuría's theology of history. The chapter shows how the specific theological pretensions, the legitimation, the meaning and the limits of this theologumenon can not be properly understood without this broader context and how from

the historical-theological perspective of Ellacuría many of the objections which have been made against this theologumenon in the last years can be refuted or at least relativized. At the end of the thesis some reflections about the actual relevance of Ellacuría's theology of history are made.