AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

IDEOLOGIES OF HUMANIST RELIGIOUS
LIBERATIONISTS: ALI SHARIATI AND GUSTAVO
GUTIERREZ

by
ANDREW COLE MURRAY

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## ANDREW COLE MURRAY

Approved by:

_____
Dr. Sari Hanafi, Associate Professor                    Advisor
Social and Behavioral Sciences


_____
Dr. Samer Frangie, Assistant Professor
Political Science and Public Administration       Member of Committee


_____
Dr. Vahid Behmardi, Assistant Professor           Member of Committee
Arabic Language and Literature
Lebanese American University


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# AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Ideologies of Humanist Religious Liberationists: Ali Shariati and Gustavo Gutierrez

The object of this thesis is to profile the work of Ali Shariati and Gustavo Gutierrez regarding their versions of liberation ideology that incorporate both religious and non-religious theory.  This thesis investigates how they rely on similar themes such as self awareness, freedom of choice, responsibility, and rejection of the status quo to address liberation and revolution in both religious and non-religious terms.

This thesis further tests these scholars' influence on the Arab World, particularly Lebanon and Palestine.  The author looks to modern social movements embracing religious identity to understand if they have similar concepts of using both religious and non-religious ideology in a similar manner as Shariati and Gutierrez.  Finding that the influence of Shariati and Gutierrez remains relatively weak in the Arab World, the author suggests an alternative to the liberation social movements existent in sectarian struggle.

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

Liberation is a profound theme in the early historical stories of Shi'a and Christian heroes. This message of liberation reflects most particularly the selfless actions of Imam Hussein and Jesus, who both promoted a morality and an action that stood against oppression in all circumstances. These two individuals pursuing their righteous ambitions as a calling from God went on to face torture, misery, and assassination as a result of their actions; however, they came to be immortalized in the minds of believers as martyrs, submitting to the will of God. Thus, while many religious histories have stories of the righteous confronting oppression, it is in the opinion of this author that Shi'ism and Christianity share similar stories of liberation based on the actions and martyrdom of Imam Hussein and Jesus, which uniquely explain how present day Shi'a and Christian communities continue to worship (in some form) their martyrdom and use it as motivation for liberation movements. While anyone can interpret in their own way what type of revolutionary both Imam Hussein and Jesus were, I use their heroic actions to understand their devotion and obedience to God, while remaining vigilant in their similar cause to free people from dominant, ungodly oppression.

In order for liberation to even be possible, a force must exist to enact a system of oppression, which people wish to be liberated from. Oppression has been prevalent in societies from the beginning of organized communities and is even not absent from religious institutions themselves. This is not to say that all religious institutions are corrupt, however, corruption tends to infiltrate most systems of society. The use of religious power was extremely attractive and compelling in order to legitimate state and/or imperial power. What became of this

relationship was the tying of religious institutions to the actions of the state or empire. Many clergymen asserted themselves to the government and upper class status quo within their respective societies, focusing more on giving their blessing to the state rather than using the liberating message of their religious heroes to liberate the masses toward a brighter future. As some government systems became corrupt and marginalized individuals within their societies, religious institutions affiliated with such policies often did nothing to stop such action. In response, intellectual thinkers and activists eventually emerged, both religious and non-religious attempting to challenge corruption. What they wanted was a sense of morality that treated all people humanely, leading to a better society. For Shi'a and Christian religious thinkers not tied to the status quo, they often relied on the stories of Imam Hussein and Jesus to affirm the concept of liberation and move forward to a new egalitarian life against corruption.

First, in understanding the similarity of heroic Shi'a and Christian histories, depicting men that challenged oppressive domination through constant adherence to their religious and moral code, eventually resulting in their deaths and martyrdom, I began to research current religious thinkers that celebrate such virtues. I knew that basically every religious scholar from Shi'ism and Christianity praised such vigilance and martyrdom of their respective religious protagonists. However, what I was most concerned about for this thesis was finding scholars that relied on heroic religious history, while incorporating modern secular scholars to make sense of justification for liberation movements within contemporary history.

Most modern revolutionary movements have either been categorically generalized as being radically religious or radically socialist atheists. It is the opinion of this author that such a generalization is often too simplistic. I believe that the movements which fit those categories often have both religious and non-religious aims within their thinking; however one of those

aims often gets masked by the other leading to gross generalizations. In this thesis, I follow two religious thinkers that provide theories for liberation and do so by using religious and non-religious ideals to distinctly identify their religious and non-religious goals.

Since living for the last two years in Lebanon, a region burdened with sectarian strife and a history of colonialism, I began to investigate how liberation was thought of in the area. As I found, liberation was and is an important element to this part of the world, especially to the movement of resistance to Israeli colonial practices. However, I also noticed that most liberation movements were referred to as non-religious or religious, with the latter being the majority and recent trend. In noting this, I then researched how the Shi'a scholar, Ali Shariati of Iran and the Christian scholar, Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru with their seemingly unique, yet clear and simple forms of liberation possibly affected Lebanese and Palestinian movements.

These scholars play an important role in understanding how to create an ideology expressing religious and non-religious concerns. While both men are religious and generally categorized as religious liberationists, they also have an affinity for non-religious ideology allowing them to explore the world of liberation and revolution without religion. Given their positions in society and their cultural situations Shariati and Gutierrez use both religious and non-religious ideology (sometimes one more than the other) to appease oppositionists to their cause. The overall all goal of liberation preached by these men is something that must be understood and analyzed today, as social movements in the Middle East associated with liberation often come with a religious identity. For this reason, the liberation theology of Shariati and Gutierrez remains relevant and possibly provides a way of building understanding between religious and secular ideologies.

My research does not intend to argue that one form of liberation is better than the other, but rather that liberation ideologies can be most easily understood and not confused if they clearly state the religious goals and non-religious goals aimed at liberation. This comes from acknowledging the use of religious and non-religious ideals and by whom they were created in order to understand specifically what is a religious goal and what is a non-religious goal of the liberation.  Such clarification helps understand the aims for religious social movements with sociopolitical agendas and furthermore, opens a gate way of cooperation between those religious and secular of building a multifaceted liberation.  I will demonstrate in this thesis that the work of Shariati and Gutierrez take from both non-religious and religious theories and histories in order to reveal their liberation movement's goals explicitly.  They keenly avoid a trap where religious ideology becomes explicit, outweighing and overbearing in its discourse to non-religious ideology that becomes implicit, subtle, and rarely relied upon. By evading this, it achieves two things: first a simple and clear understanding of fundamental religious histories without political agenda, which in this case presents similar ideas of liberation from the Shi'a and Christian perspective.  Second, allowing religious liberation and non-religious liberation to act alongside of each other, but independently attaining religious and sociopolitical goals without confusion.

**A. Ali Shariati**

In 1933 Ali Shariati was born into a religious home in Kahak, Iran, living under the tutelage of his father, Mohammad-Taqi Shariati, who studied theology at the Mashhad Seminary. After a few years of study, Mohammad-Taqi discontinued his religious studies to teach at a

secular secondary school. Yet Shariati's father remained a highly religious man using his understanding of religion and modernity to preach Islam and teach others what Shi'ism was about. His lectures denied many rituals common to religious practitioners in Iran, highlighting them as irrational. He rather focused on the need to understand Shi'ism's core fundamentals and apply them to coexist alongside modern ideologies of the world (Rahnema 1998, p 11-13).

Shariati learned greatly from his Father's influence and vowed to apply his teachings in opposition to the ever present corruption of imperialists and those associated with them, such as Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. Entering university in Mashhad, Shariati was already a well known man based on the fact that he had published intellectual articles on contemporary Islam, he was involved in political activism, and that his father was such a prominent figure. Shariati, ahead of many of his classmates was striving to improve his intellectual knowledge while becoming more and more outright in voicing his political opinion against the Shah's regime, resulting in his brief imprisonment following the protesting of Iran's dependence on the West (Rahnema 1998, p.81).

Subsequent to his release from prison, Shariati went to Paris in 1959 on an academic scholarship funded by the Iranian government to pursue his doctorate. He was forced to study literature by those funding his education. However, he took a sincere interest in studying sociology, philosophy and of course, religious theory, which he learned outside the classroom, from his relationships with others outside the university. It is noted by his biography's author, Ali Rahnema, that Shariati's relationship to France and his academic studies (literature) was "at best ambiguous" (1998, p.88); however, his learning became extremely focused within Third World intellectual circles he interacted with during the late 1950's and early 1960's in Paris. This proved to be Shariati's exposure to not only revolutionary thinking in the theoretical sense,

but also to a large group of secular theorists, such as Frantz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre, which prompted Shariati to avidly participate in political activism in anti-colonial activity from abroad. Taking from his time in Paris - where he challenged the French occupation in Algeria among other things – Shariati returned to Iran where he professed Islam as the ultimate ideology, but meanwhile introduced religion in non-conventional terms, creating a consciousness around politics based on both religious and non-religious ideas.

In his return, Shariati began teaching at Mashhad University where he became dynamic in activism against the Iranian government with loose association to national socialist movements. Different from some activists, however, Shariati was not known as one to directly participate in anti-Shah, militant activity. Rather, he kept a low profile and was discrete in his anti-government exploits. (Rahnema 1998, p. 97) This perhaps is where Shariati's true genius comes into play; Shariati bravely straddled a fine line between overtly offending the government and simply dropping hints to his students in lectures about the present corruption and oppression. By doing this Shariati managed to keep the Shah and his personal police, the SAVAK, unable to directly implicate him on charges against the regime for some time.

Shariati's greatest tool for criticizing the public state of things, including the clergy's lack of action in religious leadership and challenging the Shah's rule, was through his ability to write. For example, his work highlighting the braveness of Imam Hussein at Karbala portrayed in, *Red Shi'ism vs. Black Shi'ism* was a message to his fellow Iranians to stand against corruption and oppression. His work, however, largely remained within only academic circles and for this reason was not spread amongst all Iranians. Amid the intellectual circles his work flourished as he made people aware of the need for God, critical awareness of culture and society, and

religious revolution through analyzing holy and secular texts, while also recognizing the need for national liberation through again analyzing holy and secular texts.

Toward the end of his life, he was sent to prison for a brief period for speaking out against the Shah. At this point, Shariati began to question some of his revolutionary messages delivered in speeches and in his writings (Rahnema 1998, p.357). It should be noted that no matter what he second guessed, Shariati solidified himself as national icon concerned with creating a new life for Iranians based on egalitarianism, the idea of humanity working together in a classless system, and the love for God. He unfortunately died a premature and mysterious death in 1977, which allegations suggest he was murdered by the SAVAK (Rahnema 1998, p.363-368).

**B. Gustavo Gutierrez**

Born to a family of indigenous South American ancestry in 1928, Gustavo Gutierrez began his young life living in the poor barrios of Lima, Peru. For his education Gutierrez initially began studying medicine, but was later drawn into studying theology. He traveled to Europe were he also earned master's degrees in philosophy and psychology before finishing his doctorate and entering the Catholic priesthood (Hieber 2001, p.296).

Upon his return to Latin, Gutierrez began effectively promoting the theological justification for the preferential treatment of the poor. Using philosophical, political, psychological, and religious theory he learned from his European education, he sought the creation of an ideology relevant to those living in Latin America. What he came up with was an

ideology that would allow individuals to actively change their destiny and evade oppression through the process of accepting God and re-thinking how life should be lived.

He came to his conclusions through experience. It was not enough for Gutierrez to simply read theology and apply it to his people. Rather, Gutierrez chose to live the theology he preached by living in communion with the poor in the Rimac barrio of Lima. Experiencing oppression, Gutierrez opposed capitalist investment and development by the United States and other powerful nations, which only benefited a small minority of Latin Americans and more importantly, subjugated many others. This he argued created class division and inequality, which he deemed "structural violence" (Hieber 2001, p. 298). Moreover, his words criticized not only governments, but members of the Catholic clergy, which in many cases failed to actively argue and participate in action toward change on behalf of the poor.

Many of his theories were influenced or derived from previous secular ideologies that he was able to interpret and apply - in his own way - to his peoples' situation of poverty and oppression. Many mistook his theories to be Communist and heretical, while also believing that his work promoted violence. He uniquely interpreted Marxist ideology to fit his context and further argued against its entire structure as being compatible with Christianity. Furthermore, the priest never avidly called for violent action; however, he did understand the uncontrollability of reactionary violence that the oppressed had used as a last resort in many situations across the Third World (Hieber 2001, p.298).

What Gutierrez called for and still calls for is the unified action of all oppressed people to work together in harmony with one another and God to challenge the status Quo and create a society based on love and equality. In doing this, he notes that people should not be confined to

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using one ideology over another.  He argues for the supreme power of God, but acknowledges using non-religious ideologies as beneficial, claiming that such ideologies do not invalidate the importance Christianity.  He believes that both non-religious and religious theories can be used accurately by describing how each applies to social problems and politics; and thus, further exercising their importance to call for change within a society (Hieber 2001, p. 298).

Gutierrez continues to preach his efforts of liberation for the poor.  He currently lectures at Notre Dame University in the United States, inspiring students to promote helping the oppressed.  Throughout his life he has been labeled as a great man championing the cause of the poor by some and held as instigator of violent and radical revolution by others.  I find one description by a fellow priest, Henri Owen, to fit him the best:

> There is a little man in Peru, a man without any power, who lives
> in a barrio with poor people and who wrote a book.  In this book he
> simply reclaimed the basic Christian truth that God became human
> to bring good news to the poor, new light to the blind, and liberty
> to the captives.  Ten years later this book and the movement it
> started are considered dangerous by [the US] the greatest power on
> earth.  When I look at this little man, Gustavo, and think about the
> tall Ronald Reagan, I see David standing before Goliath, again
> with no more weapon than a little stone, a stone called A Theology
> of Liberation (Hieber 2001, p. 300).

**C. Methodology**

**1.** *Literature Review*

There has not been much work done using the liberation theology of different religions and religious sects, such as Christianity and Shi'a Islam.  The lines connecting the two have been drawn, such as in Hamid Dabashi's book, *Islamic Liberation Theology*; however, not many

scholars have bothered to investigate liberation theories relative to the respective authors and the context in which they are being used. Specific use of the similarity between Shariati and Gutierrez is even rarer. To my knowledge, the main existent work reflecting the parallels of both scholars' work is an article by Mohammad Yadegari, entitled, *Liberation Theology and Islamic Revivalism*.

Yadegari profiles the growth of Shariati's Islamic revivalism, black theology by an African American priest, James H. Cone, and Gutierrez's liberation theology. Comparing the scholars amongst each other, Yadegari highlights the return to and use of the foundational themes of religion found in texts to address modern needs. In doing this, he notes that religion serves as a vehicle in mobilizing the common man/woman to address societal and political concerns, meanwhile calling for change through action.

For the sake of this thesis, my research has relied on the works of Shariati and Gutierrez to understand the similarity of Shi'a and Christian religious liberation as well as how they incorporate non-religious texts to fit their own personal forms of liberation. Using articles and books from Shariati translated by his students such as, *Man and Islam*, *Sociology of Islam*, *and Red Shi'ism vs. Black Shi'ism*, a clear understanding for how he viewed liberation has been analyzed. Furthermore, great research was done through a biography by Ali Rahnema, *An Islamic Utopia*, in which the author goes into great detail about his life in Iran and his education there, as well as his life in Paris and exposure to secular revolutionary thinkers. Taking from Gutierrez's work, this thesis primarily relied on his first book which had the greatest impact in the movement for religious liberation in Latin America, entitled, *A Theology of Liberation*. For information regarding Gutierrez's personal life, a series of articles provided help, such as Anne Hieber's, *Peace Profile*. The works of Shariati and Gutierrez accompanied with biographical

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information directed this thesis with its primary information for understanding how and why each scholar views liberation.

Where this thesis primarily separates itself from the existing theories of liberation is how it understands Shariati and Gutierrez to use both religious and secular texts in compiling their thoughts. Many religious scholars and clergymen simply use non-religious ideologies that dismiss God as being anti-religious and incompatible with religious theory or they take secular ideology and disguise it as religious. While this happens at times, Shariati's and Gutierrez's work do not reflect this same fashion. Both scholars critically look into non-religious forms of liberation, at times agreeing and other times disagreeing with it, but nonetheless, acknowledging a theory for what it is (non-religious or religious) and how it relates to their overall method for liberation. For this reason, an investigation of certain secular thinkers who had influence on Shariati and Gutierrez was applied. These thinkers range from Sartre, to Camus, to Gramsci, and others.

## 2. *Interviews*

In understanding the influence of liberation as seen by Shariati and Gutierrez on Arab world, this thesis primarily relied on interviews for such research. I interviewed three people who are either scholars or involved with liberation movements in Lebanon and Palestine. Initially, I interviewed George Sabra, a theologian from the Near East School of Theology to get his perspective on the impact of Christian liberation theology in Lebanon.

Second, I interviewed Nicolas Pouillard, a French researcher of Islamist political movements to gain insight of Shariati's influence in the Arab world. Furthermore, we spoke of

how the concept of Islamic religious liberation takes on a stronger identity within certain groups, such as the late 1970's and early 1980's movement, the Student Brigade (of the Fatah Movement) and its leader, Munir Shafiq. The interview allowed me to ask a series of questions pertaining to the importance of ideology and how it is understood in a context with many levels of sectarian and political divisions.

Lastly, I interviewed Palestinian priest and scholar Naim Ateek. He is responsible for the new and unique method of Christian liberation and resistance to Israeli occupation, which he describes in his book, *Justice and Only Justice*. The interview gave me the opportunity to test Gutierrez's influence on other Christians writing theories of liberation. Furthermore, in gaining insight for how Ateek understands liberation in the Palestinian context, I was exposed to a new form of liberation rarely used in the Arab world. In all, the interviews greatly enhanced the importance of comprehending how Shariati's and Gutierrez's work is viewed and used by certain liberation groups in Lebanon and Palestine.

I was unable to do more interviews due to a language barrier, which prevented me from interviewing many subjects. However, I feel that the interviews conducted were sufficient given the given that the people interviewed were outstanding resources of information regarding the religious political movements analyzed in this thesis. As neither a practicing Muslim nor a Christian, I have done my best to remove myself from any bias of one religious thinker over another and I expect this will be reflected in my writing.

# CHAPTER II

# NON-RELIGIOUS THEORY USED BY SHARIATI AND GUTIERREZ

In using the work of Shariati and Gutierrez one must be familiar with the non-religious theories that came before them, helping to create the foundations of their ideologies. Unlike many religious scholars that focus on solely spiritual texts, Shariati and Gutierrez explore the world of secular ideologies, attracted to their revolutionary spirit and innovativeness. Finding a common ground between their religious theories with those of modern non-religious intellectuals, both scholars interestingly keep a balance between the religious and the non-religious in their work. Since this thesis revolves around the themes of just social and political order, self awareness, and the end of oppressive rule in order to ultimately achieve liberation and a new society, an in depth assessment of similar theoretical themes by other scholars is in order in this chapter. Being the religious men that they are Shariati's and Gutierrez's ideologies commonly cite the histories of prophets, saints, imams, disciples, and noteworthy religious intellectuals; however, they do at times, also cite in great detail, European and Third World thinkers. This chapter will focus on those theoretical concepts of modernist thinkers so heavily relied upon by Shariati and Gutierrez to help formulate their notion of non-religious liberation in conjunction with their religious beliefs. Their use and interpretation of such non-religious ideologies allow liberation to speak of both religious and sociopolitical goals while not confusing the two.

Highly influenced by Marxist paradigms such as class struggle, both Shariati and Gutierrez borrow from Marx and reconcile his theories with their own religious views to create

unique types of socialistic theory. Both have been labeled Marxists - which they reject - at different points in their lives and in order to differentiate themselves from mainstream secular socialists, they have both criticized Marxist thought and shown it as a failed ideology. The largest problem for both Shariati and Gutierrez is that Marxism is a model that neglects the individuality of particular culture, religion, and completely discards idealism. These three concepts rejected by Marx are imperative to Shariati's and Gutierrez's work, which seek to create innovative thought, grassroots social movements, and revolution within one's culture - something especially relevant to the Third World and their religious cultures because without these ideals religion stays stuck in tradition and apathy (Abrahamian 1982, p. 468-469) & (Hieber 2001, p.288-289). Ideologies of the past that originate from or reflect positively on colonialist societies are also unwanted to Shariati and Gutierrez as they represent oppression. For this reason, the theories posited below do derive from some forms of Marxist thought, but they are either from intellectuals of the Third World or European scholars that support the organic construction of liberation movements providing ideologies that both Shariati and Gutierrez can relate to.

## A. Liberation of the Self Under Sartre's Marxist Humanism

An existentialist, Jean Paul Sartre believes in affirming one's consciousness by reflecting upon a culture's social conditions and history in order to understand an individual's place within society. The act of understanding one's social condition and willing to do something to change it is what moves people towards creating just societies and freedom. He comes to this conclusion based on the fact that man has "subjective choice" and it is within one's existential decision that

as Sartre puts it, an individual "chooses for all men" (Sartre 1948, p. 29). Critical self awareness that leads to the act of choice is what Sartre believes comes from common sense and allows one to know the self and to begin making decisions for a better life. In doing so, one takes the first step to becoming a better human and furthermore, develops a greater understanding for humanity. Becoming a better human is achieved through the social work of creating an equal society and thus, by working with others, awareness spreads and more people will be able to participate in the choice to build an ideal society. This idea is expressed by Sartre's words, "the man who discovers himself directly in the *cogito* also discovers all others" (Sartre 1948, p. 45).

Shariati and Gutierrez rely heavily on Sartre's vision of the awareness of self and personal responsibility within his existential and humanist framework; however, they position their arguments to confront the ideas of Marxism and material humanism that Sartre argues for. Regarding Sartre's notion of man discovering himself, Shariati and Gutierrez agree that it is vital for man to know his true self in order to become a striving member in society. They agree with Sartre in that they both believe that the man who discovers his consciousness and contemplates his own being is giving to society as a whole. However, they argue further that critical consciousness also establishes a closer understanding of God. Shariati feels Sartre's method of declaring that man's common sense will lead to the discovery of self falls short in that it does not value God into the equation (Rahnema 2000, p. 127). Thus, the main tension between Sartre's text and that of Shariati's and Gutierrez's is that the former lacks a sense of God's will and believes that through proper education and rejection of the status quo, one will achieve awareness. Shariati and Gutierrez take from Sartre's theory, but only partly, in that individual awareness is necessary to the process of liberation.

To Shariati, Sartre's humanism along with most post-enlightenment philosophy is based on Greek mythology, which puts man in opposition to the Gods seeking to prevent him from achieving man's true potential (Bayat 1990, p. 23). This division between the Gods and humanity motivated post-enlightenment philosophers to establish the God's as "anti human". Thus according to Asaf Bayat who expounds upon the ideas of Shariati, the above post-enlightenment philosophical distinction is a mistake and in response says:

> Since these philosophers have wrongly generalized the Greek contradistinction of human versus God and spirituality, their humanism is earthly, unevenly, and in a word materialistic. No wonder the communist societies are not much different from the bourgeois ones in their conception of man…Western humanism is considered atheist in another sense, for it considers man to possess, as his human nature, a moral consciousness which determines his moral values and which acts as a substitute for God (Bayat 2000, p. 23).

Shariati proposes that it is belief in God that gives man a system of right and wrong and it is only through a conscious relationship with God that true love for humanity can exist, which will further lead to liberation from oppression (Rahnema 2000, p. 127). The result of a society without a system of morality imposed by God would be a world where, as Shariati describes by quoting Dostoevsky, "…every action would be legitimate" (Shariati 1981, p. 13).

Contrary to Shariati's proclamation, Sartre responds to religionists regarding his existentialist perspective by noting that man finding himself secures that "…nothing can save him from himself, not even a valid proof of the existence of God" (Sartre 1948, p. 56). It is therefore man and only man, according to Sartre that can lead to progression, freedom, and overall humanism. Put another way, Sartre continues:

> …we remind man that there is no legislator but himself; that he himself, thus abandoned, must decide for himself; also because we show that it is not by turning back upon himself, but always by seeking, beyond himself, an aim which is one of liberation or of some particular realization, that man can realize himself as truly human (Sartre 1948, p. 56).

For Shariati and Gutierrez the responsibility of the individual to chose is essential to liberation doctrine and toward the process of achieving a relationship with God and for this reason they rely on Sartre's work existential awareness. Liberation begins with man's choice, but what guides one to their choices is very different for Shariati and Gutierrez compared to the atheist vantage point of Sartre. Indeed, Shariati and Gutierrez assert man's freedom of choice; however, man is only free to choose within the systematic world that God created. Shariati's ideas flow from Sartre's to create what he acknowledges as quoted by Ali Rahnema "the intellectual and cultural air in which a Muslim of this century breathed was enclosed within the triangle of socialism, existentialism, and Islam" (Rahnema 2000, p. 127). In addition, Gutierrez, respective to his Christian traditions acknowledges that it is theology's duty to respond to the materialist visions of thinkers, such as Sartre and Marx. Thus, the scholar interprets Sartre and Marx to create his own theory of humanism from a Christian perspective. By openly using aspects of Sartre's work, he paves a new understanding of religious compatibility with existentialism that will - as he hopes - lead to a more just and humane world (Gutierrez 1973, p. 8).

Highly influenced by Marx, Sartre's humanism fails to accurately engage religion denigrating the sacred belief to merely a man made concept. By rejecting religion, humanism neglects one of the main tenants from which Shariati and Gutierrez construct their thoughts. One of those tenants is the aspect of *tawhid* (oneness of God) in Islam and the Trinity (God, Christ, &

the Holy Spirit) in Christianity.  These concepts are critical to man establishing his relationship with God and proving that contrary to the Marxist point of view, man is not helpless beyond his own rational awareness (Bayat 1990, p. 24).  *Tawhid*, according to Shariati, is a way to understand the world and moreover society's development throughout history with God.  God established the free world for people to create, think, and act all toward the progression of a relationship with each other and Him (God) (Moussalli 1999, p. 27) & (Shariati 1979, p. 82).  Thus, opposing elements of Marxist ideology, Shariati argues that within the existence of *tawhid*, man operates with more than just his thoughts and mind alone; man if he so chooses, has the option to live his life in cooperation with God and His values to help bring about a better world.

To agree with the totality of Marxist thought would be a mistake in the eyes of Shariati and Gutierrez because besides denying belief in God, Marxism has also become a flawed system and has proven that it does not help end suffering and oppression.  Though Shariati and Gutierrez disagree with elements of Sartre's existentialism and humanism, they cannot deny that existential thought, inspired by Marxist ideology is part of what leads man to seek change toward humane life and ultimately, create revolution.  Revolution is thus, a process of standing up for those that are oppressed in the face of an opposition that enforces oppression. Therefore, Shariati and Gutierrez find the concept of revolution perfectly reasonable and necessary in light of evil that prevents people from living a full, loving, peaceful life.  The thought of egalitarian life, however, is brought to the surface using a combination of both Sartre's non-religious theories with religious anecdotes of consciously aware heroes such as Imam Hussein and Jesus.  Though some may see a contradiction between the existentialism in the subjective choice with God having a moral guidance in one's life; however, to Shariati and Gutierrez they see no problem with this. Simply, they understand man to be alone in one's mind and position within society, until one

accepts God and therefore, acts within His will of liberating others to a critical consciousness, an understanding of God, and to create a movement to developing a new society.

## B. Theories of Revolution and the Rejection of Imperialism

In addition to the understanding of the human self, Shariati and Gutierrez also support their own interpretation of revolutionary action and ideology. Taking from the works of Third World revolutionary scholars, both men pay tribute to the work of Frantz Fanon and Albert Camus. These revolutionaries claim the necessity for action and exalt the achievement of movements inspired by people's own culture that deny foreign interference. Shariati and Gutierrez applaud these men for their contribution toward the action of rejecting oppression and moving forth toward freedom. Similar to the theory of Sartre, these revolutionary thinkers believe in the awakening of consciousness, which motivates man to strive for human perfection and undoubtedly act. Further, they assert that revolutionary action by the entirety of a critically aware people is ideal for liberation to practically play out. Yet they also note that critical awareness comes to people differently. Self Awareness is certainly an existential and individual act, similar to the process of coming to a relationship with God; however, it is through communal action and education between the aware and unaware strengthen individual's perception of the self and that of their community, thus, qualifying existentialism and revolution as coming together.

An individual's choice to do something is the beginning of the larger and more important total liberation, which comes from coordinated revolution. It is true; however, that many people need to be led to such a revolution, making the case that not everyone will achieve awareness

alone. For Fanon, Shariati, and Gutierrez the proper individual capable of leadership -

championing the call for individuals to reflect upon themselves and their society - is a

charismatic individual capable of inciting action to political change. In making the choice to act

Fanon points out the necessity to abandon the shackles placed on the third world by colonialism.

In other words, he stresses the importance for society not to follow the ways of Europe and the

West. The influence of colonialism has taught man to seek strictly self serving goals that are for

capital advancement (Fanon 1963, p. 121-124). Meanwhile class structure imposed by

colonialism in the third world has created a minority of people attempting to replicate the power

once held by the colonialists.

Replicating such action keeps a majority of the population in desperate under-

development thus, leaving much ambiguity to what distinguishes the colonialists from the new

faction that is in power (Fanon 1963, p. 121-124). The minority now wielding power, known as

the "national middle class" is a product of what Fanon calls "The Pitfalls of National

Consciousness" (Fanon 1962, p. 119). It is within the "pitfalls" that humanity fails to awaken to

the problems imposed by colonialism and consequently, the regimes that now hold power in their

absence. Similar to the thesis of Sartre mentioned above, Fanon notices the need for society to

recognize the problem at hand before any actions can ensue, hence the need for well informed,

intelligent, and mobilizing leadership.

Through recognition of oneself, as well as past and present oppression, society can begin

to reject Europe's impositions and legacy. Otherwise, colonialism creates "racialization of the

master-slave…for whenever the black slave faces the white master, s/he now experiences

disruptive charge of envy and desire as Leela Ghandi interprets about Fanon's work (Ghandi

1998, p. 20). In order to prevent such desire, Fanon prescribes to man:

> Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles
> and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole
> man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to the
> triumphant birth (Fanon 1963, p. 253).

In accordance with Fanon's work, both Shariati and Gutierrez address colonialism and the need for people to understand its historical imposition so the community can reject it in order to initiate action. Furthermore, they draw parallels between Fanon's concept of revolution with that of historical religious revolution in order to develop ideologies inciting mobilization and change.

Similar to Fanon's words, Gutierrez also contends that colonial legacy should be discarded and that the growing realization among third world countries is that powerful capitalist nations are sources of corruption and greed that have rapidly invested and purged developing countries of their freedom (Gutierrez 1973, p. 14). Fanon's and Gutierrez's descriptions portray the frustration of oppression, which had caused further outrage of lingering colonialism. Fanon describes the "national middle class" as part of the reason why many Third World nations have not been efficient in achieving their nationalistic goals on their own terms. He notes the "national middle class" often mirrors the oppressions brought by its predecessors when they come to power, promising what sounds like great improvements, but in reality only repeat the oppression first brought by colonialism. Fanon thus calls for a radical retracing of history back to people's original roots and cultural heritage, a theme prominent in Shariati's and Gutierrez's work. The objective is that in rejecting what is necessarily not part of one's true culture, a society will only be left with what is truly organic. Taking from Fanon and putting his own twist on things, Shariati proposes that while doing-away with the West, Muslims should also look to reinvent what he sees as is truly theirs, a spirit of Islam that embraces revolution. In doing so and leaving behind the stereotype that colonialism imposed on them, he says:

> We have had no choice but to shatter such images of ourselves and inculcate the portrait of reality in the minds of our masses in the East, and extract and refine our cultural resources, not the way the West has done it for us, but with a method of conscious responsibility relative to our people and society (Shariati 1981, p. 44-45).

Beyond rejection of foreign influence and making one's identity their own, Fanon further endorses the collective responsibility of all humanity to participate in what he calls "total liberation" (Fanon 1963, p. 250).  Through proper education of the masses, Fanon believes that the mission of revolution can be understood by all and therefore, an allegiance to the struggle will manifest within itself (Fanon 1963, p. 159).  Put in his own words, Fanon says:

> The collective struggle presupposes collective responsibility at the base and collegiate responsibility at the top.  Yes, everybody will have to be compromised in the fight for the common good…Every onlooker is either a coward or a traitor (Fanon 1963, p. 159).

Using loaded phrases, such as "everybody will be compromised in the fight" portrays to what length Fanon will go for revolution.  While both Shariati and Gutierrez endorse peace, they also understand reactionary violence by the oppressed as a way of challenging the status quo when most other sources are exhausted.[1]  Whether peaceful or armed resistance all of humanity must be prepared collaborate in changing the current state of their situation.  Fanon notes this importance for all to participate in rebellion, especially academics that can resist bourgeoisie temptation and help lead nations to victory (1963, p. 159).  Thus, the socialist revolution Fanon calls for is remarkably used by Gutierrez as he calls people to action within a South American framework,

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[1] It should be noted that Shariati's concept of endorsing violent or peaceful action changed throughout his life.

It is becoming more evident that the Latin American peoples will not emerge from their present status except by means of a profound transformation, a social revolution, which will radically and qualitatively change the conditions in which they now live (Gutierrez 1973, p. 54).

In theory, the implementation of a correctly practiced social revolution as prescribed by Fanon is a movement about building an ideal society based on equality. Thus, the practice of revolution is indeed about change and in the minds of its actors, is about the hope of people working together in a just world; otherwise, social revolution would not make sense. As Gutierrez explains, Camus brings humanism to the forefront with a suggestion to all people, "To decide whether life deserves to be lived or not" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 32). If life is worth living then it is man's duty and obligation to participate in a lifestyle helping to free those living under the constraints of oppression.

In response to the Cartesian question "I think, therefore I am", Camus poses his own theory heavily favored by Shariati, "I revolt, therefore I am" (Shariati 1981, p. 49). From the two above mentioned statements by Camus, the reciprocal relationship between life and revolution is realized. If life is to be lived, it should be lived fully with total participation in rebellion, and if one is to rebel then it is proof of one's existence. Camus words nearly describe the religious heroes Shariati and Gutierrez portray as ideal people and revolutions. Taking from both Fanon and Camus, Shariati and Gutierrez find the similarities between being critically aware and revolutionary in the modern sense and being critically aware and revolutionary in the sense that God commanded, which was acted upon by prophets and righteous religious men/women as they battled evil and oppression. Thus, in coming to their conclusions they

keenly rely on both non-religious and religious theories of revolution in order to establish movements within their own regional context.

The extent to which man takes revolution is not limited by Fanon and Camus. In Fanon's book *Wretched of the Earth*, the introduction written by Sartre explains that revolution by way of violence or destruction is by all means permissible and even symbolic of man "recreating himself" (Fanon 1963, p. 18). Combining the efforts of Fanon and Camus many revolutionaries of the 20th century interpret revolution to be an essential and continuous struggle of man attempting to create a new and egalitarian society. Taken into the realm of Shariati's and Gutierrez's thoughts, the scholars hold similar arguments about the overall aim of revolution while also noting that revolutionary action is something common to both of their respective cultures . In order to understand how modern revolution should unfold, it is not enough to just analyze modern thinkers; one must also look to their religious history, where revolution first took place. Thus, they keep alive the non-religious and religious ideologies of liberation independently, without confusing them.

## C. Duty of the Intellectual/Teacher & Student

Answering the call of Fanon and Camus are scholars that seek to provide a concrete method as to how awareness and revolution can come about. In rejecting foreign domination and colonialism, special attention should be paid to the systematic process of educating the masses, something both Shariati and Gutierrez advocate as essential for liberation.

Antonio Gramsci, an Italian thinker and revolutionary wrote at length about the effect of cultural hegemony dominating the class structure. Similar to Sartre, Fanon, and Camus, Gramsci

understands the need for cultural awakening; a reflection upon one's culture to become aware of who one really is. Having a great deal of faith and hope in man, Gramsci, just as Shariati and Gutierrez, believes that humanity can change and act toward developing its future if the people recognize how their society evolved throughout history (Joll 1977, p. 89). Such a realization has to happen at two key levels for liberation to ensue: at the individual level where people attempt to comprehend their existence relative to their societal history and also, at the group level where a proper leader takes the responsibility in educating the masses how their community can use historical lessons to revolt against their current struggles.

In Gramsci's ideology, the intellectual must have sincere responsibility to awaken the awareness of the masses and to help mobilize their liberation. Likewise, Shariati and Gutierrez build their concept of leadership and responsibility based on characteristics of the intellectual as seen by Gramsci. He holds that in one form or another everyone has some capacity of intellectual knowledge. Thus, by saying this, Gramsci keeps creativeness, organic thought, and self reflection open to all people. He does, however, note that although "all men are intellectuals" yet "not all men have in society the function of intellectuals" (Joll 1977, p 91). Gramsci does not go into detail as to how intellectuals who function as intellectuals should be selected; however, he does note the prime and most important responsibility of the intellectual is to remain closely attached to the masses and to culture. An intellectual cannot help lead toward revolution if he/she makes the mistake of assuming knowledge of a people (Joll 1977, p.93-94, 101). This theory of the intellectual and proper leadership plays a decisive role in the work of Shariati and Gutierrez, especially in the case of the latter who insists on living with the poor in order to produce accurate ideology of liberation. Both contend that leadership steeped in tradition has not benefited their respective societies and generally has participated in oppression.

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Thus, what they believe is needed is new and innovative leadership as expounded upon by Gramsci.

Borrowing from Gramsci's philosophy of the intellectual, Shariati and Gutierrez use his work to construct their own methods, rallying the call of liberation. Shariati, on one hand (consistent with Fanon) believes heavily in the duty of the intellectual to lead man toward freedom, while Gutierrez uses Gramsci's ideology, as well as the education method of Paulo Freire to understand where intellectualism has gone wrong and how it can be appropriately salvaged to participate in the process toward freedom.

Freire examines the educational and social history of Latin America where he notes oppression's existence and its impact on man. He claims that hundreds of years of being dispossessed have caused the poor to sink into a "culture of silence" where people's attitude to their entire social and economic situation is marked by a lack of awareness and lethargy (Freire 1970, p. 10-11). Freire's answer to this problem is a complete revival and revolution of the educational system, which he hopes will lead to a critical consciousness so often referred to in this chapter, which he deems, *conscientização* or conscientization.[2]

*Conscientização* is necessary to evade the "fear of freedom" that allows oppression to endure. Such fear is the beginning of the problem of oppression that for so many years affected and still affects Latin American Society. Similar to Fanon's "Pitfalls of National Consciousness", Freire views fear as a phenomenon in which the oppressed internalize the image and actions of the oppressor to the point where they inherit the consciousness of the oppressor. Actual freedom would entail striving for self-sufficiency and adopting a sense of responsibility

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[2] As defined by Freire, the term refers to "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take actions against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire 1970, p. 19).

to reject fear, yet it is unattainable with the conscious of an oppressor (Freire 1970, p. 31).

Gutierrez also notes the problematic characteristic of fear that permeates the poor of the Third

World. In accordance with his theory, liberation comes from the equality of man found in

establishing a legitimate bond with God and humanity resulting in a conscious that strives for

change. Yet, such freedom cannot be produced under the destructiveness of fear. Fear is an

affliction that prevents relations and negates the call to faith (Nickoloff 1993, p. 535).

Much like the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor, the educational

system Freire investigates, suffers from a situation where the oppressed is replaced by the

student and the oppressor is replaced by the teacher. Using his "banking concept" Freire

examines problematic education through metaphorically referring to teachers at narrators that

mechanically and superiorly deposit information into the subordinate receptacles, the students

(Freire 1970, p.57-59). If such an assertion does in fact exist, then one can presuppose that

students and teachers enter into a working relationship with one another believing that standard

roles exist where the all knowing teacher provides information and the ignorant student knows

nothing.

Freire urges that standardizing education by way of the "banking concept" is absurd and

prevents the very process of reflection upon humanity and the self. By assuming the student is a

void that must be filled with knowledge, Freire notes that "projecting an absolute ignorance onto

others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as a

process of inquiry" (Freire 1970, p. 58). Furthermore, the "banking concept" kills the creative

spirit and imagines the knowledge of the teacher as definitive, a notion that is arguably exploited

in many Third World countries. In line with Shariati's and Gutierrez's work, Freire's theories of

educational oppression can easily be applied to the clerical institutions of Iran and the priesthood of Latin America, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

In response to the crisis of the education system, Freire moves to find solutions to the lack of *Conscientização* among the oppressed.  He posits that an educator must not wait for *Conscientização* to materialize.  From the beginning, an educator should act as a revolutionary and therefore become critical of him/herself and society.  Such critical thinking should be shared with students as not an act of teaching, but as an act of communicating.  Every person has the capability to achieve critical awareness; however, this comes through the basic act of a humanitarian relationship, in which everyone learns from each other.  Thus, in the egalitarian education that Freire advises, the teacher not only teaches, but also learns and the student not only learns, but also teaches (Freire 1970, p. 63-64).

Taking from this unique theory, Shariati and Gutierrez view the educator as a prospective leader who should be well informed about history, current society, politics, religion, and him/herself.  In addition, such a leader must be open to learn from everyone involved in the struggle for liberation and most importantly, preach what he learns in the process of achieving liberation.  This idealism allows Shariati and Gutierrez to reject current oppressive leadership on religious and non-religious grounds by attributing the young innovative spirit of a true leader to that of their famous religious disciples, who led with the spirit of God on one hand and the clairvoyance of a polymath intellectual on the other.

The influence of secular thinkers such as Sartre, Fanon, Camus, Gramsci, and Freire contribute heavily to Shariati and Gutierrez constructing their own thought of liberation. Through analyzing these non-religious theories, one can deduce a similar thematic structure

toward revolution and liberation with that of religious liberation ideology, which will be discussed at length in the next chapter. Overall, each scholar accepts the need for a unique awareness and reflection upon one's history, culture, and self; the necessity to reject all foreign and imperialist oppressive factors that leak into society; and finally the requirement and emphasis of the intellectual to act in liberation. These non-religious thoughts combined with a revolutionary religious interpretation of their respective texts and histories, gives Shariati and Gutierrez a unique opportunity to present two ideologies at once. Liberation is made applicable and particular in two respects: first in the religious sense relating one to their cultural and religious heritage following the footsteps of those religiously minded before them and second, in the modern sense, using contemporary forms of thought to bring awareness to and ultimately battle oppression existent in one's society. Perhaps most interesting is their ability to compare their religious thoughts with thoughts originating from a non-religious perspective, thus implying that there is more than one way to liberation.

# CHAPTER III

# RELIGIOUS THEORY USED BY SHARIATI AND GUTIERREZ

The history of Islam and Christianity have witnessed the exploitation and oppression of people through the forming of partnerships between religious institutions and political dominance that have failed in helping to create egalitarian societies and just systems of governance. When holy organizations were initially created, they were to serve the purpose of comprehending the theology of their religion, transferring the teachings and laws of their religion to the masses, and guiding humanity to a divinely inspired afterlife.  This task, however, has become complicated with the rise of modern politics, adding to the struggle of interpreting religious doctrine to contemporary issues.  Thus, clerics and priests, known as the clergy, preach the word of God as they interpret it, which in many respects has great influence over the way people live their lives.  This becomes problematic, however, when clergy members interpret religion to meet the needs of the political upper and middle class, forgetting the needs of the rest of society.

Over the course of history, the religious clergy has always been connected with dominant political power, legitimizing governance from a religious perspective.  In many societies, the state needed such validation and in return, the clergymen were rewarded handsomely.  As most political leaders and leading clergymen began to attain wealth and power as a result of political dominance, many lost sight and presently, continue to lose sight of religious humility and religion's natural affinity for the dispossessed and those in need – something that both Shariati

and Gutierrez detest as an act of supporting oppression and not upholding Islamic and Christian principles.

As Shariati and Gutierrez cringe at their respective histories that strayed from God's true message, both men use history to better understand how the present and future lives of humanity can accurately live in communion with God, creating a fair and just society where all people can achieve liberation. More specifically, each scholar indentifies religious themes of liberation throughout history while calling for more contemporary movements to embrace such ideologies with contemporary thought.

Reviewing their particular faiths, Shariati and Gutierrez identify the mistakes made by religious hierarchies and format a plan by which the clergy or the best form of leadership can recover and guide their communities' toward a just life and ultimately, salvation. As will be examined in this chapter, Shariati and Gutierrez construct similar styles of religious and political liberation with sometimes radical leadership influenced by non-religious and religious theories calling for revolution of all people. In addition, their conclusions of critical awareness and responsibility of action strikingly mirror each others' arguments. This chapter will analyze in depth the socio-religious theories of Shariati and Gutierrez drawing upon their ideological resemblance as well as their use of non-religious ideologies to formulate their opinions. With the examination of these unique thinkers and the way they use different theories to expand their message of liberation, it will be made apparent that their thoughts not only open a platform for interreligious understanding, but also present a way of thinking which allows religion and secularism to remain in a theoretical arena where the ideologies do not become convoluted.

## A. History Understood

Acknowledging the meaning of God throughout history is to pay special to attention to humanity. As Gutierrez notes, "the Word is not only a Word about God and about human nature: the Word is made human. If all that is human is illuminated by the Word, it is precisely because the Word reaches us through human history" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 106). Thus God has made his "Word" available to humanity throughout human history and since the prophets are assumed to have received his message correctly, the responsibility of continually advocating the "Word" of God to all of humanity now rests with the clergy or the most virtuous individual in matters of religion. These people, wise in the matters of religion should also be knowledgeable in the ways of their people and their lifestyles', understanding history as a continuum of God's creation. In knowing history and the people participating in it, the past must account for the good and the bad, as well as the non-religious and the religious. This is the only way to understand history and relate it to the present, which Gutierrez recognizes as a cornerstone project for all people if liberation is to actually be achieved (Gutierrez 1973, p. 106).

In a different approach from Gutierrez, Shariati comes to the same point by viewing history dialectically between good and evil, in which Islam persists triumphantly over evil with God's message. He writes that "The whole of history is a struggle between truth and falsehood, a battle between monotheists and polytheists, a clash between the oppressed and the oppressor, between the deprived and the usurper" (Shariati 1979, p.29). Such duality offers a place for the righteous and the deceitful: the righteous are honorable in their intentions to achieve salvation and help one's fellow man while the deceitful are those whose intentions are for personal gain. More specifically, the righteous are those, such as Imam Ali and Imam Hussein who rose against oppression. The deceitful, on the other hand, are those such as corrupt Caliphs and the clergy

that support oppression and inequality targeting the masses (Rahnema 2000, p. 158-159).  Using

history to depict the virtuous efforts of Islamic heroes, Shariati applies their practice of rebelling

against oppression to his modern situation in Iran with the help of revolutionary theories from

Third World intellectuals, such as Fanon.

In one of his most famous works, Shariati profiles the history of Islam, praising just

revolutionaries and denouncing unjust Islamic leaders and clerics in what he entitled, *Red

Shi'ism vs. Black Shi'ism*.  He begins the piece with the claim that Shi'ism is a religion that

embodies rebellion and always has from its beginning, rejecting rulers and Caliphs not from the

bloodline of Fatima (daughter of the Prophet Muhammad and wife of Imam Ali) and the House

of the Prophet (Shariati, 2001-2010).  Most famously, Imam Hussein stands out as a

revolutionary that all should strive to become.  Shariati notes that Hussein

> …bears witness to those who have been martyred by the
> oppressors throughout history, heir of all the leaders fighting for
> freedom and equality and the seekers of justice, from Adam to
> himself, forever the messenger of martyrdom, the manifestation of
> bloody revolution (Shariati, 2001-2010).

Also, embodying the innovative rebellious spirit of the oppressed was Alawi Shi'ism[3],

which in the opinion of Shariati, righteously followed the actions of Imam Hussein at the

rebellion of Sabzevar where Alawi rebels ousted Mongol foreign invaders.  Shariati notes that

the 14th century rebellion by the Alawis was among the greatest of all coordinated liberation

efforts in history; however, upon the rise to power of the Safavid Empire, revolutionary "Red

Shi'ism" was overtaken with corrupt and tyrannical "Black Shi'ism" (Shariati 2001-2010).  The

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[3] Often referred to as Qizbalis, Alawis are believed to be descendants of Imam Ali and often accused of heresy for their radical and Sufi like tendencies.  Believed to be revolutionary in the thoughts of Shariati for defeating the Mongols and inciting a massive movement to stand in opposition to foreign domination, the Alawi rebellion inspired the Communist, Sabedaran Liberation Movement of the 20th century (Dressler, 2010).

ability to stand in the face oppression, knowing that one might not survive is a key concept to the spirit of "Red Shi'ism" and furthermore, martyrdom.

Though Shariati provides his audience with both Alawi and Hussein examples of ideal radical action in, *Red Shi'ism vs. Black Shi'ism*, he also notes that Hussein is famously regarded as one the true martyrs in Shi'a Islam.  The Imam knowingly went to his death to protect his fellow man, oppressed under the rule of a corrupt caliphate and therefore will be forever eternalized as the ultimate revolutionary.  Emphasizing this point, Shariati sees an importance of praising and embodying Hussein's rebellious courage and martyrdom as opposed to mourning and lamenting his death as millions do every year during the celebration of Ashura (Shariati 2001-2010). Hussein's actions can only serve as a guide to defy the cruelness of history and show how one should become resilient in the face of an opposition that seeks to thwart equality. Using the historical religious message of revolution, Shariati relates it to the popular Third World secular message of revolution to parallel the ideologies in a unique fashion to appeal to believers and non-believes.

Historically, the oppression which antagonizes the masses has in Shariati's and Gutierrez's opinions always been in opposition to God.  Shariati claims that,

> The history of Islam follows a strange path; a path in which gangsters and ruffians from the Arab, Persian, Turk, Tartar and Mongol dynasties all enjoyed the right to the leadership of the Moslem community and to the caliphate of the Prophet of Islam, to the exclusion of the family of the Prophet and the rightful Imams of Islam (Shariati 2001-2010).

Yet he further notes that the corruptive path evident of the ruling Islamic dynasties has not solely been from Sunni dynasties.  Rahnema comments that Shariati equated the nature of Safavid Shi'a

Islam with that of Umayyad Sunni Islam: both empires relied heavily on the support of the clergy to legitimate their regimes and sustain their power (Rahnema 2000, p. 301).

Using the same concept of the ultimate revolutionary courageously standing against oppression, Gutierrez frequently refers to the actions of Jesus Christ preaching the Gospel and dying for the sins of humanity. Speaking about the life and crucifixion of Jesus, Gutierrez says, "…the liberating action of Christ – made human in this history and not in a history marginal to human life – is at the heart of the historical current of humanity" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 97). Thus, Jesus' actions were a very real part of human history and similar to the actions of Hussein in Shi'a historical analysis, both individuals acted upon the wishes of God and battled oppression for the liberation of their religious followers. Furthermore, Gutierrez emphasizes Jesus' "liberating action" to serve as revolutionary message applicable to all Christians, similar to how Shariati does with Hussein's story. Jesus' message of love is not that different than the dialectics of good and evil stressed upon by Shariati to explain Hussein's rebellion against oppression and martyrdom. The love that Jesus preached is not absent from the religious hero Hussein.[4] Thus, though both scholars explain their religious heroes by way of a different method each hero is seen by the scholar to accept good and reject evil and in doing so, live the life of a revolutionary and die in their sacrifice.

Though Gutierrez does not stress the dichotomy of good and evil as Shariati does to ensure Hussein's liberation is understood, he does reflect upon Jesus' actions and crucifixion as a moment of salvation in human history, saving man from eternal damnation. Gutierrez's opinion

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[4] This can viewed as highly controversial as Hussein died while attempting to defeat his adversary in Karbala, Iraq and therefore is not that same person as the pacifist, love preaching figure that Jesus was known to be. Shariati focuses on the dialects of good and evil to show that while Hussein was preparing for battle, he did not let evil persuade him from fighting for his people and embracing a revolutionary spirit that through certain lenses can be seen as love for those one is fighting for. This however, is very controversial.

is that Jesus provides humanity with the ultimate truth because through showing his love for God, he is also showing love for God's most precious creation, humanity; in doing so, Jesus rejected the sin of refusing God's love (Nickoloff 1993, p.516-517). Similar to Shariati, Gutierrez does not leave his religious reflection unsubstantiated without secular arguments of liberation and revolution from thinkers, such as Sartre and Camus who also uses history to assess their current condition. After all, just because non-religious theorists do not reflect upon God to create the basis of their arguments does not negate the fact that they are part of the historical current of man and deserve adequate analysis to understand the present state of things.

History reveals that the clergies of Catholicism and Shi'a Islam often stand on the side of corrupt monarchies and dictatorships watching oppression unfold without coming to the aid of the dispossessed. Gutierrez admits that most theologies put forth by scholars "seems to avoid the conflictual character of human history" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 23). Avoiding the past that at times has implicated the church to oppression has led to the creation of theological thought that is rather out of touch with human history and addresses concepts foreign to the current of mass society. For this reason, Gutierrez employs a quote by the well known French priest of the 20th century, Ives Congar, as to how the church should respond to modern problems: "Instead of using only revelation and traditions as starting points, as classical theology has generally done, it must start with facts and questions derived from the world and from history" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 9-10), this includes multiple ideologies that have affected the history of man. Gutierrez refuses to promote a theology not based on the people. With such emphasis on humanity as opposed to tradition, Gutierrez confronts the Latin American clergy on their lack of understanding of society and asks them the obvious question, who are they here to serve? (Gutierrez 1973, p. 61)

The Church's history in Latin American is deserved of Gutierrez's question. From the beginning of the European colonization in Latin America, the Church sent priests alongside Conquistadors to convert "heathen" natives they would encounter to Christianity. After centuries of the Church's presence, the holy institution became well established and accepted. During the 19th century, independence movements began in the region that wished to distance themselves from Spain and other colonizing countries. As these movements took hold, liberal elites demanded a much smaller political role by the Church. Thus, the Church fell into a period of political quietism until the 20th century and the rise of military dictatorships. It was upon the appearance of these forceful and violent regimes that the Church gave the dictatorships their blessing or either aided in rebellion. Rebellious action was met with often violent repercussions scaring the masses to adhere to the power at hand (Hieber 2001, p.295-296). By reflecting upon this history, Gutierrez seeks to give the Church and the masses a way to acknowledge the mistakes of the past and to presently confront oppression.

Likewise, Shariati gives his audience reason to rebel against ruling regimes by recognizing the evils affecting their society. Already identifying the pangs of history, Shariati moves forward exposing in his opinion, the most corrupt in his community. As mentioned in the historical analysis above, clerics often associated themselves with the status quo of the ruling party and during Shariati's time, it was no different. An Islamic socialist at a young age, Shariati placed himself in opposition to royal family and the religious institutions that supported them by equating them to historical religious enemies and colonialist oppressors of the last two centuries (Rahnema 2000, p. 52). He viewed the Pahlavi regime as corrupt and characterized the Shah's

reign as being characteristic of the Umayyad Caliph, Mu'awiya,[5] a man who was anything but Islamic as seen by Shi'a (Rahnema 2000, p.390).

This sense of corruption was further evident as Shariati called out many clergy members associated with the Shah's party as contributing to a force suppressing the true nature of Islam. Shariati therefore publically denounced many clergy members for either being part of the ruling regime or doing nothing to stand against oppression; in Shariati's opinion doing nothing simply denies the very essence of Shi'ism's revolutionary spirit (Abrahamian 1982, p. 28).

Through different perspectives both Shariati and Gutierrez recognize the importance of history in understanding the current state of society. Both men, through their respective religious histories find the true message of how valiant men and women triumphed against oppression. Not stopping at tradition, Shariati and Gutierrez move forward to also analyze the downfalls of religious history as well as the importance of non-religious history. With such tact, both scholars separate themselves from most religious thinkers in their field that typically rely on traditional and out of date religious messages to interpret the modern needs of society.

**B. The Problem of a Tradition-Reliant Clergy**

The lack of proper leadership on the part of Clerics left no room for ingenuity and tended to leave Shi'ism as a tradition-reliant religion. Such absence of innovation is supported by Shariati's claim that "the clergy refused to look ahead and instead looked back at some mythical

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[5] The first Umayyad Caliph is well known for opposing the leadership of Imam Ali as the fourth Caliphate of the Rashidun. Mu'awiya claimed to not recognize Ali's rule because he did not seek justice and denounce the murders of third Caliph, Uthman. The disagreement ended in a civil war between Uthman's army and those of Ali's army, which following Ali's death, Mu'awiya assumed the Caliphate, a rule that is rejected by all Shi'a (Hinds 2010).

'glorious age,' and treated the scriptures as if they were fossilized, scholastic parchments rather than inspirations for a dynamic revolutionary outlook" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 28). Again, using his dualistic approach, Shariati categorizes Shi'ism into two groups, "existing Shi'ism and ideal or authentic Shi'ism" (Rahnema 2000, p. 299).

The different groups pay respect to the two different paths Islam has taken throughout history: on one hand, a path of corruption and tyranny and on the other hand, a path of virtue, seeking an honest relationship with God and man. According to Rahnema, Shariati claims, "Actually existing Shi'ism was a most important crutch supporting the ruling classes" (Rahnema 2000, p. 299). Thus, Shariati's criticism is no less different from Gutierrez's complaint, which identifies the problem between the teaming of the tradition bent, non innovative clergy and the status quo as becoming a means to prevent religious authority from seeking modern answers to modern questions. Opposing "existing Shi'ism" is "authentic Shi'ism", which takes its primary religious message from the just and humanitarian-like spirit of its most righteous heroes. In keeping with a spirit that historically symbolizes the revolution of good over evil, "authentic Shi'ism" does not deny changes in society. Rather, "authentic Shi'ism" embraces change while applying its message of liberation to all of society.

Often, the intentions of the clergy are vague, especially when they claim to be part of the popular movement serving God's message of leading humanity toward salvation. However, when religious leaders fail to act and help those in need, it leaves many to question their sincerity for upholding the will of God. The creation of the Vatican II council in 1962 was born to address the issue of the overwhelmingly large population of poor people in the Third world. According to Gutierrez, however, the concept of poverty was "largely treated by the Council as an economic, not a theological problem" (Nickoloff 1993, p.526). Thus, the church never

actually responded to how the key teachings of Christianity would address this issue with practical application.  It was not until a conference in Medellin, Colombia by solely Latin American clergy members (including Gutierrez) that proper solutions were devised to answer the cries of help coming from the poor (Fox, 2000).   It was here that innovative thinkers put tradition behind them and came up with an ideology of liberation - pertinent to their communities' needs – consisting of the foundational messages of Christianity while incorporating whatever issues and thoughts that made their ideology relevant.

With inspiration formed during the meeting at Medellin, the clergy began to set the foundation for their uphill battle in freeing the masses from oppression.  Action, however, as both Shariati and Gutierrez note can be a difficult task, especially when so many traditional Muslim and Christian clergy members lack the spirit of revolutionary action.  Supposedly in charge of helping their religious constitutes understand the message of God and find the path to salvation, traditional clergy has in many respects failed and continues to fail in identifying themselves with current problems facing their people (Abrahamian 1982, p. 25); (Gutierrez, 1973, p.7).

Without the Church or the Mosque addressing the most heartfelt issues facing society today, many religious institutions not only fall short in their task of directing people toward salvation, but moreover, do not embrace all of society on an equal footing. These institutions choose to regard the oppressed as a people outside their immediate and direct limits of intervention.  The epidemic of oppressive forces is always strong; however, as Gutierrez believes, the poor of Latin America became a people with action of solidarity, a spirit of creativity, and acceptance of diversity (Nickoloff 1993, p. 523) – making themselves a known people and preventing the church from its continual failure in responding to the poor's needs.

Both Shariati and Gutierrez believe that corruption and oppression is not enough to kill the liberating nature of humanity. It is for this reason, why they rely on the hope of liberation and construct a road map for clergy members and intellectuals capable of leadership - using ideologies including Gramsci's intellectual leadership - to ensure that the hope of liberation endures.

## C. Moving Forward

### 1. Gutierrez's Plan for Change in the Church

As addressed above, Shariati and Gutierrez analyze and condemn the corrupt actions and lack of action by the political and religious institutions that exist in their respective regions. The major point of departure, however, between Shariati's and Gutierrez's work is their perception of who is most capable of leading the people in matters relevant to religious and political affairs. While Gutierrez seeks to motivate the clergy to understand the poor and oppressed on a more sincere level in order to guide them toward better life, he also discerns where clerical affairs stop and political affairs begin. Shariati, on the other hand, radically calls to the forefront a new leadership not composed of clerics, but the intellectual who can address political and religious issues concurrently.

Gutierrez advances his ideas to motivate the church with the words of Pope John XXIII, which set up a key guideline for liberation "In the face of the underdeveloped countries, the church is, and wants to be , the church of all and especially the church of the poor" (Gutierrez 1973, p. xxvi). In order to be a "church of the poor" this requires a much more dominant and active participation by the clergy to live with the poor, become involved in activism on behalf of

the poor, and end any relationship with existing orders aimed at oppressing the poor's activity for a better life (Gutierrez 1973, p.61). Such a drastic character change by the church is not only necessary according to Gutierrez, but a step toward the natural spirit of Jesus Christ. Referencing the Gospel, he notes "Jesus Christ declared the poor blessed (Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20), and he himself wished to be poor for us (2 Corinthians 8:9)" (Gutierrez 1973, p. xxvi-xxvii). Thus, the words of Jesus easily relate to socialist theories that seek a just and egalitarian struggle where people embrace the underprivileged with the hopes of eliminating oppression and the hierarchies of classes.

If obeying the direct words of Jesus were not enough, Gutierrez gives three further reasons as to why the Church should invest its actions to benefit the poor. First, Moses' exodus, leading the Jews out of Egypt is directly in opposition to oppression. Under the order of his Maker, Moses defied the existing status quo and freed his people from a lifetime of serving the dominating Pharos. Thus, Moses in accordance with a faithful and loving relationship with God was able to successfully liberate the Jew from slavery and therefore, the clergy should do the same. Second, existing oppression of one man over another destroys the value of the creation story in the Bible, Genesis. Humankind was created in a vision of equality sought to dominate the earth through human relationships and working together. Through such a process, human consciousness matures and perfects to understand the value of fellow man. Third, Gutierrez believes that humankind is part of the Sacrament of God.[6] This is to say that humankind as whole is in relationship with God and it is by establishing new relationships with each other that humans encounter God (Gutierrez, p.146, 167-168). Within the framework of the Sacrament of God also exists the Church; comprised of those not only willing to preach the word of God and

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[6] The Sacrament of God is coming into communion with God through certain actions.

help guide humanity toward salvation, but also to secure the dignity of a valued life worth living. Furthermore, if establishing a just utopia requires the action of humans working together in harmony with God's will, then it would be an injustice to neglect a new form of clergymen who accept other religious comparisons and non-religious ideas to make their case for liberation stronger.

In calling for pastoral activity, Gutierrez focuses on the need and importance for keeping alive the spirit to create. It is the creative spirit that frees humanity from the bounds of oppression and repetitiveness of the master-slave function that Fanon relates to in his work. Creativity causes one to think and reflect upon one's situation. It is thus imperative that the clergy encourage creativeness and thinking outside societal norms (Gutierrez 1973, p. 57). In doing so, Gutierrez faithfully believes that the critical awareness stressed upon by Sartre and Fanon as mentioned early in this thesis will emerge.

With creativity, there is also a sincere need for the church to become critical. Criticism needs to not only be of the self, but also of elitist institutions and individuals that prevent the very notion of liberation. In his analysis of his own culture, society, and religion, Gutierrez is keen to Paulo Freire's concept of the transformation from "naïve awareness" to "critical awareness". "Critical awareness" is the ability to answer current problems present to one's culture and people. The focus here is the present situation of the people and how to improve their lives. While recognizing the past, it is necessary to conceptually understand how history relates to one's current life. What one must not do is dwell in the past because in the process of dwelling "naïve awareness" develops preventing true critical awareness. Understanding a society's specific needs is also appreciating those needs as unique and therefore, requiring unique action to address the situation. Gutierrez believes in this concept because the church in

Latin America cannot endorse some universal plan of action to address poverty, it must come to its own conclusions using the will and intelligence of its own clergy. Once the "critical awareness" is reached, Gutierrez as well as Shariati firmly notes that the process of becoming aware does not end, but rather is something that continues in those that wish to promote liberation (Gutierrez, 1973, 57).

The promotion and achievement of liberation, freedom, and love is something that Gutierrez wants all people to become capable of. He knows, however, that certain individuals are placed in situations that allow one to ascertain more opportunity than another. The opportunity that Gutierrez values highly is the opportunity to gain knowledge and become properly educated. According to Gutierrez, "in the new global world and knowledge-based economy, knowledge itself has become the dividing line between the haves and the have-nots" (Fox, 2000). Thus, in a commencement address to graduating seniors at Brown University, Gutierrez urged the class to share their knowledge with the poor and "help those whom others may deem insignificant" (Fox, 2000). Acknowledging the importance of educated individuals brings Gutierrez to his main point of how the Church can help the poor. Though he does so indirectly, Gutierrez (acting as a clergy member) establishes a relationship with Brown University graduates and further, encourages the educated men and women to help the deprived by building relationships with them. Gutierrez is well aware that the process of liberation will not solely come from religion, thus he employs the outside help to promote education while establishing new relationships based on love for humanity and also, for God. Similar to Gutierrez, Shariati also stresses the importance that intellectual knowledge plays in the process of liberation.

## 2. Replacing the Role of the Religious Leader with the Intellectual

A major distinction in the theme of Shariati's and Gutierrez's work is the difference in how they view the future of the clergy. As already mentioned above, Gutierrez sees the clergy - when innovative and not solely reliant of tradition - as playing a vital role in the salvation and liberation of the oppressed, calling such actions a "permanent ethical requirement of the kingdom of life" (Nickoloff 1993, p. 518). Shariati on the other hand does not entrust the clergy to effectively produce major transformations in the community and thus, endorses another form of leadership.

Shariati put his greatest value on the intellectual. In Shariati's own words, Rahnema quotes him as saying "the intellectual can turn, interpret or present a concept in any way he wishes" (Rahnema 2000, p. 286). Shariati does not try to create a new way for the clergy to lead humanity; no, he rather omits mentioning a reformation of their establishment and posits leadership only for the intellectual. Any intellectual will not do, however, because the ideal intellectual is an "upright God worshipper who can be the authentic humanitarian and the sincere liberationist" (Rahnema, 309).

It is therefore a challenge for the faithful intellectual to lead man to societal change and liberation. Corrupt politicians and their subservient clerics are a waste to society's potential. Thus, the perfect intellectual has all of the creative spirit, critical awareness, and piety that can justly lead a society. In Gutierrez's analysis, he develops methods for priests and bishops to become involved in the socio-religious life of the poor and oppressed; however, Shariati dismisses clerics, claiming "that an official clerical institution has no place in Islam" (Rahnema, 2000, p. 209).

Similar to what Gutierrez believes his clergy should possess, Shariati, claims that the ideal Intellectual uses his/her ingenuity as a tool for liberation. Fond of Gnostic esotericism, Shariati holds that an intellectual actively participating in a progressive relationship to know God helps to produce a much better and truer form of Islam. The message represented by the sermons preached among the Iranian Clergy during Shariati's time failed to address the oppression at hand, put upon society by the Shah's regime and supported by those too coward to oppose it. (Rahnema 2000, p. 129, 149).

Traditional reliant clergy are a clear interference to any creative spirit possible. Opposed to the institution of clerics, Shariati's faith in leadership is with humanity and more specifically within the creative spirit inside of man (Yadegari 2001, p. 48). Shariati acknowledges Fanon's concept of societal creativity and found that the revolutionary's ideas can also work in a religious setting. Focusing on the future, Fanon observes that creativity comes from a definitive break with the past, foreign domination, and foreign imitation (Gandhi 1998, p. 20). Shariati takes Fanon's theory a step further and adds that creativeness is also associated with a clean break with corrupt religious institutions, such as Shi'i clerics that prevent one from thinking for his/herself.

Shi'ism as Shariati believes it must be a religion that is open to change. Moreover, Shi'ism must be dedicated towards seeking social justice. In order for the religion to move forward in such a manner, Shariati creates new definitions to the meanings of justice and leadership. Acting the proper part of the intellectual, Shariati's imaginative ideas assert that the role of just leadership once held by Ali and the successive Imams is not a concept that can only be understood by a cleric that only studies theology. He rather explains just leadership as available to anyone devoted to achieving the knowledge Islam and most importantly, the ability to understand how religion can appropriately fit a society that one presently lives in (Rahnema

2000, p. 286).  Creativity not only allows the intellectual to replace the clergy, but it also gives

way to a need for the intellectual to understand the importance of a unique liberation movement,

relative to one's culture.  However, in producing a unique liberation, Shariati uses whatever

means necessary, including a variety of ideologies to apply the movement to his context.

Shariati makes his ideology distinctly Iranian, calling for the requirement of two

systematic revolutions as identified by Ervand Abrahamian: First, a national revolution, which

"…would end all forms of imperial domination and vitalize the country's culture, heritage, and

national identity"; second, as social revolution that "would end all forms of exploitation,

eradicate poverty and capitalism modernize the economy, and most of important of all, establish

a 'just,' 'dynamic,' and 'classless' society" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 26).  Within the latter

revolution, religion also represents a part of society that as Shariati explains, must be changed.

In order for such ideology to inspire the masses in Iran, the intellectual or one who inspires, must

familiarize themselves with their true Iranian cultural heritage that embodies the revolutionary

spirit, not the misguided legacy of traditional scholars (Abrahamian 1982, p.27-28).  It should be

noted that by calling for two revolutions, Shariati recognizes that politics and religion can

borrow from each other and continue their revolutionary spirits; however, they must also remain

separate without allowing one goal to be usurped by the other.

Consistently referring to Iran's historical identity as revolutionary, Shariati believes that

the proper leader of a rebellious movement is someone in touch with all aspects of society.  To

him, the intellectual can naturally and most accurately return people to the pious and

revolutionary version of Islam that once existed.  Supporting this supposition Abrahamian quotes

Shariati, "…in the modern age the intelligentsia were the true interpreters of religion"

(Abrahamian 1982, p. 28).  He further asserts that theological learning can continue to stay with

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the clergy, but since real Islam is not about ancient theological texts, the act of doing so is rather unnecessary (Abrahamian 1982, p. 28). Islam that is revolutionary is what matters and should be instilled throughout society. For this goal to be achieved, Shariati entrusts the faithful intellectual to lead this mission.

Through careful examination of both of their religious histories, Shariati and Gutierrez come to the similar conclusions about how new leadership should lead social affairs of a community, while differing on who should lead the religious community. Straying from the errors of their leaders in the past, Shariati and Gutierrez value history as a method that can shed light up present reality and the future. They write about religious heroes to inspire the revolutionary spirit in potential leaders while noting many non-religious ideologies that pertain to current political governances. Further, they discern clear concepts of leadership and responsibility, such as creativity, unique ideology relevant to the audience at hand, and a focus on spreading knowledge to the masses.

The main difference between Shariati and Gutierrez is who creates religious ideology and eventually leads society to liberation and change. Scrutinizing his own cultural and religious history, Shariati staunchly admits that he has no faith in the ability of Shi'i clerics that remain smothered by outdated traditions to lead his people to freedom. He asserts that only the most righteous, socialist intellectual that holds faith as a cornerstone to his livelihood and has a clear understanding of Iranian and pre-Iranian history is applicable for leadership, both religious and political. Quite differently, Gutierrez does not reject the idea of clergy leadership. In fact he encourages the Church to become involved in political affairs. Like Shariati, Gutierrez notes the failure of past and present clergy that associate themselves with the status quo or either do nothing to prevent it from oppressing people. Gutierrez believes, however, that the clergy plays

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a vital role in evangelizing the poor, bringing them towards salvation, and most importantly, making their present life worth living and something to be valued. However, past the act of helping to evangelize and awaken the consciousness of society, Gutierrez holds that political leadership should be in the hands of a just and intelligent leader, similar to Shariati's intellectual.

Mixing Gramsci's concept that everyone is an intellectual, but that not everyone can function as an intellectual and Freire's theory that knowledge comes from the relationship and communication between men, Gutierrez proposes that clerics act as the figurehead of the religious intellectual while learning from those they communicate with. He expects the clergy to participate in the active life of the oppressed; however, he clearly distinguishes between were the Church's role of action stops and the people's role begins. The church is to lead its people toward the direction of action, but it is the choice of the people to participate in such action and make their lives better.

Most likely, the discrepancy between Shariati's and Gutierrez's interpretation of who is an ideal religious leader and what should be done with the clergy comes from their own personal background. By no means, do I believe that they are lobbying for a universal declaration for new leadership. Simply, they are asserting what will work best for their own society. Shariati, growing up in a home where religious tradition was frowned upon, he was taught from the beginning that traditionalist clerics had their message wrong. In addition, his value of the intellectual mind grew during his time abroad, spent with thinkers like Sartre. Gutierrez, on the other hand, is a priest himself and though he has seen the mistakes of the church, he is not all together willing to dismiss the institution. He believes in the clergy's active role in human affairs to a point where people are liberated enough to begin pursing new elements of liberation, such as finding an ideal candidate to political movement. Given both Shariati's and Gutierrez's

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personal histories, it is no wonder why they have constructed the method of leadership which they did.

**D. The Essence of Man**

Following the need for reformed and radicalized leadership, Shariati and Gutierrez note the vital characteristic of self liberation through personal awareness in addition to the larger and collective awareness that is understood by the Church, the intellectual, and ultimately, society as a whole. While each scholar has his own method for recognizing the ideal ethics of man, the struggles of transforming oneself, and the ownership of responsibility, both rely heavily on individual awakening. With faith and hope in the abilities of man, Shariati and Gutierrez theorize that human awareness, achieved on an individual basis should be a cornerstone to the movement of liberation.

Shariati begins his analysis of man's call to a new consciousness by depicting the duality existent in man. In his study of the creation story of Adam and Eve, Shariati points out the various terms used in the Qur'an to denote the components of man, which suggest that humanity originates from "putrid clay", "unto pottery", and "mud" (Shariati, 1981, p. 3) & (Shariati 1979, p.88). He suggests these earth-like elements represent the lowliness of man. He also believes that man embodies the divine spirit, which God blew into man at the moment of creation (Shariati 1981, p.4). Man is therefore, a being with two dimensions capable of striving toward the essence of God or falling toward material and earthly sediment representing sin and everything that God is not. For Shariati, this duality for which man possesses both good and evil characterizes the choice of either living a righteous or immoral life. In choosing to live

righteously, it is understood by Shariati that divine power of God that inspires man will help lead to human awareness.

Gutierrez also stresses the importance of man's choice to either live in a relationship with God or to reject his message. Different from Shariati, however, he does not see man as two-dimensional, but rather as a being that embodies the Holy Spirit. To Gutierrez, "God is manifested visibly in humanity of Christ, the God-Man, irreversibly committed to human history" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 109). Because God made himself man through Christ, humanity cannot be represented by God's opposite because it does not exist in man. In making this assumption, Gutierrez suggests that the profane does not live in man, but only within the elements of nature. Thus, he avoids a Manichaeistic duality and asserts that God lives in all of humanity even those that are not Christian. If one rejects God's love (the spirit) inside of him/her, then one is choosing not to live in the fruitful relationship with God and man. Thus, when God's love is ignored and/or feared, oppression and evil persists and distracts man from his calling from God (Gutierrez 1973, p. 110).

To back up his own support of dualism, Shariati notes that he does not hold onto the same dialectical beliefs of Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism.[7] He claims that his version of dualism does not reject the oneness of God or say that the divine as some equal and opposite half. Rather Shariati maintains that dualism is only existent in man. God is the creator of nature which is one dimensional, but He created man with half of His own essence, while the other half is composed of dirt, meaning everything opposite of the divine, including evil. In his own words, Shariati

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[7] It should be noted that Shariati was known for phrasing things in a way to dupe the Shi'a clergy in order to not be labeled as a heretic. As noted by Abrahamian and others, Shariati was a Sufi and being from Iran many of the Sufi practices borrowed from Zoroastrianism. There is no way to accurately tell if his above explanation was sincere or if he was practicing *taqiyya* in order to not be harassed by the clergy.

says, "Allah and Iblis (the Devil), plays itself out in the world of men, in societies and individuals, the combination Allah-Iblis yields man as its result" (Shariati 1979, p.91-92 footnote 2). Though Shariati's and Gutierrez's way of understanding the essence of man differs, they do have the same opinion in that to some degree the spirit of God resides in us all. As understood in the previous chapter, the non-religious ideology of Sartre though falling short of recognizing God's existence does help to validate Shariati's and Gutierrez's theory of the struggle for existential liberation. By understanding the origin of man, both scholars aim for their audience to further recognize and make the choice of living within God's heavenly grace rather turning away from it.

**E. Man's Choice to Freedom**

In making the choice to accept that man comes from a divine nature, it is pertinent as Shariati and Gutierrez see it, for the chooser to free him/herself from what binds humanity to oppression. A key tenant toward total liberation is that man must exercise the choice to not only accept God, but to live justly. Taking from the importance of Sartre's "subjective choice" Shariati and Gutierrez build upon his theory with the addition of God to release oneself from everything that prevents self awareness (Sartre 1948, p. 29).

Choosing to be free and thus, eliminating the constraints of man by society and social standards, Shariati goes into a detailed account of exactly what humanity is choosing to leave behind. Accordingly, he believes that ideologies though they may at times be helpful toward liberation have the ability to sacrifice the importance of man and place too high of value on generalized norms. Some of these ideological norms are materialism, pantheism, historicism,

sociology, biology, and existentialism. Regarding existentialism Shariati criticizes Sartre for allowing man to shape his own essence any way he pleases (Shariati 1981, p. 52-54). He believes that these ideologies sacrifice man in the sense that they neglect God's essence living inside one's soul. Therefore, in becoming aware of the self and the society imposed barriers that afflict humankind, all individuals should continually struggle to see the importance of the relationship between God and humanity, rather than become immersed in a lifestyle that neglects such divine importance. His critique becomes problematic however, because he is so reliant on ideologies. Straddling the line between being a legitimate religious thinker to some and a heretic to others, it is this author's opinion that by Shariati denouncing ideologies, it is an example of him compensating for being too idealistic at times. For the purposes of this paper, we will presume that ideologies presented here are for liberation purposes and thus, legitimate from the perspective of Shariati.

Gutierrez is not so detailed in his account of the ideologies that limit society; however, he does consistently point out the ills of materialism and lack of care by individuals for their fellow person. Specifically this is done when Gutierrez profiles the damage of Capitalism in Latin America. In his reflection upon history, he notes that the reality of capitalist investment has only lead to the exploitation of the poor and the formation of one social class over another. Thus, humanity must first come to terms with the socio-economic situation they find themselves in. Understanding and acting with the moral compass Christ left for mankind, one must reject the temptations of climbing the social class ladder and taking advantage of the dispossessed. Gutierrez also mentions that while liberation from external measures is needed, so is freedom from internal and psychological pressures that burden the oppressed (Gutierrez 1973, p. 19-21).

Gutierrez suggests that revolution as we currently know it is a systematic process that replaces one corrupt and domineering leader for another, but more importantly neglects the totality of an all encompassing mass liberation.  Thus, as he sees it, the way we speak about revolution is obsolete.  Humanity must dig deep within our own creative minds to think about any and all radical ideas of liberation.  He notes that society cannot endorse all forms of rebellious action blindly; however, until peace and equality persists on a universal level, Gutierrez believes in a reconsideration of all social thought (Gutierrez 1973, p. 19-21).  In somewhat confusing manner, both Shariati and Gutierrez at times denounce the impact of certain ideologies and society's obsession with them, but also realize the importance of ideology used alongside religious ideology in the support of liberation.

## F. The Struggle for Critical Self Awareness

In his work, Gutierrez reflects upon the term "struggle" noting that not only Jesus, but all righteous Christians throughout history standing against oppression must go through the struggle to liberate.  In becoming aware of the realities that affect society, one must choose to not accept the status quo and strive toward action changing the current state of affairs.  Thus, the struggle begins from the first moment of accepting the realities of life and the inequality that exists.  From that point, the struggle never ceases and thus striving for the truth, equality, and better life never should either.  Both Shariati and Gutierrez view the struggle for liberation very similar to achieving a fruitful relationship with God.  In trying to build a communion with the higher power, all struggle to reject temptations and false ideologies afflicting humanity.  Thus Shariati and Gutierrez link the struggle for God and the struggle liberating humanity together.  Self

awareness therefore initiates self liberation from what is false and as both Shariati and Gutierrez hope, encourages man to work with humanity and develop relationships with God, inevitably achieving greater liberation.

The true brotherhood of man is known through first recognizing the self. Self understanding requires careful scrutiny of society, history, and how an individual fits within the former categories; this form of liberation is not easily achieved (hence the often used term, struggle by Shariati and Gutierrez). Using again Freire's theory of "naïve" vs. "critical consciousness" as a way for the Church to understand its role amongst the lay community, the individual also has to make note of this concept and exercise the critical awareness of everything, which as Gutierrez believes, leads one closer to God. In knowing God and the self, a new man is created and only through such a new man, can a new society also take form (Gutierrez 1973, p 134).

In Shariati's version of understanding self awareness, he again relies on his dichotomy of man to understand one's self and pose the possibility for a new society. He asserts that the true enlightenment of man's self consciousness is *Ensan*, specifically meaning a man that is becoming; in others words a man who strives for something greater, such as God. Meanwhile, the opposite of *Ensan* is *Bashar,* another term meaning "man", but this time Shariati's interpretation explains *Bashar* as simply, a being (Shariati 1981, p. 46-50). He notes that "everyone is as much *Bashar* as the rest, but there are some who have attained *Ensaniat* and there are others who are in the process of becoming an Ensan", very similar to Gramsci's explanation of the intellectual (Shariati 1981, p. 47).

**G. Helping Others Become Aware**

*1. The Ideal Man*

In his book, *On the Sociology of Islam*, Shariati devotes an entire chapter to what he sees as the "Ideal Man". Taking his above insinuation into account, he views the ideal man as someone capable of knowing God, similar to the *Ensan* of man. In a detailed manner, he compares the "ideal man" to many well known heroes, stating

> He thinks with the brain of Socrates and loves with the heart of
> Hallaj. As Alexis Carrel desired, he is a man who understands the
> beauty of God; he listens to the words of Pascal and the words of
> Descartes. Like Buddha, he is delivered from the dungeon of
> pleasure-seeking and egoism; like Lao Tse, he reflects on the
> profundity of his primordial nature; and like Confucius, he
> meditates on the fate of society. Like Spartacus, he is a rebel
> against slave-owners, and like Abu Dharr, he scatters the seed for
> the revolution of the hungry. Like Jesus, he bears a message of
> love and reconciliation, and like Moses, he is the messenger of
> jihad and deliverance (Shariati 1979, p. 122).

Interestingly he places religious and national heroes of polytheist and secular backgrounds in the same category. He shapes the "ideal man" in the best way possible, a renaissance man capable of leading and rebelling against any corrupt and tyrannical force. Yet, he believes that such enlightenment is not possible by all, only those gifted to be *Ensan*. In light of his comments about just leadership of the intellectual, Shariati (although it is not explicitly stated) seems to be making the case that the intellectual is more than merely someone capable of leading, but also the most righteous and supreme being on earth and therefore, the "ideal man". This makes sense in that if the intellectual is the person that is to lead humanity to liberation, he/she should posses the characteristics of the ideal man.

Gutierrez in a somewhat different manner sees the ideal being as someone that cannot be differentiated among the masses and exists in a classless society, in harmony with the poor and oppressed.  What is ideal to Gutierrez is living together in a world that emphasizes loving one another and God, not placing significance on material values, wealth, of class.  The meaning of life should be lived through relationships, leading humanity to create a society without class and oppression.  Gutierrez places importance on enlightenment of humanity as a whole as opposed to a gifted group able to attain ideal perfection, such as Shariati's intellectual.

According to Gutierrez poverty is a praiseworthy attribute noted in the Bible.  Thus, the term becomes spiritual in the sense that it reflects a way to directly be in the grace of God.  Providing justification for this point, Gutierrez quotes the Gospel, "Blessed are you poor" (Luke 6:20) and "Seek the Lord, all in the land who live humbly by his laws, seek righteousness, seek a humble heart (Zephaniah 2:3) (Gutierrez 1973, p. 169-170).  As Gutierrez interprets these messages, God prefers the poor, especially those that remain in the humble communion that put others before themselves and as he says, are "opposed to pride" and "an attitude of self-sufficiency (Gutierrez 1973, p. 169).  He deems these qualities as "spiritual poverty" a condition for which all people should live by.

In light of the way Jesus lived his life, each person wishing to attain a new consciousness must make the effort to engage all of humanity, including the poor.   This is only possible by working side by side with all of humanity that rejects evil and struggles to create a new and better life.  The ideal man exists within a communion of all people where men live alongside one another on an equal plane with no class differentiation.  This phenomenon is something Gutierrez calls "spiritual poverty" which he believes is a necessary as a "precondition for approaching God" (Gutierrez 1973, p. 169); however, most also have to experience actual

poverty to understand the all of humanity.  Thus, though he claims the ideal man exists within

everyone, he also notes that most must be led to the water in order to drink as Jesus did among

his people.  Therefore, an ideal person is someone capable of leading people toward working

together in communion with each other and God and therefore, attaining the awareness necessary

for societal change.  Though Gutierrez sees the ideal man in a different light from Shariati, they

both agree in that those sharing the ideal attributes should play a significant role in the process of

liberation.


## 2. Responsibility

Both Shariati and Gutierrez highlight the responsibility of the individual as a main asset

to a liberated consciousness, but in the end, they seem to be speaking to different groups as they

urge the masses toward social movement.  Nonetheless, they make use of the notion of

responsibility as springboard to action, the final step toward total liberation.  Similar to the ideal

man, Shariati believes that responsibility falls on the shoulders of someone righteous and just.

He claims that such a person is God's "vice regent" and accountable for the future of religious

and societal progression.  This leader is person who is also a revolutionary and holds God's trust

in his nature.  Shariati even goes so far as to say, "…he takes on the characteristics of God and

attains the nature of the absolute" (Shariati 1979, p. 123).  This very Sufi-like explanation is

again aimed at promoting some kind of polymath, most likely the modern intellectual that takes

on the responsibility of saving humanity from oppression.

Shariati's obsession with knowledge directs his theories and even his religious fervor toward Sufism. In his path to know God, the scholar's dedication in finding the esoteric and spiritual knowledge of the higher power is well apparent and documented as, Rahnema writes,

> Life on earth was his prison. He longed to end the suffering of separation from God by 'getting over the other side of the wall.' At time, he seemed to relish this persistent state. Convinced that suffering was the natural outcome of an inner knowledge and enlightenment reserved only for a selected few, he seemed to welcome it. Possessed of this inner knowledge he was destined to bear the burden of everyone's woes. Shariati believed he was not born to lead a 'pleasant and satisfying' life. On the contrary, he seemed convinced that he was destined to be a martyr…Shariati associated suffering and pain with consciousness and responsibility… (Rahnema 1998, p. 42-43).

In reflecting upon the tragedies that affect his people, Shariati sees knowledge as the key remedy for change toward the betterment of humanity. In his work he states, "…the greater a man's knowledge of the norms that predominate society, the greater is his responsibility for changing and developing society, and the greater, too, his freedom in doing so" (Shariati 1979, p. 52).

While Shariati commonly refers to the responsibility of the intellectual throughout his work, Gutierrez takes a different approach in placing responsibility on Christians as a whole. Given the already mentioned facts that Gutierrez believes God's essence resides in all of man, that God favors the poor, and that in coming to awareness people should recognize God's true message and the oppression existent on earth, he asserts that humanity should embrace the poor and live in brotherhood with them. Shariati also believes in these facts; however, does construct his message around poor, but rather the oppressed as a whole. Since Gutierrez's work is relevant to the poverty of South America, he believes that being a Christian means embracing the poor

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and because Jesus died for everyone's sins, this is responsibility for all people. Regarding the

Peruvian scholar's standards, Hieber notes,

> Christians cannot accept the oppression of the poor as tolerable.
> That many Christians have done so, and have even urged the
> oppressed to accept their situation … is an ugly reality of which all
> Christians must repent. There is a sense of urgency in Gustavo's
> approach to these problems that is often lacking in the perspective
> of comfortably situated Christians (Hieber 2001, p. 297).

Gutierrez hopes to inspire Christians and all people alike to come to a communion with

God and man. He expects those who choose God to also act toward building a better life and

society, thus tasking the entire Christian lay community with creating a new Christendom

(Gutierrez 1973, p. 36). Separating the role between the responsibility of the Church and the

community, Gutierrez holds that the Church should educate and guide people to God's

Evangelical message, a Christian conscience, and toward forming a better life on earth. Thus, he

tasks humanity with building their community and striving for their national goals, while also

using the message of God to create a better bond among man and therefore, a new Christianity.

This proves yet another example of how Gutierrez provides Christians with non-religious or

national ideologies as well as religious ones, showing their similarity and yet distinctly keeping

them separate.

## H. Awareness to Action

Gutierrez illustrates the fulfillment of Christianity through action by noting the Gospel of

John. In this story, the disciple accounted for Jesus' actions for feeding 5,000 people with only

two fish and five loaves of barely. In delivering John's message during a speech at Brown University, Gutierrez maintained that many Christians living in the present world, selfishly spiritualize the actions of Jesus and neglect that fact that the meaning of the story is that he literally fed the empty stomachs of all those who came to him (Fox 2000 p. 28). The message is clear; honoring God is achievable through acting and helping those who are in need.

For Gutierrez, the acceptance of God and the equality of all people is an idealistic utopia that he hopes all people will strive to achieve; however, he understands the difficult in producing such a new world. What he sees as very realistic and necessary is responsibility for the poor to take action themselves. Noting the lack of action by those in powerful positions, Gutierrez notes that,

> Based on the evidence of the usually frustrated classes of popular
> classes to participate in decisions which affect all of society, the
> realization emerges that it is the poor who must be the protagonists
> of their own liberation (Gutierrez 1973, p.67).

Using this perspective, one can begin to see Gutierrez's rhetoric become more focused. After all, it was the intention of initial liberation theologies in Latin America to champion the cause revolution for the poor, led by the poor. For this reason Gutierrez focuses his ideology around poverty, however, he also notes that in the growing and complex world, there are many other forms of liberation that need to ensue, such as national liberation, female liberation, and racial liberation. (Gutierrez 1973, p. xxi)

Understanding liberation in this way shows that Gutierrez places the greatest importance on his original cause, liberation of the poor by the poor; however, he also values the responsibility of every human being to hopefully, gain a sincere level of awareness and

participate in the global struggle for the emancipation of oppression. Thus, hinting at the complexity of liberation calls for not only a religious understanding, but also a non-religious understanding, which Gutierrez boldly achieves in his case for liberation of the poor.

Just as Gutierrez calls on all people to fulfill their responsibility as human to help in the liberation of the poor, Shariati also does the same. After discussing the responsibility of the intellectual and the ideal man in his work, Shariati calls on the common people and their responsibilities. It should be noted that most of his speeches were in front of university students and intellectuals hence the reason for all the themes of intellectual leadership. However, in his time as a public figure he also made use of placing responsibility on the entirety of the people. In speaking about true Islam, Shariati is quoted

> It is not enough to say we must return to Islam. We must specify which Islam: that of Abu Zarr or that of Marwan the Ruler. Both are called Islamic, but there is a huge difference between them. One is the Islam of the Caliphate, of the palace, and of the rulers. The other is the Islam of the people, of the exploited, and of the poor. Moreover, it is not good enough to say that one should be concerned about the poor. The corrupt Caliphs said the same. True Islam is more than concerned. It instructs the believer to fight for justice, equality, and elimination of poverty (Abrahamian 1982, p. 27).

By way of reflecting upon the past and the ideals of true Islam in the above quote, Shariati is able to make his message relevant to the responsibility of all Iranian people and furthermore, not just make his words applicable to religious liberation, but also national liberation. In other words, Shariati makes the concept of liberation not only a religious responsibility, but also an Iranian responsibility. In this way, Shariati's and Gutierrez's work allow for different types of liberation to come the surface.

## I. Religion & Ideology

In understanding revolutionary Islam's call to creating a new society, Shariati refers to the religion as an ideology and does not hesitate to use it side by side with non-religious ideologies. Envisioning his utopian world, Shariati holds that a just and ideal society should maintain "a harmonious constellation of philosophical views, religious beliefs, ethical values and scientific methodologies, giving birth to a meaningful, goal-oriented and dynamic entity" (Rahnema 1998, p. 288). The proper way to liberate the consciousness of all people and lead them to a new society, according to Shariati begins with Islam, but also is further understood with the help of non-Islamic sources.

Using the Marxist system of base and superstructure, Shariati maintains that the base is not the outcome of material production, but rather supported by a "creedal base" (i.e. *tawhid*) that is part of a worldview and belief system. The correlating superstructure consists of anthropology, sociology, and history (Rahnema 1998, p. 289). Therefore, the superstructure is explained by the creed and the oneness of God. Since the base and the superstructure support the ideology and the ideology in this case is Islam, the religion, when properly practiced as Shariati sees it, can answer all the needs of society. Properly practiced Islam as Shariati notes in his work has much in common with certain non-religious ideologies, such as those by Fanon, Sartre, Camus, etc.

Though Marx saw ideology in the pejorative sense and claimed that all ideas supported the elitist class structure, Shariati does not see ideology as a backward system that only supports ruling parties. To Shariati, Islam is not fallible and is considered an ideology because it strives to liberate people from others that try to prevent its full potential, such as those adhering to

tradition minded religions and status quo supporting institutions. Ideologies therefore exist, if they can be proven to be infallible. To raise the consciousness of society, Shariati claims that ideology must be explained to humanity by a simple, yet aware teacher that is keenly aware of the impoverished conditions of his/her people (Rahnema 1998, p. 291). Through this explanation by the intellectual, ideology penetrates society and as humanity sees truth in practice, Shariati believes that man will choose faith and love, the ideal attributes of his utopia (Shariati 1981, p. 93).

In constructing the foundation for his utopia, Gutierrez believes that a perfect society is the equivalent to the present action of man working together. Again, borrowing from Freire, Gutierrez holds that humanity must denounce that which is the oppressive existing order and announce what is to come (Gutierrez 1973, p. 136). This takes creativity and is the beginning of action. Once action and therefore, utopia develops further, it supports the awakening of social consciousness and develops further, the relationships of man.

The working together of people in harmony leads to in Gutierrez's opinion, the beginning of liberation; however, he points out that political action and faith will not transform until a consciousness of awareness is attained by humanity (Gutierrez 1973, p.137-138). This transformation comes from education. Educating the Christian conscience is a task that must be upheld by the clergy. Like Shariati's intellectual, the clergy must speak of the current existing oppression to inspire man to shape his own future through action (Gutierrez 1973, p. 69). And following proper religious education, man can continue to learn through the relationships established with others.

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The mark of awareness is so important to Gutierrez because it challenges the very

structures of unfair societies. In a completely opposite take to Shariati's view, Gutierrez

understands ideology as a concept that prevents utopia and only preserves current social orders.

In his opinion, ideology masks important social advancements such as science and does nothing

to present rational and practical thinking (Gutierrez 1973, p. 138-139). Accordingly, Gutierrez

puts ideology in a box with all uncritical and uncreative though. Given his Marxist tendencies, it

makes sense for him to reject ideology; however, it would be unfair of him to denounce ideology

as whole given that he borrows from so many philosophical thinkers. Nevertheless, he sees

perfection as the social action of critically aware men and women working together and living in

peace under God's will. For this reason he renders ideology obsolete when compared with

religion. Yet in order for this perfect state of being to exist, ideology must guide and educate

people to existence. When compared to Shariati, it is apparent that both men express the need

for religious and non-religious ideologies to liberate the masses; however, while Shariati deems

religion an ideology, Gutierrez does not.

Regardless of how both men view ideology in terms of religion, they both use a plethora

of theories from different thinkers to create their road map to liberation. In doing so, they

uniquely separate themselves from a majority of scholars considered religious by noting that

religious ideology and non-religious ideology have much in common and furthermore, can be

used to achieve the same goal. In recognizing these ideologies they prevent any confusion by

explicitly labeling what is religious and non-religious while showing their similarities. What is

achieved through such as process is the ability to find connections among different religions. By

not clouding a religious message with other non-religious agendas, one can see the foundation of

religion for what it is. It so happens that with both Shi'ism and Christianity, the foundations of

their liberation within the religion have much in common and furthermore, are also similar to secular themes of national liberation.

What should be understood from the following two chapters is that both Shariati and Gutierrez highlight the struggles of humanity with every person independently struggling against oppression. They use both religious and non-religious sources to address that fact and furthermore, assess that the only way out of solitude is through an individual awakening. From this point, it is the decision to act, persuading people to join a group struggle to overturn the oppression that hinders their quality of life. The emphasis on choice and action is so strong because quietism within religious institutions has failed humanity in changing society. While they prescribe the path to liberation through a variety of religious and non-religious sources they make no attempt at creating a universal method for liberation. That is because while they can give suggestions to their own respective communities, they wish them to be only suggestions. I firmly believe that both men value the independence of thought and the eccentricity of the mind more than anything else. They find these qualities in their religious heroes who thought for themselves, but did so with faith and acted to transform existent oppression.[8] Through this thought process it can be understood how Shariati and Gutierrez link the religious message of liberation to modern, non-religious liberation thinkers.

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[8] This can become confusing as Jesus is the human form of God and Imam Hussein along with all other Infallible Imams in Twelver Shi'ism had complete esoteric knowledge of God's will. Shariati and Gutierrez use these stories of Jesus and Imam Hussein to highlight human choice and action that is done out of love for God and humanity. While Jesus and Imam Hussein were free from sin, they obtain human flesh and therefore possess free will and the ability to make independent action and choice.

# CHAPTER IV

# THE INFLUENCE OF SHARIATI AND GUTIERREZ IN LEBANON AND PALESTINE AND THE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW IDEOLOGIES

After analyzing the forms of liberation used in Shariati's and Gutierrez's work, this thesis moves to analyze the perspective of these scholars' work on the Arab world, a region ripe with the need for liberation. As the impact of their theories of liberation and critical awareness increased among their respective audiences between the 1960's and 1980's, revolution and socialized movements challenging existing political powers made significant strides toward societal change, and even succeeded in Iran in 1979. Their work, encouraging a better world spread outside of Iran and Latin America and found homes in all areas of the world, including the Levant. Academics and leaders turned to the attractive words of Shariati and Gutierrez, which embraced dynamic change in politics and religion, eventually forming their own variations of liberation ideology.

Following the result of the June 1967 War, Arab Nationalism, once one of the most prominent ideologies in the Middle East, began to lose the prowess it held over the region. Consequently, many leaders began to search for new intellectual movements that could engulf the masses, challenge the West, and reaffirm their nationalism. In short they needed a quick fix or something that was already somewhat prevalent, and what the region favored was a Marxist approach toward politics with a larger influence over religion. To many existing Arab communists, Shariati's rhetoric proved to be inspiring as he challenged Western authority and domination and preached a revolutionary rhetoric. Marxism by itself in the region, however,

began to wane and simply did not correlate with the Arab culture as successfully as it had with

others. Eventually, some communists sought conversion to Islam following the initial success of

the Iranian Revolution, which gained much of its student and intellectual support from Shariati.

Meanwhile, Gutierrez's message of social mobilization against the corrupt and the importance of

organic grassroots ideology inspired some Christians in the region to adopt and formulate their

own views on liberation. The idea of resistance by both scholars with emphasis on self

awareness and an old, but new religious message relative to how their audiences had viewed the

life and death of their religious heroes[9], allows the following question to be postulated: Can

societies achieve their desired religious and non-religious aims while not letting one ideology

trump the other failing to recognize both goals independently? The purpose of this chapter is to

test the former question in Lebanon and Palestine where liberation ideas have and still are

present and to see if Shariati's and Gutierrez's work had influence on movements. As will be

understood their work affected certain groups, however, never in a way where the religious and

non religious goals of revolution worked with each other albeit existing autonomously, with the

possible exception of peace movement out of Palestine, led by Naim Ateek.


**A. Shariati's Influence**

As the 1979 Islamic Revolution approached in Iran, Shariati's vision was ripe with the

influence of Western Marxists intellectuals, but interpreted through a looking glass that was

uniquely a new form of Shi'ism incorporating modern ideologies. Shariati's popularity gained as

he lectured and inspired students and fellow intellectuals to question the state of life in which

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[9] Shariati and Gutierrez both emphasized that the life and death of their respective religious heroes not be mourned. Rather they inspired many to view their heroes as revolutionaries whose' deaths should incite action to reject and change corruption in the world.

they were living. He urged political action against the Shah's regime and denounced clerical

authority and traditional doctrine, drawing criticism from both the government and religious

institutions. His outspokenness labeled him a target for his alleged murder, most likely thought

to be committed by the Shah's muscle and secret police, the SAVAK (Rahnema 1998, p364).

His legacy, however, was embraced and popularized by the educated in Iran and it would be the

doing of Khomeini that would exploit Shariati's rhetoric to attain intellectual support.

Khomeini was keenly aware of the situation and divisions among the Iranian people

under the Pahlavi Regime. While staunchly against communist supporters such as the Tudeh

Party, Khomeini sought to use the strength of Shariati's leftist popularity to illuminate his own.

He spoke in a very Shariati-like language, calling out against the oppression faced by the poor,

raising all standards of living, and defeating the imperialist influence saturated by the Iranian

government. Khomeini rode a wave of false promises that he never enacted. In the process of

creating the Revolution, he knew he needed Shariati's follower and therefore, could not dismiss

his legacy as irrelevant. By all means, Shariati's legacy strengthened the revolution and helped to

create a real life event that would inspire the Islamic World to stand against Western backed

monarchies and corrupt governments (Abrahamian 1982, p 479).

Though Shariati was a source of inspiration behind the 1979 Islamic Revolution, it still

must be noted and emphasized that Khomeini was able to garner the support of Shariati's

constitutes in his absence. Using Shariati's political religious fervor and being an anti-

establishment thinker himself, Khomeini came into the revolution promising equal and

democratic reforms while receiving immense support. It was only until after his government was

in place that Iran had to find out that his promises were unable to come through, failing to bring

about the justice desired so strongly by Shariati. This becomes a notable point when reflecting

upon Shariati's message that a leader should be a righteous intellectual, possessing all qualities *ensan* and devoid of any traditional clerical connection. Khomeini was a well learned man taking pride in his studies of Plato and classic philosophy. He placed special credence in an educated government that could handle Iran's political as well as religious issues (Nasr 2007, p.126). However, Khomeini remained a member of the clerical institution Shariati had once heavily denounced. Thus, the Revolution led by Khomeini which became extremely attractive around the Muslim world to intellectuals and Muslims alike was in effect, lacking a true intellectual and was nowhere near what Shariati was calling for.

Nonetheless, the message of change and political action by educated and religiously minded men stemming from the initial success of the Islamic Revolution found its way to the Levant and was embraced by many. Communists once popular in the region began searching for new ideologies they could build up. Communism had showed its ugly side to the world and particularly to Muslims – the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Red Army only secured that Russian Communists were imperialists and unbelievers - however, this did not mean that Socialist thought was thrown out the window as garbage (Khalili 2007, p. 27 & 28). As Shariati had once done, many intellectuals from the third world acquired most of their radical leaning toward western thought while abroad in places such as France. There, many were exposed to teachings which sought ways to combine political, sociological, and philosophical theories with virtues closely related to Islam.

It was clear that Muslims and non-Muslims living in the Arab world desired something more than solely Western concepts of liberation that did not address their direct needs or their culture. Creating a new understanding and reverting back to a pure form of Islam presented a bright hope, allowing people to trace back through years of the rich history of their religion and

apply it to modern concepts. Islam shown in this light gave humanity an ideal relevant to their culture, moving past failed ideologies and reliving Islam as a revolutionary force like the Prophet had once done. Islamism gave people the perspective of linking them to their past - a past that had produced great thinkers, governments, and militaries. The arrival of colonialism was an ugly mark on the rich history of the Arab world and needed to be overcome. The opportunity to rebel against governments seen as remnants of colonialism while adhering to revolutionary principles of religious heroes was pious. For Islamists, finding their way back to what culture meant before colonialism was to reaffirm core religious values in light of everyday life, including politics (Ayubi 1991, p. 221).

Yet did this mean Islamists in the Arab region were taking from Shariati's ideology? This question has a very complex answer. In short, yes many Islamists, particularly those coming from secular, leftist, or Marxists backgrounds borrowed from Shariati's work. The longer more complex answer is no and if they did, only indirectly. As Shariati was heavily influenced by great secular minds such as Fanon, he managed to apply anti-colonialists theories to the Islamic world. However, outside of the intellectual world and notably the secular world (since Shariati was regarded as a heretic to many clerics) Shariati's views were unknown or dismissed.

As mentioned above, it was not until the Islamic Revolution that his ideas were greatly spread throughout the world; however, at this same time Khomeini's prominence and success coming from the Revolution was so large that it overshadowed Shariati's influence. For example, at a major leftist publishing house in Beirut, *Dar al-Tali'a* Khomeini's, *Islamic Government* was published. It must be taken into account that his book was published after the great success of the Revolution and because of the Revolution's popularity, Khomeini's work

was quickly released. It was given a foreword in which the following was needed to describe Khomeini's vision. "Despite the religious characteristics of this revolutionary thought…it is essentially a nationalist, contemporary, and modernist ideology…the Islamic mode enables it to win a broad popular basis without losing sight of other objectives" (Sivan 1985, p. 167). This must be highlighted because under almost any circumstance Shariati would not need such an explanation to clarify his vision, simply stating the need for both a religious and national revolution. Had Shariati's rhetoric been popularized by the Revolution and not simply incorporated into Khomeini's discourse as, his work may have very well not been overshadowed. As was the case, the Revolution popularized Khomeini and through explaining his work carefully, Islam and the case for liberation based on religious identity began to catch fire in the Levant even in some intellectual circles.

Thinkers such as Munir Shafiq welcomed this idea of Islamist thought replacing the unsuccessful ideologies of the 20th century. Though he was born Christian Palestinian, his faith was quickly taken over by nationalist ideologies, as he originally favored Maoist discourse and uprising. Eventually, his tendencies toward Mao and Communism were transformed by Islamic ideology as he and a handful of Arab intellectuals chose to embrace Islam.[10] Shafiq was a founding member of the Student Brigade, an umbrella movement within Fatah operating out of Lebanon. It was during his time in the Brigade that influences (including Shariati) from various regions of the Islamic world would come to help this leftist bunch to embrace Islam and use it as a political ideology.

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[10] It should be noted that Islamism has different meanings to different people and "aside from basic differences between Sunni and Shi'a practices and beliefs, the different historical, socio-economic, and political experiences of adherents to political Islam have meant that there is no essential, monolithic, and coherent 'Islamism'" (Khalili 2007, p. 26).

It is necessary to first understand the failure of other ideologies among leftist activists. As mentioned above, certain political theories, such as Communism did much to tarnish its image amongst the Islamic World with its invasion of Afghanistan. Furthermore, Arab Nationalism and the Ba'ath Party appeared to be a passing fad, which were also influenced by European theories. Maoism was initially heavily relied upon due to its emphasis on peasant revolution and guerilla warfare that seemed attractive to the Palestinian cause. In the end, however, Islam served as a more popular vehicle for liberation in the Arab world than any other theory. Thus, Islam was the main tool for activists to profess an ideology that adhered to a strong sense of Nationalism, historical and religious identity, and most important, an ideology that had yet to fail. For many, even non-Muslims, Islam made sense. Christianity, on the other hand was often seen as a religion of imperialists and colonialists and for this reason, it was difficult for revolutionary Christian ideology to gain ground in the Levant (Pouillard, Personal Interview) & (Sivan 1985, p. 167).

The Student Brigade was a grouping of young leftist intellectuals, militants, and common men looking to stand against the corruptive forces of the capitalist and imperialist world. Under the tutelage of Shafiq, the group's official start was in 1974 and sought the liberation of the Palestinian people. Composed of various ethnicities and nationalities, the students were exposed to a variety of teachings and works; students came from Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran to name just a few places. Iranian students brought the intellectual wisdom of Shariati with them to the Student Brigade. His words inspired the Student Brigade, but his work was one of only many ideologies circulated among the members. However, Shariati's influence was only indirect with a great deal of other great leftist and Islamist thinkers such as Khomeini, Hassan Turabi, Abdelhamid Ben Badis, and other influential scholars. Arguments existing outside the Islamic realm adopted

by Palestinian liberation groups such as the Brigade often attributed those thoughts to being universal known (Nicolas Pouillard, Personal Interview)[11].

Interestingly enough, Shariati's influence could not have been too great, especially over the Iranian members of the Student Brigade. Many of the Iranians returned to Iran and participated in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, supporting Khomeini and his activities. This brings about two possible scenarios: either the students became so much more religious within the student brigade that they indeed were glad to see a cleric led, Islamic Revolution (regardless of Shariati's denouncement of the clergy) or they considered Khomeini as a leftist revolutionary (regardless of him being a cleric) bringing about a nationalist change for the better of society. In all likelihood, both are true.

A clear tenant of the Student Brigade was that they wished to remain apart from the Lebanese Civil War and therefore, refused to operate within Beirut. They chose instead to launch militia attacks against Israeli Forces from only South Lebanon. As the Student Brigade mounted their resistance, the group became engrossed in the culture of the rural southern Lebanese communities. Through this process, Nicolas Pouillard observes that many members of the Brigade began to associate themselves with the religious practices and political attitudes they witnessed during their time in the South. He notes that at first, many students failed to embrace the Islamism gaining popularity in South Lebanon and instead remained grounded in their intellectual and non-religious ideologies. However, as the Brigade began spending more time within Palestinian refugee camps and among various Southern rural villages, their piety started to increase. Religious rituals, such as Ramadan either once completely foreign or not taken

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[11] For more details about that time see Nicolas Pouillard's, *Utopies Tiers-Mondismes Et-Theologie Du Non-Renoncement*

seriously began playing a major role in the Brigades ability to relate with alienated Palestinians seeking liberation. Many members, including the leader Shafiq, sought to adopt Islam as part of a collective conversion. They used religion finally as a nationalist message not only to denounce oppressive and imperialist forces, but also and more importantly, as way to unite Muslims in the Palestinian cause.

Those Iranian students returning to Iran saw in the Islamic Revolution a way to follow a liberating message of nationalism while using Islam as a triumphant ideology capable of defeating oppression. They saw in Khomeini a leader that could provide such a transition. Using leftist rhetoric, Khomeini's revolutionary zeal was opposed by many calmer Clerics living in Iran. Thus, the portrait painted of Khomeini as a religiously conservative leader of a theocratic nation that is often presented today in the Western World is not the same light that Muslim intellectuals saw him in during the Revolution. In fact, the way in which Khomeini spoke prior and during the Revolution often differed very little from Shariati. However, it was Khomeini's political leadership and Shariati's premature death that caused Khomeini's influence to grow much larger than Shariati's in Iran and also the Arab World.

Shariati's legacy to the Arab world will always be revered as revolutionary and unique within Islamic thought, but in relation to liberation movements adopting an Islamic tone, his voice will always be quieted by Khomeini. His indirect intellectual influence to the region spread beyond groups like the Student Brigade that largely came under the influence of Islam. His rhetoric was found in the newspaper of the secular group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) headed by George Habash. Habash's views were often left wing and ingrained in Marxists theory. Shariati's socialist views struck a chord with the PFLP (hence the publishing of Shariati's work), but in the long run, Shariati's work was also Islamist and not

appropriate for a secular organization (Pouillard, Personal Interview).  The Arab world made use

of the scholar's unique philosophy; however, his work tended to be too leftist for Islamist groups

- which were gaining ground and the region - and too centered around Islam for secular groups

trying to maintain leftist ideologies.  Unfortunately, what was missed was Shariati's unique

ability to make both leftist and religious theory work together.


## B. Gutierrez's Influence

Gutierrez's ideology of liberation and influence to the region appears to be generally

unknown before the late 1980's and was often associated with Che Guevarian resistance and

revolution.  As is the case with George Habash, some Christians and Marxist thinkers chose to

identify with the populist liberation cause of Palestine – a cause that transcended sectarian

divisions.  Thus popular movements overshadowed the efforts of men like Naim Ateek who

sought to create a Palestinian theology of liberation and perhaps the closest in calling for the

need of religious and non-religious ideologies of revolution similar to Gutierrez.

On the theology side of things, Ateek wrote a Christian response to the occupation of

Palestine.  He wrote this theology to be practically applied to the Palestinian situation that

witnessed death, oppression, and destruction on a regular basis.  Ateek sought a theology of

liberation, which very similar to Gutierrez's work relies heavily on reflection of one's historical

context.  In his work, *Justice and Only Justice*, Ateek attempts to solve the doctrinal problem of

the Old Testament claiming Jews to be the chosen people of God, which many Israelis see as

justification for a Jewish state (Ateek 1989, p. 74).  On a much different level from Gutierrez,

Ateek chooses to use theology as a way to mobilize direct peace, combating the Israeli

occupation of his own people. Though Gutierrez also aims for a peaceful world, his pushes for social mobilization and revolution, which as history has typically revealed, revolution leaves a bloody trail of armed struggle. Ateek has no naïve presumptions regarding the consequences of revolution and therefore, whole heartedly supports a peacemaking strategy and resistance, yet he does so citing the peaceful actions and religious virtues of Jesus as well as the non violence non-religious teachings of Nelson Mandella. (Ateek 1989, p. 155).

According to Gutierrez, the Church's role in liberation begins with the reflection of history and how faith has to be interpreted up to that point (Gutierrez 1973, p. 10). Engaging one's historical reality requires one to confront the specific facts of that reality. Thus, Gutierrez's expectation of liberation theology must be different from one historical context to another. In this case, Ateek directly favors a movement toward peacemaking without revolution after reflecting upon the historical context of Palestinians. The explicit claim of peace combating is a consequence of the failure of armed struggle in many Areas of the world including Latin America (Ateek, Personal Interview). Thus a major difference in Ateek and Gutierrez's work is how it should be practically applied to their respective situations: Gutierrez focusing on a religious and socialist message that allows his audience to build their own political future compared to Ateek who distinctly adheres to religious and socialist message of non-violence.

As noted by Ateek, the scholar and priest revealed that Gutierrez's work specifically did not play into his liberation ideology, *Justice and Only Justice*. In fact, he wrote about his work not initially categorizing it in the liberation theology realm; it was his publishers who noticed the similarity to typical liberation work. He notes that he was well aware of the liberation theology in Latin America and the revolutionary movement; however, his work began primarily as a result

of the Israeli occupation and the June war of 1967.  He shared his initial hope of a peaceful

resistance toward oppression by noting the success of the First Intifada in 1987.  In retrospect he

believes that Palestinians can learn about social mobilization and how peace can be a very

effective tool to bring about justice on an even larger scale than what was accomplished in 1987.

Ateek claims, "The spread of peaceful resistance, however, remains difficult as Israel

tactically treats non violent activism with the same reaction as they would violent activism"

(Ateek).  This element combined with other social factors, such as the complexity of Palestinian

identity has caused people to seek justice by unjust means.  An example of such complexity is

noted as Ateek examines how some Palestinians recognize their Arab and Palestinian identity

over their Christian identity (Ateek 1989, p. 14).  Perhaps many Christians in Palestine value

their national identity is such high esteem because it allows them to relate more to the movement

of resistance.  Certainly this was the case with George Habash of the PFLP.  Although a pious

Christian, his national identity was emphasized over his religious character to support the cause

of his movement.  As it will be discussed in further detail below, Palestinian national identity has

gone through a period of change where the role of religion has increased to authenticate various

new social movements.

In response to how conflict affects religious identity, Ateek hastened not to generalize;

however, speculated that as violence and occupation has become more intense people find it

easier to emphasize one aspect of identity over the other.  Possibly this could provide reasons for

why certain intellectuals in movements, such as the Student Brigade, found it easier to combat

oppression as a Muslim.  Asserting Muslim identity became popular as it gave Arabs a Muslim

cause, independent of any basis for social movements that had been used in any part of the

world.  Christianity simply does not have the numbers or the unique history that Islam has to

serve as a justification for a social movement and receive a large following. In addition, peaceful resistance against oppression is an uphill battle that requires perseverance and patience. Quite possibly a reason for Ateek's religious and non-religious goals not changing and/or not becoming convoluted could be due to the fact that his movement is not a threat to the opposition. When a movement is recognized as a threat, it often will face challenges and perhaps have to change its ideology, thus allowing for religious and non-religious ideals to become confused. For Ateek, this has yet to happen.

## C. Change in the Use of Ideologies within Social Movements

The late French scholar (orientalist, historian, and sociologist), Maxime Rodinson suggested that "Muslims commonly re-interpret Muslim ideas and symbols as the equivalents of current communist ideas and themes" (Rodinson 1979, p.48). The process of re-interpretation and change of Islamic idealism in the Levant during the 70's was extremely attractive for certain individuals in political organizations, such as those in the Student Brigade. It should be noted that I believe this statement cannot be confined only to Islam and the Arab world or to any one religion or people. However, many of the Muslims that belonged to leftist political parties or that favored communism were exposed to other non-religious socialist ideologies as well as those religious reformers preaching various ideas of social transformation. The difference, in this author's opinion between Shariati and other religious reformers during that time was Shariati's ability to preach the need for both religious liberation as well as non-religious sociopolitical liberation without blurring the lines between the two.

As it turns out however, Shariati's influence in the Arab world was only minor in respect to the fellow academics that viewed his work. Among intellectual and public circles, Islamic reformers such as Khomeini, who had succeeded with an actual Islamic revolution put into practice, gained the most support. Shariati created his philosophy around the same mode of using original aspects of Islam to fit certain socialist thinking as did many religious men; however, he took his ideas a step further to recognize the need for two revolutions that clearly stated their non-religious and religious goals.. His influence helped two distinct ideologies to become recognized by sociologists and others studying the region: first, there is the dominant and explicit ideology which is publicly emphasized and purposely popularized to affect the main activities of daily life, which in this case is Islam; second, there is the underlying ideology that is found within the rhetoric of the explicitly ideology, yet generally takes a backseat to the former's dominating identity and is known as the implicit ideology, in this case a sociopolitical agenda (Pouillard, Personal Interview). What Shariati had to carefully accomplish in Iran was to awaken the people to two revolutions, a religious one and a national one. He knew that if all the explicit ideology was put into a religious revolution, then the specific needs of sociopolitical change would never be accomplished and vice versa.

This case of non-religious and religious ideologies existing alongside each other is complicated by the linking of explicit nationalism to secularism as Sayyd Qutb did in his book, *Milestones*, based on his experiences with Arab Nationalism (Qutb 2005, 10 & 29). Qutb believed that loyalty should not be given to a state where true Islam was not imposed on the population and since true Islam had yet to be implemented in modern nations, he spoke out against nationalism. He held that the only true collective identity should be an Islamic one, which comes before national, racial, and even family identity. Similarly, Khomeini, in coming

to power in Iran chose to label the 1979 Revolution an Islamic Revolution as opposed to an Iranian Revolution. Thus, nationalism – as it is known in the Western sense – can only be described as being subtle or disguised in Muslim rhetoric. By calling for an Islamic state, individuals intend to keep nationalistic intentions a main goal while outwardly pursuing a way of life that stands against the status quo as command from God; however, nationalistic goals often get absorbed within the religious. I believe Shariati would approve of some form of an Islamic State as long as religious and sociopolitical goals remained explicitly distinct.

When a traditional ideology, such as religion has non-religious counterbalance it becomes re-interpreted and begins to lose the focus of its origin doing whatever necessary to dominate the implicit ideology. Moreover, this concept is in distinct contrast with Shariati's stance of keeping his nationalistic and religious intentions very separate and explicit in both cases. In keeping the goals of the two ideologies apart, it must be noted that Shariati saw religion and nationalism as distinct ways of thought that ran parallel paths; this is true, in that both ideologies use aspects socialism, revolutionary action, humanity working together, and a conscious awareness to achieve the desired utopia. Shariati's message only becomes distorted when nationalistic and religious goals lose their separation and begin to merge, leaving many to push their religious ideology to the forefront.

The case of Lebanon is a perfect example of this confusion. Violence brought to the country with the start of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975 deepened an already large sectarian divide, which fractionalized the country to its core. Even secular leftists found themselves choosing sectarian sides. Describing the situation of intellectuals in Beirut, Emmanuel Sivan quotes Christian Lebanese leftist, Jerome Shahin,

> If the Left wants to remain both Arab and progressive it has to
> make its peace with religion as a social factor and drop the secular
> ideal almost altogether. But this does not mean acquiescing to the
> status quo. Only one religion is to be embraced and that is Islam,
> the major cultural component of Arabism (Sivan 1985, p. 165).

Shahin was not alone with his feelings, as many intellectuals including Shafiq adopted Islam as religious divisions in the region grew more intense. As noted by his quote above, Shahin and others saw Islam as a way to give Arabs a strategic advantage in separating themselves from foreign ideologies and religions of oppressors.[12] This way of thinking becomes problematic with Shariati's work in the sense that by emphatically stressing the importance of one's religion over nationalistic and social endeavors - especially in an area where the sectarian differences are vast – the result allows religion to be left unquestioned and automatically assuming a leadership position within social movements. According to Shariati, religious tradition as it had presented itself in his society was extremely flawed and not fit to lead a people to social change and revolution.

Also in contrast with Shariati's ideas are Palestinian movements which were explicitly created with Nationalistic intentions and have today become overshadowed (with no help from popular media) by religious ideologies re-interpreted, making the importance of the movement to be seemingly more about religion than nationalism. Furthermore, the current movements are represented by so much religious re-interpretation that the case for Palestine is now confused on the one hand by various Islamic groups advocating an Islamic Palestine and Jewish movements located both inside in outside of Israel calling for the need to maintain a Jewish state. Failing in

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[12] It should be noted that the author is not saying that these men who use Islam to promote their Arab identity are not necessarily religious or that they are, but what is trying to be said is that in identifying as a Muslim these men become closer to their Arab heritage.

this separation between ideologies has led to vast stereotyping all over the world causing the persecution, slander, and unnecessary violence to people simply practicing a religious belief or standing for a national cause they believe in. It is in my opinion that Shariati's ideas remain equally focused, yet separate on nationalistic and religious goals to achieve the overall goal of liberation. His views, however, were never formed to create an independent political party or school of thought and had they been, his ideals would have certainly clashed with Khomeini's making it clear that religious re-interpretation in the hope of creating a new society from more than one party only exacerbates the primary function of achieving a nationalist revolution.

Christianity on the other hand has not gone through the similar trend Islam has of having to account for their ideologies in the Middle East. It is true that while the greater the occurrence and veracity of sectarian violence, such as that of the Lebanese Civil War and Israeli occupation have caused most movements to rely and re-interpret their explicit religious ideology to achieve their implicit Nationalistic ideology. However, since Arab countries have a far greater population of Muslims, it is easy to see how Islamic movements, especially those against the West and the status quo receive greater amount of study and attention from the outside Western world.

George Sabra, a Lebanese theologian asserted that Christian liberation ideology never grasped the roots of Arab culture like it did in Latin America because many Christians simply were trying to survive as a minority in a sectarian divided region. This is not to say that during violent outbursts in the region Christians did not assert their Christian identity to greater proportions, which is evident by the character of Christian militias. However, since the concept of liberation for this thesis has to do with resisting oppressive forces, Lebanese Christian militias that fought alongside Israeli aggressor do not belong in the category of the oppressed. Thus, the

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Christians in the Arab world that wanted to challenge the status quo while asserting their piety had to do it in a secular form, such as George Habash. Revolutionary ideas as solely Christian Liberation would have left out a population of people (Muslims) too valuable to not create a movement around. Thus, the form of liberation ideology adopted by Christians in Palestine is slightly different from Gutierrez's vision.

The result in the change of liberation ideology among Christianity is a change away from being revolutionary in the sense of the word that was popularized in Latin America. Christians in Palestine outnumbered and looking to assert their voice somewhere in the complexity that is the Israel Palestine conflict, have now, with the help of Ateek, opted for a liberation based on solely peace. It should be noted that many Christians still believe in the armed struggle against Israel; however, in terms of Christian Palestinian liberation theology, Ateek's peaceful movement is virtually by itself. Gutierrez also preached for the peaceful and loving relationships of people; however, remained vague on the limits of social action amongst people. Ateek on the other hand, specifically points to the need for a peaceful social movement in a land where violence has become an unfortunate common occurrence (Ateek, Personal Interview).

The result of modern movements and intellectuals in Arab world using religion as the main cause for social movements is far from Shariati's and Gutierrez's visions. Both men consistently rely upon religion as a reminder for how liberation is possible and to understand the morality of religious figures that rebel, yet the cause of their movement is freedom, which in the modern world translates to national freedom. Their work made relatively little impact on the region. Shariati had a larger effect than Gutierrez, but this is largely due to the fact that there are closer regional and cultural similarities between Iran and the Arab world. The traces of Shariati's work seem to be largely indirectly related to certain movements started by

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intellectuals.  These movements took from his revolutionary ideas; however, as they became more religious, their intellectual ability was overshadowed by their piety.

Gutierrez's influence seems non-existent to the region directly.  The main proponent of liberation theology to the region, Naim Ateek, uses liberation theology in his own way to justify peace in the region.  Gutierrez's work, though offering peace also preaches revolution and thus was most popular with militant movements.  To some degree – although not specifically Gutierrez – liberation in the Latin American sense had a stronger following among secular and Islamist groups in the Arab world.  Among the PFLP a martyred member was referred to as the Guevara of Gaza (Khalili 2007, p. 140).  The Islamic movement, Hizbullah attempted to reconcile and publish their religious message within the same confines as Latin American liberation theology, but in the end chose against it as the cultural differences we too great (Pouillard, Personal Interview).

In Lebanon and Palestine, acknowledging equally both religious and non-religious goals and actions of liberation in order to facilitate a hybrid religious secular movement is not common in fashion.  Most probably because of sectarian strife and the occupation of Palestine by a Zionist state, popular movements that are now calling for liberation or even change are commonly of a religious persuasion.  While many have non-religious elements of liberation, they become secondary to the religious elements and identity of a movement.  In order for this not to continue a resurgence of secular leftist rhetoric needs to reappear in Lebanon and Palestine.  Working together, I believe that secular leftists and progressive religious leaders have the best opportunity to unite and create a movement using similar ideas of Shariati and Gutierrez in its own context.

# CHAPTER V

# CONCLUSION

The effects of colonialism and class development within contemporary history and throughout parts of the Third World has resulted in great attempts by scholars, leaders, and activists to answer the needs of their respective societies, including the effort to make one's culture distinctly his own.  This task has been addressed by many charismatic individuals leading to the popularity and call for revolution, known as a form of liberation from the oppressions existent in their respective countries. Separating themselves from First World ideology, which many revolutionaries believe lacks religious morality, some rely on solely religious interpretations of how religion can answer societal needs.  These religious thinkers, - bound tightly by the fear of sounding heretical - create liberation ideologies often within a religious framework in the attempt of achieving both sociopolitical and religious aspirations.  This at times becomes problematic as the ideology of liberation is confused between religious and sociopolitical language, distorting the message of what is fundamentally religious and what is fundamentally national.

That being said, this thesis examines two religious thinkers that I argue do not confuse the messages of religious and sociopolitical liberation. These thinkers, Ali Shariati and Gustavo Gutierrez, uniquely produce theories of liberation in order to free the masses in their respective communities of oppressive forces.  They manage their ideologies initially by addressing the superiority of God and that His will wishes humanity to strive toward a loving relationship with Him and all of humanity, producing a just and fair world.  Within this context, both men use religious histories to examine how righteous religious heroes once opposed oppression.  They

continue by making the concept of liberation and social revolution applicable to their present sociopolitical situations and critically reference the ideologies of secular thinkers that endorse change in opposition to the First World status quo. Thus, using both religious and non-religious ideologies toward the ultimate goal of liberation, but explicitly not confusing goals of the religious with goals of the non-religious, Shariati's and Gutierrez's work achieves two things: first, it prevents misunderstanding of religious ideology taking over what is non-religious ideology. Second, it allows for a much easier task of comparing foundational religious messages of liberation, such as those found in Christianity and Shi'ism.

Through examining Shariati's and Gutierrez's profoundly unique form of liberation, this thesis moved to understand the influence of the scholars' work in the Arab world, a region fraught with calls for liberation. As it turns out, though Shariati and Gutierrez were known within the academic circles of the Arab world, their work did not directly affect social movements rallying the masses toward liberation in Lebanon and Palestine. Rather, movements of liberation in the area were deeply affected by sectarian strife, either making their identity more religious or totally non-religious; thus, preventing Shariati's and Gutierrez's concepts of promoting both religious and non-religious ideologies.

This is not to say that if liberation movements in the Arab world followed the same way of constructing their ideologies as Shariati and Gutierrez that they would automatically have success. After all, Shariati's ideal movement was never put into practice in Iran following his death and Khomeini's rhetoric inevitably captured the imagination of his followers. As it was previously noted, much of Khomeini's pre-Revolution discourse relied heavily on the religious and the non-religious; however, as his political power grew and his Islamic Regime came underway, his religious ideologies trumped his non-religious ones. Shariati's ideologies, on the

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other hand were at times complex, changing in order to elude those in pursuit of charging him with treason to the state and thus, Hamid Dabashi accuses his ideology as having "an important, but never definitive role" in achieving societal change (Dabashi 2008, p. 99).

Also, Gutierrez's movement though influential in Latin America still struggles to garner a large following. Typically when Latin American revolutionary movements do gain momentum, they are popularly associated with Marxist socialism due to their embrace of socialist values. Yet, in actuality Marxist revolution is in opposition to Gutierrez's message of liberation. The Marxist label and the cultural differences between Latin America and the Arab world are most likely the reason to account for a lack of popular borrowing of Gutierrez's ideals. Thus, in the constantly changing political environment and sectarian sensitive Arab world, what might be beneficial is to use Shariati and Gutierrez as examples of cohesive religious and non-religious morals in order to broker some sense of religious and non-religious understanding and establish co-religious social movements. However, because of the fact that both men are considered outsiders to areas such as Lebanon and Palestine, this might be easier said than actually put into practice.

It is in my opinion that the concept of liberation theology from Gutierrez's point of view might be a viable influence to social movements in the Arab world if reworked to fit the Arab Muslim and Christian context, because of the strong emphasis of humanity working together to accomplish religious and national goals. However, given that Gutierrez's work is relevant to Latin American liberation and it rings of a distinctly Christian tone, it would most likely be too large of a hurdle for religious Arabs of non-Christian faiths to overcome.

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Shariati's work on the other hand, will also most likely continue to influence very few in Arab world as it will be dominated by other religious thinkers that will probably dismiss his work as heretical as has been done in the past. His work will most likely appeal to the non-religious and academic audiences. Though his work is extremely sincere in its revolutionary message, the practice of liberation adopted in the Arab world has been revolutionary Islam led by a range of non-unified movements lacking secular inspiration. Shariati's unique approach of denouncing religious institutions is difficult for many to grasp as was also the case in Iran. Revolutionaries have thus been divided into two camps in popular mainstream media; the religious and the non-religious socialists. Shariati and Gutierrez would see such a concept as disappointing, as their work employs both religious and non-religious theories of liberation that openly acknowledging each other and work together, allowing revolutionaries to be both religious and socialist.

Furthermore, as sectarian struggles persist, so does the anxiety of being undermined from an opposing sect. Recently certain groups striving for the Palestinian cause, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad have increasingly spoken out against Shi'a discourse being anti-Islamic (Pouillard, Personal Interview). Thus, the emphasis of solely religious ideology in sectarian environments steeped in armed strife unfortunately leaves little room for the reconciliation of different religious movements and therefore, strengthens religious identity. The attempt to bring together movements of different faiths as this thesis has tried to do by examining the commonality of ideologies used by Shariati and Gutierrez is becoming rarer as the growth of religious ideology increases. Though their work has had relatively little effect on the region, much can be learned from their attempts to explicitly spread their overall form of liberation within two ideologies, the religious and the non-religious.

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