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Martin Luther's Theory of "Two kingdoms" and Its Practical Dimension

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Abstract: Luther's "theory of two kingdoms" outlines "the kingdom of God" governed by "spiritual government" and "the kingdom of the world" governed by the "secular government". It also emphasizes the obedience to the secular rulers regardless of their tyranny. Luther's solution to the problem of their tyranny made him controversial, especially after the oppression of civilians and Jews by the extreme power politics in Auschwitz tragedy in World War II. Some scholars argue that it has kept religion indifferent to society and politics. To address this issue, Niebuhr and Moltmann proposed a political theology that focuses on the reality of human conditions in this earthly life. Latin American liberation theology further applied secular theology to practice, but it eventually shifted to spiritual construction in the face of the spiritual crisis of the loss of theological identity. The relationship between the two kingdoms can be explored from the perspective of spirit (πνευματικῶς pneumatikoos), soul(ψυχήν psychēn) and flesh (σαρκίνοις sarkinois). This paper aims to demonstrate the inherent affinity between the two kingdoms and respond to the criticism of the "two kingdoms" theory.

Key words: Martin Luther, "two kingdoms" theory, theology of spirit, soul and flesh, Latin American liberation theology

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1. Introduction

The relationship between the Sacred and the Profane is a crucial and controversial topic in the study of Christianity. This tension is rooted in the conflicting powers between religion and politics, between theology and society, and between spiritual and physical realms, and among other contradictory dialectical oppositions. Martin Luther's "two kingdoms" theory inherited significant theoretical viewpoints from the Bible and Augustine's theory of "two cities." As one of the representative theories of Christianity in dealing with the Sacred and the Profane relationship, it had been continuously refined and matured, particularly after the German peasant war. Luther divided the Sacred and the Profane into the kingdom of God, responsible for inner faith, and the kingdom of the world, responsible for external order and worldly peace.(1) Building on this foundation, Luther further underscored the significance of secular power and the necessity of obedience to secular political power.(2)

As a tool for maintaining secular rule, Luther's "two countries" theory has valuable implications for democratic political order. However, it can be easily abused during autocratic periods which leads to criticism. During the Second World War, the Christian Church stood silent in the face of Nazi atrocities and disregarded

(1) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编．《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 135。

(2) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编．《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 69。

Auschwitz massacre to keep the religious distance between faith and the society. Afterwords some theologians criticized the complete separation of the relationship between the two kingdoms. They advocated for combining faith and religious criticism of society and proposed a political-theological model in which the church should bear social responsibility. This new model of political theology served as the theoretical basis for early Latin American liberation theology and was applied in practice.

However, "it is must be said that the abuse or misinterpretation of a doctrine doesn't justify its condemnation."[3]During World War II, the Norwegian Lutheran Church based their resistance against the German occupation on Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms. In 1946, Eivind Berggrav, the Bishop of Oslo in Norway, stated that despite the Nazis depriving them of law and justice, they had God and conscience to fall back on. Luther became their great example and gave them arms.[4]

Therefore, it is necessary to re-examine the assertion that Martin Luther's "two kingdoms" theory disregards the present world and separates the relationship between the Sacred and the Profane. Political theology and liberation theology shifts their focus from individual and spiritual rebirth to pursuing the physical liberation of human beings, which enriches the Christian religion. However, with the development of secular theology, it also risks neglecting spiritual and faith, and separating the two kingdoms. Luther's theory is valuable for navigating the relationship between the two kingdoms. The current literature on Martin Luther's "two kingdoms" theory is insufficient, mainly focusing on interrelationships of the "two kingdoms" and the theory itself. The innovate point of this article is that it will not only interpret the relationship between two kingdoms from the perspective of spirit, soul and flesh, but also use Latin American liberation theology as an example to elaborate in detail.

2. The theory of "two kingdoms"

Luther's "two kingdoms" theory can be traced back to biblical teachings. In the Book of Matthew 22:21, Jesus answered the Pharisees' question about paying taxes to Caesar by stating, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." This suggests that the secular rulers have control over the flesh, while God has control over the spirit, and the two are not related. The apostle Paul also discussed the secular authority in Romans, stating in *Romans* 13:1 that "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Paul's argument, based on the Bible, shows that secular power comes from God. As a result, spiritual and earthly power, which had been previously in separation, moved towards interaction. This attitude towards secular power has greatly influenced Christianity's development over thousands of years. After Constantine unified Rome, Christianity became the authoritative religion that was closely linked to politics and used as a tool to maintain political rule. Consequently, the power of the pope was placed under secular power. The legalization of secular power did not result in the separation of politics and religion, but instead led to entanglement and interference between the two kingdoms.

Augustine's theory of the two cities served as a direct source of inspiration for Luther's theory of "two kingdoms." According to Augustine, individuals who prioritize their earthly desires constitute the secular city,

(3) Prill T, "God's Two Kingdoms and the Christian's Two Citizenships: Luther's Misunderstood Doctrine and its Relevance for Today,", *Grace to the Nation*, Vol. 2, (2010), 35-39.

(4) Prill T, "God's Two Kingdoms and the Christian's Two Citizenships: Luther's Misunderstood Doctrine and its Relevance for Today,", *Grace to the Nation*, Vol. 2, (2010), 35-39.

while those who prioritize spiritual pursuits constitute the city of God. [5]As both the holy city and the secular city coexist within the same country, the question of how politics and religion intersect becomes a pressing issue. Augustine proposed that Christians living under pagan rule should obey the commandment of Jesus to "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" and submit to the rule of secular authorities. In Christian countries, secular rulers should obey God just like other Christians and lead with the city of God as their guiding principle.[6] Augustine believed that the secular city and the city of God coexisted within the same space, with the church existing within the social reality of the secular world. Therefore, Christians cannot reject the secular city by opposing the earthly system and the city of God. Augustine argued that the two powers given by God are equal, and the secular power is not subordinate to the spiritual power. Christians should obey the ruler of their country, unless the spirit sphere is violated. [7]

The relationship between the state and the Church underwent significant changes during the Middle Ages, as the Western Roman Empire was gradually divided into the national kingdoms, and the feudal system led to the separation of the states and divisions of the churches. The "Two Swords" doctrine emerged during this time and went through a long process of evolution, reflecting the struggle between political power and religious authority. In general, since the reign of Pope Gelasius I (491-518), the "two swords doctrine" had prevailed, which held that there was no superiority between the two swords of "kingship" and "ecclesiastical power". As the Roman Catholic Church grew in power, the "two swords" doctrine posited that God gave both the "secular sword" and "spiritual sword" to the Pope who then handed the "secular sword" to the king, strengthening the independence and authority of the Church in this way. [8]During the era of Gregory VII, with the increasing power of the Roman Catholic Church, the theory was transformed into one where religious power was higher than secular power, and religious power became the sole authority. The corruption of the papal system provoked ecclesiastical heresies such as Wycliffe and Hoss, but they failed to challenge the authority of the church due to the inability of the secular regime. In the period of Martin Luther, the rising consciousness of nationalism in Europe provided support for religious reform for which Luther's theory of "two kingdoms" served as a theoretical foundation.

Martin Luther's religious reform challenged the social and political order of his time. At that time, the model of church-national states gradually replaced the Roman Catholic-imperial order. The implementation of the religious reform required new political-theological theory to replace the "two swords" doctrine under the Roman Catholic-imperial order. Luther's "Two Kingdoms" theory developed and matured in response to the changing reality, which can be divided into three stages.

From the publication of the "Ninety-five Theses" in 1517 to "An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" in 1521, Luther's main work was to demonstrate the legitimacy of secular power and to connect the spiritual and secular kingdoms. According to Luther, both secular power and church power came

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(5) 奥古斯丁 Augustine, 《上帝之城》 Shangdi zhi cheng [The City of World], 王晓朝Wang Xiaozhao译 · （北京 Beijing：人民出版社 People's Publishing House） · 2006 · 631 。

(6) 奥古斯丁 Augustine, 《上帝之城》 Shangdi zhi cheng [The City of World], 王晓朝Wang Xiaozhao译 · （北京 Beijing：人民出版社 People's Publishing House） · 2006 · 21 。

(7) Martin Luther's "two kingdoms" theory is based on Augustine's theory of the two cities but was modified to reflect his own ideas. Luther believed that Christians belong to the "kingdom of God," but their physical bodies are also in the"kingdom of the world."Luther argued that worldly power belongs to the present world but becomes an integral part of the Christian.

(8) 姜启州 · 赵辉宾 Jiang Qizhou, Zhao huibin · 《试论中古西欧双剑论的流波与诠释》Shilun zhongguxiou shuangjianlun de liubo yu quanshi [On the Dissemination and Interpretation of the "Two Swords Theory" in Medieval Western Europe] · 《政治思想史》Zhengzhi sixiangshi [Journal of the History of Political Thought] · No.1 · 2016 。

from God. While secular power belongs to the present world but becomes an integral part of Christian. Just as the hands should help the injured eyes, secular power has the right to regulate and punish Pope for his errors. Since earthly power is sent by God to punish the wicked and protect the kind people, the secular authorities should freely exercise this power among the whole Christian community.(9) In Luther's theory, Christians are also part of the power in the world, and the power in the world becomes the extension of the power of God's kingdom in this world. As the two countries gradually converge, secular power is elevated to spiritual power. Luther's ideas were welcomed by the lower classes. On the one hand, the people who had long been excluded or oppressed by the Catholic-imperial order also wanted to change the world order as Luther said. On the other hand, the nationalistic sentiment contained in the religious reform and the "two kingdoms" theory also catered to the people's aspirations. Under the influence of Luther, the peasant movements took place.

The period from 1521 to 1523 marked a stage of maturity for Luther's ideas of two kingdoms. Following the Diet of Worms, the secular government prohibited the propagation of Luther's ideas and treated him as a prisoner, which led Luther to realize that the power of the secular government needed to be restrained as the power of the church. In response, Luther published his "An Earnest Exhortation for All Christians" to preach the Word and convince people. In 1523, Luther's "Temporal Authority: To What Extent it Should Be Obeyed" expounded on the relationship between the two kingdoms clearly defined, mutually compatible, and interdependent. Luther maintained that "the one [kingdom] is to produce piety, the other to keep the peace and prevent wickedness; neither is sufficient to exist in the world alone".(10) The article also delved into the Christian use of the sword and the limits of the submission to the authority. According to Luther, to preserve their faith and spiritual life, Christians should not submit to the interference of secular power with faith and conscience.(11) Instead, they should refuse to obliterate the Christian faith, deny the Word of God, and blaspheme the majesty of God.(12) Christians may use the sword in cases of injustice towards others, but they shouldn't use it for their own secular or related interests.

However, various groups, such as insurgents, the secular government, and the church, exploited this doctrine for their selfish desires. In particular, radical religious groups denied the authority of the secular government, overemphasized the importance of the spiritual kingdom, and completely severed the relationship between the two kingdoms. Thomas Münzer took the relationship between the two kingdoms to an extreme in 1524, proposing that God lives in the mundane world, that the well-being of Christians in this life is as important as the immortality of the soul, and that Christians could interfere directly with secular power and change the social structure. In 1524, the misinterpretation of Luther's theory and the urging of reformers such as Münzer resulted in peasant wars in Germany. Luther responded them by publishing articles such as "Admonition to Peace Concerning the Twelve Articles of the Peasants," "Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants ," and "An Open Letter on the Harsh Book Against the Peasants." In these writings, he urged the nobles to take the riots seriously, mitigate their

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(9) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编．《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 69。

(10) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编．《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 135。

(11) 黄保罗．刘新利 Paulos Huang．Liu Xinli．《路德书信集（1507-1519）》Lude shuxinji（1507-1519）[Martin Luther's Letters]．（山东Shandong：山东大学出版社 Shandong daxue chubanshe [Shandong University Press．2015]．148页。

(12) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编．《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 131。

harsh demands on the peasants, and pointed out the the problem of violence of the peasants and the error of the Gospel in rationalizing the violence.

The practical application of Luther's "two kingdoms" theory focused on the stability of the social order in the context of the intensification of the conflict between the lower classes and the nobility of the Holy Roman Empire under feudal serfdom. This period marked the practical application of Luther's "two kingdoms" theory, which he refined further by reflecting on the peasant wars. He adjusted the relationship between the two kingdoms, emphasizing that secular authority has the power to suppress heresy and blasphemy, particularly the violent rebellion of radical religious groups. Before and after World War II, many Christians ignored this context in which the "two kingdoms" theory arose so that they misunderstood or criticized it.

3. Misunderstanding and Criticism of Luther's "Two Kingdoms" Theory

Due to Luther's emphasis on the status of secular authority and his opposition to changing the social order, the relationship between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world was often misconstrued as a divisive relationship, which had a serious negative impact on Hitler's Germany. During World War II, many Christians misunderstood the relationship between the two kingdoms, considering that they are separate. They disregarded the fact that Christians physically live in this world and have a responsibility to it. Members of the Lutheran Church who supported the Nazi dictatorship even deliberately misinterpreted and misused the "two kingdoms" theory to authorize the dictatorship. The so-called German Christians of the time willingly cooperated with the Nazi regime and did their best to bring the church under the control of the Nazi state. However, this approach clearly confused Luther's definition of the boundaries between the two kingdoms.

After the Auschwitz tragedy, theologians who had witnessed the oppression of civilians and Jews by Nazi ultra-powerful politics during World War II, reflected on the Auschwitz tragedy from a theological perspective. As a result, political theology emerged as a Doctrine dealing with the relationship between religion and society. Representative figures of political theology, such as Jürgen Moltmann (1926-) and Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971), reexamined and reflected on Luther's idea of the "two kingdoms." Based on this, they proposed new theological ideas to address contemporary societal problems. They believed that the church should be cognizant of its political presence, social duties, and critical responsibility.

Moltmann argued that "the doctrine (the 'two kingdoms' theory) provided no basis for religious and political resistance to Hitler's perversion of the state" [(13)] and led to the separation of church and state, which left the church to govern only religion and conscience, while society was left to be governed by a conscience-neutral power politics.[(14)] In his Theology of Hope, Moltmann shifted the perspective of Christian theology from the kingdom of God to the secular world, emphasizing the importance of promoting change and bringing hope to people in their socio-political and private lives. He criticized Luther for the danger of pulling ourselves out of the world and becoming silent and uncritical, arguing it is not a responsible Christian way of being, and it does not contribute to peace and justice in world politics and economics. Moltmann rejected the separation of the Christian community

(13) Jürgen Moltman, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics: Jurgen Moltmann Lectures in Dialogue with Mennonite Scholars,* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 17.

(14) 于尔根·莫尔特曼 · Jürgen Moltman · 《俗世中的上帝》 Sushizhong de shangdi[Gott im Projekt der modernen Weit] · Zeng Nianyue 译 · (北京Beijing：中国人民大学出版社 Zhongguo renmindaxue chubanshe [The Press of Renmin University of China]) · 2003 · 50 。

from the secular society, arguing that Christians should develop a critique of the violent world in the light of God's kingdom in the Last Judgment.(15)

Moltmann's view highlights that it is very important to reflect and criticize the society and keep inner faith. He also emphasized the importance of the social reality and the need for changes and critical spirit to promote the transformation of irrational social structure. His theory shows an attempt to link the spiritual kingdom with the secular kingdom. However, he shifted the focus of theology from God to humanity and society, so that "the crucified God" as a reflection of human suffering and social reality may ignore the characteristics of religion and God. As a consequence, it runs the risk of insufficient spiritual construction. His critique of Luther's "silentism" may also be biased, which could be further explained in the fourth chapter with the theory of the theology of the soul, the flesh and the flesh.

Niebuhr argued that Christians have the ability to transform the social structure to care for each other. He criticized Luther for his unfounded fear of anarchy stemming from his pessimism, and his indifference to the injustices of tyranny which led to fatal consequences in the history of German civilization.(16) Niebuhr contended that although Luther advocated for individuals to fulfill their responsibilities in society and help their fellow man, he did not propose changing the social structure to foster mutual care. Niebuhr also pointed out that Luther's stance on the peasant revolt exemplifies his approach of separating the secular and spiritual kingdoms. Luther expressed satisfaction with the inequalities of the feudal system of his time, acknowledging that there would always be masters and slaves in the world.(17)

Niebuhr contended that Luther's theory opposed the demand of peasants for the abolition of serfdom because it would expand Christ's spiritual kingdom into the secular realm, thereby achieving equality for all people. Luther widened the gap between the secular and spiritual kingdoms, which becomes a division between "public" and "private" morality. He demanded perfection of private morality in the service of official morality and the existing social structure, favoring tyranny over anarchy.(18)

In political theology, the theology of the kingdom of God emphasizes the importance of leading a righteous life and promoting the welfare of society. It is not a private theology, but rather a public one. According to Moltmann, the separation of church and state does not imply that religion should become only a private matter. The church should preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God not only to individuals, but to society as a whole. Moreover, Moltmann argues that the theology of the Kingdom of God should not only remain confined to the public sphere, but also should shed light on marginalized individuals who have been relegated to the underground.(19) This implies that the harmonious relationship between religion and politics requires the active participation of every Christian in politics and society. For Christians, the peace is a communal concept rather than an individualistic one, and the harmonious relationship between church and politics can be disrupted as

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(15) Jürgen Moltman, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics: Jurgen Moltmann Lectures in Dialogue with Mennonite Scholars,* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 51-55.

(16) 雷茵霍尔德·尼布尔 Reinhold Niebuhr ·《人的本性与命运（下卷）》 Ren de benxing yu minyun [The Nature and Destiny of Man], 王作虹Wang Zuohong 译,（贵州 Guizhou：贵州人民出版社 Guizhou Renmin chubanshe [Guizhou People's Publishing House]）, 2006, 450。

(17) 雷茵霍尔德·尼布尔 Reinhold Niebuhr ·《人的本性与命运（下卷）》 Ren de benxing yu minyun [The Nature and Destiny of Man], 王作虹Wang Zuohong 译,（贵州 Guizhou：贵州人民出版社 Guizhou Renmin chubanshe [Guizhou People's Publishing House]）, 2006, 456。

(18) 雷茵霍尔德·尼布尔 Reinhold Niebuhr ·《人的本性与命运（下卷）》 Ren de benxing yu minyun [The Nature and Destiny of Man], 王作虹Wang Zuohong 译,（贵州 Guizhou：贵州人民出版社 Guizhou Renmin chubanshe [Guizhou People's Publishing House]）, 2006, 456。

(19) 于尔根·莫尔特曼 · Jürgen Moltman ·《俗世中的上帝》 Sushizhong de shangdi[Gott im Projekt der modernen Weit] · Zeng Nianyue 译 ·（北京Beijing：中国人民大学出版社 Zhongguo renmindaxue chubanshe [The Press of Renmin University of China]) · 2003 · 265-266。

soon as one person is left behind. Therefore, political theology overcomes the problem of the privatization of politics inherent in traditional theology.

While political theology has undoubtedly contributed to the development of theology's public attributes, it is important to note that the critique is based on the misinterpretation of Luther's theory rather than Luther's own theory. In the 19th century, with the rising of national states and civil society, the boundary between two kingdoms was distorted as the difference among the "private" and the "public". The faith was away from the secularization, and the secular world became faithless and distant from God. Professor Sun Xiangchen pointed out that John Stuart Mill's work *On Liberty* inherits Luther's dichotomous structure of inner and outer wherein the public sphere is still ruled by the secular king, but the essential difference is that man governs the private sphere instead of God.(20)This misinterpretation formed the basis of Niebuhr's critique of Luther's "two kingdoms" theory. The division of the "public" and "private" since Luther's Reformation has departed from Luther's original conception of "two kingdoms" which was divided into the inner and outer originally.

The critical political theology advocated by Niebuhr, Moltmann and some other scholars, became the theoretical basis for liberation theology. The difference is that the liberation theology intended to be more revolutionary as it aimed to change the center-periphery order and the domestic social order. At that time, in Latin America the wealth gaps widened under the external dependence of capitalism and the internal rule of the military government. In response, Latin American theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez launched the movement of liberation theology that united all the poor to liberate themselves from capitalist oppression and exploitation.

Gutierrez believed that only by eliminating the alienation of the irrational system could man regain his dignity, and that the Catholic faith was a tool for eliminating alienation. He argued that if the Church refuses to engage in class struggle, it will degenerate into what Marx called "opium" —an instrument to paralyzes the people. Therefore, religion is no longer a silent sigh and can no longer deprive people of their real life.(21) In Latin American liberation theology, the relationship between the kingdom of God and the secular kingdom is redefined.

Political theology and liberation theology challenge Luther's "two kingdoms" theory by questioning how the suffering and injustice of this world can be rectified on the condition that societal structure and order remain unchanged. Although Christian theology focuses on salvation and the eternal life in the spiritual realm, human beings live in the physical world. Upon closer examination of the two kingdom theories, it becomes evident that although Luther did not advocate for spiritual power to interfere in the temporal world or for Christians to alter the present world's order, he did not reject this world's significance or Christians' responsibility for the mundane world at the meantime. To delve deeper into the relationship between Luther's "two kingdoms", the following chapter will explore the tension between the spiritual and the temporal through Luther's theory of spirit, soul and flesh.

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(20) 黄保罗Paulos Huang · 《神学、哲学与第三次启蒙对谈录》 *Shenxue zhexue yu disanci qimeng duitanlu* [Dialogues on Theology, Philosophy and the Third Enlightenment], (赫尔辛基 Helsinki：《国学与西学国际学刊》杂志社Guoxue yu xixue guoji xuekan [International Journal of Sino-Western Studies], 2021),107-108。

(21) 奚望Xi Wang · 张航Zhang hang · 《古铁雷斯<解放神学>对马克思宗教批判的回应》Gutieleisi jiefangshenxue dui makesi zongjiao pipan de huiying [A response to Marx's Critique of Religion in Teología de la Liberación by Gutiérrez] · 《重庆交通大学学报》Chongqin jiaotong daxue xuebao [Journal of Chongqing Jiaotong University] · No. 8, 2018, 8。

4. Elaborating the relationship between the two kingdoms from the dimensions of spirit, soul and flesh

Luther, citing *1 Thessalonians*(5:23), and drawing on St. Jerome and Augustine's theories, divided man into three parts: flesh, soul, and spirit. These parts correspond to the sensual, rational, and spiritual aspects of human nature respectively.(22) The flesh exists in the kingdom of the world; the spirit, a matter of faith and belief, exists in the kingdom of God. The soul, our middle part between the two, is equal to human's response to the reality, including intellect, will, emotion and so on.

The relationship between the two kingdoms is intricately intertwined in three dimensions of human existence: spirit, soul, and flesh. Christians, residing in the earthly realm, are unable to entirely extricate themselves from the sins of the flesh, and they bear spiritual responsibilities for the kingdom of God. The soul enables us to engage in rational activities within the context of social reality. Christians are subject to the authority of secular governments and the potent influence of traditions, customs, morals, and ethics. In the meantime they also adhere to God and remain steadfast in their faith through rational thought. For the sake of faith, their fellow human beings, and the entire world, Christians assume roles such as court officers, judges, public officials, etc., so that the government will not be despised, or tend to annihilation. They also fulfill their social obligations with dedication, as the spirit will drive them to do something good and necessary. Their service to their country is not for their own needs.(23)

It should be noted that the attainment of the ideal living is only feasible for those who have received divine grace and cannot be expected of anyone in the secular world. Therefore, unlike the kingdom of God, which is governed by the gospel, the secular kingdom also necessitates the use of the law and the sword. Christians living in a secular kingdom are required to comply with the laws of secular rulers. However, in addition to obeying secular laws, Christians may be prompted by the spirit to emulate the "incarnation" of Jesus Christ by prompting the theology of soul and flesh. Christians may also be impelled by the spirit to undertake secular tasks and engage in social service in the dimensions of soul and flesh. It is evident that the relationship between the kingdom of God and the earthly kingdom in Luther's theory is not a dichotomy, or "quietism" as Moltmann defined. Instead, it represents a synthesis of opposing forces and mutual influences within the triadic nature of the the spirit, the soul and the flesh.

Luther placed greater emphasis on the spirit rather than on the flesh and the soul, believing that mundane aspirations are intrinsically incapable of achieving perfection. Luther recognized very clearly that high-handed politics cannot be eliminated on earth since neither man nor society can be perfect, and politics cannot be either. Therefore, there is no need for Christianity to insist on a government with sound political theory and perfect political practice in the kingdom of the world.(24) Luther opposed revolution and supported reform in the face of an imperfect government because he believed that the kingdom of the world could not live up to the ideal of Christianity, and the kingdom of God could not exist on earth. He quoted the story of the beggar who feared that a

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(22) Paulos Huang · *Yearbook of Chinese Theology,* (Leiden&Boston：Brill · 2009),11-12.

(23) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编 ·《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 137。

(24) 陈驯 Chen Xun, 《路德论政教关系》Lude lun zhengjiao guanxi [On the Relationship between Church and State according to Martin Luther] , No.1 (赫尔辛基 Helsinki：《国学与西学国际学刊》杂志社Guoxue yu xixue guoji xuekan [International Journal of Sino-Western Studies], 2015),46.

fly that had drunk its fill of blood would be driven away which might invite other thirsty flies, a metaphor for the unreliability of political revolutions.(25) While it is easy to change the government, it is difficult to obtain a better one, and its danger is difficult to perceive. Based on the fact that the kingdom of God cannot be realized on earth, the difference between the old and new governments is just old wine in a new bottle.(26)

Since World War II, with the accelerated secularization of theology, the theology of soul and flesh has been overemphasized while the theology of the spirit has been neglected so that the relationship between two kingdoms is at risk of becoming unbalanced. As Luther said, the lack of a theology of the Spirit produces severe consequences. "The spiritual man rests outwardly in the Word and in Faith, namely, positively, as long as the object of his faith, that is, the Word, remains fixed in him. But he is disturbed outwardly when his faith is in danger."(27)The theology of soul and flesh has gradually become a social evangelical movement with the rise of political theology and liberation theology, replacing the theology of the spirit. These evangelical movements placed too much emphasis on the theology of flesh and soul to reduce injustice and suffering in this world, neglecting the theology of spirit such as identity, origin, mission and so on. The history between 1950 and 1980, including liberation theology, shows that the social gospel movement couldn't bring the kingdom of God anywhere on earth. Therefore, the social gospel should not be the essence of Christianity. The next chapter will address how to achieve a balance between the two kingdoms in these three dimensions in the context of the Latin American liberation theology movement.

5. Spirit, Soul and the Flesh in the Movement of Liberation Theology in Latin America

A theology of soul and flesh is complementary to the theology of the spirit rather than a substitute. In contrast, the social gospel is a substitute for the theology of the spirit. The soul and the flesh comprise two-thirds of human beings. However, they cannot replace the other third, namely the spirit. Although temporary, soul and flesh are essential and necessary for human existence. Focusing solely on soul and flesh, the social gospel neglected spirit and failed to deliver the blessings that Christianity was intended to provide, therefore losing its essential dimension.(28) This is also the fundamental issue of the theological crisis of liberation theology. Liberation theology mistakenly believes that people can only be won over by keeping up with history and changing the social structures which lead to poverty. It fails to realize that people prefer an "eternal" fundamentalist religion rather than a religion that changes with time.(29)

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(25) The story of the beggar and flies could be referred to Rhetoric 2, 20, Josephus, Antiquities of the Jewish People,18, 174-175(VI,5) 转引自黄保罗 Paulos Huang：《反思马丁·路德在农民起义、使用暴力和反对造反三方面所受到的批评》[Reflections on the critique of Martin Luther's attitudes towards farmers' uprising,violence and rebellions against some regimes],《云南民族大学学报（哲学社会科学版）》 Yunnan minzu daxue xuebao zhexue shehui kexueban [Journal of Yunnan Minzu University (Social Sciences)],(云南 Yunnan：2016年第1期，54。

(26) 黄保罗 Paulos Huang：《反思马丁·路德在农民起义、使用暴力和反对造反三方面所受到的批评》[Reflections on the critique of Martin Luther's attitudes towards farmers' uprising,violence and rebellions against some regimes],《云南民族大学学报（哲学社会科学版）》 Yunnan minzu daxue xuebao zhexue shehui kexueban [Journal of Yunnan Minzu University (Social Sciences)],(云南 Yunnan：2016年第1期，54。

(27) Paulos Huang，Yearbook of Chinese Theology,（Leiden&Boston：Brill，2009),18.

(28) Paulos Huang，*Yearbook of Chinese Theology,*（Leiden&Boston：Brill，2009),16.

(29) 叶健辉 Ye Jianhui，《托邦 拉丁美洲解放神学研究初步》Tuobang ladingmeizhou jiefangshenxue chubuyanjiu [Utopia：Preliminary Study of Liberation Theology in Latin America Yearbook of Chinese Theology],(北京Beijing:中央编译出版社Zhongyang bianyi chubanshe [Central Compilation &Translation Press,2015],276。

In the 1960s, the movement of liberation theology took place within the global trends of innovation, against the backdrop of the political and economic realities of Latin America. The Second Vatican Council, from 1962 to 1965, created an opportunity for reform in liberation theology with its resolution to comprehensively reform Roman Catholicism to adapt to new trends, including international communism. Meanwhile, Latin American countries adopted the developmentalist theory of Raúl Prebisch (1901-1986) and engaged in import substitution industrialization to develop their national economies and to overcome their dependence on Western industrial processed goods. However, this import substitution industrialization strategy eventually failed due to unbalanced economic development. As a result, the dependency theory emerged based on the success of the Cuban Revolution and some of views of Structuralism. The dependency theory called for a revolutionary break with capitalism and advocated for the liberation of poor countries from the dependence. Early liberation theology replaced "development" and "revolution" with "liberation", rejecting economic discrimination against the weak and the inhumane while also inheriting the content of the "revolution" to change the existing order without strong political overtones.

At the political level, the authoritarian rule of military governments in South America in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as individual dictatorships in Central America, weakened intermediate organizations that could channel the political participation of the people. Political parties and interest groups were banned or strictly controlled. Built on liberation theology, grassroots church groups grew rapidly and became a channel for the voice of the people to seek "liberation" from totalitarian politics.

In the early stages, Liberation Theology primarily focused on the theology of soul and flesh. As a tangible expression of the secular realm, the theology of flesh manifested in the physical dimension, encompassing the physical body, the surrounding environment, and material wealth, so that it became a crucial factor in the movement of Liberation. In the book, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, Leonardo Boff (1938-) and Clodovis Boff (1944-) proposed that "Liberation Theology was born when faith confronted the injustice done to the poor."[30] It shows that the elimination of poverty became the primary demand of early Liberation Theology.

At the social and psychological level, the theology of the soul focuses on individuals' interaction with others in their surroundings and rational reflection on them. For instance, people respond to their cultural, racial backgrounds and other people. Based on their perception of the self and the world, some individuals choose to conform to the existing social order and norms, while others strive to transcend the prevailing social structures by becoming leaders.[31] The early Liberation Theology belonged to the latter, as they actively engaged with the world, contemplated reality while reflecting on people and the world, critiqued the exploitation and oppression perpetuated by the capitalist system, and endeavored to break the established rules and transcend the prevailing social structure in this world. However, although pursuing the material and physical realm is reasonable, it can never attain absolute perfection. However, it just leads to relative progress. Only by unifying the spirit, soul, and flesh can we alleviate the sinfulness of the flesh and the sins of the world.

In Luther's theory, the spiritual kingdom, reaching perfection, is elevated above soul and flesh. Luther referred to the fleshly man as the old man, while the spiritual man was referred to as the new man.[32] The concept of the spirit in theology " may be their understanding of their own characters, their past experiences, and their

(30) Leonardo Boff, Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* , tr. by Paul Burns, (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 150.

(31) Paulos Huang · *Yearbook of Chinese Theology,* (Leiden&Boston : Brill · 2009),14.

(32) 胡斯都·L·冈萨雷斯Huston L. Gonzalez,《基督教思想史》 Jidujiao sixiangshi [A History of Christian Thought], 陈泽民 Chen Zemin孙汉书 Sun hanshu 译 · (南京Nanjing: 译林出版社[Yilin Translation Press]) , 2008, 313 。

future possibilities."[33] The belief in the invisible spiritual dimension is believed to drive change in the tangible physical world through the role of the soul dimension.

In the movement of liberation theology, Gutiérrez, in his book *Liberation Theology*, noted that the development of Christianity showed a tendency to give a positive connotation to poverty as an ideal state of religion. Therefore, he criticizes the indifference of religion in the face of the present world.[34] Gutiérrez argues that poverty, as an immoral state according to biblical standards, violates human dignity and is therefore contrary to the will of God.[35]

Liberation theology rejects the rationalization of "poverty" and frequently cites the liberation of the Israelites from slavery and oppression written in *Exodus*, as a foreshadowing of the way for the Latin American people. Through faith and reflection, individuals engage in revolution and struggle to improve the conditions of the poor in the kingdom of the world.

In the initial development of the liberation theology movement, the relationship between the two kingdoms gradually shifted towards the secular kingdom. Although Gutierrez emphasized the importance of alleviating both material poverty and "pobreza espiritual" (spiritual poverty), the movement paid more attention to the soul and the flesh. As an important base for liberation theology, grassroots christian groups gradually became radical in the development and increasingly involved in political movements in countries such as Chile and Nicaragua. The early roots of the movement could be traced back to a group of young Christian intellectuals in Chile, the leaders of a socialist Christian movement in 1972. Their aim was to be Christians in faith but socialists and revolutionaries in politics. Their efforts paved the way for the growth of liberation theology.[36] Subsequently, in 1979, the movement played a role in the violent overthrow of Anastasio Somoza (1925-1980) in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan Revolution was considered a "new experiment" in liberation theology. Both grassroots church organizations and the socialist Christian movement in Chile aimed to intervene and change the irrational political and economic order in order to achieve social justice.

Liberation theology faced a spiritual crisis as it emphasized the kingdom of the world at the expense of the theology of the "spirit" and the kingdom of God. This led to attacks from both Catholic fundamentalists and Protestant charismatics, causing a need for transformation. In 1979, the Third General Conference of Episcopalian Latin American proposed a conservative version of liberation theology that would not threaten the social order and would go beyond the secular revolution, providing a foundation for the transformation of liberation theology.

In the 1980s, the fall of military governments and the return of civilian governments led to the gradual retreat of liberation theology from politics. They began to focus on the issue of cultural identity to address the theological problem of the spirit. Liberation theology began to regain its theological identity while avoiding political controversies, which could be seen in two trends of tendency of Liberation Theology, the theology of the people and Indian theology.

The grounding of liberation theology in this period shifted from the global trend of innovation in 1968 to a more profound exploration of its own internal historical heritage since 1492. That Columbus discovered the New World in 1492 marked the encounter between Christian civilization and the Other. As the idea of Christian mission

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(33) Paulos Huang · *Yearbook of Chinese Theology,* (Leiden&Boston：Brill · 2009),15.

(34) Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología de la liberación*, (Salamanca: Ediciones Sigume, 1972), 366.

(35) Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología de la liberación*, (Salamanca: Ediciones Sigume, 1972), 269.

(36) 余文烈 Yu Wenlie, 《当代国外社会主义流派》 Dangdai guowai shehuizhuyi liupai [schools of Contemporary Socialism Abroad], (合肥 Hefei：安徽人民出版社 Anhui Renmin chubanshe[Anhui Renmin Press] · 2000) · 398.

emerged while local cultural traditions throughout the Americas were weak, Christianity easily made Catholicism prevail in Latin America and dominate this land.(37) Nevertheless, the native Latin American faith and civilization did not become extinct but were revitalized through the mutual integration of Iberia and Indian America.

The theology of people can be traced back to the encounter and convergence of these two different continents after 1492. Carlos Scannone, a representative of the theology of the people, posited that the theology of the people, as a combination of culture, religion, and history, consists of the second generation liberation theology. He extended the source of liberation theology, the "poor", to the grassroots from the pastors of the Church, from revolutionary communities, from the poor and the oppressed.(38) "Juan Pueblo"(39) represents the image of the common people in the theology of people, clings to their own historical identity and discovers a new expression of grassroots religion during the wave of industrialization.(40) They searched for the ultimate meaning of life and death in the depths of their own history and culture. Scannone described it as a fundamental characteristic of their culture.(41)

Indian theology embodies a unique spiritual experience that highlights the divine presence within a history of cultural integration. The Indians' belief in a natural animistic deity was integrated in their spiritual experience with the "liberator" Christ sought during colonial period. As a result, ancient Indian religion became the path to the "kingdom of God", as they put it: our own God gave us the way to the Word of God and to Jesus Christ. (42)

Indian theology is an another practice of religious integration in the Christian encounter with the Other, conform to evangelical paradigm proposed by Charles Van Engen. This model confronts the historical and intrinsic dynamics of interfaith, consistent with the developmental patterns of Indian theology. In contrast to exclusivist, pluralist, and inclusivist paradigms, it has three distinct characteristics. First, in the evangelical paradigm, Christianity is exclusivist in its beliefs, i.e., the Gospel is only in Jesus Christ, while Indian theology recognizes God and Jesus as the ultimate destination. Second, it is pluralist in its cultural aspects, as Indian theology embraces indigenous beliefs and cultures. Third, it is inclusivist in ecclesiastic area, i.e., it rethinks theology in the new age with multiple cultures and the context of the globalization.(43) In the 1980s, Indian theology, grounded in its own history and culture, became one of the developing trends in the transformation of the liberation theology movement.

The theology of the spirit has played a crucial role in the development of liberation theology since the 1980s. Christianity has been the dominant religion in Latin America since its introduction in 1492 during Spanish colonization, but the indigenous population also had their own spiritual beliefs. They believed in the mountains, the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars. Despite the violent eradication of culture during the colonial era, this spirituality and culture persisted. The tension between these two religious and cultural identities has been a consistent theme in the history of Latin America.

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(37) 黄保罗Paul Huang, 《大国学视野中的汉语学术对话神学》Daguoxue shiye zhong de hanyuxueshu duihua shenxue [Theology of Chinese Academic Dialogue in the Light of the Great Guoxue], (北京：Beijing：民族出版社 MInzu chubanshe [The Ethnic Publishing House], 2011) · 125。

(38) Juan Carlos Scannone, *Evangelización, cultura y teología Editorial,* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Guadalupe, 1990), 61-66.

(39) Juan is a very common name of local people like John; Pueblo means people.

(40) Juan Carlos Scannone, *Nuevo punto de partida en la filosofía latinoamericana,* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Guadalupe, 1990), 18.

(41) Juan Carlos Scannone, *Evangelización, cultura y teología Editorial,* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Guadalupe, 1990),70.

(42) Eleazar López Hernández, "Cambinos de la Teología India", in Gisela Grundges (IPA), ed., *Teología Inia. Sabiduría indígena, fuente de esperanza. Tercer Encuentro-Taller Latinoamericano*, (Cusco, Perú; Editorial Grafisol, 1998), 75.

(43) "Evangelicalism" is further discussed in Van Engen's works from 2000a and 2000b. 转引自黄保罗Paul Huang, 《大国学视野中的汉语学术对话神学》Daguoxue shiye zhong de hanyuxueshu duihua shenxue [Theology of Chinese Academic Dialogue in the Light of the Great Guoxue], (北京：Beijing：民族出版社 MInzu chubanshe [The Ethnic Publishing House], 2011) · 172-173)

Early liberation theology focused primarily on social and political movements and revolutions, neglecting the theology of spirit. This resulted in an imbalance between the secular kingdom and the kingdom of God. The "poverty" that underlaid the spiritual experience in early liberation theology was seen as a result of the intervention of nuclear countries and closer to the theology of flesh. The rise of the theology of the people and Indian theology helped to address this imbalance and to develop a theology of spirit. In face of the oppression and suffering in the secular life, these theologies draw new spirit that integrates the relationship between two kingdoms on the collision and convergence of two continents in 1492. At this point we can refer to Guadalupe, a religious figure that emerged from the combination of Spanish Catholicism and Indian civilization. The theology of the people and the Indian theology achieved a balance between the two kingdoms by obeying the rule of the government in the secular kingdom and reciting *the Rosary* under the statue of Guadalupe for the suffering people. It reflects Luther's teachings and demonstrates that spirituality and politics can work in tandem to address social injustices.

6. Conclusion

Luther's theory was susceptible to misinterpretation and misunderstanding particularly during periods of dictatorship, therefore leading to criticism. This is especially evident during the fascism of the Second World War and the various totalitarian regimes that emerged in Latin America in the last century which caused much harm to the development of human rights and political democracy. In such contexts, obedience to established order is tantamount to hold the candle to the devil. However, it is essential to note that Luther acknowledged the usefulness and benefits of the sword for the sake of the neighbor and the whole world. [(44)]In extreme cases, Luther was likely to suggest that Christians were not necessarily opposed to the use of violence for others. As human being exist in the secular world, they have both a duty to observe social order and the right to oppose violent governance. The "two kingdoms" doctrine appears to be more valuable in democratic politics, as it not only prevents threats to existing democratic political orders but also reinforces spiritual refresh, which is often overlooked in economic growth.

Through Latin American liberation theology, this paper further elaborates the relationship between the two kingdoms in the dimension of spirit, soul and flesh · responding to the critique of Martin Luther's "two kingdoms" theory in a new light. In the late 1960s, liberation theology shifted the focus of Christianity from spiritual areas to the improvement of the material conditions of life. This movement drew attention to the political order and social structure. However, liberation theology neglected spiritual construction in its struggle for political, economic and social liberation, leading to a crisis. After the 1980s, with the fall of military governments and the rise of democracy, liberation theology turned to spiritual reflection and sought more moderate approaches to fight against the evils in the present world.

The relationship between the two Lutheran kingdoms is similar to the "inner affinity" described by Weber in his analysis of the relationship between capitalism and Protestant ethics. [(45)]The kingdom of God and the

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(44) 黄保罗Paulos Huang主编 · 《马丁·路德研究丛书之二论两个国度》 Mading Lude yanjiu congshu zhi er [Series on the study of Martin Luther: Two kingdoms], (山东Shandong：山东省基督教两会Shandongsheng jidujiao lianghui [Shandong Province Christian Association], 2018), 138。

(45) 马克斯•韦伯Max Weber · 《新教伦理与资本主义精神》Xinjiaolunliyuzibenzhuyijinshen · [The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism], 康乐Kang Le · 简惠美Jian Huimei译 · (上海 Shanghai：上海三联书店 Shanghai Sanlianshudian [Shanghai Joint Publishing Company]) · 2019 · 16。

secular kingdom both derive their authority from God, which forms the basis of their affinity. The dimensions of spirit, soul and flesh further reveal the concrete location of the “two kingdoms” and their intersection, reflecting the affinity between them.

Between the Sacred and the Profane, Christianity does not emphasize worldliness and the elimination of fleshly desires in the same way that Buddhism and Hinduism do. Instead, in the Christianity thought there are many society-entry thoughts which can be concluded from Jesus’ arriving world to guide suffering people towards eternal rejoice. The “two kingdoms” concept links the ultimate concerns of religion with the social concerns of mundane life, achieving a reconciliation between the spiritual and the physical as well as the intersection of the eternal and the real.

中文题目：

马丁•路德的“两个国度”理论及其实践维度

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提要：路德的“两个国度”理论勾画了由“属灵的政府”管理的“上帝之国”和“俗世的政府”管理的“世界之国”这两个国度，并强调即使俗世君主不公，也不得反抗。对俗世政府暴政问题的解决方法使路德饱受争议，特别是在二战的奥斯维辛极端强权政治压迫平民和犹太人之后，尼布尔、莫尔特曼等学者批判两个国度的宗教二分使得宗教对社会与政治保持距离和冷漠的态度，提出关注此岸世界的人类现实处境的政治神学。拉美解放神学将这种属世神学进一步运用到实践，但在后期失去神学身份的灵性危机下逐渐转向属灵建设。本文从“灵、魂、肉”的视野，以拉美解放神学为例，探究两个国度的关系及其实践维度。本文意在回应一些学者所认为的两个国度的分裂问题，从“灵、魂、肉”的人论视野证明两个国度之间的内在亲和力；本文也希望通过对“两个国度”理论的的重新解读，为处理属世神学的困境提供可借鉴之处。

关键词：马丁•路德，“两个国度”理论，“灵魂肉”理论，拉美解放神学