

## Article

# Christian Ethics and Liberation from Below: A Way of Doing Theological Ethics in Brazil

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**Abstract:** This essay offers a Latin American perspective of theological ethics developed from the preferential option for the poor, marked by dialogue and encounter with the poor in their reality. Considering the theological diversity of the region, the author focuses on a theological ethics developed in Brazil, especially the dialogical methods of Brazilian Catholic ethicists gathered by the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology. This essay presents an account on dialogue in theological ethics as a means of creation and liberation from the encounter with the poor in their reality and with other partners in a praxis of faith and struggle for justice. Then, the author stresses their reality as a theological locus and their voices as interlocutors for developing theological ethics, showing an experience of this method from below in theological bioethics and global health challenges.

**Keywords:** theological ethics; Brazil; dialogue; poor; bioethics; global health

This essay offers a perspective of theological ethics as it has been developed in Latin America in the last fifty years. Latin America is a large region with a diversity of theological views. Although many theologians outside Latin America tend to regard Latin American theology as synonymous to liberation theology,<sup>1</sup> this is not accurate because of the diversity of theological perspectives in the region. This essay, however, does not aim to map theological ethics as it exists in each nation throughout Latin America. Indeed, each country has its own specificities that account for differences among Latin American theologians and their respective theological reflections, even as similarities are discernible among many of them, especially regarding methods for beginning an analysis of what is going on concerning the moral issues they are facing.

Given my own theological views (as a Roman Catholic) and national experiences (I am Brazilian), I am going to focus on a liberating theological ethics developed in Brazil, which offers a way to think on Christian ethics as theological ethics from below, considering two perspectives. The first is a Brazilian Latin American perspective, which arises from a nation marked by social injustice and inequalities. The second is the perspective of the poor, who suffer due to the existing injustice in the country. I offer this account on theological ethics from the experience and journey of Brazilian moral theologians gathered by the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology. I also present this model for doing theological ethics from a concrete engagement based on dialogue as liberation, and I close by considering the application of the preferential option for the poor in theological bioethics and health care ethics. Examining the journey of the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology, one can see that the liberating ethics developed there—grounded on the resources offered by liberation theology as a systematic theology—has been oriented to ethical challenges faced by experiences of people in their local reality. Focusing on ethical challenges from the concrete experience of marginalized communities and individuals, this liberating ethics was the first subdiscipline in Latin American theologies to expand the liberating way of doing theology to include topics and marginalized voices beyond those related to socioeconomic issues and oppression.



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## 1. Catholic Theological Ethics in Brazil

For a window through which to view Christian (especially Catholic) theological ethics in Brazil, I begin by looking at the journey of the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology (SBTM, acronym in Portuguese for *Sociedade Brasileira de Teologia Moral*), including its conferences and publications. Although this professional society of academic theological ethicists or moral theologians<sup>2</sup> neither identifies itself explicitly as a group of liberation theologians nor is directly committed to any liberating method, nonetheless the liberating aspect has been present in most of its collective publications. Indeed, in their efforts to understand the realities and to address the challenges they faced, we find a great presence of marginalized voices, such as those of the poor, and dialogue with other disciplines, especially the social sciences.

Founded in 1977, SBTM is the largest academic organization of theological ethicists in Latin America and the only one in South America until 2019, when a group of Argentinian ethicists founded the MORAR (Society of Moral Theologians of Argentina). Every year since its inception, SBTM has conducted annual conferences at which these moral theologians gather and explore a major theme, reflecting the main concerns of Brazilian Catholic ethicists that given year. By examining these major themes over the years, it is also possible to see some of the principal challenges faced by the Brazilian Society. According to Ricardo Hoepers, who has examined the trajectory of moral theology in Brazil based on the SBTM's conferences, "SBTM's perspective presents a dynamic and creative side of moral theology in Brazil" (Hoepers 2014, p. 341). He identified three major phases of SBTM's conferences. Each one was characterized by themes addressed by moral theologians that reflect social and ecclesial challenges present in Brazil.

The first phase (1977–1987) was directly influenced by Vatican II (1962–1965) and conferences of the Latin American Bishops at Medellin (1968) and Puebla (1979). During this phase, two important aspects contributed to the originality of moral theology in Brazil: "Conscientization and articulation" (Ibid., p. 351). A "process of conscientization" was established for moral theologians who inserted themselves among the people. These moral theologians left their academic and ecclesial comfort zones, and they listened to the people in their articulation of the concerns of moral theology in that time and place. The second phase (1988–1998) was characterized by a deeper reflection on the social and cultural changes that Brazilian society was experiencing. During this phase, most of SBTM's conferences were marked by topics connected to social ethics. This phase also involved a noticeable increase in participation by lay people. Also evident was an effort at more interaction and theological discussions with their moral theological counterparts in other Latin American countries. In the third phase (1999–2011), SBTM showed a greater readiness to dialogue with people across the span of society. SBTM began to invite people from other areas and different traditions to speak at the conferences. This was essential to create an environment of plurality and dialogue. Since 2012, in Hoepers's estimation, SBTM has been undergoing a new phase culminating in new fruits to be cultivated based on 35 years of experience, studies, and publications. As he puts it, "In a pluralistic vision and in a time of such big challenges as ours, where all move in an absurd speed, moral theology in Brazil, through SBTM, wants to maintain its role as mediator investing in formation for consciousness and in dialogue with society to produce fruits of charity to the life of the world" (Hoepers n.d.).

The theological reflection encouraged by SBTM has always sprung from the encounter with people's historical challenges. In the last two decades, this reality has led ethicists to look at new groups of the oppressed, expanding the preferential option for the poor to a perspective that includes all those who are victims of systems of marginalization and oppression due to reasons beyond solely poverty, such as race, gender, sexuality, and addiction (Hoepers 2022, p. 385). Moreover, in 2022 the discussion at the SBTM conference focused on Pope Francis's teaching and witness, which have encouraged the theologians at the SBTM to "build bridges and open the door of their communities, so they can be like a field hospital that welcomes all, without discrimination" (Ibid., p. 386).

Each of these conferences was followed by the publication of a collective book, which is the fruit of the papers and plenaries in the meetings (Hoepers 2022, p. 385). These publications provide a snapshot of the commitment of the moral theological community in Brazil to a liberating ethics perspective crossing a variety of ethical themes and their relevance to fundamental moral theology, social ethics, and bioethics. These publications also allow us to see the challenges that Brazilian Catholic ethicists faced in different times. This is evident in three series of books published by moral theologians gathered by SBTM. The first was the series *Moral Theology in Latin America*, published by Editora Santuário, which included twelve volumes between 1987 and 1996. These twelve books examined ethical issues in Brazil and Latin America, always connecting them to social concerns, especially injustice and poverty. These volumes also correspond to a time when Brazil was returning to democracy, a period of social and cultural transformation, after 25 years of dictatorship and tremendous social inequality. A second series of books, published from 2008 to 2012, reflect how moral theologians seemed to hold more existential concerns. This series coincides with a time of significant prosperity in Brazilian society with economic growth and the reduction of social inequalities. The third series of publications, currently underway, reveals that Catholic ethicists in Brazil are facing a *double issue*: on the one hand, concerns with social justice in a diverse and technological society and, on the other hand, the need for returning to and reviewing Catholic moral foundations (including reviewing the Latin American theology developed during the last five decades).

This double concern also reflects how the issue of dialogue is one of the greatest challenges in Brazil today. Just as Ricardo Hoepers affirms that the new phase of SBTM is to invest in consciousness and dialogue (Hoepers 2022, p. 385), Brazilian society needs a movement able to foster a process of critical consciousness grounded in a tolerant dialogue. At the same time, this awareness must become the basis for deepening dialogue towards participatory democracy in Brazilian society. So too should it promote critical and tolerant dialogue inside the church, between the church and the secular society, and within civil society as a whole.

Published in 2022, the most recent (at the time of my writing) SBTM book shows exactly the need to build and cross bridges of dialogue in order to create productive encounters and collaboration among those who are different (Coelho 2022b). In that volume's introduction, current president of SBTM, Mário Marcelo Coelho, writes: "Crossing borders means also working to overcome all forms of prejudice, xenophobia, racism, LGBTQIA+phobia, aporophobia, etc. This means moving from disrespect to recognizing the other, an urgent task that theological ethics must help to achieve" (Coelho 2022a, p. 7).

Today, Brazil is experiencing a huge political and economic crisis with the rise of far-right movements. This has polarized the country and created an atmosphere of misunderstanding, intolerance, and rivalry for political power. In this context, unemployment and poverty have increased. Violence has become a more pronounced part of the daily lives of Brazilians. The COVID-19 pandemic and its mishandling by the federal government produced more insecurity and health challenges. All these have contributed to an atmosphere of anger and instability. In this context, dialogue as a creative act of liberation has fallen by the wayside. Nobody listens to the other. Conversation becomes yelling and lands on deaf ears. "Dialogue" is possible only if "you agree with me". Instead of being an act of mutual liberation, "dialogue" has been used as an attempt to dominate the other. As such, there is no dialogue at all.

## 2. Dialogue as Liberation

Listening to the other—who has a different perspective in a creative dialogue that includes the voices of the historically marginalized groups among the theological interlocutors—is an ongoing task that theological ethicists must promote in order to sustain this liberating tradition. A dialogical method is one of the key features of liberating theological ethics. In the development of theological ethics promoted by the SBTM, it was possible to notice that the ethicists engaged in dialogue with diverse interlocutors, beyond other

professional theologians to include scholars from other disciplines and representatives of marginalized communities. They have not only spoken in the conferences but also written essays in SBTM's books.<sup>3</sup> The value of dialogue seems obvious, but it is not, especially in a context of growing intolerance and ideological polarization.

Although dialogue is part of human experience, engaging in a *true* dialogue requires an honest effort from one interlocutor to interact with another in an inter-relationship among subjectivities. This requires openness to listen to the other without prejudgments and with a disposition to learn. As Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire has put it, "Dialogue is an encounter among women and men who name the world . . . It is an act of creation" (Freire 2000, p. 89). In a real dialogue, people are active agents who, mediated by their contexts and perspectives, create and recreate their world. As such, dialogue is a collective action of creativity and growth. Authentic dialogue, in which one does not attempt to dominate the other, is an "act of liberation" for both interlocutors who address the world "which is to be transformed and humanized" (Ibid.).

As an act of liberation, dialogue must begin with the presupposition that all, regardless of who they are and where they come from, have something to offer and a potential to engage in a creative dialogue to build the world. This is not easy, and it is particularly complicated at the present time and its paradoxical dilemma. On the one hand, the globalized and technological world has facilitated communication and interactions among cultures and peoples. Global migration has made local societies more diverse. Diversity and global communication should be seen as an opportunity to increase dialogue to foster creativity and human growth. On the other hand, the globalized world and its pluralistic societies have seen a significant growth of intolerance nourished by a lack of dialogue as an act of liberation and creation. This has fostered what Pope Francis terms as "globalization of indifference" (Pope Francis 2015, § 52; 2020a, § 138). This paradoxical dilemma is clearly visible when one looks at the political discussion in many countries. Thus, intolerance of, indifference to, and lack of dialogue with the other who suffers are visible in many socio-political contexts, including Brazil.

Although it is difficult to be optimistic about the future, from a Christian theological perspective we cannot lose hope in the possibility of dialogue as an act of liberation. A conversation of mutual learning and recreation of the world can begin again. In his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire observes "Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love of the world and for people. The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if it is not infused with love. Love is, at the same time, the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself" (Freire 2000, p. 89). In another work, he stresses: "Born of a critical matrix, dialogue creates a critical attitude. It is nourished by love, humility, hope, faith, and trust. When the two 'poles' of the dialogue are thus linked by love, hope, and mutual trust, they can join in a critical search for something. Only dialogue truly communicates" (Freire 1971, p. 107).

Barriers begin to fall when someone from one side opens themselves to love the other on the opposing side. Just as Freire suggests, without a profound love for people there is no dialogue. A love that fosters an authentic, tolerant, and constructive dialogue also requires the virtues of humility, hope, faith, and trust. The Christian tradition offers light, too, to illuminate experiences and practices for establishing a liberating and creative dialogue, and the church can play a significant role in this mission, opening great opportunities for theological ethicists at this time.

We do not need to start from scratch. The Second Vatican Council was built upon a spirit of dialogue that was essential for its fruits to be able to flow both through the wider church and to the world. One of most important impulses for this spirit of dialogue was, first, the courage and humility of Pope John XXIII (1881–1963) who inspired the Roman Catholic Church to engage in dialogue to reconsider itself and its mission. His successor, Pope Paul VI, provided form to this agenda with his encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* which presented dialogue as the method of the Christian apostolate rooted in four characteristics: *clarity, meekness, confidence, and prudence* (Pope Paul VI 1964, § 81–82). Dialogue has also

been a key characteristic of Pope Francis's pontificate. Indeed, Pope Francis, who is originally from Argentina, usually begins his texts and documents by affirming he is offering a reflection to "enter into dialogue with all people" (Pope Francis 2015, no. 3). In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Francis argues that social dialogue is important for the common good: "Evangelization also involves the path of dialogue. For the Church today, three areas of dialogue stand out where she needs to be present in order to promote full human development and to pursue the common good: dialogue with states, dialogue with society—including dialogue with cultures and the sciences—and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church" (Pope Francis 2013, § 238). In *Laudato Si'*, Francis stresses: "Today in view of the common good, there is urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life, especially human life" (Pope Francis 2015, § 189).

In this view of dialogue, the poor and the marginalized have a special space to participate and present their voices, as Pope Francis states in *Querida Amazonia*, in which he specifically mentions indigenous peoples. They are our main partners in the dialogue to advance an agenda of defending the environment crisis and these who are most impacted by its consequences (Pope Francis 2020b, § 26). Listening is essential for creating dialogue and social friendship for Francis: "Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common grounds: all these things are summed up in the one word 'dialogue' . . . Unlike disagreement and conflict, persistent and courageous dialogue, does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine" (Pope Francis 2020a, § 198).

For Pope Francis, the poor and marginalized not only should be included in the dialogue, but they also have something to teach all of us. He follows the spirit of dialogue fostered by the Second Vatican Council and embraced by the Episcopal Conferences of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops. These Conferences also opted for following this spirit of dialogue, especially the Conferences of Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979). Medellín encouraged a liberating education based on critical dialogue because "Latin America needs to redeem itself from unjust servitude and, above all, from its own egoism" (Conferência Episcopal Latino Americana 2005a, p. 117). Puebla affirmed that the Catholic community must be a "bridge of contact and dialogue" (Conferência Episcopal Latino Americana 2005b, § 1226). Then, it added: "In an attitude of sincere listening and welcoming, in this contact and dialogue we must address issues that are raised from their own temporal environment" (Ibid., § 1227.). Similarly, the Conference of Aparecida (2007)—in which Francis as Cardinal of Buenos Aires had a significant role, leading the writing commission—also embraced "a dialogue from different cultural worldviews: celebration, inter-relationship, and revival of hope" (Conferência Episcopal Latino Americana 2007, § 97).

Although a liberating and creative dialogue is not an easy task to initiate and undertake, especially in a politically polarized and intolerant society, it is not possible without people's participation and mutual learning to re-create the world and re-build political and economic systems to pursue the common good. For this to happen, we need love, and that love must begin on the part of someone. Because God is love (1 John 4:16), love is the Holy Spirit who maintains the ongoing presence of Jesus Christ in the church and its mission to continue his ministry in history. Love shows that the church's mission is dialogue to promote an encounter among people in which they exercise tolerance, listen to one another, and establish a critical process of liberation and re-creation of the world.

### 3. Liberation, Dialogue, and the Voices of the Poor Concerning Health Care

In this final section, as an example of the perspective developed by theological ethicists in Brazil and promoted by the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology, I present an application of liberation theological ethics from below in the context of health care.<sup>4</sup>

In the field of global public health, the predominant model involves a top-down approach, in which decisions are made by those called "experts," with no participation of the people who are immersed in the most challenging realities threatening their lives. Many



of the initiatives that aim to help the poor run at the risk of infantilizing them, with a soft form of management of poverty through dependency and a charity that prevents the poor from dying but does nothing to really raise them from poverty. Serving the poor—without believing that they have anything to offer and without accepting they know their reality and recognizing they can be our partners in any global health effort—does not respect their agency and thereby fails to create sustainable development. In contrast to that prevalent approach, a liberating one regards the poor as partners who have a contribution to offer and who can engage in dialogue with the medical experts in an authentic process of mutual listening, learning, and problem-solving. Theological ethics—grounded on the preferential option for the poor and other principles of Catholic social teaching—has a contribution to create and promote this process of mutual learning.<sup>5</sup>

Developed from the encounter with the poor, a theological ethics from below shows that actions that aim to help the poor but that dismiss their contribution see them only as passive recipients of charity and maintain current structures of oppression. Without the agency of the poor, one provides bread to them, so they do not die hungry. However, the poor and their agency are not recognized. They are prevented from realizing their own knowledge of the human condition and the reasons for their impoverishment. Consequently, they do not become aware of the structural forces that create the poverty they live in and paths to fight against these forces. For those who provide the bread, it is good that the poor are still there; otherwise, how could those providers be seen as good or even saints back home? Helping the poor without engaging with them as agents of their own history and without asking why they are poor does not create problems for those who enjoy the *status quo*, and nothing changes.

Feeding the poor without asking why they are poor—struggling for their independence within their own reality—is what Paul Farmer refers to as the “management of poverty” (Farmer 2003, p. 127). Managing poverty provides gains for many people, even for those who say they are working for the poor. This also yields a false historical determinism that is imprinted in the minds of the oppressed, who feel out of control. They lack agency, the ability to participate in making decisions about the future. They do not believe in their capacity of re-building the reality and making history. Paulo Freire understands this as a source of oppression inside everyone’s mind (Freire 2000, pp. 45–50). For him, justice begins with a process of liberation of the mentality from this historical determinism that decides who is rich and who is poor. History is made by the human being who is always challenged to create and re-create the world. The poor have a creativity to recreate their world every day to survive in their impoverished reality and oppression. They are not and cannot be seen as passive recipients of our actions “for them,” in a colonial paternalism, a fruit of this historical determinism.

Liberating theological ethics recognizes that the poor possess a power in history. This is, in the words of Gustavo Gutiérrez, “The irruption of the poor in history” (Gutiérrez 1981, pp. 107–23). If we want to act to build justice for the poor, this must be made *with* and *from* the poor. We do not liberate them, but they liberate themselves and us, among them. As Paulo Freire suggests, liberation and justice can only happen from the poor. The poor not only liberate themselves but also the oppressor because the oppressing class does not liberate and cannot be liberated by its own action (Freire 2000, p. 44).

In a global health context, the relationship between poverty and health is an evidence-based reality: the main cause of health issues, diseases, and premature death is poverty (Habibov et al. 2019). It creates a vicious cycle (Daniels et al. 2004, pp. 65–66) that begins with injustice and ends with death. Poverty is not a natural phenomenon but is a socioeconomic one that makes people *vulnerable to falling ill*. Once sick, a poor person lacks access to the medical care needed to participate in their recovery. This leads to more suffering, making people even sicker and poorer. As a result, the poor person dies, in a process of denial of his/her dignity.

Christian health care ethicists must join the poor in a project of independency that recognizes their agency in order to break this perpetual cycle of poverty, illness, and

death. Here is one of the main challenges for global health. Catholic social teaching offers important resources to guide leadership from the poor in global health (de Campos 2021, pp. 141–51). The preferential option for the poor is one of these resources that leads us to shift our perspective from a top-down approach to a bottom-up one in which the poor are agents of history.

The poor—who are experiencing this vicious cycle responsible for creating vulnerability of many victims of violence against their dignity—are victims of structural violence, a social sin that creates oppression. They are not poor because of any form of historical determinism, but they are people who were impoverished. If we do not change this colonial paternalistic way of helping the poor, we are also contributing for the maintenance of structural violence, imprisoned in the fallacy of historical determinism.

The option for the poor leads us to join the poor for a process of learning from them and the social *locus* where these victims of structural violence are. The option for the poor is a perspective *from below*, from the experience of the poor, that places their voices at the center of our discussion and actions for the common good in global health. This creates an inclusive dialogue where all are invited to join to move forward in a project of creating and re-creating the world. The experience of theological ethicists in Brazil as presented above has produced a comprehensive collection of texts, articles, and books that reflect a broad engagement in dialogue with scholars from different disciplines, the poor, and the oppressed. The starting point of this theological perspective is the reality wherein occurs the *encounter with the poor and their suffering*.

#### 4. Conclusions

As I affirmed at the beginning of this text, the goal was not to map the theological ethics developed in Latin America but rather to focus on the Brazilian development of this discipline in the last few decades. Moreover, even the theological ethics that has been maturing in Brazil was too large and diverse to be object of an article. Therefore, I narrowed my object by focusing on the experience and journey of theological ethicists gathered by the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology. This did not aim to dismiss or diminish other experiences and perspectives developed in Latin America and in Brazil. Their significance deserves its own analysis, and it is certainly a gap to be filled. The perspective offered in this text has a liberating aspect that marked its approach to theology and to the reality where people experience faith, particularly those communities who are marginalized because of poverty, structural violence, and other forms of oppression. This reality and the voices of these marginalized people and communities are central interlocutors for a doing theology that is informed and rethought by a praxiological account of a liberating ethics among the poor and the oppressed. Encounter and dialogue are key in this liberating theological ethics, but they do not occur at any place; instead, the encounter occurs in the same reality of the marginalized, and the dialogue has them as the main interlocutors of any theological development, only a secondary act originated in an organic exchange with the poor and the oppressed. These encounters with the marginalized to listen the challenges they are experiencing shape a process of learning that leads us to develop a theological liberating ethics as a second act projecting the voices of the marginalized and their perspectives on the ethical challenges they face. This has broadened the understanding of who the poor and the marginalized in Latin America are and what are the ethical challenges they face in the local reality. There is here a contribution to liberating theologies anywhere to its ongoing development in contexts that the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized are not limited to those under socioeconomic injustices but also include listening to the voices of those who are suffering because of their sex, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, geography, etc. These individuals and their oppressive experiences reflect injustices against their dignity and right to flourish that should be an integral part of the call for a preferential option for the poor in theological ethics.

The local is the place where theological ethics springs. It is in the local that the theological tradition finds a place to be revived, acquiring new meanings that are relevant

for those who live in this local reality. It is in the local that the universality of God becomes present in the experience of a community or a people (povo). From the local, the universal can be simultaneously seen and offered for a dialogue with other theological accounts and the growth of the tradition. The local has people's faces, reflecting their experience that very often comes with suffering because of who they are and/or the social condition they are obligated to live. Contemplating these faces and listening to their voices are realizing the presence of the universal God in the midst of their challenges. At the same time, it guides us to address these challenges from an ethical point of view that incorporates their voices telling us who the poor and the marginalized are and in which way we should go to join them in a meaningful process of recognition of their dignity and of liberation. The theological ethics developed by theologians of the Brazilian Society of Moral Theology is a journey that embodies this perspective. Concretely, this occurs in several ways of engaging theology with different challenges in a very broad range of oppressive experiences. One of them is the challenge related to health inequities and injustices that prevent the poor from flourishing with minimal resources for their well-being and from accessing health care. At the same time, they live within disproportional vulnerability to diseases and premature death. I presented this healthcare challenge as one example of an application of a liberating ethics that points out to a global health approach with the poor and the oppressed as agents for justice in health care. The liberating ethics helps us to build a global health effort from the local reality of the poor and the oppressed, a bottom-up approach of health promotion and construction of justice.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> For an comprehensive account on liberation theology and its method, see: [Boff and Boff \(2001\)](#); [Dussel \(1999\)](#).
- <sup>2</sup> One can argue that these terms refer to two different categories of theologians and methods. I am not disputing that, but I am use them synonymously.
- <sup>3</sup> See, for example, the chapter written by a representative of the LGBTQ+ community by [Milanez \(2022\)](#), pp. 333–40).
- <sup>4</sup> This part aims to introduce a critic to the top-down approach in global health and how liberation theology and its liberating ethics offer resources for a bottom-up approach in global health. Hence, it has a methodological aspect of a liberating ethics in global health. For an empirical use of this approach and for the encounter with the voices of the poor and marginalized, see my previous work in liberation ethics and justice in health care, which the poor speaks about their experience and knowledge ([Martins 2020](#), especially chps. 7 and 8).
- <sup>5</sup> On an account of mutual learning see: [Martins \(2020\)](#), pp. 223–58).

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