

The Influence of Words Used in Translated Texts on Liberation Theology on Distortions and Depictions of Messages from Seminal Source Texts on The Theology

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Abstract

Originally based on Roman Catholic doctrine, Liberation theology emerged from amongst the poor of Latin America in the late 1960s and was initially very influential on the continent. However, the Vatican was very critical of the theology for over thirty years, at least partly because it had links to Marxism. Consequently, liberation theology started losing currency worldwide. However, the theology has regained relevancy, partly because many academics are reading translated versions of seminal texts on the theology that were originally written in Spanish. Translations of texts on liberation theology can be subject to issues associated with the words the translators use. I argue that the words used in both translated texts this presentation considers reflect differences and similarities between the theological viewpoints of the authors and translators and pro- and anti-Marxist sentiments. In one of the translated texts, the culmination of the anti-Marxist feelings and differences between the author's and translator's viewpoints have led to significant distortions of the messages of the original Spanish text. In the other translated text, the translators' pro-Marxist sentiments and the similarities between the translators' theological viewpoints and the author's have resulted in translations that more faithfully depict the source text's messages. This presentation will highlight how the translators' words accurately depict or significantly distort the source texts' messages. The presentation will also highlight the significant roles the translators' views on Marxism and theological viewpoints have played in the distortions and depictions.

Keywords: Written language; translations; Spanish; English; theology