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This is the first book to show how Latin American liberation theology can be applied to and can transform pastoral care in countries such as Britain and the USA. Hitherto pastoral care has tended to concentrate on looking after individuals. Stephen Pattison suggests that much of the suffering endured by individuals is actually socially and politically caused, and so is avoidable if the appropriate action is taken. The author argues that what we now require is a socio-politically aware and committed pastoral care which makes an option for oppressed and poor people and engages in practical struggle against the forces of injustice and oppression. Focussing, as it does, especially on mentally ill people and on women, the book will be of interest to all those who want to broaden their vision and knowledge of liberation theology or pastoral care, whether theologians, pastors, students for ministry, members of caring professions, or users of the services they provide.

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Religion increasingly is seen as a renewed force, and is recognised as an important factor in the modern world in all aspects of life – cultural, economic, and political. It is no longer a matter of surprise to find religious factors at work in areas and situations of political tension. However, our information about these situations has tended to come from two main sources. The news-gathering agencies are well-placed to convey information, but are hampered by the fact that their representatives are not equipped to provide analysis of the religious forces involved. Alternatively, the movements generate their own accounts, which understandably seem less than objective to outside observers. There is no lack of information or factual material, but a real need for sound academic analysis. ‘Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion’ will meet this need. It will give an objective, balanced, and programmatic coverage to issues which – while of wide potential interest – have been largely neglected by analytical investigation, apart from the appearance of sporadic individual studies. Intended to enable debate to proceed at a higher level, the series should lead to a new phase in our understanding of the relationship between ideology and religion.

A list of titles in the series is given at the end of the book.

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PASTORAL CARE AND LIBERATION THEOLOGY

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General editors' preface

Only twenty years ago it was widely assumed that religion had lost its previous place in Western culture and that this pattern would spread throughout the world. Since then religion has become a renewed force, recognised as an important factor in the modern world in all aspects of life, cultural, economic, and political. This is true not only of the Third World, but also in Europe East and West, and in North America. It is no longer a surprise to find a religious factor at work in areas of political tension.

Religion and ideology form a mixture which can be of interest to the observer, but in practice dangerous and explosive. Our information about such matters comes for the most part from three types of sources. The first is the media which understandably tend to concentrate on newsworthy events, without taking the time to deal with the underlying issues of which they are but symptoms. The second source comprises studies by social scientists who often adopt a functionalist and reductionist view of the faith and beliefs which motivate those directly involved in such situations. Finally, there are the statements and writings of those committed to the religious or ideological movements themselves. We seldom lack information, but there is a need – often an urgent need – for sound objective analyses which can make use of the best contemporary approaches to both politics and religion. ‘Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion’ is designed to meet this need.

The subject matter is global and this will be reflected in the choice both of topics and of authors. The initial volumes will be concerned primarily with movements involving the Christian

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religion, but as the series becomes established movements involving other world religions will be subjected to the same objective critical analysis. In all cases it is our intention that an accurate and sensitive account of religion should be informed by an objective and sophisticated application of perspectives from the social sciences.

This is one of the most substantial and challenging contributions to pastoral theology to have appeared for some years. Pastoral care has had difficulty in relating to serious theology or developing a critical self-understanding. Liberation theology, argues Dr Pattison, can stimulate pastoral care to become more aware of its socio-political context, and more sensitive to the dangers of implicit or explicit collusion with oppressive structures and processes. These insights are of general relevance to the criticism and renewal of pastoral care, and are developed here with special relation to the pastoral care of people with psychiatric disorders, to psychiatric hospitals, and to the role of the chaplain. Dr Pattison's carefully developed argument is challenging and controversial, and has important implications for the practice of pastoral care and for a more rigorous pastoral theology.

DUNCAN FORRESTER AND ALISTAIR KEE
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Preface

Like any other part of Western society, the intellectual and academic spheres have their rapidly changing fashions. In the postmodern supermarket of ideas and theories, liberation theology, which originated in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, may now appear to be over-familiar, even *passé*. After the triumph of capitalism and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, it may be thought to be well beyond its 'sell by' date. If this is the case, then this book is, in part, a protest against intellectual consumerism and trendiness. It is also an assertion that, in their haste to refresh their palates by devouring the next new idea to come along, thinkers and practitioners in the West run the risk of failing to digest the full significance and implications of ideas and movements which have a more than transitory importance.

Marxism (which heavily influenced liberation theology) is an example of a theoretical system which is presently discredited and out of favour in the academic establishment, even amongst left-wing thinkers. This is short-sighted and absurd: Marx is a giant of the intellect whose work still has much to teach us about how society works, even if we would frequently want to disagree with his theories, interpretations, and prescriptions. Similarly, there is a vast amount that we still need to learn from liberation theology, theoretically and in practice. In this book I want to argue that liberation theology provides an illuminating critique of pastoral care for the 1990s. It is not so much that liberation theology has been tried in the Western world and found irrelevant or wanting. It is more that its implications and methods have not yet been sufficiently under-

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stood and applied. Pastoral care, being a practical activity, is an obvious area in which to apply them.

In the 1970s it was thought in many countries that economies could expand indefinitely, that social consensus was here to stay, and that, while the poor might always be with us, they would become more affluent and the gap between them and the rich would continue to narrow. The demise of these assumptions means that the very practical challenge of liberation theology lies ahead not, as contemporary intellectual entrepreneurs might have us believe, behind us.

It is a great pleasure to acknowledge extensive debts in writing this work. Alastair Campbell, Una Maclean, Duncan Forrester and Peter Selby provided guiding hands and supportive criticism in initial stages. Sue Spencer agreed to read parts, and to help particularly with chapter 17 on pastoral care with women, a subject in which she has an enormous amount of practical experience and theoretical expertise. James Woodward's enthusiasm and commitment to reading speedily many chapters of the book has been the complete antidote to authorial depression and self-doubt. His willingness to compile an index is gratefully acknowledged as the act of supererogation that it is. Elaine Graham discussed pastoral care with women with me, and generously allowed me to use some of her own unpublished writing on this subject. Barbara Hayes also did the latter. Michael Bourne, John Foskett, and John Browning kindly brought me up to date on aspects of the state of contemporary mental health chaplaincy by supplying me with information. Malcolm Johnson at the Open University had the vision to appoint a practical theologian to the staff of this remarkable, interdisciplinary, secular institution and the courage to allow me to continue writing in the theological sphere. Last, but by no means least, Alex Wright of Cambridge University Press has been an honourable and exemplary commissioning editor with whom it has been a delight to work.

My chief debt is really to the patients and staff of a psychiatric hospital in the North of England where I worked as a part-time chaplain for a while. It was they who taught me what mental health services were, and could be, like, for good

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and ill. The experience I gained in that setting was the concrete horizon of dialogue for the insights I was gaining from liberation theology. It underlies the present work at all points, even if this is not often directly apparent.

If it were appropriate to dedicate this book to an individual I would have no hesitation in dedicating it to John Sweet, my first theological teacher. John has given me nearly twenty years of friendship and support, encouraging me on theological study from very unpromising beginnings. As he approaches retirement I take this opportunity to thank him, and to salute him warmly and publicly from an area of theology very distant from his own field of New Testament Studies.

Given the subject-matter of the book and the engaged, corporately focussed response I hope it might engender, however, I think it most appropriate to dedicate it to all those who suffer and are oppressed, especially those who are oppressed by what we think of as mental disorder. In this connection I particularly remember the members of my own family whose lives have been vitiated by severe, chronic mental illness.