# RELIGION AND SOCIAL
# COMMUNICATION

## Journal of the Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication

The Asian Research Center
for Religion and Social Communication
ARC

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# COMMUNICATION THEOLOGY - A NEW APPROACH[1]

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_This study presents a new understanding of a Christian Communication Theology, looking at Theology under the perspective of Communication. The study is partly based on texts written by modern German theologians, which are not yet available in English. The author is a graduate student in Pastoral Communication at the 400 year old Pontifical & Royal University of Santo Tomas (UST) in Manila where he is currently continuing his doctoral studies in the Theological Faculty._

## 1. Introduction

There are many definitions for communication under informational, social, psychological, cultural or anthropological perspective (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008, 3-7). There is generally an agreement on its nature as an ongoing process through which human persons express themselves, share meanings with each other so they come to a commonness (Eilers, 2009a, 22-24; cf. Pearson and Nelson, 2000, 6-7; cf. Samovar, Potter, and McDaniel, 2007, 2-16). Human communication is a dynamic, dialogic, and ongoing process in which people share with each other meanings, using symbols, signs, certain instruments and ways according to their social and cultural context.

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[1] This article is a summary of a thesis for the degrees of Licentiate in Sacred Theology and Master of Art in Theology major in Social/Pastoral Communication at the Pontifical & Royal University of Santo Tomas, Manila. In the process of theological thinking, several theologians addressed the phenomenon of human communication in relation to the Church's life. Based on their works, the author tries to develop a theological and systematic view of communication and shows how Christian communication may be fulfilled and contribute to the process of human communication

The Church as part of the human family is, since her very beginning, is concerned with communication in various ways. Generally she has, especially in recent times, shown a positive attitude in the development of human communication as many documents of the Church show[2]. Basically, the Church recognizes the benefits of technological inventions and the contribution of modern means of social communication to human development. She also calls for respect for the dignity of the human person and pleads for spreading of the truth in communication. She appeals to responsively deal with the means of communication.

An important contribution of the Church to the development of human communication is the introduction of the term "*Social Communication*." When the preparatory commission for the Vatican II Decree on Social Communication "Inter Mirifica" proposed this term, they said in a *declaratio* that expressions like Mass Media, Media of Diffusion, Audio-Visual Means or anything similar would not sufficiently express what the Church is concerned about. Therefore, they proposed the new term Social Communication. This was accepted and promulgated by the Council Fathers (Eilers, 2009b, 314-316). The idea of "social communication" is a concept of Vatican II which contains also a theological dimension (Eilers, 2009b, 324-328). The term refers to the communication *of* and *in* human society, and thus includes all ways and means of communicating within human society. It covers all communication within human society in the past and leaves the door open for further developments in the future. In this perspective, *Social* Communication is concerned

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[2] Among them there are several important documents like the Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura" (by Pope Pius XI, 1939), "Miranda Prorsus" (by Pope Pius XII, 1957), the degree of the second Vatican Council "Inter Mirifica" (1963), the Pastoral Instruction "Communio et Progressio" (published by the Pontifical Council for Social Communication, 1971), and "Aetatis Novae" (by Pontifical Council for Social Communication, 1992).

with human interaction through which human beings express themselves and share meaning in their social and cultural context.

## 2. Development towards a Communication Theology

The key concept which is used in reflecting communication theology is the concept of *self-communication* of God. Karl Rahner was the one who drafted this concept to explain the teaching of grace and justification of human beings, especially the completion of human beings is grounded in divine self-communication. Apparently, already some theologians like Friedrich David Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Herman Schell (1850-1906), and Romano Guardini (1885-1968) had applied this term before Rahner (O'Collins, 2001, 239). However, it was Rahner who indicates with this term that God communicates himself to human beings as he is, beside God's mystery that he himself can "withdraw" himself so that human beings can never grasp him in a complete way (Rahner, 1984, 123-125). In divine self-communication, the giver who himself communicates is also the communicated gift. Here, giver (God) and divine grace (the self-communication) are somehow the same (Rahner, 1984, 126). God as love gives himself and therefore, sets, in "efficient causality" as Creator, the human being in existence to whom God's self-communication as grace is given (Rahner, 1984, 127-130). All this shows that God's self-communication is constitutive for the essence of creation, of the world and of human beings. Rahner's term of God's self-communication plays an important role for communication theology even though he did not explicitly speak of this as he developed this concept. Avery Dulles maintains that Rahner has brought out the communication dimension of theology in his concept (Dulles, 1992, 21).

From this perspective, Gisbert Greshake, a German theologian, states that "communication is from its origin a decisive theological idea which grounds in the Christian revelation, and which addresses the center of the Christian perception of God and of the world" (Greshake, 2002, 6). God's self-communication explicitly happens in the event of Jesus Christ. Human beings see in the encounter with Christ God himself. Jesus is the self-communication of God. Anyone who comes in touch with his word, his life, his death and resurrection, will be brought into relation with God. According to Greshake, a Christian theological concept of communication has its root in the Trinitarian and Christological realities (Greshake, 2002, 11).

Based on divine revelation, Jürgen Werbick sees communication as a basic category in the perspective of fundamental theology. According to him, revelation, faith, tradition, and Church's practices basically have to be considered as communicative reality (cf. Werbick, 1997, 214f). For him the Church is constituted as community of those who are really incorporated in Christ, and through his Spirit builds an organic community (Werbick, 2005, 770). Therefore, *Communio* and *Koinonia* are closely connected with communication by which all Church's members - according to divine intention - participate in God's salvation through Christ (Werbick, 2005, 778-780). Communication is the basic process, *Grundvorgang*, of the Church (Werbick, 2005, 797). The performance and the effectiveness of the communication within the community, however, depend on the communication with Christ and the Holy Spirit who ensures and guides the Church's communicative activities (Werbick, 2005, 799-809). Further, *martyria, leiturgia, diakonia* are basic dimensions of Church's communication (Werbick, 2005, 810-811). Living the faith in all these aspects, the Church shows a new communicative culture to humanity.

From the perspective of God's self-communication, Peter Henrici says that "communication theology cannot be a regional theology of the genitive; it will become essentially the intrinsic structural principle of a whole theological concept" (Henrici, 1986, 791). Communication is the essence in the relation between God and human beings. The whole revelation and salvation process is considered as communication. This has consequences for communication in pastoral ministry in the world today.

Carlo Martini, a biblical scholar, took up the reflection on communication from biblical perspective. For a pastoral plan of two years for his archdiocese of Milan, he wrote two letters on communication to the members of his archdiocese in order to give them guidelines through the "pastoral journey to communication": the first one is called "Effata, apriti!" (Effata, be open!), and the second one is "Il lembo del Mantello" (the Hem of his Garment). Based on Scripture, he reflected God's communication in the first letter and gave some theological indications for communication practice. The Trinitarian God is communication. He communicates himself to human beings; the incarnation and paschal mystery of Jesus Christ is the summit of God's communication in humanity; because communication is a gift of God, bestowed upon human beings, humans are able to communicate (Martini, 1990, nos. 18-38). With this theological reflection Martini builds a biblical foundation for communication. Consequently, he gives some proposals for the pastoral practice (Martini, 1990, nos. 39-81).

Avery Dulles goes another way when he reflects communication under the ecclesiological perspective. He states that "the Church is communication" (Dulles, 1972, 6). The Church realizes herself as "a vast communication network

designed to bring men out of their isolation and estrangement and to bring them individually and corporately into communion with God in Christ" (Dulles, 1988, 110). Studying the Church's documents of Vatican II, he sketches five communication models of this "network": 1. Hierarchical model, 2. Herald model, 3. Sacramental model, 4. Community or Communion model viewed as fellowship of life, charity, and truth, 5. Secular-dialogic model, Church as communication to the whole human family. In his view, theology aims to express and communicate the experience of grace whereby it uses tangible, social, historically transmitted symbols as ways of communicating. The starting point of communication theology is God's self-communication since the Christian God is a communicating God. Further, he states that "theology is at every point concerned with the realities of communication, and especially with symbolic communication" (Dulles, 1992, 22). Based on this insight, all theological disciplines have a communication dimension since finally they reflect God's communication to human beings. Dulles devotes in a chapter on "Theology and Symbolic Communication" special sections to Fundamental and Practical, but also Systematic Theology. According to him, communication theology refers in a special way to fields like Christology, Creation, Grace, Sacraments, Ecclesiology and Eschatology (Dulles, 1992, 22-39).

In his "Method in Theology," Bernard Lonergan counts eight stages through which theology has to pass: (1) research, (2) interpretation, (3) history, (4) dialectic, (5) foundation, (6) doctrines, (7) systematic, and (8) communications. The final stage is considered as very important for theological reflection to bear fruit. Therefore, doing theology is living communication. Lonergan says that "practical theology is concerned with the effective communication of Christ's message" (Lonergan, 1971, 362). This should be *cognitive, constitutive,* and *effective*

(Lonergan, 1971, 362-363). Furthermore, church's theology has to communicate and unite with all other relevant branches of human studies so that the church will become a "fully conscious process of self-constitution" (Lonergan, 364-365). Thus, theology is ontologically an ongoing communication.

Josef Palakeel stresses the relevance of communication and of a theological pastoral formation for communication. According to him, there exists already an awareness of the importance of communication in ecclesiastical life and activities, both at theoretical and practical level. However, there is not yet a successful attempt at integrating communication within the overall pastoral, theological and missionary context. The reason for this is that there is not "an integrating principle" (Palakeel, 2003, 10). Palakeel mentions the need of moving "toward a communication theology". Therefore, areas of interface between theology and communication should be sought in order to develop a more communicative/communication theology and to draw insights from communication (Palakeel, 2003, 12). Palakeel, however, does not elaborate any concept and clear understanding of communication theology.

In reflecting communication under theological perspective, Franz-Josef Eilers makes the issue more clear when he distinguishes *Theology of Communication, Communicative Theology and Communication Theology.* For him, theology of communication tries to 'baptize' the Mass Media and Mass Communication in order to "bring them into the flock of the Christian faith" (Eilers, 2009a, 19). This kind of theology considers social communication as a theological imperative: God has given us these Media for the apostolate. For this reason, we have to use them for the communication of the message. The church shows this attitude for example in the documents like

"Inter Mirifica" and "Communio et Progressio" (cf. IM, Nos. 1-2; CeP, Nos. 1-2). While theology of communication puts its emphasis on the use of the instruments, communicative theology is concerned with the way of communicating the contents of the faith so that they can be easily understood by people. Therefore, theologians have to use languages and concepts of the people of today to explain and transmit God's redemption. "Such a *communicative* theology tries to give answers to questions and deep desires of modern people. It uses for example their longing for 'wellness' to show God's goodness to be reflected and incorporated into our lives" (Eilers, 2009a, 20). Beyond these two approaches, Eilers proposes a deeper understanding of theology and communication in a new perspective. He states:

> "Communication is not any more a subject to be baptized or to be made understandable or to be seen as part of the 'communicative action' of society but becomes a theological principle in itself which has special repercussions on pastoral theology." (Eilers, 2009a, 21)

In this approach, communication must be brought into the center of theology. The whole of theology is considered now under the perspective of communication. Here, communication becomes a *theological principle* in itself which is called "communication theology" and which is especially important for pastoral and evangelizing communication. Here, God is taken serious as a *communicating* God and divine revelation and salvation are considered as communication happenings. Having reflected attempts of several theologians, Eilers presents some basic elements of divine communication: Trinity, Revelation, Incarnation, and the Sending of the Church. For him, the whole of salvation history is history of God's communication (Eilers, 2009a, 21-32).

From these considerations, we can see there is an inner dynamic cohesion between theology and communication. Communication is essential and intrinsic within Christian theology, because:

- The Christian God is a communicating God.
- He communicates himself to human beings in various ways throughout human history.
- His communication will make human beings to partner of God's communication and it will enable human communication.
- In Jesus Christ God's communication reaches its fullness as he has given himself in love to human beings.
- The Church, incorporated in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit, has to communicate God's message to humanity in its now and here.

Communication theology will reflect the divine communication in all these aspects. It will present God's communication as grammar for any human communication, and especially for the whole of theology. From there, communication theology will show consequences for all Church's practices.

## 3. Communication Theology

### 3.1 The Trinity - Source of Life and Communication

The belief in the Triune God is at the heart of Christian faith. The Christian believes in the revelation and salvation of God, who communicates himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Trinitarian God, the Christian is baptized i.e., he enters into the reality of the Trinitarian life.

The Trinitarian reality refers to a dynamic, vivid and personal motion in which the three divine persons share the life with each other. The Christian God is not a static, lonely monad. Rather, God is in himself plural: Life, Love, Communio (Greshake, 1997, 51-55). This is the final reference point for all reality.

Gisbert Greshake, in a concise way, describes the Trinity as follows: "God is those communio in which the three divine persons carry out the one divine life as mutual self-communication in the threefold interaction of love" (Greshake, 1997, 179). In this compact statement, the communication dimension of God is explicitly to be seen. The divine communio is considered as an ongoing "exchange" of unity and plurality and is the primary reality of the divine life. In this perspective, the life of God entails, analogically speaking, different moments of a mutual communication happening according to the respective divine person: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each divine person communicates itself to the other in a specific manner which belongs only to that person. In this way, the moments of self-communication of the three persons form a dynamic reciprocal self-communication in the Trinitarian life.

Greshake calls this mutual sharing "eternal rhythmic of love." Here, each divine person "plays its role" in a communicative process. The Father fully gives himself to the "other" as the Son, in this way he possesses his God-head as giving love, therefore also receives the being as Father. The Son is receiving and responding love while he himself receives wholly from the Father, and in grateful manner gives to him honor. The Spirit is uniting love while he himself receives from the relationship between the Father and the Son as "the Third" and at the same moment glorifies both the other divine persons. Thus,

the divine life in the Trinity can be described as a kind of mutual relation FROM and TO: from the self to the other, and in turn from the other to the self. From there, we have a paradigm of this sharing in love: giving/receiving, receiving/giving, and uniting/receiving/returning. In this way, the divine *self*-communication is an ongoing communication of mutual giving and receiving, an interpersonal happening of love (cf. Greshake, 1997, 184-188).

This concept is an attempt of theological thinking which tries to explain the divine reality in human language so that we can imagine in an intelligible way when speaking of God. In fact, this concept is not a result of a speculative thinking process the Church has developed in the course of her theological efforts. Rather, the belief in the Trinitarian God is based on the experience of Jesus Christ who reveals God to human beings in and through his life. Through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, God approaches humanity. In this encounter God shows to human beings his innermost nature and allows them to participate in divine life. Carlo M. Martini asserts:

> "In the Incarnation and in the paschal mystery we come to know the Son whom St. Ignatius of Antioch calls 'the Word proceeding from silence.' It is he in whom the Father (the Silence, the hidden mystery who is the origin of communication) expresses himself and makes himself known. In his whole life, Jesus did not want to do anything else as revealing the Father: 'I have revealed your name to men' (Jn 17:6). As Word proceeding from the Father, Jesus communicates himself to men and women of every age up to today, sending the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can be called "the Encounter": encounter of the Word and of Silence, the encounter of the Triune God with humanity. Through the Holy Spirit, an encounter-with-love mysteriously happens within every one of us, the love which the Father has for us

from eternal silence and which he shows to us, in time, in His Son" (Martini, 1990, no. 25)

Martini refers to several biblical verses which address the intimate relationship of Jesus with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Martini, 1990, no. 26). Especially, the disciples experience and witness the deep relationship between Jesus and God, the Father, as well as the connection with the Holy Spirit when Jesus explains to them God and when they see Jesus prays to God. Numerous biblical passages give evidence to the relation between Jesus Christ and his Father, particularly the Evangelist John, for example: "No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn. 14:6), "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9), and in other verses like Jn. 14: 10, Jn. 15: 9, Jn. 15: 15; Jn. 16:13, 14; Jn. 16:15; Jn. 17:11; Jn. 17: 22, 23, etc. The Trinitarian dimension of communication can be described with Bernhard Häring's words:

> "Communication is constitutive in the mystery of God. Each of the three Divine Persons possesses all that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful, but in the modality of communion and communication. Creation, redemption, and communication arise from this mystery and have as their final purpose to draw us, by his very communication, into communion with God. Creating us in his image and likeness, God makes us sharers of his creative and liberating communication in communion, through communion, and in view of communion." (Häring, 1979, 155)

In short, we can say: The Trinitarian life is a communio through self-communication; and in turn the Trinitarian life is self-communication in communio. The divine self-communication is the ground of created realities. Especially, human beings are able

to communicate because God has created them in his own image and likeness (Gen 1:26). From this Trinitarian understanding, being person is unique, relational and communicative. This is not only applicable to God, but also to human beings. The oneness of the person is always related to the distinctiveness of the other. Further, it opens the way to revelation, redemption and salvation of human beings. Karl Rahner describes the divine communication to the "outside" of the Trinity as follows: "each one of the three divine persons communicates himself to man in gratuitous grace in his own personal particularity and diversity. This Trinitarian communication is the ontological ground of man's life in grace and eventually of the direct vision of the divine persons in eternity" (Rahner, 1970, 34-35).

Therefore, Avery Dulles asserts "Christianity is first and foremost the religion of communication" (Dulles, 1992, 38). All acts of God in creation, revelation, redemption are grounded in the self-communication of God in the Trinity. Dulles also states that "the entire work of creation, redemption, and sanctification is a prolongation of the inner processions within the Trinity" (Dulles, 1992, ibid.). One can discover this communicative motion from the innermost nature of God towards human beings in the process of divine revelation and most of all in the Incarnation.

### 3.2 Dimensions of God's Self-communication in Revelation

The Vatican II's document "Dei Verbum" declares: "Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men. That is to say, He chose to share with them those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind." (DV, no. 6)

From the Trinitarian life, God communicates himself; he creates human beings, addresses himself to them, and opens to them the secrets of his personal life. God's intention is to offer to humans a share in his life. God, the living God, has spoken to humanity in its concrete life and history. This is the fact that dominates the whole process of divine self-communication which is documented in Scriptures.

In the Old Testament, God shows himself to Israel. From his free will, God intervenes into the history of Israel. This intervention is conceived under the form of an encounter between God and His chosen people: God speaks and Israel listens and answers. God addresses man; humans, hearing God, answer by faith and obedience. The fact and content of this communication is called revelation. Hence, to consider the way of God's revelation is to consider the dimensions of God's communication. Israel experiences in the encounter with God his sovereign power which changes the course of its history and the individual existence. René Latourelle says that God's "activity is not a brute display of power; it is always incorporated in words" (Latourelle, 1967, 21). The power of God's word is the dialogues, the announcements, the explanations, the manifestations of a plan. In the course of revelation in the Old Testament, however, God does not speak to the whole of humanity, but he chooses first of all the people of Israel. This people are intermediaries who transmit His word to others.

From this background, the Old Testament is a testimony of Israel's belief. In this book, Israel communicates to the next generation the experience of God who acts in various communicative ways throughout its history and who asserts his will and his power to save his people. Franz-Josef Eilers states that "the whole Old Testament can be considered as a report on

God's communication with Israel his people" (Eilers, 2009a, 27). There are some fundamental moments of God's communication in the whole historical development of the Chosen People Israel.

Not without reason, the story of God's initiative to continue his communicating to humans is presented directly after humanity fails to build a city in order to live with each other and to keep communication among themselves, still more "to make a name" for themselves; the plan is unsuccessful (Gen. 11). The story of Babel remains a symbol of miss-communication and misunderstanding among humans because this undertaking is based *only* on human capacity and power. Within the story of humanity (Gen. 1-9), God speaks to a concrete person Abram and reveals himself. He communicates his plan for humans, and thus the story between God and Israel, considered in biblical perspective, begins (Gen. 12). In a communicative relation to God, Abraham will become father of a great nation and a blessing for them with whom he shares life (Gen. 12:1-3). According to Erich Zenger, the election of Abraham and the promise for the land are two constitutive elements of the existence of Israel (Zenger, 2008, 70).

The book Exodus narrates the history of Israel's deliverance. The high point is the encounter with God on Sinai. In this story, God comes in contact with the chosen people through Moses. God appears to Moses, addresses to him, and calls him into his special service from the burning bush (Ex. 3:2). On the Moses' story, Eilers comments that Moses approached the bush probably "more out of curiosity." Here, "God uses the need and sense for news of human beings to establish relationships and pass on his messages and concerns" (Eilers, 2009a, 27). Israel comes to "know" God primarily when it experiences God's power which delivers it from the slavery of Egypt; and it progressively deepens

its faith in God through many words and deeds which God had fulfilled in its own history (cf. DV, no. 14). In this communication happening, God uses nature (the plagues of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea) to show his power and his will to liberate Israel and to make it into His chosen people. This deliverance ends up in the theophany on Sinai where God presents himself to his people and seals the alliance with Israel (Ex. 19, 1-7). For Martini, the hour of the alliance on Sinai is a "fundamental event" in the communication of God with Israel (Martini, 1990, no. 20). In this special relationship, the communicated Divine Word (Decalogues: "Ten Words") grounds Israel's existence and makes it into a nation.

God calls Israel out of Egypt, accompanies it through the desert, and now God gathers it and gives His word that grounds and guarantees the new born nation (Ex. 20:2-17). This communicative happening is, according to Zenger, the third element of Israel's existence (Zenger, 2008, 71). The event on Sinai is the existential significant moment of the communicative relation between God and the People Israel in which God makes Israel, as his first-born son, to his communication partner so that it from now on lives in a relationship with God by keeping the covenant. Because of this, Zenger calls the first part of the Bible, commonly identified as the Old Testament, the First Testament (Zenger, 2008, 15).

Based on this experience, Israel believes in the Word of God. It has creative power: when God communicates his word everything is created. God's communication has a concrete plan and it is the fundament for every event, happening in the world. God speaks and everything is created. He names created things, and at His call, creation rises out of nothingness. The word of God gives existence and subsistence to the created reality

(Gen. 1:1 ff; cf. Ps 33:6,9). God's words manifest His presence, His majesty, His wisdom (Ps. 19:2-5; Job 26:7-14; Prov. 8:22-31; Sir. 42:15-43; Wis. 13:1-9). In other texts of the Old Testament, God communicates himself in escort of natural apparitions: He appears veiled in a cloud (Ex. 13:21), burning like a burning fire (Ex. 3:2; Gen 15:17), thundering in the tempest (Ex. 19:16; Ps. 29: 2ff), gentle as a light breeze (1 Kgs. 19:12 ff). All these show a kind of "non-verbal communication" of God which accompanies and confirms the Divine Word. Moreover, the word of God creates order that gives human life security. According to the source of the priestly tradition in the Old Testament, the universe is an expression of the will of God which, through the stars and the seas, determines the liturgical times, the Sabbath and the feasts (Gen. 1:3-8); God's communication creates order as condition for human life against the chaos that damages life. (cf. Zenger, 2008, 157-169). Israel has to preserve this life by keeping the order which God has given to it for safeguarding the life. Thereby, God continuously communicates his order from the "meeting tent" as the symbol of divine presence in the midst of Israel (Lev. 1:1). The whole book Leviticus describes the rules to guarantee the new community.

The communication event on Sinai always remains a central and fundamental moment of God's communication. Just in the time of exile, the remembrance of this event gives new meaning in the new life situation of the Israelites. God used the prophets to comfort and to enlighten Israel in the new situation. His communicating word gave hope to the shattered people who live in exile (Ez. 33:1 ff). Through the prophets, God reminded Israel of its origin where God has made it into a people from its nothingness in Egypt. From the beginning of Israel's history, God always communicates his word and reveals the plan for Israel (45:18-19; 48:16). God holds the poles of history (Is.

41:4; 44:6; 48:12). In the midst of national and religious crisis, Israel now heard the Divine Word which has a dynamic power upon all created reality (Is. 40:26; 45:12; 48:13). God's word shows its dynamism in the history. According to René Latourelle, "Yahweh addresses His word to the prophet. In the prophet, this word is an active reality, charged with the very power of a God who communicates" (Latourelle, 1967, 33). In the view of Zenger, God communicates himself through the prophets as the one God who concretely intervenes in human history. He reveals himself as the God who commits himself to humanity and world's history (Zenger, 2008, 425). The "prophetic word is *creator* and *interpreter* of history" (Latourelle, 1967, 34). The prophet constantly refers to the communication event on Sinai, either to remind Israel of the faithfulness it owes the covenant, or, during the time of exile, to proclaim a new exodus, a new covenant (Is. 54-55). Based on God's word, he perceives the meaning of events, interprets history from the point of view of God, and makes it known to men and women of his time. Latourelle states that "the precise content of this word (of God) becomes intelligible only through the word of the prophet. Revelation-event and Revelation-word are, as it were, the two faces of the word of God" (Latourelle, 1967, 35).

According to Israel's belief, God's will expresses itself in the sapiential literature which represents a very ancient tradition in Israel (1 Kgs. 5:9-14; 10:1-13.23-25). Sapiential literature enjoys a new popularity in the Persian and Hellenistic times: the existing collections (for example Prov. 10:1-22, 16; 25-29) are augmented by numerous creations (Job, Ecclesiastes, Sirach, Wisdom). The sapiential literature has to do with human effort for a right knowledge which allows human beings to perceive the all-embracing order, existing in daily life. However, the people of Israel believe that wisdom is grounded in the fear of

the Lord (Prov. 1:7). There are various forms of communication in wisdom: proverbs, discourses, riddles, poetries, tales, etc. Israel gains its sapiential knowledge through experiences in life among themselves and by intercultural encounter with other neighboring peoples. These sapiential treasures were soon transformed by Israel into an instrument for communicating the divine message. The same God who gives light to the prophet makes use of human experience to communicate himself to human beings (Prov. 2:6; 20:27). At the beginning, this wisdom is simple reflection, positive and realistic, on man's conduct, to help him direct his life with prudence and discretion. In Greek culture, this reflection will take a more speculative trend and change into philosophy. In Israel, the treasure of human experience and wisdom was quickly animated by the breath of Yahweh's religion: Human experience and wisdom were adopted, but interpreted, and transmitted in the light of Israel's faith in Yahweh. Moreover, the experience from which this sapiential reflection is refined frequently belongs to revelation: creation (Sir. 43), history which makes known the ways of God (Sir. 44-50), the historical books, the Law and the prophets (Sir. 39:1 ff) (cf. Zenger, 2008, 329-333; 400-403).

Looking at the communication dimensions in the First (Old) Testament, we can see some characteristics:

- God is first, the *Initiator* of communication. Based on this, human beings are called to enter into an interpersonal communicative happening.
- In the encounter between God and Israel, God is the *one* who shows himself when he wills, to whom he wills, and because he wills. He reveals himself in various forms and ways: like the Lord to his servant, then progressively like the father to his son, like a man with his friend, like a bridegroom with his bride, etc. All these communicative attempts of God aim

at inviting and leading Israel to live in the covenant with God as communication partner.

- God communicates himself by His word. The Divine Word that once has called all things into being has been continually expressed itself throughout Israel's history, aiming at re-connecting Israel with God. It constitutes and safeguards the life of men. Hearing the word of God and following it, Israel comes to know Him and His plan. Blessing or curse, life or death is dependent on man's attitude whether s/he accepts or refuses God's word (Dt. Chaps. 5 and 6).

- God's communication is not abstract, but his word is spoken concretely, in history and through history. The message of God is always incorporated in history. He uses the way of nature, human experiences and history to communicate his will to human beings. He uses the varieties of personalities (priests, sages and prophets, kings and aristocrats, peasants and shepherds, women and men) to transmit His messages. He chooses diverse ways of communication (theophanies, dreams, consultations, visions, ecstasies, trances, etc.) to make known his plan for Israel. He expresses His will in oracle, exhortation, autobiography, description, hymn, sapiential literature, mediation, etc.). Thus, one may say: "God communicates thus in many ways verbally and non-verbally and finally his communication is presented, preserved and sealed in a book, a means of communication which is the proof of God's communicative action" (Eilers, 2009a, 28).

- Studying God's communication in biblical perspective, Carlo Martini discovered some criteria

for God's self-communication which he considers as basis for any human and Christian communication (Martini, 1990, No. 30ff).

1. Divine self-communication *is prepared in silence* and in secrecy of God (cf. Rom. 16:25). It is a mystery "which is hidden from ages past in God, who created all things" (Eph. 3:9).

2. God's communication to humans *is progressive, cumulative* and *historical.*

3. Divine self-communication realizes itself in a dialectic way.

4. Divine Communication *does not reach its fullness here on earth.* One must distinguish between the communication "in via" and the communication "in patria." Divine communication on earth has its value in anticipating what is to come in the fullness of time when we see God how he is (1 Jn. 3:2).

5. Divine self-communication is *personal.* God communicates himself, not something else. Everything God communicates out of himself is a sign and symbol of his will to communicate himself as a supreme gift. At the same time, divine communication is interpersonal. It appeals to the human person who receives this gift. This needs attention, reception, and listening.

6. God's communication finally *assumes all kinds of interpersonal communication.* In his communication God informs about himself and appeals to humans by calling, promising, threatening, admonishing; but all his communication is finally *self*-communicating because what he really wants to communicate is His person.

## 3.3 Dimensions of God's self-communication in the Incarnation

"In the times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke through us to a son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, who sustains all things by his mighty word" (Hebr. 1:1-3).

These words of St. Paul to the Hebrews may be used as a summary of divine Self-communication in the Incarnation, in the person of Jesus Christ. In Him, God now communicates himself in a very personal way: God, again as initiator, seeks for a "common ground" to communicate himself to human beings. For this reason, "the Word has become flesh" (Jn. 1:14). The Son of God becomes a human person among the other.

First of all, it is to note that the circumstances of the life of Jesus Christ as such must already be considered as communication: the simple way of His birth, His hidden years in Nazareth as preparation for His apostolate, His social status as the carpenter's son, the 40 days in the desert, and His passion

and death on the Cross, all these show how Jesus Christ did communicate (cf. Eilers, 2009b, 55).

There are some fundamental moments of Jesus' communication:

*1. The Baptism of Jesus – a New Dimension of God's Self-communication*

In this special event, God breaks silence and speaks to men. The baptism of Jesus is a Trinitarian communicative act of God to human beings which characterizes a new exodus: (1) the Father, in a new and singular way, gives his WORD. (2) The Holy Spirit publicly discloses the true Image of God to all those who are present by the baptism act. Jesus is here revealed as a true Servant of God. (3) The Son, when he lines up with other people for the baptism by John and willingly accepts the baptism of repentance, represents the true Image of God's Son as well as the true image of Israel, the "first-born son" (cf. Ex. 4:22), (cf. Moltmann, 1993, 65-71). All these characterize Jesus as the one, who is the "new" communication of God to Israel. At the same time, he himself is, in his being, God's message to human beings: Jesus Christ is the communicator and the communication. All these aspects determine and permeate the whole life of Jesus. They become tangible and visible through the multiform of his activities.

*2. First of all, Jesus Christ appeals to the people of his times as the one who announces and inaugurates the Kingdom of God. He does this through his teaching, his deeds, and most of all through his person.*

Jesus communicates to human beings as the teacher of wisdom par excellence. In the beatitudes, Jesus proclaims the

Kingdom of God and declares the essence of its program so that his hearers could memorize, ponder and live by it (Mt. 5:1-12; Lk. 6:20-26). He uses the disposition of his audience, their values which are grounded in the socio-cultural and religious perception of Israel to explain them and to introduce to them the meaning and substance of God's kingdom. He comes not to destroy those values, but to bring them the fullness (Mt. 5:17). The so-called antitheses in Mathew's Gospel prove Jesus' competence and authority as communicator: "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors... But I say to you..." (Mt. 5:27-48). He performs his activities of teaching on any occasion and at any place (cf. Eilers, 2009b, 55).

While Jesus uses the words to explain the relevance and the content of the message of God's kingdom, his parables and stories of everyday life "visualize" the reality of the Kingdom of God in the perception of his hearers. There is a wide range of human experiences and activities in Jesus uses for the service of teaching: sons leaving home to live elsewhere, travelers beaten and robbed on the lonely road, hidden treasures being discovered, farmers sowing seed, workers hired, women preparing the yeast in the flour, etc (O'Collins and Kroeger, 2010, 81-110).

In addition, the miracles performed by Jesus belong to the same communication as words. They are signs which Jesus uses to attest to the words, and to manifest the Kingdom of God. In his theological reflection on Jesus' miracles, René Latourelle underlines four functions of miracles: (1) communication, (2) revelation, (3) attestation, and (4) liberation and enhancement. First of all, he emphasizes the communicative function of Jesus' miracles. According to him, "they are not simply traces or vestiges of a presence and an action, but express an intention to seek inter-personal communication... Prior to any further

specification miracles thus have the function of communicating. They show God's intention of entering into a dialogue of friendship with human beings" (Latourelle, 1988, 294). There are many stories like the narratives of the possessed man (Mk 5:20), the leper (Mk 1:45), the blind man at Jericho (Mk 1852; Lk 18:43), the deaf man (Mk 7:31-37), etc. These people are separated and isolated. Because of their illness, they lose their communicative ability and possibility. By healing their illness, Jesus reestablishes their communicative ability and gives them the possibility to return into human society and into communion with the Father (cf. Latourelle, 1988, 297-298).

To summarize the way of Jesus' communication in his proclaiming of the Kingdom of God, one might say:

> "The *means* used by Jesus for His communication cover the whole range of non-verbal and verbal communications of His time and culture. He non-verbally communicates through actions like miracles, healing, touching, writing in the sand, expelling the sellers from the temple, etc. His actions, thus, can be communicating directly or symbolically, expressing a deeper meaning. He verbally communicates in preaching, teaching, dialogue, group sharing like with His disciples and personal contact like with Nicodemus. His preaching uses parables, metaphors, proverbs, storytelling and references to daily life experiences but also plain language." (Eilers, 2009b, 55)

*3. The Last Supper is the culmination of God's communication which was introduced by the baptism of Jesus and was realized in Jesus' mission. In this intimate scene, God, in and through Jesus Christ, gives himself and reveals himself as a living God whose being is a being for the other.*

In the Last Supper, Jesus uses the special ritual of Israel as a way to communicate God's love in a deeper and new

dimension. He takes the place of the housefather in Israel, who reminds his children of the wondrous deliverance of Israel from the Slavery of Egypts; in the Last Supper, Jesus introduces his disciples to a new dimension of God's salvation. What is more, in this deeply touching and wonderful moment Jesus gives himself as the Lamb which saves and frees human beings (Mt. 26:26 ff.; Mk. 14:22 ff.; Lk. 22:19 ff.). He acts, in this point of view, as a friend who shares the intimate life with his friends up to the point of giving himself for the life of his friends (Jn. 15:13).

*4. In Jesus' Crucifixion God speaks his "Yes" as an answer to a "No" of human beings who refuses God's invitation to the share in communal and communicative life.*

All the teachings, activities, and the whole life of Jesus aim at the full communion between God and humans. His testament to the disciples reveals this divine will "they may all be one, as you Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (Jn. 17:21). Jesus communicates a movement "from God to men" in all his activities; he addresses his listeners and tries to bring them the experience of God's love. Based on this, people, as the response, may enter into communication and communion with God. At the same time there is also in his whole life a movement "from men toward God". He not only introduces people to this way; in a communicative action, he himself goes this way. Moreover, he draws people into this movement. According to Greshake, the movement "from God to men" and "from men toward God" can be seen clearly in the event of the Cross. The Cross is, considered from God's view, the most radical sign that God keeps up his offer to communication and communion even when the world refuses it. The Cross is the kenotic Yes of God to the No of human beings. In fact, God's "Yes" is spoken into the absurd

abyss between God and the world, created by a human "No" to divine love and life. At the same time, the Cross is characterized by a movement "from men toward God": it is a sacrifice which Christ as the "son of man" – representing humanity – gives to the Father (cf. Greshake, 1997, 338-340). So, we can say that the Cross is a radical gesture of God's love he communicates to human beings, a silent gesture in the power of love.

All these moments of God's communication address the whole life of human beings. In other words, all aspects of the human life are embraced by the presence of a communicating God which is showed in Jesus Christ: from the beginning (baptism) until the end (crucifixion), but passes over in a new life in the Spirit (resurrection) as a new communicative being, a presence in communio with the Trinitarian God.

Reflecting the dimensions of Jesus' communication, there are some characteristics:

The most essential dimension of God's self-communication in the New Testament is the fact that the Eternal Word of God is spoken by God himself – the Son. In this way, God fully communicates his intimate being to humanity. In Jesus Christ, God speaks directly from himself (Jn. 1:1-2, 18). The word of God, once passed on, interpreted and pronounced by the prophets, becomes now "flesh" in a person. The high point of the divine self-communication in Jesus Christ is he is giving himself in love to human beings.

According to Greshake, the Incarnation does not aim at instructing human beings that they finally "know" who God is and what this God demands. But, it is in fact an ultimate foundation of communication. Moreover, in this event, God unconditionally communicates himself to human beings (Greshake, 1997, 318).

In his communication, Christ reveals to humans who God is, namely "God is love" (cf. 1 Jn. 4:8, 16). At the same time, he shows what human beings are: God's children (cf. 1 Jn. 3:1), created in God's image and likeness.

In the interplay of communication and communion, Christ is at once the expression and the exegete of God's heart to human beings. He is "the perfect communicator" (CeP, No. 11). Jesus Christ is the central symbol of the Christian religion. Rahner sees in the Incarnation "the absolute symbol of God in the World." This absolute symbol of God is "not merely the presence and revelation of what God is in himself. But He is also the expressive Being (Da-sein) of what – or rather who – God will be, in free grace, to the world, in such a way that this divine attitude, once so expressed, can never be reversed, but is and remains ultimate and unsurpassable" (Rahner, 1967, 293-294).

Analyzing Jesus' communication, Eilers points out some criteria which can serve as principles for any Christian communication (Eilers, 2009b, 56):

- *Jesus' prayer and relation to his Father* must be considered as the basis of His communication to people.
- In His communication, *Jesus always starts from the life and life experience of His people.* He is recipient-audience oriented but at the same time rooted in His mission from the Father.
- *Jesus' communication is embedded in Scripture.* He shows in His communication how His message and mission are prepared already in the old covenant of Israel.
- Jesus communicates also *through question and answer.*

- *Jesus makes people think and challenges them in different ways of communicating* to be honest in their lives and before God. They are challenged to set the proper priorities in their lives. He bares the masks of human communications and encourages and demands clear decisions (Mt 8:19ff; Lc 14:26f: Mc 10:17). He curses those who do not face reality in their lives and their vocations (cf. Lc 12:56; Mc 8:17f; Mt 23:13).
- Jesus also communicates *in the dialectic way of thesis and antithesis.*
- *Jesus puts people into crisis and confrontation but aims at change and conversion;* it is finally not only a sharing of information but of life.
- Jesus, in His communication, *reminds and admonishes people on their dignity, their duties,* their being loved by the Father.
- Jesus *encourages and invites to unity and oneness with* God and others. He restores the communication which is blocked or interrupted by sin.
- *Jesus' communication has an eschatological dimension:* His communication finds its final fulfillment only at the end of time.

### 3.4 The Holy Spirit as Person-Gift and Agent of Divine Communication

In the story of God's self-communication the Holy Spirit is at work as dynamic communicating power and movement. He is the dynamic and vivid "out-coming movement" of the Triune God which reaches out to the creation, "as an extension of the ineffable communion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (DeV, no. 11).

He takes part in the act of the creation (cf. Gen 1:1). He is present in the creation at the beginning of God's salvific self-communication to the things he creates (DeV, no. 12).

He is active throughout the salvific history of God with his chosen people Israel. He comes upon persons whom God has chosen (Ex. 35:31; Jdg. 14:6; 1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 1 Sam. 16:13; 2 Ch. 15:1). Through him, man receives the communicative power to speak the word of God (2 Sam. 23:2; Ez. 11:5). He makes humans able to hear the words of God (Ez. 11:24). He renews the faith of Israel (Ez. 37:1ff.) and makes known the will of God (Mic. 3:8). He is also the one who enables Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna to see Jesus as the Messiah (Lk. 1:39ff. and 3:25ff.).

He also crucially acts in the Incarnation as Person-love. In this perspective Pope John Paul says in his document "Dominum et Vivificantem":

> "It (the Incarnation) was 'brought about' by that Spirit - consubstantial with the Father and the Son - who, in the absolute mystery of the Triune God, is the Person-love, the uncreated gift, who is the eternal source of every gift that comes from God in the order of creation, the direct principle and, in a certain sense, the subject of God's self-communication in the order of grace... For the 'fullness of time' is matched by a particular fullness of the self-communication of the Triune God in the Holy Spirit. 'By the power of the Holy Spirit' the mystery of the 'hypostatic union' is brought about, that is, the union of the divine nature and the human nature, of the divinity and the humanity in the one Person of the Word-Son. When at the moment of the Annunciation Mary utters her 'fiat': 'Be it done unto me according to your word,' she conceives in a virginal way a man, the Son of Man, who is the Son of God. By means of this 'humanization' of the Word-Son the self-communication of God reaches its

definitive fullness in the history of creation and salvation" (DeV, no. 50).

The Holy Spirit communicates Jesus as the true servant, the true prophet and the Son of God by Jesus' baptism (Mt. 3:16ff.; Lk. 3:22, 23) (cf. DeV, Nos. 15-17). He is present in Jesus' activities for the kingdom of God (Mt. 12:28).

Through the Paschal mystery and resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is given to human beings as a Person-gift from the Father and the Son. At the Last Supper, Jesus speaks to his disciples from this Spirit: "I will send him (the Advocate) to you ... and he will declare to you the things that are coming... He will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you" (cf. Gn. 16:7-16). According to Pope John Paul II, "the new, definitive revelation of the Holy Spirit as a Person who is the gift is accomplished at this precise moment" (cf. DeV, no. 23).

Pentecost is the fulfillment of Jesus' promise. This event opens the era of the Church. In fact, it is a fundamental moment of Church's communication. Carlo Martini calls the Pentecost "the Gospel of communication." At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enables the frightened disciples to communicate and open the channels of communication which was interrupted in the event of Babel. God here does "re-establish the possibility of simple and authentic communicating in the name of Jesus" (Martini, 1990, 19). Further, Eilers asserts that the event of Pentecost is "an impressive example of intercultural communication, the communication of God's coming to people of all cultures of that time - in one language and on one occasion" (Eilers, 2009a, 31). This is the hour of the Church's birth, the beginning of Church's

communication as "sign and instrument" of God's communion in humanity.

### 3.5 The Church as Image of the Trinity - a Communicative Reality

God's self-communication in the history of Israel aims at making himself known to his Chosen People. His communication enables Israel to enter into the relationship with God in the covenant. Israel lives from the event on Sinai as communication partner of God which has to follow the Decalogue (Ten Words). Living the faith, this people will be saved and witnesses the God's presence in their nation. Moreover, Israel should communicate the presence of God to other nations.

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ is the fullness of God's communication. God really communicates himself as a person to human beings. He shows his innermost being through the life, work, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Who comes in touch with Jesus, follows him, and lives in personal relationship with him, he will personally encounter God (Jn. 14:9). Jesus does not only incorporate the disciples into the life with the Trinitarian God, moreover, he demands them to share this life to other people. The document "Ad Gentes" states that the Church is "a universal sacrament of salvation" for the humanity (AG, no. 1). She is "missionary by her very nature." Because of this, the Church is, by her very essence, communication. This mission is grounded on the love and self-communication of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (AG, nos 2-4). Living in communicative communion with Christ and through the Holy Spirit, the Church communicates the Trinitarian reality to humanity. In this perspective, Dulles asserts that "the Church is communication." She realizes herself "a vast communication network designed to bring men out of their isolation and estrangement and to bring

them individually and corporately into communion with God in Christ" (Dulles, 1988, 110). She is by her nature the continuation of God's communication in every time and place.

There are some fundamental aspects of this Church's communication dimension of the Church.

In fundamental theological perspective, Jürgen Werbick considers communication as standard category of the Church. According to him, revelation, faith, tradition and ecclesiastical practices may be considered as basic communicative realities (Werbick, 1997, 214). The Church's communication to humanity happens in a dynamic communicative process in which the content of the faith is preserved and shared with the next generation. In this ongoing communication, the church shapes and keeps her identity, and develops her own institution in the midst of human society. All this is based on God's communication (cf. DV, No. 7). In this way, the Church realizes herself as a new communicative reality in the here and now of every time and space.

The new communicative reality is expressed through *communio/koinonia*. The Church should mirror the communicative essence of God in the midst of the world. Based on this, the Church realizes herself as the continuation of God's communication to humanity. Through a life communion with God and among the faithful, the Church testifies to a "new communicative culture" (cf. Werbick, 2009, 121-124). The *communio/koinonia* concept follows the paradigm of the Early Christians (cf. Acts. 2:42; 4:34ff.) which is grounded in the communion with Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 1:4,5), and is shown deeply in the Eucharist ((cf. 1 Cor. 10:16-21). All these build up the mystical body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. Chap. 12).

This spiritual dimension of Church's communication can be seen in the theology of love by the evangelist John. God is love and one can be part of this love when s/he believes in God and in the Son whom God sends to communicate his love. One participates in this love if s/he remains in it (Jn. 15:9-10). From there, the Church gains her communio and the church as communio testifies to the unity of the Triune God (cf. 1 Jn 3:24; 4:15-17; Jn. 17:21-24). For this reason, the Church is also called "communio sanctorum" in which the faithful think of the gift of God's self-communication and communicate this gift that guarantees their communion.

Based on the communion/communication with Christ and in the Holy Spirit and the communion/communication among the Church's members, the Church is considered as a community which remembers, proclaims, interprets, and celebrates the communicating Word of God, but at the same time also as a community which communicates this message to the world. Here, the kerygmatic dimension of the Church comes to light. The Church performs this in the three basic ways of communicating: *Martyria*, *Leiturgia*, and *Diakonia* (Werbick, 2005, 810).

When we accept the five communication models of the Church, as developed by Dulles (Dulles 1992, 22), as communication structure, the concept of *communio/koinonia*, realized in *kerygmatic* form and in three basic ways *Martyria*, *Leiturgia*, and *Diakonia*, should permeate the entire structure of the Church. In this way the Church is more a communicative reality than institution. She lives in view of communication and communion for the sake of human's communion with God.

The reciprocal self-communication of God in his innermost mysterious life, his self-communication in human history, presented in the history of Israel, the divine self-communication in the Incarnation, and the continuation of God's self-communication in and through the Church set up the frame for communication theology. Such a theology is the basis for the Church as communication. Therefore, communication theology primarily concerns itself with the essence of the Church as communication. Its focuses less on the use of the communication instruments. For this reason, the whole of theology must be considered under the perspective of communication. As consequences all fundamental aspects of communication, driven by the self-communication of God, must permeate in all theological disciplines. Based on the essence of the Church as communication Christian communicator shapes the inner disposition for communication and deals with the communicative reality of human beings with its potentials of communication, and with the respective situation.

## 4. Conclusion

God's self-communication is the source of human life and human communication. The divine self-communication shows itself in the Trinity, the revelation, the Incarnation, and embodied in the Church is the grammar of communication theology. Such a theology should be a formation program in Church's theological institutes, especially in the priestly formation. Further, communication theology leads to deepening the dimensions of communication in all different theological disciplines in order to fecundate the respective fields of those disciplines. It helps Christian communicators to form dispositions in communicating with other people from different social backgrounds, cultures and religions. Based on God's communication, Christians can develop a proper attitude in the process of social communication in order to contribute to the improvement and unity of human society (CeP, no. 1). It gives

enlightening insights to those who concern themselves with human social communication. In turn, studying communication theology, one will be led to a communicative exchange with other sciences like anthropology, culturology, psychology, sociology, etc. In this way, the Church can effectively face the challenges and problems of social communication in the modern world of today, especially when she will give orientation and direction to young people who are the most affected persons in living under the influence of modern communication.

In Christian understanding one can say: we may miss-communicate, but we cannot not communicate because human beings are created by a communicating God, in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). Communication must happen for the sake of human unity among themselves and with God, their constantly communicating God.

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# SIDDHARAMA'S VACHANAS ON
# SOCIAL EQUALITY
*Kivudanavar Jagadeesh[1]*

*This paper written by a historian is on Siddharama's Vachanas on social equality. Siddharama was a devotee of Siva (Hindu God) who tried to communicate to the people through Vachanas. Vachanas are like poems, criticizing the caste system and inhuman practices prevailing in Hinduism at that time. The paper is on Hindu Caste, Creed and Inequality and the criticisms made by a devotee.*

Siddharama *Sivayogi* is one of the stalwarts of *Vachana* literature. Basavanna, Channabasavanna, Prabhudeva, Siddharamesvara and Akkamahadevi, these are, as it were, the five vital breaths of Lingayatism. Siddharamesvara has played an important role in shaping Virasaivism. *Vachana* means 'promising words' in the literary expression. The Saranas of 12th century AD declared socio-religious reformation. They promised to uplift the people from social evils. As that, they composed Vachanas to eradicate the social evils. The Hindu society was paralyzed by several inhuman practices like casteism, untouchablity, sati, female infanticide etc. Therefore the *Saranas* held responsibility to purify the society. The socio-religious conditions of 12th century AD influenced on the *Saranas* and they revolted against the greedy Vedic society. Therefore, *Saranas* composed the *Vachanas* in the Kannada language and touched the hearts of the people. They opened the eyes of the society. The *Vachanas* of Siddharamesvara reveal how he was transformed at the sight of the great saints. He became president of the *Sunya Simhasana* established by Basavanna. He was also one of the members of the

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*Anubhava Mantapa*, a religious parliament of new experiments to bring reforms in the society.

Siddharama was born in Solapur (Sonnalapur) in the Maharashtra state. He was born dumb to his aged parents who were past the childbearing age by the blessings of Revanasiddhesvara. His parents, lavishing their love all the more on this late born and handicapped son, put him, as he grew to boyhood, to tending cattle. Every day he worshipped Sivalinga on the highway of Haderabad. One day, he met a beggar named Mallayya and shared food with him. Once, Mallayya desired to eat curds. When Siddharama went home to bring curds, Mallayya disappeared. Siddharama soon returned with a pot of curds but Mallayya had gone away. Then he stood weeping. At the same time a pilgrim passing by took pity upon the boy and took him to Srisaila where he assured to show him his Mallayya. But he did not find Mallyya at Srisaila. He was disappointed and decided to put an end to his wretched life and plunged into a deep valley, where an unseen hand held Siddaharama. A voice in the air advised him to go back to Solapur. He started welfare works such as temple building and digging tanks, wells, watersheds for pilgrims. Siddharama did hard Sivayoga. One day Allamaprabhu arrived at Sonnlige and after a heated debate punctuated with yogic feats on either side, Allamaprabhu brought him to Kalyana where he joined *Sivasaranas* and converted into Virasaivism by wearing the *Ishtalinga*. Siddharama then involved in the socio-religious reform movement led by Basavanna and other *Sivasaranas*. He wrote many *Vachanas* on the theme of equality. He dedicated them to his Lord Kapila Siddhamallikarjuna (Mallikarjuna of Srisilam).

## His Vachanas on Social Equality

*Sivayoga* is a universal practice. Everybody is eligible to practice without any caste, creed, age, sex and position, which is pictured in the following vachanas:

*Equanimity alone is Bhakti;*

*Truth alone is the Linga*

*Untruth alone is another God.*

*Being without ire is worship;*

*Being without desire is Prasada.*

*If you are engrossed in Ishtalinga,*

*It is as good as becoming*

*Kapilasiddha Mllesa, the God of gods.*

*(S.V.S., Vol.1V, No. 771)*

*Difference is in the mind, not in the object, O Sir,*

*Difference is in action and non-action not in knowledge,*

*O Sir, Difference is in beauty and ugliness, not in the vital force,*

*O Sir, Kapilasiddhamallikarjuna.*

*(S.V.S. Vol. 1V , No. 1153.)*

In these *Vachanas*, Siddharama encouraged to wear *Ishtlinga* and worship without discrimination between human being. He says that God only has high caste but not man. Every-

one should drink same water in the tank, but water never pushes them back by the reason of caste and colour. Earth is a gift of Siva. He is the author of birth, life, death and every thing. So he never practices casteism. The matter of high and low is depending upon one's character and his living condition only.

*What do I do, being high born?*

*God is not in caste; God is in one's mind.*

*What matters of what womb one is born?*

*He alone is high born.*

*Whom you love, O Kapila Siddhamallikarjuna!*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.358)*

*If the high caste and the low caste ones*

*Go to drink water,*

*Does water push them away?*

*Saying, Go, get burnt?*

*When will your virtue of equanimity,*

*That can keep me in calm state of mind,*

*Ever possess me?*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.420.)*

The *Varna* system brought a rigid casteism in the Hindu society. A person born in a particular class bore the stamp of that class throughout his life. Worthy or unworthy, he was compelled to follow the profession of his fore-father. This created inequality in the Hindu society and ruined the Hindus (Heaven, p.7).

The *Sivasaranas* including Siddharama criticized, advocated annihilation of the caste, and encouraged inter-dining and inter-caste marriage.

*Hear me, you who Fight*

*Over the question of Caste:*

*Was Dohara high born?*

*Was Madara high born?*

*Was Durvasa high born?*

*Was Walmiki high born?*

*Was Kondilya high born?*

*Caste-consideration is meaningless.*

*If you see their conduct,*

*There is none in the three worlds*

*To match it, look you,*

*Kapila Siddhamallikarjuna!*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.1206)*

*What if one belongs to one of the four castes?*

*He is a Virasaiva*

*Who can transcend the four castes?*

*What if one has read the four Vedas?*

*He is a chandala*

*Who has not shed the body.*

*What if one heads a four-fold army?*

*Look how he rules his state without*

*Wit and wisdom!*

*Look, what boots a grand body,*

*What means the existence?*

*Unless Gajacharmadhara Kapila Siddha*
Mallikarjuna

*Smiles His benediction on him?*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.1383.)*

*What if one is a Sudra by birth?*

*He is a Virasaiva in the eyes*

*Of Mahadeva lodged in him.*

*It is not wrong to say:*

*"Gold, silver, brass become through alchemy*

*One and the same gold.*

*So also Sudras and others*

*Become Siva through the alchemy of Sivajnana"*

*O Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna!*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.498.)*

*At the common dinner session*

*There should be no discrimination.*

*If there is discrimination,*

*Let none take note of it.*

*If one takes note of it...*

*One should not tell it to others.*

*Even if one tells,*

*It should not be a cause for breaking a family.*

*Should the family break?*

*Let there be no breach in the hearts,*

*Look, O Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna.*

*(S.V.S. Vol. IV, No. 1624)*

Siddharama says here that if a man took birth as a Brahman and reads Vedas that is only by his penance. *Sivasakti, Sivadhyana* and *Sivapuja* are high birth. Then, he asks what if one pores over Vedas? Does that make him a Brahmin? He questioned the authenticity of *Veda, Sastra, Purana,* etc.

*The Sastra is love's weapon;*

*Vedanta is the root-disease of mind;*

*Purana is the story of the dead;*

*Logic is but a monkey's game;*

*The Agama is but yoga's sin;*

*History is the saga of Kings;*

*Smriti is observed with sin and merit,*

*The Ancients' Vachanas are a great store of knowledge,*

*To understand*

*Our Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna!*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No. 1221)*

Manu's ambivalent attitude towards treating the woman as an object of worship as well as condemning her is unfit for freedom and undoubtedly worsened her condition. Among many evil practices of Hinduism was its ill treatment of women as a slave, as an impurity, as a weakling, as a curse, etc. In the caste-ridden society, woman was treated worse than slippers, whereas *Sivasaranas* regarded woman as a Goddess. Basava strove to free women from the fetters of impurity and inequality. Siddharama also wrote many *Vachanas* and participate in the reform movement of *Sivasaranas (Vachanas).*

*Listen, O Sir, how the state of our parents is*

*They are like the moon and her light*

*And like Siva and Sakti, you see.*

*There is no difference at all here,*

*Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna!*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No. 1221)*

*The woman He himself had made*

*Adorned His head.*

*The woman He himself had made*

*Adorned His lap;*

*The woman He himself had made*

*Adorned Brahma's tongue;*

*The woman He himself had made*

*Adorned Narayana's chest.*

*Therefore:*

*A woman is no woman*

*Nor is she a demon,*

*A woman is verily*

*Kapila Siddha Mallikarjuna Himself looks.*

*(S.V.S. Vol.IV, No.____)*

Woman was in no way inferior to men. Woman like Akkamahadevi, were masculine in their spirit. The *Sarana* society had need of such women. Moreover, the soul, dwelling in woman, priest and periah is one and the same.

Thus, the reform movement led by *Sivasaranas* of 12*th* century, through multidimensional in its expression was primarily religious in its spirit. Along the highway of history, revolutions are milestones. They mark off the important stages in man's thought, which is the living force underlying human progress. Siddharama was a great yogi who wielded great influence over the people all over Karnataka. He was, however, rather indifferent to the great socio-religious revolution that was going on at Kalyana. The *Vachanas* of Siddharama reveal how he was transformed

of the sight of great saints. Thus, his *Vachanas* made profound influence on the rigid and biased Hindu society.

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# DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PROGRAMMING OF THE HINDI SERVICE OF RADIO VERITAS ASIA

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*Religion and Social Communication both thrive and develop in human societies. Conversely, religion and social communication serve cultures and societies. This paper is an example of this service explained from a development communication perspective. It was developed and presented at the College of Development Communication at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos (UPLB). The author is now the coordinator of Hindi programs of Radio Veritas Asia, Manila.*

## 1. Introduction

Human development or the improvement in the well-being of people is the thrust of recent developmental activities that are carried out in developing countries. There is the growing awareness that while economic growth is extremely important, it is to be accompanied by improvement in the quality of life of the people for the development process to be sustainable in the medium to long run. More importantly, it is to be inclusive in nature. The notion of inclusive growth relates essentially to equality of opportunity to all for a productive and meaningful life with freedom and dignity.

Development is much broader than the objective of poverty alleviation. There is the growing awareness to have sustainable and equitable socio-economic development; conservation of environment; preservation and promotion of culture; promotion of good governance; higher standards of health and education, wider opportunities for work and leisure; increased capabilities and choices for the individual and inter-re-

ligious harmony of a country. Hence, development encompasses human development and economic and social mobility for all sections of the society. A major element necessary for inducing economic development and socio-cultural modernization is communication. Development is simply a purposeful change for advancing the richness of human life that a country wants to achieve for its citizens. In particular, the disadvantaged and marginalized population groups of the society must not only be brought into the economic and social mainstream but more importantly, be made active participants and legitimate beneficiaries of the development process. Ultimately, a healthy, educated and an empowered population contributes to improved productivity which, in turn, sustains economic growth.

The new conceptions of development, especially in India, imply a different and generally, a wider role of communication. India is one of the developing countries having an area of 3,287,240 sq. km. It is the seventh largest country of the world. The rural India is still beset with low literacy rates at 66%, low per capita incomes of USD 815 annually and an average life expectancy only of 63.2 years (India Year Book, 2009). The need for development communication (devcom) continues since a large population, over 600 million, lives in rural areas and depends directly on agriculture. Poverty is reducing as percentage of population but still over 200 million are very poor as of 2008. Ethnic, linguistic, religious, economic and cultural diversities seem to emerge sharper and affect the life and mentality of a growing and teeming population in India. India is 5000 year old ancient civilization and Indian society is divided in three major races namely Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Mongolic and there are 325 languages and 1,652 dialects spoken by them. There are 29 states and five union territories having 18 official languages. Hinduism (80.5%), Islam (13.4%),

Christianity (2.3%), Sikhism (1.9%), Buddhism (0.8%) and Jainism (0.4%) are major religions. And Hindu society is divided in to four castes that are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras (India Year Book, 2008). Due to all these divisions India like most societies has been marked by acute practices of social discrimination and exclusion.

At different periods of history protest movements arose against caste, gender and religious discrimination. Yet prejudices remain and often, new ones emerge. Thus legislation alone is unable to transform society or produce lasting social change. A constant social campaign to change awareness and sensitivity is required to break them. Therefore, development communication still remains highly relevant.

Given the vast geographical areas of India, however, it is not possible to rely on face-to-face contacts only. As literacy is also low in rural areas, newspapers or the written word cannot be the chief means of communication. Television sets are also costly. Hence, the medium with highest potential to reach them would be Radio. India has an estimated 180 million radio sets, reaching over 99 percent of its one billion inhabitants - a clear indication of the vast development potential in India for this medium.

Radio remains a popular and distinctive medium despite the growth of television, cinema, cable and satellite services, the ubiquity of recorded music, and even the internet. It adapted to new place in media mix, delivering music, news and talks. It is constantly evolving and adapting to cultural and technological changes. Radio sets are cheap, portable and its programs can be listened to while doing other routine works. Its availability makes it very distinctive as it is there in homes,

shops, workplaces, cafes, cars, buses and taxies and even in personal cell phones.

Radio Veritas Asia (RVA) based in Manila, Philippines, is a short wave broadcast station. It is meant to be an instrument of the Church to share knowledge and information especially with those in Asia who have- because of political, social and economic reasons, no access to "the Truth"("Veritas"). Therefore, transmitting programs to various Asian countries, it aims to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and contribute to spread and support human development. RVA is part of the "Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences"(FABC) since it was started in 1969. It was conceived and built to support the development of people. Today RVA broadcasts in 15 different languages and its content covers basically three areas: moral-religious, social-cultural and socio-political concerns. The emphasis of the broadcasts differs from language to language but in most programs the socio-political content with issues on human development is bigger.

RVA began as the fruit of a strong commitment on the part of Asian Bishops gathered for a general meeting in 1958 in Manila, Philippines. China and other countries had fallen under communist rule and all missionaries were expelled. Therefore, to reach out the people within the communist countries like China, North Vietnam, North Korea and Burma, a proposal for a continental short wave radio station was accepted by all the Bishops present in the meeting and few years later RVA was inaugurated on April 11, 1969 at Quezon City, Metro Manila. Right from the beginning RVA programs were a mix of human development and evangelization. In many areas almost 90% of the listeners of the station are non-Christians. This is reflected in

the feedback letters and in the composition of listeners' meetings especially in India, Pakistan or Sri Lanka.

One of the programs of RVA is Hindi service called 'Satyaswar' (9670 kHz) meaning 'the voice of truth'. Though, the transmission centre is RVA, Manila, the programs are aired for the listeners in India. 'Satyaswar' short wave transmission covers in India the whole Hindi belt with some 600 million people. In the context of multi-religious and multi-cultural India, 'Satyaswar' represents the new face of Christianity.

Therefore, right from the beginning, an effort was made to dialogue with the people through the programs of 'Satyaswar'. Its programs address to the needs of different age groups, genders and all religions. The main thrust of the programs is human development guiding people to build a just and peaceful society based on Christian Gospel values.

The Asian "Bishops' Meet" in 2001 named beside several challenges for the Church in Asia development of Christian communicators who possess a deep spirituality rooted in prayer and emulating the "perfect communicator", profound understanding and adequate analytic skills, preferential option for the poor and marginalized, special concern for the promotion of human dignity and human rights and promotion of Christian values. The producers of 'Satyaswar' as communicators of Christian and human values should possess the knowledge, attitude and skills which would reflect in their development communication programming.

## 2. Changing Paradigm of Development

Everett Rogers views development in his 1976 definition development as "a widely participatory process of

social change in a society", intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment. However he maintains that mass media communication campaigns for development usually have their greatest effects on the more advantaged audience segments, thus widening the communication effects gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged audience segments (Rogers, 1976). Wilbur Schramm summarized already in his "Mass Media and National Development" (1964) the role of mass communication in development which was regarded as the classic statement of the old 'communication and development' paradigm.

Concerned with 'national integration' and the creation of national identities, Schramm saw the big and small media as instruments for sharing information within nations. This included bringing remote communities in to the national space and informing farmers about the decisions of their governments, the existence of new technological knowledge, and the availability of goods and commodities. The media were then considered vehicles for education in the broad sense, for bridging the experience and competency gap between urban and rural communities.

In modernization theory, the terms modernization and development have been used interchangeably to refer to a wide variety of social, political, economic, and cultural changes, for example, westernization, industrialization, rationalization, individualization, economic growth, democratization, cultural and social differentiation, bureaucratization, secularization, and the like. In the Dominant Paradigm, development consisted of an attempt to increase productivity, economic growth, and

industrialization by capital-intensive investments, sometimes tied to administrative reforms. The favorable effects of these innovations would "trickle down" from the elites throughout the society. In the process, the culture would be transformed from "traditional" to "modern" (Narula, 1990).

The modernization paradigm, which underpinned Schramm's work, considered development as a social growth process, with societies moving through stages from traditional to transitional and modern. These stages were characterized by the use of different types of communication structures-from local, traditional, interpersonal and oral, to national, rather impersonal, modern mass media structures (Opubor, 2000). Later studies inspired by Schramm's perspective grounded this linear progression on correlation analysis which showed reciprocal relationships between communication variables and social variables such as literacy, educational enrolment, urbanization, and income levels. These studies provided justification for investments in communication on the presumption that the more media communication a society is engaged in, the more developed it was or would become.

In the 1970s, the kind of social Darwinism expressed by the modernization school came under attack, especially in the thinking of Latin American scholars (Opubor, 2000) because they saw that communication did not necessarily lead to development. In other words, investments in media hardware, or even mass media messages, by themselves, did not change the poverty and dependency of the underprivileged. Especially given the tendency of the media to carry escapist, consumerist, urban-oriented content, generally imported from industrialized countries turned out to be irrelevant to the conditions of rural people. This situation is referred to as the

paradigm of 'dependency', which puts too much emphasis on the contradictions at the international level and not enough on the contradictions at the local and national levels. Consequently, obstacles to development came first and foremost from external, not internal (Bessette, 2004).

In the 1970s scholars such as Paulo Freire and Nora C. Quebral began to highlight the imperialistic and expansionist underpinnings of the dominant Modernization theory (Yun Kim, 2005). Freire and Quebral started updating the top down theory of Modernization, with bottom up development theories which evolved into a new development paradigm. This led to calls in development to abandon the "vertical" approaches of information transmission and to adopt "horizontal" projects emphasizing access, dialogue and participation (Beltran, 1980). The Latin American critique of the dominant paradigm as an extension of domination and the call for more egalitarian and responsive approaches to development were followed by a robust body of research into "participatory communication," which has emerged as the most influential concept in the subsequent decades (Huesca, 2003).

As a result of questioning the modernization model, an alternative development model was proposed. That model linked underdevelopment to factors such as contextual and structural inequalities, resource control, and deprivation, rather than to inherent inabilities or 'lack' on the part of 'traditional' peoples. This emphasized self-esteem, self-reliance, and support for indigenous cultural values. This model would need to be supported by a communication perspective, based on participatory approaches, enabling the rural and the disadvantaged to create their own messages, to speak for themselves, as well as to be spoken to. Such model, according to Bessette (2004), has

made it possible to extend the concept of development to non-material notions of social equality, liberty, revenue distribution, grassroots participation in development, etc. Development planners learned that the choice of development strategy must recognize differences in access to opportunities for improvement within a nation, and between nations. Development would have to include mobilization and reorganization of the marginalized majority to counteract the continued monopolization of all opportunities for growth by a stronger minority (Mody, 1991).

## 3. Development Communication

Since the 1950s, the meaning of development communication has changed. Despite its multiple meaning development communication remains a short of umbrella term to designate research and interventions concerned with improving conditions among people struggling with economic, social and political problems in the non-western world (Waisbord, 2002). Nora C. Quebral defined development communication in 2005 as "the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential." (1) What makes development communication according to her different are the purpose it serves and the venue of its action.

The purpose of development communication According to her is to advance development. Development requires that a mass of people with a low rate of literacy and income, and the socio-economic attributes that go with it, first of all be informed about and motivated to accept and use a sizable body of hitherto unfamiliar ideas and skills in a very much less time than that process would normally take (Quebral, 2005). Highlighting

motivation as the key element in development communication she stresses the job of development communication as to inform and motivate at the national, sectoral and project level.

According to the World Bank, "development communication involves creating mechanisms to broaden public access to information on reforms; strengthening clients' ability to listen to their constituencies and negotiate with stakeholders; empowering grassroots organizations to achieve a more participatory process; and undertaking communication activities that are grounded in research."(2) It is the integration of strategic communication in development projects. Strategic communication is a powerful tool that can improve the chances of success of development projects. It strives for behavioural change and not just information dissemination, education, or awareness-raising. Development communication is a process by which an idea is transferred from a source to a receiver with the intent to change his behaviour. Usually the source wants to alter the receiver's knowledge of some idea, create or change his attitude toward the idea or persuade him to adopt the idea as part of his regular behaviour (Rogers, 1983). Cleofe S. Torres, the present dean of College of Development Communication at the "University of the Philippines in Los Banos (UPLB) views development communication as the application of communication concepts and principles in bringing about desired behavior changes towards better quality of life.

The UN General Assembly Resolution 51/172 stresses "the need to support two-way communication systems that enables dialogue and that allows communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns, and participate in the decisions that relate to their development."(3) There are two basic shifts in communication for development theory. First

the new paradigm moved towards more egalitarian, ground-up, participatory communication. And, second, the new paradigm viewed entrenched hegemonic systems as the primary inhibitor to development, rather than the psyche of the individual. There are three pillars to the new communication for development paradigm. The first pillar is the concept of empowerment; the idea that decisions about development goals and methods of achieving goals are to be made by the community in question – not by foreign governments, organizations, or experts. The second pillar of the alternative paradigm is participatory communication; each person and group affected by a development program must be consulted and given the opportunity and autonomy to participate in decision making. The third pillar is participatory action research; marginalized groups are to be given the power, tools, and resources to study the results of development initiatives (Yun Kim, 2005).

According to the present theory of communication for development, the community is the starting point. But, Waisbord argues that in practice the community is "rarely the starting point" (Waisbord, 2008). In his experience, community input is simply overlaid on decisions and plans devised by external experts. The grand plans of development are still global in scale – they are not locally identified, locally defined initiatives. Ending poverty and hunger, providing universal education, creating environmental sustainability, enhancing gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS, child heath, maternal health, and global partnership (www.un.org) – and these are the common themes of modern development. Yet, these issues have not been the result of extensive community consultation and agreements across the globe. Rather, they were the product of complex negotiation and advocacy involving governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, UN agencies, and sometimes affected communities

(Waisbord, 2008). The focus of development communication is still decided on at the top.

The two broad approaches that dominated the field of development communication are diffusion and participatory models. Faced with different scenarios and choices, the growing consensus is that a multiple approach that combines "top-down" and "bottom-up" interventions is recommended (Waisbord, 2008).

## 3.1 Development Communication in India

Development communication initiatives started in India with Community Development projects initiated by the union government in 1950's. The government, guided by socialistic ideals of its constitution and the first generation of politicians, started massive developmental programmes throughout the country. While field publicity was given due importance for person-to-person communication - also because the level of literacy was very low in rural areas - radio played an equally important role in reaching messages to the masses. Universities and other educational institutions - especially the agricultural universities, through their extension networks - and international organisations under the UN umbrella carried the development communication experiments further.

Development communication in India, a country of sub-continental proportions, acquires many connotations. On one end of the spectrum are the tools and techniques totally applied by charitable and not-for-profit organizations with very close inter-personal relations among the communicators and on the other end is the generic, far-off, one-way sort of communication emanating from the government. The privately owned media enterprises have least interest in developmental issues. There

is lack of social responsibility in Indian mass media, which has generally turned its back to social development issues, in favor of sensationalism. Mass media seems to be the only unregulated "free enterprise," which has replaced the soul of "freedom of expression" (Dagron, 2008).

## 4. Development Communication Programming of 'Satyaswar'

'Satyaswar', meaning 'the voice of Truth' is one of the broadcasting services of RVA. Right from the beginning of RVA it was clear that the station would not be just another church station with only church news. But it was conceived and started to support the development of the people. Therefore, RVA programming evolves from its two-fold objectives namely Christian and human development.

Christian programs include gospel reflections, Church news, morals, Catholic doctrines, catechesis, liturgy and sacraments but also dialogue with religions and cultures and the role of the Church in the modern world. Human development features deal with people empowerment, community building, family, women and youth and science and technology.

Development goals do change, or perhaps the better word is "vary" (Quebral, 2008). When most countries explicitly push economic goals before implicitly attending to the others, tiny Bhutan sets its ultimate goal of life as the inner happiness. Keys to all Bhutanese national policies are four strategies; (a) sustainable and equitable socio-economic development; (b) conservation of environment; (c) preservation and promotion of culture; and (d) promotion of good governance. Measures of progress include free time and leisure and social and economic contributions of households and families.

Based on Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul-Haq, the idea of human development which insists on human needs and social goals was taken up by UNDP internationally. Going beyond material well-being a developing nation like India should seek higher standards of health and education, wider opportunities for work and leisure, increased capabilities and choices for the individual. According to Amartya Sen, human development as an approach is concerned with the basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it.

The principles and values of freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance are adopted in the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (UN, 2000).

1. **Freedom**. Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.

2. **Equality.** No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.

3. **Solidarity**. Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.

4. **Tolerance**. Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.

The Hindi service of RVA, "Satyaswar" has incorporated these both objectives of RVA in its development communication programming. The Hindi program covers in India the whole Hindi belt with some 600 million people for this language service (Eilers, 2008). As ethnic, linguistic, economic and cultural diversities seem to emerge sharper and affect the life and mentality of a growing and teeming population in India, there is ever growing challenge for 'Satyaswar' to be the voice of human development emphasizing freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance for all.

I have undertaken a study at RVA Manila, the main production center of 'Satyaswar' in February-March, 2010. Complete enumeration of the producers and the key informants from the three production centers namely RVA, Manila; Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra, Indore and Ravi Bharti, Patna is used to illicit information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as name, age, sex, civil status, religion, educational attainment, specialization and position at RVA; background in communication/ media exposure and training; knowledge on devcom communication and devcom programming, attitude towards devcom and devcom programming and attitude towards devcom management. And for the description of the vision and mission statements; the frequency of airing and time allotted for the devcom messages

and the categories of devcom messages in the programs of 'Satyaswar', the secondary data are used.

### 4.1 Vision and Mission of 'Satyaswar'

Its vision and mission statements of 'Satyaswar' state:

**Vision**

"Satyaswar, the voice of truth, will always remain the harbinger of truth, justice and peaceful co-existence among the Hindi speaking people."(4)

**Mission**

"Satyaswar, Hindi service is committed to proclaim the message of peace, harmony and brotherhood through all its programs based on 'Vasudhaivkutumbkum' the universal brotherhood." (5)

Although, the vision and mission statements of 'Satyaswar' emphasize the messages of evangelization and social harmony, other areas of concern are given adequate space in its programming.

'Satyaswar', the voice of truth broadcast very relevant programs on scientific knowledge, spirituality, inspirational personalities, problems and pains suffered by modern persons as well as their remedies, and all developmental and progressive messages related to human development. It has maintained its special place among other broadcasts as it is not influenced by modern commercial values but promotes the Gospel values, culture, inter religious harmony, and overall human development.

In the face of growing regionalism, communal violence, social intolerance, economic gaps between the haves

and have-nots, problems of globalization and environmental degradation, Satyaswar focuses its vision and mission in proclaiming development and progress for all.

### 4.3 Development Communication Messages in Satyaswar Programs

#### a. Categories of Devcom Messages in 'Satyaswar'

"Satyaswar" (9670 kHz) airs programs from 6:00 to 6:27 am and from 7:00 to 7:30 pm every day. Hence, it air programs for 27 minutes in the morning and for 30 minutes in the evening.

**Morning Broadcast**

| DAY | Time spent for each program in minutes | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

| DAY | Time spent for each program in minutes | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | Word of God | 2 min | Inter Religious Reflection | 9 min | Bible Drama | 10 min | Bible Quiz | 2 min |
| TUE | Word of God | 2 min | Interview | 16 min | Hymn | 5 min | | |
| WED | Word of God | 2 min | Great Personality | 9 min | Women Empowerment | 9 min | Hymn | 5 min |
| THURS | Word of God | 2 min | Lives of Saints | 5 min | World of Communication | 10 min | Hymn | 5 min |
| FRI | Word of God | 2 min | Legal Aids | 12 min | World of Agriculture | 9 min | | |
| SAT | Word of God | 9 min | Hymn | 5 min | Church News | 12 min | | |
| SUN | Word of God | 2 min | Mail Box | 12 min | Health & Environment | 10 min | Hymn | 3 min |

**Evening Broadcast**

| DAY | Time spent for each program in minutes | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MON | Word of God | 2 min | Inter Religious Reflection | 12 min | Bible Drama | 12 min | News | 5 min |
| TUE | Word of God | 2 min | Universal brotherhood | 8 min | Mail Box | 12 min | News | 5 min |
| WED | Word of God | 2 min | Youth & Development | 15 min | Emails | 5 min | News | 5 min |
| THURS | Word of God | 2 min | Drama | 16 min | Hymn | 5 min | News | 5 min |
| FRI | Word of God | 2 min | Health and Environment | 10 min | Mind the Mirror | 9 min | News | 5 min |
| SAT | Bible Reflection | 9 min | Hymn | 6 min | Church News | 12 min | | |
| SUN | Word of God | 2 min | Listeners' Pad / Children's World | 6+6 min | Mail Box | 15 min | | |

I have classified the programs into five categories of Devcomm messages: evangelical, social development, economic development, human development, and environment preservation. Every program includes three or four segments from above mentioned categories. It has the time table of programs for a week. Under the same main segments of programs, new programs are aired again for the following week.

## b. Specific Segments of Devcomm Messages in the Satyaswar Programs

*Evangelical messages.* Evangelical messages include six segments of the programs. They are Word of God, Sunday homilies, Bible dramas, Church news, Lives of saints and Hymns. In a week, a total of 129 min (2.15 hours) or 32 percent of the total airing time is allotted for segments on evangelization.

*Social development messages.* The major thrust of the vision and mission statements of 'Satyaswar' is social justice,

peace, and harmony along with evangelization. Therefore, in this category, segments deal with social harmony and universal brotherhood. A total of 124 minutes (2.04 hours) are given to social development messages or 31 percent of the total airing time in a week.

*Economic development messages.* Economic development is very important to achieve overall human development. A total of 55 minutes are allotted to this category or 14 percent of the total airing time in a week.

*Human development messages.* Segments under this category are inspirational to imbue citizens with human values accepted and cherished all over the world. A total of 42 minutes or 11 percent of the airing time in a week are allotted for these segments.

*Environment preservation messages.* Environment preservation messages are allotted only 20 minutes or 4.92 percent of the total airing time in a week.

There is only one program entitled Health and Environment (Swastya or Paryavaran). This segment imparts information on health-related issues and creates awareness about personal health and hygiene. It describes various diseases affecting the people and prescribes available remedies. Further, it gives information on physical, mental, and overall holistic health of the people. On the other, hand the listeners are encouraged to work for the protection of the environment and to promote a healthy atmosphere in their locality. Regular quiz contest are conducted to generate interest among the audience.

Among these five categories evangelization and social development messages are allotted more time comparing to other

three categories. Environment preservation messages that are highly emphasized by the producers have minimum allotted time (4.92%) in a week. There is only one segment in environment preservation and that also includes health related issues. Rest 8.87% of the total airing time in a week was allotted to signing on and signing off with 'Satyaswar' jingle.

These are the highlights of the study:

1.  There was a good mixture of young talented producers with modern perspectives and senior producers with traditional socio-religious values and experience. Majority of the producers were male and were married but still there was a good representation of women producers. The respondents belong to two major religious groups namely Christianity and Hinduism and there was an equal representation them. But there was no representation from other religious groups. All the key informants were Christians.

2.  Majority of the respondents held either master or bachelor degrees, specialized in broadcast or broadcast related fields and were working for 'Satyaswar' for 2-5 years. They had received either formal or informal training on broadcasting and had done computer courses. The key informants were well qualified for their assigned posts. Though majority of them had received broadcast related trainings and felt competent to produce the assigned segments of programs, most of them expressed the need for more professional training for preparing their programs with the assistance of new technologies.

3.  All the producers had a good media exposure. All of them read news papers and listened radio programs daily to be informed about the national and international affairs. Again most of them watched TV news and other current affairs programs daily. Only some of them used internet but others were open to learn and use it for radio production. All the key informants used modern media regularly and were well informed about the current affairs nationally and internationally. They spent more time on internet for their assigned tasks. To prepare the assigned segments of programs the senior producers still preferred the traditional sources of information, whereas the junior producers preferred online resources.

4.  The producers and key informants had good knowledge of devcom and devcom programming. For most of them, national development was the improvement of the quality of life of the individuals and they emphasized the vital role of communication for development. Most of them emphasized Social development, human development and environment preservation categories in the devcom programming.

5.  Most of the respondents had very positive attitude towards devcom, devcom programming and 'Satyaswar' programming. They emphasized inclusive socio-economic development that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential. They were of the views that devcom should highlight socio-economic development, environment preservation

and messages on inter-religious harmony. In the multi-religious scenario of India, they did not want devcom programming focusing more on evangelical messages. They wanted 'Satyaswar' programs being more development –oriented, communicating 'the realization of the potential of human personality', bringing about changes in people's knowledge, attitude/social values, behavior and sustain their practices over time. But they stressed 'Satyaswar' bringing about changes in people's knowledge, attitude/social values and behavior and sustain their practices over time.

6. The management staffs were involved in planning through regular monthly meetings conducted at production centres. The producers had been given enough freedom to produce the assigned segments where they had to do research, write the broadcast scripts, edit and record them. The coordinator monitored all the programs before they were sent for transmission. The feedbacks received regularly were discussed by the Board and requested the changes were made. The human and non-human resources were utilized. Regular trainings and seminars were conducted and producers were asked to perform multitasks. The evaluation of the broadcast was done at the yearly listeners and board meetings.

7. Although, the vision and mission statements emphasized the messages of evangelization and social harmony, other areas of concern were given adequate space in its programming. 'Satyaswar', the voice of truth broadcast very relevant programs

on scientific knowledge, spirituality, inspirational personalities, problems and pains suffered by modern persons, their remedies and all developmental and progressive messages related to human persons.

8. Five categories of development communication messages were identified in the programs of 'Satyaswar' namely evangelization, social development messages, economic development messages, human development messages and environment preservation messages. "Satyaswar" had every day morning 27 minutes and evening 30 minutes broadcast. Every program included three or four segments from these categories. It had the time table of programs for a week. Under the same main segments of programs new programs were aired again for the following week. Evangelization and social development messages were given more broadcast time whereas environment preservation had the least airing time in a week.

## Conclusion

RVA is hailed as 'the Voice of Asian Christianity' and the Hindi Service has defined its vision and mission to proclaim human development based on Gospel values. Spiritual, social, economical, human and environmental messages are important for overall development of a person and these messages are being proclaimed by 'Satyaswar'. In its morning 27 minutes and evening 30 minutes daily broadcast 'Satyaswar' has given adequate time and duration for Devcomm messages.

The respondents are working in communication organizations and therefore, they are well educated, trained and

exposed to multimedia world. They have been broadcasting development messages and therefore, they have knowledge about Devcomm and Devcomm programming. Though, they may not be able to define the concepts and principles of devcom, they are already practicing Devcomm.

'Satyaswar' is a charity broadcast and most of respondents have joined the organization for the purpose of service. Therefore, they have genuine interest in development of people. This is reflected in their attitude towards Devcomm; Devcomm programming and 'Satyaswar' programming. Three communication centers collaborate in the production and broadcast of 'Satyaswar' programs and most the respondents have positive attitude towards Devcomm management.

### Endnotes

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