

## **Editorial.....**

*The communion (Koinonia) expresses the core mystery of the Church. A profound understanding of communion is central to the renewal of the entire Church. The concept of communion resonates with the other chief aspects of the Church such as the church as people of God, the mystical Body of Christ and the universal sacrament of salvation. Indeed, communion is at the heart of the self understanding of the Church. It effectively mirrors the life of our triune God and the eschatological fulfillment in heaven. Communion has a vertical dimension (communion with God) and the horizontal dimension (communion among humans). It has to be recognized as the gift of God and the fruit of the Paschal mystery. Jesus Christ did not just establish a deep relationship between God and humanity but also established profound bonds of unity among humans. Hence, the challenge is to actualize this mystery of communion at all levels in the Church.*

*In the last few decades, the Church in Goa has taken significantly important strides towards its self-renewal through communion. Beginning with the tremendous efforts of implementation of the renewal set into motion by the great Council Vatican II, one can discern a graced history of the Church in Goa in its efforts to become a Church of communion. The various pastoral plans, the Diocesan Synod 2002 and the pastoral plan that flowed from it, the pastoral themes of the past years along with the pastoral letters of the*

*Archbishop Patriarch have galvanized this multipronged movement for renewal of our Church in Goa. The pastoral theme and the pastoral letters of this year and the first national convention hosted in Goa have accelerated this process and underlined its urgency and relevance in the Church. The priorities of the diocesan pastoral plan with its vision of coordination of the entire pastoral action in the diocese, through various structures and organs of communion such as the priest senate, the diocesan pastoral councils, the council of deans, the council of diocesan bodies at the diocesan level, the parish pastoral councils and the small Christian communities at the parish level has ushered in a profound degree of the culture of communion in the Church in Goa.*

*The Rachol seminary has also kept pace with these efforts of renewal in the diocese in many ways. The theme of the formative year ripples with the main pastoral theme of the diocese. Under the dynamic and visionary leadership of the Rector, Rev. Dr. Aleixo S. J. Menezes, the seminary is moving towards a life of communion and dialogue in every sphere. In congruence with the spirit of communion, the theme that we have chosen for this year, the work of editing and publishing of this annual journal Luceas, has been conducted at all stages from its initial conceptualization, guiding of the writings of our seminarians, their corrections, editing and the final publication. This work is a fruit of communion that is flowering in our*

*seminary. The path of communion is difficult yet profoundly satisfying and hence the editorial team is grateful to each and every persons who has offered us their contribution that helped us to bring to light this publications.*

*In our effort to coherently present the vibrant content of this publication, we have sub-divided it into four main subsections interspaced with scientific papers that were presented during various occasions in the seminary in this formative year. Besides this, we have the insightful, inspiring and erudite messages of our beloved Archbishop and Rector as well as the joyous reports of the happenings in our seminary in the last academic year. The first section directly explores the theme Church as a communion, the second section attempts to reach out in dialogue to some of religio-cultural conditions that influence our community life, the third section takes the ethical challenges that arise from time to time due to tourism and mining that has steadily become the*

*economic backbone of our community in Goa, fourth section attempts to analyze various biblical themes that can provide inspiring vistas to our life of communion for the Church in Goa. Alongside of these chief sections, we have the lectio brevis of this formative year, the key note address of the national seminar on Swami Vivekananda and the insightful papers presented during the annual missionary academy. The annual reports of different associations in the seminary are prefaced by profoundly evocative stanzas of the budding poets in our seminary and a melodious musical score of a song on the theme in konkani. We are happy to offer this work as a loving tribute to our beloved late Rev. Fr Tomas d' Aquino Antonio Sequeira (ex-rector and ex-professor), late Rev. Dr. Ivo da Conceição Souza (ex-professor), late Rev. Dr. Alfredo Mesquita (ex-professor) who served the seminary with great distinction. May the Lord grant them their eternal reward.*

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- |                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
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|-------------------|----------|

**3rd YEAR**

- |                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
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- |                                 |                  |
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| 4. Fernandes Rony Nazareth      | Cortalim         |
| 5. Noronha Mario                | Margão           |
| 6. Rebello Socorro              | Chinchinim       |
| 7. Rodrigues Richard            | Arambol          |
| 8. Rodrigues Roman              | Arambol          |

**1st YEAR**

- |                                 |         |
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4. Ferrão Heston (JDV, Pune)	Assonora
5. Menezes Arly Movin (Pius College, Mumbai)	Chandor

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## *Church As Communion*

### TRINITY, THE SOURCE AND SUMMIT OF SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

\* Rev. Dr. Aleixo Menezes

The New Testament communities *Qahal-Ekklesia* were characterised by *koinonia*, which means sharing, having in common, fellowship. Those who were baptised were noted for their prayer, breaking of the bread, teaching of the Apostles and common life or *koinonia* (Acts 2,42). For Paul, *koinonia* is the vital union of believers among themselves (1Cor 1,9) and the spirit of sharing of all possessions with others (2 Cor 8,4; 9,13; Rom 15,6). John views *koinonia* as union with the Father through the Son (1 Jn 2,23; 5,12.20). *Koinonia* is a covenantal relationship between the believing community and God. John expresses this relationship by using statements like “*to be in God*” (1 Jn 2,5; 5,20) or “*abide in God*” (1 Jn 2,6; 3,24; 4,13) or “*to have God*” (1 Jn 2,23; 5,12; 2 Jn 9). The New Testament understanding of Communion, *koinonia*, is not directed towards the unity of Churches but towards the relationship of the Triune God with His People (cf. P. Neuner: 2006<sup>3</sup>, 298-302). Hence, the Church is a communion of all those whom God loved first and are now giving a living expression of His love by loving one another.

Communion is, first of all, a theological

reality. God is a communion of three persons. God’s self-revelation is in terms of the communion of the human and divine in Christ. The Spirit is the bond of communion that holds the Church together and binds each Christian in a divine communion with God and one another. The Church is therefore *a communion of all those who believe in Christ, sent by the Father and who are bound together by their common faith in Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit*. In this sense, the Trinity becomes the source and model of the Church – Communion (LG n. 2).

The Vatican II took up this biblical model of the Church as Communion and expounded it through the biblical images of People of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Spirit. The Vatican II understands the Church as a communion that has her origin in God and her goal in God (LG nn. 2,48). This communion with God is inseparable from communion among humans because it is God’s desire that the whole human race may become One People of God from the One Body of Christ and be built up into One Temple of the Holy Spirit (AG n. 7; LG n. 17). Thus in Christ, the Church is already a communion of men and

women of every nation, race, people and language; however the full realisation is yet to come.

The model of the Church as Communion, with emphasis on interpersonal relationship, aims at a personal growth, not through laws and structures, but through interpersonal relationship. Thus, the Church is understood as a fellowship of persons, namely men and women with God and with one another in Christ.

### **Trinity, a Communion of Persons**

*The Trinity is One God and Three Persons* is a dogma of faith. But the question is “Is this One God a person?” If the question is answered metaphysically, then God is not a person in the sense of a human person. However, if the term *person* is taken analogically, then one can speak of God as a person i.e. the reality we call “God” has certain qualities that are normally attributed to persons, e.g. intelligence, love, compassion, graciousness, fidelity, etc. The personhood in God is characterised by two basic activities of God namely knowledge (one who knows himself fully, a pure act of self-understanding) and will (one can possess himself fully, a pure act of self-love). The Old Testament people experienced a personal God in their history and covenants. The New Testament people encountered him in the person of Jesus Christ, who is truly God and truly Man.

Although One God is a person, nevertheless he is a communion of Three Persons. Theologically, the Trinity is understood in terms of *Processions*, *Missions*, and *Relations*. In the Trinity, one can identify two *Processions*: that of the Son and that of the Holy Spirit. The Father (does not proceed from anyone) begets the Son

from all eternity, and with (or through) the Son originates the Holy Spirit. The Father knows/loves himself absolutely and the expression of this absolute self-knowledge/love is the Son. Hence, the Father is not the cause of the Son but the origin of the Son. On the other hand, the Father contemplates in the Son and gifts himself infinitely in love to the Son and the Son contemplates in the Father and gifts himself infinitely in love to the Father. This gifting-love that unites the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. Pope John Paul II, in his Encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem* speaks of Holy Spirit as Person-Gift (DV n.10). The Holy Spirit is the ‘bonding person’ of the Trinitarian communion between the Father-Son. There is a distinction between the love that is natural and essential in the Father and Son, and the love that is Personal, which is specific to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Love that unites the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son. However, this concept of *procession* is not a temporal succession or passive acts of begetting because in God, everything is eternal and there is dynamism of relationships of love and intelligence. In the Trinity, *Missions* or *Perichoresis* or *Circumincession* means cohabitation, co-existence, inter-penetration of the divine persons. One can identify three *Missions*: *Appropriated* (action attributed to one Person: creation to the Father; Revelation and Redemption to the Son and Sanctification to the Holy Spirit); *Proper* (action effectively performed by that one Person alone with the involvement of the other persons also, e.g. incarnation is proper to the Son alone, however there is the involvement of the Father (sending the Son) and the Holy Spirit (sanctifier); and *Divine* (action whereby the divine Person seeks to insert the creatures

within its own eternal history. In the Trinity, one is able to discern four *real Relations* namely the Fatherhood of the Father to the Son i.e. paternity; the Sonship of the Son to the Father i.e. filiation; the breathing out of the Spirit by Father and Son i.e. active spiration; and the existence of the Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and the Son i.e. passive spiration. However, there are only three *subsistent Relations* namely paternity, filiation and passive spiration because only these three relationships are mutually opposed and distinct from one another. Active spiration involves the Father and the Son and is not opposed either to paternity or filiation. The Father can only be Father whose hypostatic uniqueness is Generating. The Son can only be Son whose hypostatic uniqueness is Generated. The Holy Spirit is the Union between the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son. This Union is the Hypostatic Uniqueness of the Holy Spirit i.e. Love that is Personal, Love that is a Gift, which is non-created-eternal. The Holy Spirit expresses the Unity of the Father and the Son without destroying their specific hypostasis.

Hence, the Three Persons are in communion with each other because of the One Godliness. It is the one Godliness that binds them together. Although *processions* and *missions*, and even *subsistent relations* make the three Persons distinct from one another, this distinction is in view of the communion of the persons, otherwise one would commit the heresy of Tritheism or Absolute Monotheism.

### **Trinity, the Heartbeat of the Church**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “*The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith*

*and life... The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, reveals himself to men and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin”*. (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) n.234). *Lumen Gentium* dedicates the first chapter to the understanding of the Church as a Mystery. The English word Mystery has to be understood in the sense of Greek *Mysterion*. In the Greco-Roman sense, *Mysterion* is the sacred ritual in which the myth of life and death was symbolically presented and its meaning revealed. Something hidden or secret was made known to those who were being initiated into the religion. They in turn were sworn to keep it secret. (Prümm: 1981, Vol. 10, 153-164). In the Old Testament Septuagint, *Mysterion* is used in the context of Jewish apocalyptic language. It does not refer to undisclosed secrets, but rather of divine secrets now revealed by a divine agency (cf. Brown: 1981, Vol. 10, 148-151; Dunn: 1987-2001, Vol. 38, 675-697). In the New Testament, *Mysterion* occur around 30 times specially in the letters of St. Paul. It occurs only once in the Gospels, Mark 4,11 (Mt 13,11; Lk 8,10) and refers to the advent of the Kingdom of God in Christ and to the possibility offered to the disciples of knowing and participating in this mystery for a gratuitous revelation of God. For Paul, the mystery of the Kingdom of God is definitely in Christ himself. He uses the term based on two reasons: Firstly, because with Christ, the divine plan of salvation has folded itself (1 Cor 2,7-10; Rom 16,25-26; Col 1,26-27; Eph 1,9-10; 3,30-32). This plan consists of the vocation to the Jews and the Pagans and has its origin and recapitulation in Christ

(Rom 11,25); and secondly, because this plan, which had remained hidden from eternity was made known by means of the Spirit through the will of God to all humanity so that all humanity may see the treasures of the knowledge and wisdom of God, who conceived this plan in order to encounter humanity and come in communion with it. Because this plan of salvation was revealed and totally actualised in Christ, incarnate-crucified-risen, Paul calls Christ, the *Mysterion* par excellence of God, the Father. (Col 2,2; 1 Cor 1,23; 1 Tim 3,16). Hence, *Mysterion* means the plan prepared by God, at first hidden but at the fullness of time, realised in Jesus Christ and will be totally and fully realised at the Parousia (Grelot: 1969-1971, 1233-1243). The Church, therefore, is the realization in visible historical form of God's secret plan to gather all people and the entire universe into one great unity. This plan which was hidden from eternity and revealed only at the coming of Christ has its origin in the love of God who wishes to share with humanity the infinitely perfect and blessed life of the Trinity (Kloppenburger: 1974, 14-15). Hence, the Church is a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (McNamara: 1983, 56).

Lumen Gentium, dedicates three articles (LG nn. 2-4) separately to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and quoting St. Cyprian, concludes by describing the Church as "*a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*" (LG 4; cf. Forte: 1995, 79-202). Through the union with Christ, who has been raised up to share in the Father's glory and who sends the Holy Spirit upon the Church, men are taken up into the eternal life of the Trinity. The Trinity is a Communion of Persons. God is a communion

of three persons. God's self-revelation is in terms of the communion of the human and divine in Christ. Hence, Communion is a theological reality. The Spirit is the bond of communion that holds the Church together and binds each Christian in a divine communion with God and one another. The Church is a communion of all those whom God loved first and are now giving a living expression of His love by loving one another. The ecclesiology of the Vatican II can be summed up as the Church coming from the Trinity, is journeying towards the Trinity and is structured in the image of the Trinity (Forte: 2003<sup>8</sup>, 22).

The Church is a communion of all those who believe in Christ, sent by the Father and who are bound together by their common faith in Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, the Trinity becomes the source and model of the Church – Communion (LG nn. 2, 48). The Church is the sacrament that makes visible here on earth this Trinitarian Communion of Persons. This communion with God is inseparable from communion among humans because it is God's desire that the whole human race may become One People of God from the One Body of Christ and be built up into One temple of the Holy Spirit (AD n. 7; LG n. 17). Hence, the divisions amongst the Disciples of Christ, not only destroy the communion of the Church of Christ, but destroy the image of the Trinity manifested in and through the Church (UR n. 1). Karl Barth would say, "*There is no justification theological, spiritual or biblical for the existence of a plurality of churches, genuinely separated, mutually excluding one another internally and therefore externally. A plurality of Churches in this sense means plurality of*

*lords, plurality of spirits, plurality of gods. There is no doubt that to the extent that Christendom does consist of actually different and opposing Churches, to the extent it denies practically what it confesses theoretically – the unity and singularity of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit”* (Barth: 1956, 675). Precisely for this reason, before shedding his blood for the salvation of the world, the Lord Jesus prayed to the Father for the unity of his disciples (Jn 17,20-21). This oneness prayed for on behalf of all believers by Jesus Christ posits the Trinitarian relationships as the hope for the relationships of those in the Church with each other and the persons of the Trinity. Hence, the relationships between the persons of the Trinity form a model for the relationships between believers. The New Testament in various passages expounds this truth: Matthew 28,19: A disciple of Christ is baptized with the Trinitarian formula of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Hence, by means of Baptism, which is the entry in the Church, the disciple enters into the life of the Trinity; 2 Corinthians 13,14: By appealing to the Trinity, Paul tries to bring together the divided Church in Corinth through their personal experience of the Trinity in their daily lives. Paul mentions first Christ, then God (Father) and then Holy Spirit. Paul is drawing attention to the Trinitarian consciousness, not in the initial work of salvation which has already been accomplished in Corinth, but in the sustaining work that enables divisive Christians to achieve unity; 1 Peter 1,2: The scattered Christians are reminded by Peter through reference to the Trinity that their election (destined and chosen by the Father) and redemption (the sanctified by the Spirit) should lead to holy life (obedient to the Son);

Ephesians 4,4-6: Paul pleads with the Ephesians to be united because we have been formed into one body by the one Spirit, we have one faith and baptism in the one Lord, and we have one Father of all who is one God; 1 Cor 12,4-6: Paul informs the Corinthians that they have to be united even though there may be variety of gifts, variety of services, variety of activities because there is the same Spirit, same Lord, same God.

### **The Holy Spirit as the Principle of Communion in the Church**

The first Christian Community (Acts 2,41-47) is the result of the descent of the Holy Spirit. On the day of the Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descends on the disciples (Acts 2,1-4), the crowd is amazed (Acts 2,5-13), Peter’s first kerygmatic speech (Acts 2,14-36), the call to repentance (Acts 2,37-40), the forming of the first Christian Community (Acts 2,41-47). Vatican II has upheld that it is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth that leads the Church into a full understanding of the truths revealed by Jesus Christ. The Church, which the Spirit guides in way of all truth and which He unified in communion and in works of ministry, He both equips and directs with hierarchical and charismatic gifts and adorns with His fruits (LG n. 4). It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe; and pervading and ruling over the Church as a whole, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful. He brings them into intimate union with Christ, so that He is the principle of the Church’s unity (UR n. 2). The Holy Spirit is the principle of unity in the Church as communion as He was in the early Church (LG n. 7 and Acts 2,42). The primitive Church grew guided by the Spirit of God and by the spirit-guided persons. This Church was

a Communion of Faith i.e. they accepted, lived and proclaimed the faith handed down by the apostles; a Sacramental Communion i.e. they celebrated the same sacraments everywhere and the Eucharist is the sacrament of communion; a Charismatic Communion i.e. they were inspired and strengthened by the Holy Spirit; a Communion of Sharing and Love i.e. they were concerned about one another and nobody was found wanting (CCC nn. 949-953). Speaking of the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus exhorted his disciples, “*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you*” (Jn 16,13-15). Hence, the inspiration by the Holy Spirit, although a Trinitarian mission proper to the Holy Spirit, is the work of the entire Trinity. In the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the Principle of Unity. Hence, in the Church too, the Holy Spirit, without destroying the individual uniqueness of the disciples, keeps them united as the One Church of Christ. According to Augustine, the first principle of invisible unity is the Holy Spirit, who confers the grace of Christ on the members of the Church, while the first principle of the visible unity is the Eucharist (Mondin: 1988, 296-297).

#### **The Trinity as the basis for Hierarchical Communion in the Church**

Lumen Gentium n. 23 states that *Jesus Christ mandated the Successor of Peter to*

*be the guarantor of the unity of the episcopate and to preside over and safeguard the universal communion of all the Churches.* The First Vatican Council (Session IV, Chapter 2, Art 5) stated that the hierarchy in the Church is divinely instituted (DS nn. 1822-1825). The Second Vatican Council views the hierarchy in the Church as a *hierarchical communion* which is essentially manifested in the College of Bishops with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, as its head (cf. LG n. 22). The Roman Pontiff is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the bishops and of the faithful (cf. LG n. 23). This Hierarchical Communion has its basis in the Trinitarian Communion. The three Persons (*hypostasis*) of the Trinity are substantially (*ousia*) united into One God. However, among the three Persons there is an internal/ logical Order (*taxis*). The Father generates the Son (the first procession) and the Holy Spirit is the spiration of the Father and the Son (second procession). This Order in no way diminishes or destroys the fundamental unity among the three Persons. Hence, the Pope, although equal to every other Christian believer, nevertheless has the unique role of keeping the Church of Christ united as one People of God and one Body of Christ. The Prefatory Note of Explanation to Chapter III of Lumen Gentium affirms that in the hierarchical communion (which is not understood as some kind of vague disposition, but as an organic reality which requires a juridical form and is animated by charity), the college of bishops can act only with the consent of the Pope. However, this authority of the Pope is not exercised in a dictatorial manner but on the personal level (Cf. Tavard: 1992, 163).

### Trinity, the Source and Summit of SCCs

One of the pastoral priorities of the Church in India is the formation and strengthening of Small Christian Communities. The Archdiocese of Goa and Daman hosted the First National Convention of SCCs in November 2013 in which representatives (bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful) from almost all the Dioceses in India participated. While accentuating the importance of the need of Small Christian Communities in our parish communities, very few speakers highlighted that communion in the Church and SCCs has its origin and goal in the Trinity. For example, Apostolic Nuncio to India, Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, “*The divine gift of communion, in fact, represents, ....the very essence of the most holy Trinity*” (Homily at the Inaugural Mass, 19.11.2013); and Archbishop of Goa and Daman, Most Rev. Filipe Neri Ferrão, “*Our God is a Trinitarian God and, in the process of creating humankind, he shared his Trinitarian life with us. We therefore are relational by nature*” (Pastoral Letter: 2013-2014, n.2ii). The Final Statement speaks of the SCCs as rooted in the power of the Word and the Eucharist (Cf. *Renovação*, January 1-15, 2014, 17).

In any human society we come across various types of communities: ethnic community, the religious community, a professional community, etc. However, every group of people does not become a community. Certain characteristics make a community:

- a. *Geographical area (place)*: The term “community” is related to a specific geographic area, which in SCCs are called zones, sectors, etc.
- b. *Common bonds*: A community is held

together by certain mutual foundations, experiences, outlooks, etc., which have grown over the years in the group and hold the group together. In the SCCs, it is the common faith that binds the members together.

- c. *Sense of belonging*: The feeling of being accepted by others and the attitude of acceptance of the other. In the SCCs, this is the practice of the virtue of love.
- d. *Celebrations*: One of the crucial aspects of a community is the community celebrations. It is at this time that the sense of identity of the community crystallises and grows. It is also an important time for meeting and interacting. In the SCCs, the community celebrations like Christmas, Feasts, even community celebrations of birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc.
- e. *Sense of Fellowship*: Every member is ready to invest integrally for the good of the other. In the SCCs, every individual family is united with the other family, where individual family growth is essentially oriented towards community growth.
- g. *Animation*: A community acknowledges the leadership of one person, or a group of persons. In the SCCs, the animator is the leaven, not so much to lead and direct, but help every member and family participate in the life (not only activities) of the community.

In order to make the SCCs truly vibrant, they should be truly Trinitarian:

- i. *Oneness*: The oneness in God is the basis of the unity of the three persons. Although this Trinitarian mystery is difficult to grasp, nevertheless, the

theology is loud and clear: it is the faith in Jesus Christ that brings the faithful together. It is the oneness of faith that becomes the basis of the unity of the distinctness of the faithful. Hence, *faith formation* is an essential element for the *establishment* of SCCs. Faith formation should consist in growth in faith and not growth of faith. If faith is a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, then this encounter has to be a responsible, not blind, encounter, whereby the person makes a knowing and willing self-surrender to God. When this encounter-surrender is genuine and authentic, then the SCCs become a measure to grow in faith, *mystagogia*. In this *growth in faith*, the Word of God is the basic tool and *school*.

- ii. *Communion*: The three persons of the Trinity are united despite of their individual missions, on the other hand, the individual missions of the each person of the Trinity necessarily demand unity. Every individual disciple of Christ is baptized in the name of the Trinity, which makes her/him a member of the Church, which is a community of faith. Christianity is by essence communitarian, not in the sense of Marxist or political communism, but where every individual member of the Church is sacramentally united with the other, not because one wants but because the membership in the Church requires. Hence, *interpersonal relationship* is an essential element for the *sustenance* of the SCCs. It is only when members of community are one of mind and heart, then they automatically have things in common. For the *interpersonal relationship*, the Eucharistic celebration

is basic tool and school. Every individual disciple of Christ participates in the Eucharistic celebration, which is the celebration of/by/for the community. Like the many wheat ground, make one bread, and many grapes pressed, make one wine, the many members of the community, are pleased to sacrifice their individual likes and dislikes, for the sake of the community.

- iii. *Unity*: Despite the unity amongst the three persons of the Trinity and despite the involvement of one Person in the specific mission of the other Person (*proper missions*), the individual person is responsible with regards his *appropriate* mission. Every disciple of Christ has a specific vocation and mission in this world. In order to discern one's vocation and one's mission within a community, she/he requires the assistance of the other members. However, the various *ministries/apostolates* are an essential element for the *growth* of the SCCs. When every individual member, and not the 'elite few', discerns responsibly her/his ministry/apostolate within the context of community, and exercises it responsibly for the sake of the community, then the SCC becomes the *home* of lasting communion.

### CONCLUSION

The Father sent the Son and the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit; and through the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit to reach the Father. Hence, the relationship of man to God is a reflection of the relationships within the Trinity, which are articulated in relationship to the Church as the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of

the Holy Spirit.

In the incarnation of Jesus Christ, it is the Second Person of the Trinity who became man but remaining intimately related to the other two persons: truly human –truly divine. In the exercise, and for the continuation and fulfilment of his salvific mission, Jesus chose a community of his disciples from whom he chose the Twelve Apostles. The writings of the New Testament present a clear picture of the early Church, as a community of believers with elders, being faithful to this call and mission given to her by Christ. Thus, the Church is a communion, having as its source and summit, the Trinity.

Christ continues to call every human person to experience the salvific mystery in and through the Church, which is by her very nature and mission, a communion of believers. Despite the various distinctions of colour, race, region, caste, etc., it is the love of Christ that unites every believer to Christ and to one another (Rom 8,35-39). Hence, the Church communion is a communion of love *because he first loved us* (1 John 4,19). Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, is the climax of the salvific mystery (Letter to the Hebrews) and the Church is the universal

sacrament of salvation (cf. LG n. 48). Hence, a Church is a communion, having as its source and summit, the Trinity.

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"Every person is defined  
by the communities she belongs to."

- Orson Scott Card, *Speaker for the Dead*

# ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

## *From Biblical Perspective to Pastoral Practice*

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### INTRODUCTION

The recently concluded National Convention on Small Christian Communities, held in Goa from 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> November 2013, focused on the theme: ‘**Small Christian Communities – Communion of Faith in Love**’. In the above mentioned theme, the term ‘Communion’ stands out and serves as an inspiration for individuals and groups to a deeper thought-provoking reflection and committed action. The Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop-Patriarch of Goa and Daman, Most Rev. Filipe Neri Ferrão, for the year 2013-2014, revolves around the same theme, and with focus on the Small Christian Communities, gives us number of pointers for the enrichment of our life of Communion. The general theme for *Luceas* 2013-2014 also serves as a signboard for a life of Communion.

The Greek equivalent for ‘communion’ is *koinōnía*. This paper will strive to dig out in the etymology of *koinōnía* and unravel the various shades of meaning that lie hidden in this significant term. The path for our analysis will begin in the Hellenistic world and then retrieve its steps in the religious and cultural milieu of the Jews, with eyes fixed on the Old Testament Canon. The New Testament understanding and interpretation of the said term will be of utmost importance, which, in turn, will lead us to some pastoral practicalities

that may serve as worthy tools for an apt Christian living, i.e., a life of Communion.

### 1. *Koinōnía*: ETYMOLOGY and MEANING

Generally speaking, the term *koinōnía* is derived from *koinós*. *Koinós* when used of persons means ‘participant’, and when used of things, it means ‘common’; often, it has the sense of ‘common ownership’. The other forms that belong to the close-knit family of *koinōnía* are the noun *koinōnós* and the verb *koinōnéō*. The term *koinōnós* is used with diverse meanings, and they vary from ‘participant’ to ‘fellow-being’ with implications of fellowship with ‘someone or something’, and also, with reference to ‘sharing of something with someone’. It is also used with diverse grammatical peculiarities like in the absolute sense or with objective genitive or with dative of persons or with prepositions. The verbal form *koinōnéō* lays great emphasis on the reciprocal ‘giving’ and ‘taking’, and like *koinōnós*, has varied nuances like ‘participation’, ‘fellowship’, etc.<sup>1</sup> Some opinions in the Biblical circles also make a distinction between *koinōnía* and the so-called Latin equivalent ‘societas’. ‘Societas’ is more of an agreement and means ‘a partnership’ whereas *koinōnía* is more seen as ‘a relationship’.

In the Biblical arena, *koinōnía* is also

understood as an abstract form of the above referred noun *koinōnós* with emphasis either on ‘giving or receiving of something’; it is not one-sided but indicates a ‘participation’ or ‘fellowship’ entwined with ‘giving’ and ‘receiving’.<sup>2</sup>

Various Biblical experts, restricting themselves to the use of the term in the New Testament, orient our minds in different directions. William Barclay speaks in terms of generous sharing in contrast to the spirit of selfish giving. He also stresses on the quality of ‘togetherness’<sup>3</sup>. James Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible spotlights on different nuances of *koinōnía* and the terms that belong to its family. These include ‘partnership or participation’, ‘sharers’ and ‘common’, that is, something shared by many or by all. For Martin Lohmeyer, *koinōnía* basically denotes ‘participation in something with someone’. He further states that the precise meaning will vary according to the Sitz-im-Leben and can be deciphered only within the context<sup>4</sup>. Wright, drawing inspiration from Philemon 6, expresses that through *koinōnía* the members of the Christian community not only belong to one another, but are mutually identified with each other.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. *Koinōnía*: HELLENISTIC WORLD

The term *koinōnía* was widely used in Hellenism. But depending on the different realms, the connotation differed. Basically, the dominant use of the term was seen at two levels: the human domain and the divine domain.

In the human domain, the term referred to relationships of diverse kinds amongst the human person: sharing in things, sharing in common enterprise, sharing in material

possessions, sharing in the same city as equal citizens, sharing in friendship, and finally, sharing in marriage, which was understood as an intimate life-partnership.

In the divine domain, there was lot of stress and importance given to fellowship meals which were considered as one of the best means of communion between the divine and the human. The human and divine were often seen as partakers or companions at table. Furthermore, the sexual union with the deity was also seen as an act of *koinōnía* between the human and the divine; it was also extolled and epitomized as the most supreme form of fellowship that a human person was privileged to have with the deity.<sup>6</sup>

## 3. *Koinōnía*: OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

The LXX translates the Hebrew *hābar* (*hbr*) as *koinōnía*. In the Hebrew lexicon, we find the root *hbr* in many grammatical forms like verb, noun, etc. and with various connotations.<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew *hbr* is used in the Old Testament to express ideas such as ‘common or shared house’ (cf. Prov 21: 9), ‘binding’ or ‘joining’ (cf. Ex 26: 6; Eccl 9: 4), ‘companion’ (cf. Eccl 4:10), and even a wife ‘as a companion’ (cf. Mal 2:14). The term also has a lot of added usages which can be summed up as follows: it is used of objects being pulled together (cf. Ex 26: 6); of nations coming together (cf. Gn 14: 3); of the common house (cf. Prov 21:9; 25: 24), etc.<sup>8</sup> These references enlighten our minds to the use of the term *hbr* concerning the various levels of relationship that focus on humanity.

The question is often asked about its usage concerning the realm of God or gods. It is worth noting that, though the term is occasionally used to signify the relationship of the human person with gods, it is seldom used

of relationship or intimacy with the God of Israel. The book of Hosea out rightly condemns the union or relationship with gods and terms it as ‘adultery’ (cf. 4: 17) whereas Isaiah does not hesitate to call the followers of *Baals* as their ‘fellows’ (cf. Is 44: 11)<sup>9</sup>. The Old Testament thought-pattern maintained a distance between the common and the sacral. Therefore, the human person, though maintained a relationship with God, was aware of his distance and consequently considered himself as the servant of God, which led him to a relationship of deep trust in the might of God. Even though the sacrificial meal was also regarded as a relationship between human and the divine, it was never considered as *hbr*. In the book of Deuteronomy, speaking of the festive occasion, the writer uses the expression ‘in front of’ or ‘before’ rather than ‘with’ to signify a sort of a distance between the divine and the human.

The most common expression used by the OT writers to denote the relationship or fellowship with the Divine is *berith*.<sup>10</sup> The covenant formula ‘*I am your God and you are my people*’ denotes relationship between God and his people. Time and again, we also come across the reassuring assistance formula ‘*I am with you*’ which also signifies the communion between God and His people. Furthermore, the people of the Old Testament experienced the closeness of God in their day to day life through events, signs and symbols. Thus we have the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam 4: 3), the pillar of fire (Nu 9: 15ff), the mighty deed of God in the Exodus Event (Ex 14), the messenger of the Lord leading the people in the name of God (Ex 23: 20-21)<sup>11</sup>. The place of prime importance symbolizing the divine presence in a superlative manner

was the Temple, the delight to the eyes of the people of Israel (cf. Ezek 24: 15).

The Old Testament also presents to us instances wherein we see the communion between God and certain individuals who were bestowed with an unmerited privilege of enjoying a close relationship with God. Among the most prominent ones is Moses, the servant of God.<sup>12</sup> There are various biblical texts that invite us to reflect on the closeness Moses was honored to have in the presence of God (Ex 33: 9ff; Deut 34: 10).

*Hbr* was also used for a member of a Pharisaic society. Pharisees tended to form very close associations with one another in social, religious, and even business affairs. A most important dimension in the life of these *heberim*<sup>13</sup> was a sharing together in the study of Scripture or Torah, and table fellowship.

Among the Jewish writers, Philo uses the term and its cognates to express the religious sharing and fellowship between God and the human beings.<sup>14</sup> He also spells out the requisite for such a fellowship in that he stresses on ‘righteousness’ on part of the human person. Furthermore, for him, *koinōnía* also has a horizontal dimension; he presents it as an ideal common life of the Essenes. For the first century Jewish historian, Josephus Flavius, *koinōnía* also implies living in a right relationship with fellow beings.

#### 4. *Koinōnía*: NEW TESTAMENT PERIOD

The term *koinōnía* features many times in the New Testament. Primarily, it means ‘fellowship, sharing in common, communion, association, community, joint-participation, intercourse’<sup>15</sup>. However, there are also other shades of meaning that cannot be ignored. In

this section, our prime focus will be to re-discover these shades in the light of the Canonical Gospels, Pauline Corpus and the other relevant texts of the New Testament.

#### 4.1. Canonical Gospels

In the Canonical Gospels, *koinōnía* basically denotes a sort of a bond for a specific purpose. There are two kinds of bonds that we can trace in the pages of the Gospels. The first one is evident in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 5: 10). The term *koinōnoi* in this verse is translated as ‘partners’ in most of the biblical versions. James and John, the sons of Zebedee are considered as ‘partners’ in the business of fishing. Hence, the term is generally understood as implying a legal partnership with ‘common occupation’ as the bond and ‘catching of fish’ as the shared or specific purpose. The second occurrence is in the Gospel of Matthew (cf. Mt 23: 30). The term *koinōnoi* occurs here in the rebuke of Jesus to the Scribes and Pharisees for having claimed that ‘we would have not taken part (*koinōnoi*) with them in the shedding of the blood of the prophets’. In this second instance, the bond is understood as ‘common spirit’ and the purpose as the ‘shared opposition’ to the prophet of God.<sup>16</sup> The common element in both the occurrences in the Canonical Gospels is the ‘joint-participation’ either in something positive i.e. common occupation or something negative i.e. fellowship in carrying out persecution.

#### 4.2. Pauline Corpus

Paul, in his writings, lays a great emphasis on *koinōnía*, a term used more often by him than any of the New Testament human authors. In Pauline Corpus, it has basically a religious significance, unlike the gospels,

where the secular was not ignored. Paul’s viewpoint can be summed up under three headings:

##### 4.2.1. *Koinōnía with Christ*

Time and again, Paul urges the members of the Christian Community for *koinōnía* with Christ (1 Cor 1: 9). *Koinōnía* with Christ implies sharing in his passion and his glory (Rm 8: 17) and the participation in the Gospel (1 Cor 9: 23; Phil 1: 5).

Furthermore, Paul links *koinōnía* with Christ to the participation in the Supper of the Lord. As a polemic against the Jewish and pagan festivals and sacrificial meals, Paul makes a clear-cut distinction between sacrificial meals of the Jews or pagans and the Lord’s Supper. According to him, participation in the sacrificial meals leads one to have *koinōnía* with the evil one. On the contrary, worthy participation in the Lord’s Supper leads one to *koinōnía* with Christ.

Finally, speaking about *koinōnía* with Christ, Paul exhorts the followers of Christ to participate in the various stages of the life of Christ. The stages are categorized as follows<sup>17</sup>:

- Sharing in the Life of Christ (Rm 6: 8)
- Sharing in the Work of Christ (Col 2: 12)
- Sharing in the Sufferings of Christ (Rm 8: 17)
- Sharing in the Cross of Christ (Rm 6: 6)
- Sharing in the Death of Christ (2 Cor 7: 3)
- Sharing in the Glory of Christ (Rm 8: 17)
- Sharing in the Kingship of Christ (2 Tim 2: 12)

#### 4.2.2. *Koinōnía with the Spirit*

For Paul, *koinōnía* is not just limited to Christ. He also speaks of *koinōnía* with the Holy Spirit. At the conclusion of the letter to the Corinthian community, he uses the expression ‘the communion (*koinōnía*) of the Holy Spirit’ (2 Cor 13: 13). Going by the grammatical analysis and peculiarities, the phrase ‘of the Holy Spirit’ is called objective genitive, and thus, the whole expression conveys the sense of ‘participation in the Holy Spirit’ or ‘participation in the gifts of the Holy Spirit’. Again in Philippians 2: 1, we find the expression *koinōnía* of the Spirit<sup>18</sup>. This sharing or fellowship in the Spirit or in the gifts of the Spirit, according to Paul, should urge the Christian follower to be of the same love and mind that was in Christ (cf. Phil 2: 2-5).

#### 4.2.3. *Koinōnía with fellow-Christians*

*Koinōnía* with Christ or with the Spirit has no meaning, if it does not urge someone for an effective *koinōnía* with fellow beings. In the letter to the Corinthians, Paul cautions the community about the divisions in the Body of Christ and appeals the members to be of the same mind and the same purpose as was in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1: 10). Using the powerful imagery of a body, he allegorically exhorts the followers of Christ to live a life of communion with one another (1 Cor 12: 12ff). *Koinōnía* with fellow-Christians implies various kinds of fellowships:

- *Fellowship in Faith*: this is motif used by Paul when he sends Onesimus back to Philemon (Phlm 17).
- *Fellowship in the Work of Christ*: this is the motif used by Paul so that Titus receives honorable welcome in the Corinthian community (2 Cor 8: 23).
- *Fellowship between the Jews and the*

*Gentiles*: this is the motif used by Paul to maintain the unity of the Church of Christ and also to reinforce his mission to the gentile world (Rm 15: 27; Gal 3: 28).

- *Fellowship in Material Goods*: this is the motif used by Paul to motivate the communities to support those in dire financial need (Rm 15: 26-27).
- *Fellowship in Sufferings*: This is the motif used by Paul to urge the Christian followers to share in the sufferings of others (1 Cor 12: 26; cf. Phil 4: 14).

On one hand, Paul strongly appeals to the members of the Body of Christ to live in *koinōnía* with each other, while on the other, he cautions about the situations where *koinōnía* is to be avoided: *koinōnía* should not exist with the evil one: ‘I do not want you to be *koinōnos* with the demons’ (1 Cor 10: 20b); writing to the Timothy, he issues a word of caution not to associate with the sins of others: ‘Do not *koinōnei* in the sins of others’ (1 Tim 5: 22).

#### 4.3. Other Writings

The other Canonical writings of the New Testament also lay some emphasis on *koinōnía*. We shall make an attempt to browse through some of them:

In the Acts of the Apostles, the members of the early Church lived in communion with one another. The biblical pericope that throws much light on this is Acts 2: 42-47. These verses bring out the many aspects of *koinōnía* in the early Christian community: they shared things together; they listened together, they prayed together and they broke the bread together.

The Catholic letters present *koinōnía* as a relationship with both the divine as well as the human. In the first letter of John,

fellowship with God necessarily implies fellowship with one's neighbor (cf. 1 Jn 1: 3); one cannot be in fellowship with God, if one is not fellowship with fellow-being (cf. 1 Jn 4: 19). In his writings, John also has a word of caution to the Christian disciple: 'if we say we have fellowship (*koinōnian*) with him while we are walking in the darkness, we lie and do not do what is true' (1 Jn 1: 6). Finally, in the Johannine thought 'one who greets the transgressor of the doctrine of Christ shares (*koinōneō*) in his evil deeds' (2 Jn 12). No doubt, this has to be interpreted in the context of those times.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews, focusing on the sacrificial dimension of worship says: 'do not neglect to do good and to share (*koinōnias*) what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God' (Heb 13: 16).

### 5. *Koinōnia*: TODAY

In today's context, *koinōnia* is often limited to fellowship in the sense of sharing a 'common table' or eating a 'common meal'. Going through the various biblical nuances, we have realized how rich the term *koinōnia* is. Drawing inspiration from the biblical world, especially the life of the early Christian community and the canonical writings of the New Testament, let us draw home a few insights for a right Christian living:

#### a) *Koinōnia* implies sharing in the material goods

In Acts of the Apostles, we observe that the early Christian Community bore witness to *koinōnia* through sharing of material goods in such a way that no one was in want (Acts 4: 34). St. Ambrose once said: 'You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is

his. For what has been given in common for the use of all, you have arrogated to yourself. The world is given to all, and not only to the rich'.<sup>19</sup>

Reflecting on the Small Christian Communities, the Archbishop of Goa and Daman in his Pastoral Letter highlights the need for a relationship of the neighbors with the needy, the poor, the marginalized, etc as one of their traits<sup>20</sup>. For *koinōnia* to be our way of life, we need to share the God-given material resources with people in various kinds of wants.

#### b) *Koinōnia* implies sharing in the Charisms

In the first letter to Corinthians, Paul draws our attention to Charisms. Though the source of these gifts is one i.e. divine yet there are varieties of these Charisms (1 Cor 12: 1-11). Furthermore, Paul urges the Corinthian community to excellence in the Charisms for building up the Church (1 Cor 14: 12).

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, while maintaining the unity of the Church as one body, stresses on the varieties of Charisms and diversity of functions, and exhorts Christ's faithful to put these Charisms, both at the service of the Church as well for the welfare of the Christian community.<sup>21</sup>

#### c) *Koinōnia* implies sharing in the sufferings of others

Writing to the Corinthian community, Paul calls for *koinōnia* that empathizes with the sufferings of its members: 'if one member suffers, all suffer together with it' (1 Cor 12: 26). If a part of our body is infected, inflicted or affected with pain, it is not just that part which suffers but the whole body. So also, it has to be in the Christian community.

The document on the Church in the Modern World, right at beginning drives home this message: ‘The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well’.<sup>22</sup>

**d) *Koinōnía* implies sharing in the Life of Christ**

In the letter to the Colossians, we find: ‘As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up upon him ...’ (2: 6-7). St. Paul lived up to this sort of *koinōnía* in a supreme manner for he could testify with great courage: ‘It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me’ (cf. Gal 2: 20).

The Sacrament of Baptism gives us a share in this type of *koinōnía* i.e. sharing in the life of Christ. The baptismal rite itself has lot of symbolisms that spell out this sharing. When a white garment is given to the baptized, the celebrant says: ‘you have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ’. And also when a lighted candle is given, he says: ‘Receive the light of Christ’ and further reminds the parents and godparents that their child is enlightened by Christ and exhorts them to keep the flame of faith alive.<sup>23</sup>

**e) *Koinōnía* implies sharing in the mission of Christ**

During his earthly ministry, and specifically before Ascension, Christ gave a mandate to his chosen ones to go and preach: “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mk 16: 15); he also sent them on his behalf to towns and places where he himself intended to go (Lk 10: 1). Thus,

Jesus gave them a share in his mission.

The sharing in the mission of Christ is brought out in a lucid manner, again in the Baptismal rite at the second anointing on the crown of the head. Anointing with the Chrism, the celebrant says: ‘..... as Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live as a member of his body’.<sup>24</sup>

**f) *Koinōnía* implies sharing in the right relationship**

In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments, given as a sign of the Covenant, were also meant to safeguard the right relationship with the divine and the human (cf. Ex 20: 2ff). In the New Testament, Christ beautifully sums up the Ten into Two, again holding on to the important relationship between God and man (cf. Mk 12: 29-31). In the Pastoral letters, John clearly highlights the right relationship with God and the human person: ‘those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or a sister whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: ‘those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also’ (1 Jn 4: 20-21).

**g) *Koinōnía* implies sharing in Unity.**

The Church in its very essence denotes Communion which is seen in the term ‘ekklesia’ (gathering or assembly). Where there are factions, there cannot be communion and where there is no communion we cannot have the witnessing Church. Being united is the hallmark of the Church founded by Christ and this dimension is very much emphasized in the Scriptures which use a lot of images that signify communion or unity:

the Sheepfold (cf. Jn 10: 10); the Vine and Branches (cf. Jn 15: 1-5); the Building (1 Cor 3: 9); the Bride (Rev. 19: 7) and the Body (1 Cor 12: 12ff).

Where there is dissension or discord there cannot be unity. *Koinōnia* invites us to a live a life of communion modeled in accordance with the one that we see in the Triune God. By virtue of Baptism, we share in the fundamental equality of the children of God. The Ecumenical Decree states: 'division in the church openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature' (no. 1).<sup>25</sup> The Church in Goa also emphasizes this unitive aspect in the vision of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan 2002: 'Set ablaze by a deep personal as well as communitarian experience of God – the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit – we, the Church in Goa, hand in hand with all our sisters and brothers, move as a vibrant community of love....'<sup>26</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The term *koinōnia* is considered as the source and the summit of the very existence of the Church. It is something to be practiced and something to be achieved

The term *koinōnia* has been widely used. It is relevant in the secular world as well as in the realm of the divine. The different shades of meaning analysed in this paper only proves the inexhaustible richness that lies embedded in it.

Today, individualism, self-centeredness, lack of team-work, spectator-style rather than participative style of functioning, abuse and over-use of technology, wounds in the church due to doctrinal or other differences, power struggles, denominational factions, etc, have

caused enough and more harm to the important dimension of Communion in the Church.

Let us not limit *koinōnia* to the eating of 'a common meal' or 'sharing a table' but let it march forward in reaching out to needs of the other. Let *koinōnia* not just be an external sign of coming together for mere Sacramental celebrations, but as the fruit of effective participation in the celebration, let it be made manifest in action at home and in the society.

*Koinōnia* can become for us 'fellowship' when we share with one another our common experiences for building up the Body of Christ

*Koinōnia* can become for us 'participation' when accept and share in the good that we see in others

*Koinōnia* can become 'contribution' when we generously share both the material and the spiritual that is in us.

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Friedrich Hauck, "Koinōnia...." in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol III, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 789-790.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. William Barclay, "The Acts of the Apostles" in *The Daily Study Bible* (Bangalore: TPI, 1987), 30.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Communion* [article on-line] (accessed on 21st January 2014); available from <http://www.arlev.co.uk/fellowship.html>; Internet.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Hauck, "Koinōnia..", 798-799.

<sup>7</sup> The verbal forms of *hbr* have diverse meanings; generally speaking it means 'to be bound or joined together'; in the Piel form it means 'to attach', in Pual, it means 'to be joined together'; in Hiphil, 'to join or connect'; in Hithpael, 'to join oneself'. The noun form usually means 'companion, fellow or associate'. (cf. Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), 246

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Hauck, "Koinōnia..", 800.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 801

<sup>10</sup> The term *berith* comes from Hebrew *karat* meaning 'to cut' or 'to carve', and hence, implies permanency in the covenantal relationship.

<sup>11</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, "Communion" in *The*

*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 664

<sup>12</sup> It is remarkable that the Jewish writer Philo in his work, *The Life of Moses 1: 158*, speaks of the relationship between God and Moses and understands it as *koinōnia*.

<sup>13</sup> It is a plural form of *hbr*.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Hauck, "koinōnia", 800.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 438-439.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Kyle Pope, Fellowship in the Gospel – A Study of the Greek word koinonia [article on-line] (accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014); available from <http://ancientroadpublications.com/Studies/BiblicalStudies/FellowshipintheGospel.html>; Internet.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hauck, "koinōnia", 806.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Ibid., 807.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Herve Morissette, *Thunder in the Rain* (Bangalore: St. Paul's Press, 1991), 81.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Filipe Neri Ferrão, *Gonvllik Chitt*, 2013-2014 (Verna: New Age Printers, 2013), 25.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. "Lumen Gentium" in *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and the Post Conciliar Documents*, Austin Flannery, ed. (Mumbai: St. Pauls, 2004), 324.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. "Gaudium et Spes" in *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and the Post Conciliar Documents*, Austin Flannery, ed. (Mumbai: St. Pauls, 2004), 794.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. "The Rite of Baptism for One Child" in *Rituale Parvum* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 2003), nos. 30-31.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. no. 29.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. "Unitatis Redintegratio" in *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and the Post Conciliar Documents*, Austin Flannery, ed. (Mumbai: St. Pauls, 2004), 400.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. "DPP 2002" in *Synodal Documents, Archdiocese of Goa and Daman* (Verna: New Age Printers, 2002), 1.

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*"We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship (koinōnian) with us; and truly our fellowship (koinōnia) is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

**(1 Jn 1: 3)**

## The Coresponsible Participation — Flowing from the *Communion* of People of God.

\* Rev. Dr. Nelson Sequeira

Pope Paul VI speaking to the Tribunal of the Sacred Roman Rota on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1967, drew attention to how important *Communion* was to the Church, saying, “*Magnae illius Communionis, quam efficit Ecclesia.*”<sup>1</sup> Vincenzo Mosca says that if there is principle that animates the whole ecclesiological concept of the Second Vatican Council it can be none other than *Communion*.<sup>2</sup>

Fredrich R. Mc Manus, a canonist who was present at the council, drew attention to the fact that the council made an eloquent choice of the biblical images in no. 6 of *Lumen Gentium* and then the choice of the image as “People of God” as the primary and governing nomenclature for the discussion of mission, ministry and institutions.<sup>3</sup> His affirmation is strengthened by the fact that John Paul II in his discourse at the presentation of the code affirmed that the concept of People of God was from the Old Testament. The concept of People of God is on par with the designations such as Communion, community, congregation, assembly, gathering etc. Indeed the People of God is a gathering of different people, at the same time it is a composed of people of different states of life united with the primacy of the Chair of St. Peter.<sup>4</sup> In his Apostolic letter *Novo Millenio ineunte*, Pope John Paul II gave a call to make the Church a home and school of *Communion*.<sup>5</sup> *Communion* is a rich reality with several dimensions. The Council uses the term *Communion* in various senses. The

Congregation for Doctrine of faith in its document *Communio Notio*, pointed to its vertical and horizontal dimensions. *Communion* in the vertical sense is the relation with God and *Communion* in the horizontal sense is the relation with men.<sup>6</sup> The said document of the Congregation for Doctrine of Faith aims to give three criteria for the comprehension of what is understood by *Communion*.

- \* *The concept of Communion in relation to the other notions of ecclesiology like, people of God, body of Christ, sacrament.*
- \* *The concept of Communion in relation to the Eucharist and the Episcopate pointing to the reciprocal relationship between the Universal Church and the Particular Church.*
- \* *The concept of Communion among bishops and that of the bishops together with the successor of Peter.*<sup>7</sup>

*Communion* therefore speaks of a union in the life of the Church where in there is a sharing of faith, a relationship with the Sacraments and a relationship with every member of the Church to whichever state he or she may belong.

### The Participation of the People of God in the life of the Church

*Lumen Gentium* no. 10 and 11 speaks about the common priesthood of all the faithful. It uses the term “*unum enim et alterum suo peculiari modo de uno Christi*

*sacerdotio participant.*” and then in no. 12 speaks of the participation of the faithful in the prophetic office of Christ using the words “*Populus Dei sanctus de munere quoque prophetico Christi participat.*” But no. 13 of the same document speaking of the Kingdom of Christ, falls short of using the word *participat* or *participant*. Even before the Second Vatican Council, Pope Pius XI used the term “participation in the apostolate of the Hierarchy”<sup>8</sup> But his statement initiated a reflection and it was seen that there were many responsibilities exercised by the hierarchy, like those which originated from the sacrament of orders, which could not be entrusted to the laity. The question arose as to whether the participation was in the office or in the powers of the hierarchy. Hence Pius XII avoided the term participation and explained it in terms *mutuam consolationem* and *adiutrice Pastorum ac fidelium* which in English is translated as “co-operation” and “collaboration” respectively.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless there are certain offices that are exercised by the hierarchy which are not necessarily hierarchical. In such a case exercise in this office would not mean cooperation in the hierarchical apostolate. E.g. the office of a Nuntio. some offices in the Roman and Diocesan Curia or a Curia of an Institute of Consecrated life. *Pastor Bonus* article 9 speaks clearly in the case of the administration of the ecclesiastical goods, it provides that officials be taken from faithful, both clergy and laity.<sup>10</sup>

### **Collaboration**

Business management understands that the key to efficiency and productivity in any healthy organization is empowerment thereby allowing the right persons to do the right

things and make the right decisions. Today experts in business management also realise that it is impossible that the staff and leaders to be truly empowered when all the financial control rests with one person in the accounting office.<sup>11</sup> As a matter of fact many principles followed by corporate houses today in business management have their roots in the bible. I cannot miss the excellent example of collaboration found in the Gospel episode of the miracle of the multiplication of the bread. According to the synoptic Gospels, Jesus instructs the disciples *dóte autoís umeis phagein* “Give them to eat yourselves”<sup>12</sup> The Gospel of John has Jesus asking Philip *Póthen agorásomen artous ina phagosin auto* “Where shall we find bread for these to eat?”<sup>13</sup> After the multiplied bread and fish are distributed and the disciples are asked to gather the leftovers. The disciples are asked to collaborate in the collection, the distribution and also the outcome. It is to be noted in the Gospel according to Mark chapter 6 v. 35 mentions *oi Mathetai* which means the disciples in contrast with *oi apostoloi* seen in v 30 of the same chapter which begins the narration of the miracle. It appears that it is not only the twelve that are entrusted with the task. The Gospel according to Luke too makes the distinction of the same words. This biblical passage could be an example of collaboration of the followers of Jesus in the multiplication of bread.

Indeed the collaboration is not a new discovery at the Second Vatican Council, we have examples of collaboration in the Acts of Apostles but somewhere down the ages Clericalism set in.

### **Co-responsibility**

The Collaboration is realised in the

activity of the individuals as well as collectively either in groups or recognised associations. It is characterised by a coordination of the gifts of the members through a hierarchical organisation.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the co-responsibility is implied in every member of the Church.<sup>15</sup> The Council spoke of collaboration of the faithful according to their state of life, but, as De Paolis notes, the Council did not use the term of co-responsibility, this term was a result of post-conciliar writings and it was officially used by the synod of bishops in 1985 and is considered as the interpretation of the Council.<sup>16</sup>

The coresponsibility of the laity has been repeatedly affirmed after the Synod of 1985. Pope John Paul II in his post synodal apostolic exhortation *Christi fideles Laici* spoke of the hierarchical and charismatic gifts of the members of the Church which made them co responsible.<sup>17</sup> He further affirmed that the Fathers of the Second Vatican council had acknowledged that the Pastors knew that they were to recognise the services and charisms of the laity and they together would cooperate in the common task.<sup>18</sup>

In his other post synodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* again he reminded the Priests that their consciousness of Communion leads to a need to awaken and deepen the co responsibility in the common mission.<sup>19</sup>

Addressing the Pontifical Council of the Laity on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1997, again he affirmed that teachings of the Second Vatican Council: the Church has become more keenly aware of being a mystery of Communion and of being missionary by nature; the dignity, co-responsibility and active role of lay people has been better recognized and highlighted.<sup>20</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI in his address at the opening of the Pastoral convention of the Diocese of Rome on 26 May 2009 affirmed the laity should not be viewed just as “collaborators” of the clergy but truly recognized as “co-responsible”, for the Church’s being and action, thereby fostering the consolidation of a mature and committed laity.<sup>21</sup> At the same time affirming that this in no way reduces the responsibility of the Parish Priest he invited the pastors to nurture the commitment of the lay faithful in their apostolic growth.<sup>22</sup> Again on his pastoral visit to Lamezia Terme, Serra san Bruno, Pope Benedict on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2011 invited the lay faithful to use their skills and responsibilities to contribute the construction of the common good in Communion with their bishops.<sup>23</sup>

Pope Francis again in his Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, again reiterates that the Church is not a mere institution. The Church he says, as the agent of evangelization, is more than an organic and hierarchical institution; she is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God<sup>24</sup>.

Every faithful who is baptised has a fundamental right and duty to participate directly and actively in the life of the Church according to one’s status.<sup>25</sup> Based on the mystery of communion within the church. Each member has to feel fully co responsible in the mission of the Church and act according to his role. The co responsibility is a fundamental right and duty of every faithful who is incorporated in the church through baptism<sup>26</sup>. It is this theologico-juridical understanding that has to guide the Church in this communion.. As such every member should understand the Church as his own and have the concern that the mission of the

Church is continued

Each of these pilgrims has a distinctive role. The distinctive role is a basic right and obligation of the lay faithful arising from the dignity of personhood they enjoy in the Church by their baptism. By which they are incorporated in Christ.<sup>27</sup> It is quite clear that the laity exercise their role not only outside the Church but also within the Church.<sup>28</sup>

Co-responsibility denotes that the many subjects have a capacity to act in a matter. The faithful bear responsibility as baptized in the Church's mission, therefore, they must contribute to the life of the Church according to their position. The co responsibility gives rise to different forms of participation. This is not just a general statement, the code, acknowledging the responsibility of all-faithful, intends to facilitate and regulate this participation, hence it provides that "bodies" be established for this purpose of the Church within the structures of shared responsibility. These structures in the Church must be distinguished from being identified with other institutions that at first glance may appear similar, such as associations of Christ's faithful based on freedom of association (c. 215) or the institutions that play leadership roles with judicial office, or such institutions with collegiate power. These structures are aimed for consultation and assistance according to their competence. The Communion in the Church presupposes unity and diversity in the subjects of consultation. They do have equality but no uniformity. Because as said earlier, through the working of the spirit there are different gifts and given charisms, that determine the distinct ministries and functions and services which are exercised in the Church.<sup>29</sup> Based on the common vocation and on the mission of the Church, are founded

the relations of Communion between the members of People of God and those who, by the Holy Spirit, are constituted Pastors in the Church to be teachers of doctrine, the Priests of the sacred worship and ministers of governance of the community (c. 375 § 1). Because the ministries mean diversity, the common vocation of Christ's faithful to union with God and each other to the salvation of people is considered before the diversity of gifts and ministries<sup>30</sup>

Let it be noted that the conciliar documents never use the term co-responsibility.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the post-conciliar theological publications frequently speak in those terms as practical application of the exercise of Communion. The term was made official by the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in 1985, where it says:

*".....because the Church is a Communion, there must be at all levels of participation and shared responsibility". This is a correct interpretation of the council when it says, "the extent of knowledge, competence and prestige they enjoy, they (the faithful) have the right, indeed the duty to make known their views on what concerns the good of the Church,"*<sup>32</sup>

The Synod then immediately specifies; 'If necessary, do it through the organs established for this purpose by the Church, and always with truth, courage and prudence, with reverence and charity towards those who, by reason of their sacred office represent Christ'<sup>33</sup>

#### **Communion in the Code of Canon Law.**

This Communion of the People of God, which rediscovers the co responsibility of the faithful and the realisation of the role of the

local Church, was to be necessarily accommodated in the revision of the Code.<sup>34</sup> Pope Paul VI addressing the commission for revision of the Code reminded them that they are primarily to work with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, He expressly mentioned the pastoral care and the necessity of the People of God.<sup>35</sup> The work of the commission was to carefully follow all the phases and evolution of Vatican II in order to capture its spirit so that its norms would be based on the decisions, the directives and also the votes of the council.<sup>36</sup>

Not that the code was to be just the canonical or juridical expression of the Council. The ecclesiology after the council shifted from a juridical and apologetic view to a Trinitarian Christ centric and pastoral orientation.<sup>37</sup> The understanding of the Church from a prospective of an Institutional structure was changed to a more of communal life. Hence it was felt that the code should be structured based on the three functions of the People of God. And therefore, it is evident the communal nature of the Church is expressed in the responsibilities of the faithful<sup>38</sup>

### **The coresponsibility as seen in the CIC 1983**

Canon 96 of CIC '83 points to the fact that through the sacrament of baptism one is incorporated in the Church and therefore enters in the Communion in the Church as subject of rights and duties. Living this Communion he or she enjoys the equality of the baptised. However he or she exercises the role according one's status.<sup>39</sup>

The book II of the Code of Canon Law 1983 has the title of People of God which speaks of the differences of state People of

God, their rights and obligation and is followed by two other books, namely III and IV deal with the functions of teaching and sanctification. There is no book on the function of Governance. Just like the council the code on its part does not speak of the participation in the kingly office<sup>40</sup> There was a suggestion that the Part II, on the hierarchical constitution of the Church be entitled *De Munere Ecclesiae Regendi*, but the secretariat of the commission and some consultants responded saying that the book was not dealing only with governance, besides there were other parts of the code dealing with governance too.<sup>41</sup>

The Canon 129 §1 states that those who have received the holy Orders have the function of Governance. As Velasio De Paolis says the administration of goods is an act of governance, one would naturally ask in view of the above, how can laity participate in administration of goods? The canon 129 § 2 speaks of lay persons cooperating in the function of governance according to the norms of the law. Article 37 of Lumen Gentium speaks of the exercise *ad intra* of this power of governance. The canon 129§1 affirms it is only those who have been ordained that have the power of Governance. The §2 however does not exclude the laity. The c. 129 § 1 states explicitly that they only "those who are have receive sacred orders are capable of the power of governance. The canon does not use an exclusive language like "solus" like in the case of Canon 118 of the Code of Canon Law 1917, besides it adds the clause "ad normam praescriptorum iuris. What about the laity? Are they capable or not of an exercise of Governance? Further if they are able then to what extent? § 2 of the same canon seems to give the answer. It

is well known that the term “*cooperari possunt*” i.e. they can cooperate, was inserted in the last phase of formulation of this canon. Right from the *Lex Fundamentalis*, the proposed formulation appeared as Canon 96 was “*partes habent*” i.e. they have a part.<sup>42</sup> As such there are offices which do not require the reception of sacrament of orders. They are reserved to clerics solely by ecclesiastical law it is enough that one is fully incorporated in the Church, i.e. by baptism and confirmation. In such a case the lay person can also participate in such an office.

We draw attention to the clause *ad normam iuris cooperari possunt*. They can cooperate in the power of Governance again according to the norms laid down by the law. In fact there are cases where it is provided lay people can also exercise this power: The most apparent example seems to be that the Bishop’s conference can permit that lay persons be appointed as a judge in the tribunal of the College Church (c. 1421, § 2). Canon 137 §1 says that the executive functions can be delegated to the laity either for an individual act or in general unless of course the law expressly prohibits it. Like in the case of administration, Canons 1281, 1291, 1292, 1295 and 638 put a restriction on the acts extraordinary administration

One way they cooperate in the exercise of the power of governance is by exercising judicial or executive power in the offices open to them in the universal law. Another way they cooperate is by personal delegation. Canon 129§2 does not specify whether the said norms of law originate from universal or particular law. The code of canon of law 1983 in canon 228 and 1421§2 mentions that the members of the Institutes of Consecrated life exercise the power of governance

whether lay or clerical as superiors or members of the chapter.<sup>43</sup> In fact if they do not participate in the power of governance they could not co-operate.<sup>44</sup>

By participation it does not mean that one involves totally in what one undertakes. It means that there are many who take part and each one plays a partial role.<sup>45</sup> There could be a possibility of someone playing a bigger role but if one person assumes the total onus, then there would not be participation and Communion of persons.<sup>46</sup> It consists in the cooperation between the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood, which could be termed as organic cooperation with different functions but which are complimentary.<sup>47</sup> We need to draw out attention to the titles one and two of the second book, viz, “*De Omnium Christi fidelium Obligationibus et Iuribus*” and “*De Obligationibus Et Iuribus Christifidelium Laicorum*”, which enunciated the rights and correlative obligations as a reflection on the conciliar teachings. Canon 149 § 1 leaves it open for a lay person to be promoted to an ecclesiastical office. Keeping the principle of diversity the Canon 150 restricts the conferring of an office that entails full care of souls to the laity viz. a task that belongs to *potestas ordinis*. Attention needs to be drawn to the notion of ecclesiastical office as given by canon 145 §1 of CIC ’83 term the office is broader than just governance. In the code the *potestas iurisdictionis* consists of *potestas legislativa potestas executiva, and potestas iudiciaria*.<sup>48</sup> In the administration of goods the exercise of governance is through the executive function which is also known as administration. It is to be exercised according to the established norms<sup>49</sup>

According to Canon 212 § 2, all faithful

have the right and duty to manifest the needs especially the spiritual needs to their pastors. The § 3 of the same canon asserts the right and obligation of the faithful to manifest their mind to the sacred pastors with regard to the good of the Church. Ghirlanda says that this help to the pastors by way of counsel, is participation in the function of governance.<sup>50</sup> Canon 228 § 2 states that the Laypersons who excel in necessary knowledge prudence and uprightness are capable of assisting the pastors of the Church as experts or advisors, they can do so even in councils, in accord with the norm of law. The Code sees the possibility of participation of lay persons in a variety of collegiate bodies; diocesan pastoral council;<sup>51</sup> diocesan synod;<sup>52</sup> diocesan finance council;<sup>53</sup> finance officer<sup>54</sup> parish pastoral council;<sup>55</sup> parish finance council;<sup>56</sup> Administrative and pastoral work of the Church, as well as participation in councils and synods, above all the Parish Priest is obliged to help all the faithful to exercise their specific role<sup>57</sup>

While discussing the question of the obedience of the Christ faithful to the Pastors the Secretary of the Code commission stated that the faithful are not expected to submit themselves blindly and passively but as true Christians are to act responsibly for the common good.<sup>58</sup>

### Conclusion

The coresponsibility gives rise to different forms of participation. The consultative bodies which are representative bodies are comprised as organs of participation. They exercised equality among the faithful and at the same time the official exercises the responsibility of Christ. Who guides the Church. And conserves unity.

At the recent convention of the Small Christian Communities held in Old Goa, Bishop Dabre was heard saying, “earlier the Hierarchy told what is to be done, but now the people talk and we have to listen.” This is indeed the participative Church.

The Code does caution that the said bodies have a consultative vote however this term consultative does not mean that the one who consults listens and does what he likes. the communion of the faithful means all members of the parish enjoy equality and dignity and co responsibly share in the mission of building up the body of Christ, which is the Church, even though they have a different juridical status.<sup>59</sup> The faithful are advisors of the sacred pastors on the basis of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.<sup>60</sup> The decision of the pastors should be a fruit of the consultation. He can go against the decision only counsel given goes against the doctrine of the Church, when it is positively seen that the counsel could harm the interests of the local or universal Church, or when he foresees a division in the community.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Cf. PAUL VI, Alloc. *Ad Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae Decanum, Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos, novo Litibus Iudicandis ineunte anno, de protectione iustitiae perfectiore reddenda* 4 Feb. 1967 in AAS,69(1977)148

<sup>2</sup>Vincenzo MOSCA Il diritto missionario nel CIC: la dialettica universal e particolare in *Ius Missionale* 1(2007)13

<sup>3</sup>Fredrich R. MC, MANUS, *Laity in the Church Law New Church New Focus* in *The Jurist* 47(1987)15-16

<sup>4</sup>*Lumen Gentium*13.

<sup>5</sup> JOHN PAUL II, Lit. Ap. *Novo millenio ineunte*, 43 (6 January 2001) in AAS 93 (2001) 296

<sup>6</sup>*Communio* 3 28 May 1992 [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/)

rc\_con\_cfaith\_doc\_28051992\_Communionis-notio\_en.html visited on 2nd May 2011. Also see Velasio DE PAOLIS, *La Disciplina Ecclesiale al Servizio della Communionne in Communionne e Disciplina Ecclesiale* Libreria EditriceVaticana, Città del Vaticano 1991, pp 22-28

<sup>7</sup>CONGREGAZIONE PER LA DOTTRINA DELLA FEDE <<Communionis Notio>> *Lettera e Commenti* Libreria Editrice Vatican 1994. p.8

<sup>8</sup>PIUS XI, enc., *Non abbiamo bisogno*, 29 June 1931 AAS 23(1931)285-312

<sup>9</sup>PIUS XII enc. *Mistici Corporis Christi* 15,17, 44, 62,68, 69 87, 29 June 1943 in AAS 35 (1943) 193 – 248.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Ap. Const. *Pastor Bonus*, 28 June 1988 AAS 80(1988)861

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Todd LANE, *A necessary evil? Why you shouldn't shun good financial accounting in your Church* in *Ministry Today* January 2011, p. 29

<sup>12</sup>Mt. 14:16b, Mk 6: 37, Lk.9. 13

<sup>13</sup>Jn 6:5c

<sup>14</sup>Cf. F. GIANNINI, *La Chiesa Particolare e gli Organismi di Partecipazione*. in *Apollinaris* 56 (1983)518

<sup>15</sup> Léon –Joseph Cardinal SUENENS, *Co responsibility in the Church*, translated by Francis Martin, Burns & Oates, London, 1968, p.30.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. V. DE PAOLIS, *La Disciplina Ecclesiale al Servizio della Communionne in Communionne e Disciplina Ecclesiale* Libreria EditriceVaticana, Città del Vaticano 1991 pp 22-28. See also M. RIVELLA *I fondamenti della corresponsabilità ecclesiale* in M. RIVELLA (ed). *Partecipazione e Corresponsabilità nella Chiesa, I Consigli diocesani e parrocchiali*, Ancora, Milano, 2000. p.11

<sup>17</sup>*Christi fideles laici*, 21

<sup>18</sup>*Christi fideles laici*, 32.

<sup>19</sup>JOHN PAUL II Ap. Exhort. *Pastores dabo vobis*, 74 25 Mar 1992 in AAS 84(1992) 788

<sup>20</sup>JOHN PAUL II Alloc *Ad Pontifici Consilii pro laicis sodalis*, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1997 in AAS 90(1998)593

<sup>21</sup> BENEDICT XVI, Alloc. *Seguendo Una Ormai*, May 26 2009 in *Insegnamenti di Benedetto XVI* V, 1 (2009)903-904.

<sup>22</sup>idem

<sup>23</sup> Ref. [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/angelus/2011/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_ang\\_20111009\\_lamezia-terme\\_it.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/angelus/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_ang_20111009_lamezia-terme_it.html) visited on 19th October 2011

<sup>24</sup>POPE FRANCIS, Ap. Exhort, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 112, 24 Nov 2013.

<sup>25</sup> Canon 212

<sup>26</sup>See canon 208.

<sup>27</sup>*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 3

<sup>28</sup>Cf. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 3

<sup>29</sup>*Ad gentes* 4, *Lumen Gentium* 4a 12b, 13 c *Gaudium et spes*. 32 d. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 3d; CIC '83 cann.204§1 208

<sup>30</sup>Cf. Alfredo SOARES, *A comunhão na Constituição Hierárquica da Igreja, Investigação Teológico-canónica*. Porto, 1992. p. 195

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Agostino MONTAN *Responsabilità ecclesiale corresponsabilità e rappresentanza*, in Paolo GHERRI (ed), *Responsabilità ecclesiale corresponsabilità e rappresentanza, Atti della Giornata canonistica inter disciplinare*, Lateran University Press, Città del Vaticano, 2010. p.10

<sup>32</sup>*Exeunte coetu secundo* IIC 6

<sup>33</sup>*Lumen Gentium*. 27

<sup>34</sup>*Lumen Gentium*, 8, 304, OT 16,808

<sup>35</sup>Cf. PAUL VI, Alloc. *Ad E. mos Patres Cardinales et ad Consultores Pontificii Consilii Codicis Iuris Canonici recognoscendo*, 20 November 1965 in AAS 57(1965)988

<sup>36</sup>Brian FERME, *Ius Condere: Historical Reflections on the 1983 Code* in *Jurist* 63(2003)189 full article 171-192. Also see V. FAGIOLO, "Vaticano II e Codex Iuris Canonici" in *teologia e Diritto canonico*, Studi Giuridici XII Città del Vaticano, Libreria EditriceVaticana 1987 35-36.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. A.V. ROMUALDEZ, *Vatican II and the New Laity* in ACHUTEGUI P. S., *Ecumenism and Vatican II* Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, 1972 p.76

<sup>38</sup>Cf. J. P. SCHOUPE, *Elementi di Diritto Patrimoniale Canonico* Varese Giuffrè 2008<sup>2</sup> pp. 2-3

<sup>39</sup>Canon 204 § 1

<sup>40</sup>See *Relatio* in *Communicationes* 14(1982)148.

<sup>41</sup>*Communicationes* 14(1982)156

<sup>42</sup>Francis Marcus and Varghese Mammen describe the formation of the Canon 129 in their Doctoral Thesis. See Francis MARCUS, *The meaning of Cooperation* Palm 2010. And Varghese MAMMEN, *The Laity and their Cooperation in Church Governance, according to the Provisions of cceo and the tradition of the Malankara Catholic Church*, Rome, 1996. Pp. 17-19.

<sup>43</sup> CIC '83 Canon 631§1

<sup>44</sup>Cf. J. BEYER, *Dal Concilio Al Codice, Il Nuovo Codice e le istanze del Concilio Vaticano II*, EDB, Bologna, 1984. P. 57-58

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Alfred Leite SOARES *Participação Numa*

*Igreja constituída hierarquicamente* in Periodica 81 (1993)159. He explains this by drawing attention to the difference between totality which is the composed reality and the globality which is the participated. Which in ontologically is sum of participations.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. A. FADA *Il principio di corresponsabilità nella costituzione gerarchica della chiesa* Lateran 2004

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Antonio SANCHEZ-GIL *L'istituzione parrocchiale un approccio storico-giuridico-pastorale*, in PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM PRO LAICIS, *Riscoprire il vero volto della Parrocchia*, Libreria editrice vaticana 2005, p90-91

<sup>48</sup>Cf. Can. 135 §1

<sup>49</sup>CIC '83 cc 135,§2,3 391 See G. GHIRLANDA *Il diritto nella mistero della Chiesa: compendio di dirittoecclesiale*

Pontificia Università Gregoriana; Cinisello Balsamo (MI) : San Paolo, 2006.p. 428

<sup>50</sup>*Il diritto nella Chiesa, mistero di comunione :compendio di diritto ecclesiale* Pontificia Università Gregoriana ; Cinisello Balsamo (MI) : San Paolo, 2006.p. 99

<sup>51</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Cann. 511 and 512

<sup>52</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Cann 460, and canon 463, § 1, n. 5 and § 2 By comparison, can. 358, of the 1917 code made no provision for the laity to participate in a diocesan synod.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. CIC '83 can. 492 §1

<sup>54</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Can. 494, §4

<sup>55</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Can.536 §1

<sup>56</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Can.537

<sup>57</sup>Cf. CIC '83 Can.529 §2

<sup>58</sup>*Communicationes* 17(1985)174

<sup>59</sup>G. GHIRLANDA, *Introduzione al Diritto Ecclesiale* Piemme Casale Monferrato (AL) 1993 p. 126. Also see Can 127 §3

<sup>60</sup>See CIC '83 cann. 204 §1 and 208

"Many people are good at talking about what they are doing, but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don't talk about it; they are the ones who make a community live."

— Jean Vanier, *Community And Growth*

# ‘CHURCH AS POOR’: Towards an inclusive community

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## Introduction

A whispered statement of Cardinal Claudio Hummes, in the conclave, ‘Do not forget the poor,’<sup>1</sup> prompted the Pontiff-elect to choose the name of ‘Francis,’ re-presenting St. Francis of Assisi, the champion of the living the Gospel of poor, humble and crucified Christ. Pope Francis in much less than a year has spelt out his vision of the church as poor. As a man of many ‘firsts’ Pope Francis could initiate a revivalism of Christian values in the church and the society. No wonder recently, he has been chosen as ‘person of the year’ in 2013 by a famous English magazine, *Time*. Popularity of the Bishop of Rome, grew not out of pomp and glory, but by being simple and humble. Much media-hyped person he has become in the world – a world leader whose every action and word has been reported with great sensation, admiration and surprises. Even criticized as ‘Marxist,’ by conservatives, the ‘Vicar of Christ,’ has categorically stated that love for the poor and to be poor come from his conviction in the Gospel of Christ. Christ remains a model as a shepherd who embraces all, including those despised as sinners, neglected and socially excluded. Vision of Church as poor is Christocentric and Evangelical as it proclaiming the Gospel by living.

## Pope’s vision of Church as poor

“How I would like a church that is poor and for the poor,” the Pope told about 5,000 journalists gathered for an audience with the Pope after the election.<sup>2</sup> ‘Church as poor’ is a very tricky phrase. Wondering the meaning of

the vision each catholic Christian is confronted with a question of possibility of making this a reality. Such wonder presupposes a grim reality that the Church as community of Disciples of Christ has wandered far away from the poor and built cities with secured and secluded forts. From magnificent high towers of power, money and institutionalism, Catholic Church has not of course, forgot the poor. Through its worldwide charitable activities, reaching out to the needy, Church as pioneered itself in ‘serving the poor.’ From our Indian perspective, where the Church has been identified for a long period with its charitable, educational and social works, ‘Church for the poor’ is very easily understood and accepted. One can be showing concerns for the plight of the poor, gather together all its resources for the welfare of the poor and work towards their socio-economic development. On the contrary taking the plight of the poor on to oneself is a prophetic vision of the Pope and it calls for a radical revision of one’s own life style.

One might argue that the alleviation of poverty is best done only by raising the standard of living of those below poverty line. Socio-economic empowerment of the poor and the marginalized is ensured when they are provided sufficient opportunities and income to come up in life. It means that the poor are given an upward mobility and social status with better employment, housing, healthcare, etc. Concern for the poor is conveniently defined in terms of removal of obstacles for the poor to come up in life. Ensuring that the poor participate in the life of an elite or at least lead

a moderate and decent living, satisfied the servants of the poor. In other words, empowerment of the poor reaches its goal when the so called poor are raised to a level of social status equivalent as that of their 'higher ups.' Would the so called 'higher ups' tolerate such an equalization in the society? Surely they would not. Ideologically there could be an affirmative answer to the above question. Betrayal behind the answer is that they strongly believe that it would never happen in the history of humankind. Sarcastically it could be said that Christ must be true as quoted by the evangelist, 'the poor would be always with you.' (Mt. 26:11; Mk 14:7; Jn 12:8)

Vision of Church as poor, visualizes a way of life of the faithful in the Church that reflects a life of the poor without pomp and glory, luxury and extravagancy. In a recent official letters to newly elected Cardinals, the Pope reportedly urges, "I ask you, please, to receive this designation with a simple and humble heart... And, while you must do so with pleasure and joy, ensure that this sentiment is far from any expression of worldliness or from any form of celebration contrary to the evangelical spirit of austerity, sobriety and poverty."<sup>3</sup> Coming upon heavily on the consideration of being termed as Cardinals to be a promotion and elevation in the church, the leader of the church insists that being 'designated' as Cardinal is towards service to the folk of Christ with humility and simplicity. In a way Pope Francis nibs in the bud, the attitudes to power, status and prominence of clergy in leadership positions, especially the would-be Cardinals. Any tendency or activity without austerity and simplicity, becomes counter-sign to the Gospel way of life and contrary to teachings of Christ.

With renewed efforts in imparting radical Gospel values, the Pope continues with his relentless focus on the kind of Church he envisions; a community where the poor have the only place of privilege and the role of

officials in the Church is as servants. Pope Francis wants a renewal of Church's engagement with the poor. He desires that the so called 'higher ups' incarnate themselves into the poor settlements. Incarnation begins with 'self-emptying.' *Kenosis* is a radical challenge, exposing one to situations of vulnerability, insecurity and uncertainty. "You must leave room for the Lord, not for our certainties; we must be humble. Uncertainty is in every true discernment that is open to finding confirmation in spiritual consolation."<sup>4</sup> If Church is to be poor, it has to self-empty itself of its castles and citadels of power and money. Starting from the question of how Church's personnel spend on their exhibits of dress to mark a distinction of role in the church, there seems to be a renewed thinking and action in Pope's admonition. "It was rightly described by many as the epitome of 'dress up Catholicism,' now so condemned in word and deed by Pope Francis. Despite the fashion magazine *Esquire* choosing him as the best dressed man of 2013, Pope Francis has deliberately 'dressed down'... The message of Pope Francis is simple but also hard to live: learning the hard lessons of how we can share the mission of Jesus requires patience, humility and a readiness for self-sacrificing service."<sup>5</sup> Church as Poor cannot afford to distance itself from the poor even in how its leaders appear.

Gospel radicalism - if this is not possible, we blaspheme against Christ. One could recall a quoted instance from life of St. Francis of Assisi while seeking apostolic permission from Pope Innocent III in Lateran Basilica: a certain Cardinal John of St. Paul in the papal court challenged the entire gathering by saying, 'If we reject this poor man's request on such a pretext, would we not be saying that the Gospel is impracticable and so blaspheming Christ its author?'"<sup>6</sup> If living the Gospel of Christ who incarnated himself to be poor, becomes impractical and impossible, we make Christ an un-pragmatic idealist. Identifying

oneself with the poor and living a life of poverty has been championed by many in the Church, like St. Francis. Appeal of the present Pope to recommit ourselves in involving the poor in the life of the Church and learning to be poor, is a radical, challenging and prophetic call. In the year of golden jubilee of the Vatican II council these renewal attempts are a welcome sign. "Vatican II was a re-reading of the Gospel in light of contemporary culture," says the pope. "Vatican II produced a renewal movement that simply comes from the same Gospel. Its fruits are enormous... Yes, there are hermeneutics of continuity and discontinuity, but one thing is clear: the dynamic of reading the Gospel, actualizing its message for today... is absolutely irreversible."<sup>7</sup> Possibility of living with the poor and as poor is there for all to see. Renewed expression of this vision to be poor has a foundation in understanding Church as an inclusive community where poor have a greater role to play.

#### **Towards Inclusive Community**

Vision of 'church to be poor' emerges from deeper understanding of contemporary ecclesiology that the church is communion of God's people. The concept of communion (*koinonia*), which appears with a certain prominence in the texts of the Second Vatican Council,<sup>8</sup> is very suitable for expressing the core of the mystery of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* (No.1) begins by declaring, in an introductory paragraph, that the Church is, in Christ, a sign and instrument of communion. The concept of communion lies 'at the heart of the Church's self-understanding,'<sup>9</sup> insofar as it is the mystery of the personal union of each human being with the divine Trinity and with the rest of humankind, initiated with the faith,<sup>10</sup> and having begun as a reality in the Church on earth, is directed towards its eschatological fulfilment (Phil 3: 20-21; Col 3: 1-4; *Lumen Gentium*, 1) in the heavenly

Church.<sup>11</sup> "Communion always involves a double dimension: the vertical (communion with God) and the horizontal (communion among people)."<sup>12</sup>

Christian faith proceeds from the concrete historical experience of Trinity as a communion of persons. We believe that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God and called to share in the Divine life. Human life on earth journeys towards a goal which is a reflection of the life of the Trinity - a life in communion with others.<sup>13</sup> The faithful form one body in Christ. "All people are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and towards whom our whole life is directed."<sup>14</sup> Excluding individuals or certain groups of people becomes contrary to very basis of church's existence. Inclusiveness is at the heart of the Church's existence and mission as we proclaim that salvation, sanctification of humanity is in community. In Christian anthropology, human self-realization is never an individual affair; it is always in and through a community. As we are all part of community we discover ourselves only by mediating ourselves through the other. The reason behind this is that we can existentially live and grow only with the help of others.<sup>15</sup> In this connection, it is good to recall Pope Francis: "And then a thing that is really important for me: community. I was always looking for a community. I did not see myself as a priest on my own. I need a community. And you can tell this by the fact that I am here in Santa Marta. At the time of the conclave I lived in Room 207. (The rooms were assigned by drawing lots.) This room where we are now was a guest room. I chose to live here, in Room 201, because when I took possession of the papal apartment, inside myself I distinctly heard a 'no.' The papal apartment in the Apostolic Palace is not luxurious. It is old, tastefully decorated and large, but not luxurious... and I cannot live without people.

I need to live my life with others.”<sup>16</sup>

‘Living with’ and ‘communicating with’ the other is a necessity in contemporary era of globalization and communication. Moving beyond the boundaries of the church, Christian community has to live and communicate with ‘others’ in multi-cultural, multi-religious situations of the world today. In a world where even smaller communities with their cherished civilizations, however insignificant they have been labelled, are affirmed to contribute to common human heritage, there is a greater need for preservation and promotion of every one with focus on security and wellbeing of whole of human society.<sup>17</sup> Church cannot afford to exclude them as ‘non-christian’ or ‘non-catholic.’

### **Conclusion**

Would the church at large, Indian church in particular be able to take the bitter pill of Christ to be poor? The Pope who strongly condemns tendencies of consumerism and ‘profit-alone-motive’ marketism, chose never to neglect the poor. Poor are the teachers of humility and contentment. Depicting contented people with minimum required house, even with thatched roofing, which suits their climate and their environment, as poor and living in a wretched condition is wrong. Even picturizing Indian villagers as under developed, although lacking certain amenities as urban people enjoy, is to be revisited. A renewed thinking and activism are required to imbibe the spirit of poverty that Christ preached, “Blessed are the Poor.” (Lk 6:20) Call of the present Pope for the Church to be poor has a concrete and definite reform motive to move towards inclusive community. An authentic community of Christ could never entertain exclusiveness in its social setup.

‘Walk the talk,’ is a usual jargon we hear, insisting on living the ideals one speaks of. Everyone who talks of high ideals and vision for a society is expected first to follow those

principles and values in life. Such persons who do not put into practice what they preach are scorned only as impractical and ideal ‘talkers.’ They set goals for others to reach. They preach for others to live, sounding nice to listen to, as they remain only as entertainers who show up on the stage and gain popularity for limited time. Pope Francis came across to the millions of people as a person who first walked and then talks. He just not only follows what he preaches but he preaches what he practices. The world has identified a leader who leads by example - a person who convinces others of the Gospel principles he believes in and practices. Present generation which seeks concreteness and experiential display of values, needs reinventing the Gospel of Christ in our context. Church to be poor and inclusive community would certainly bring the gospel to this generation. As spontaneity is a virtue of charismatic figures, the bishop of Rome comes out so creatively and impressively, shunning away rigid formalities and protocols for which Roman Church has been famous for centuries. As St. Francis of Assisi was to the medieval church, Pope Francis is to contemporary society which naturally gets attracted to such personalities to keep alive the flame of the Gospel.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup><http://ncronline.org/blogs/francis-chronicles/pope-francis-i-would-love-church-poor> (accessed on 16th Jan, 2014)

<sup>2</sup><http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-21812545>, (accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2013)

<sup>3</sup><http://www.ucanindia.in/news/popes-words-of-warning-resonate-in-asia/23441/daily> (Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> “A Big Heart Open to God: The exclusive interview with Pope Francis” 19 September 2013, p.10 in [www.thinkingfaith.org](http://www.thinkingfaith.org), accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, trans. Christine Rhone (London: Routledge, 2004), 33.

<sup>7</sup> “A Big Heart Open to God: The exclusive interview with Pope Francis” 19 September 2013, p.9 in [www.thinkingfaith.org](http://www.thinkingfaith.org), (accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 4, 8, 13-15, 18, 21, 24-25; *Dei Verbum*, 10; *Gaudium et spes*, 32; *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 2-4, 14—15, 17-19, 22.

<sup>9</sup> John Paul II, “Address to the Bishops of the United States of America,” 16 Sept 1987, no.1: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, X*, 3 (1987), 553.

<sup>10</sup> I Jn 1: 3: “that which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Cf. also I Cor 1: 9; John Paul II, apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 Dec 1988, no. 19: AAS 81 (1989), 422-424; Synod of Bishops (1985), *Relatio Finalis*, II,

C), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Cong. for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Some aspects of the church as Communion*, 1992, 1, 3.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Dialogue and Ecumenism, ‘Guidelines for Interreligious Dialogue,’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Rev. Ed. (Delhi: CBCI Centre, 1989), n.28.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Paul, C. M., (ed.). ‘*Shepherds’ For An Information Age. An Experimental and Training Manual for the Education of Salesians of Don Bosco in Media ad Social Communications* (Mumbai: Boscom-India, 2000), p.86.88-89

<sup>16</sup> “A Big Heart Open to God: The exclusive interview with Pope Francis” 19 September 2013, p.2 in [www.thinkingfaith.org](http://www.thinkingfaith.org), (accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Crollius, R.A., “Religion and the Dialogue of Civilizations in an Era of Globalization” Dispense for *Spiritualita Apostolica*, Gregorian University, Rome (2002)

“We have all known the long loneliness  
and we have learned that the only  
solution is love and that love comes  
with community.”

— Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness:  
The Autobiography of the Legendary Catholic Social Activist*

## MARY IN COMMUNION WITH GOD

\* Rev. Fr. George Dias

### Introduction

The Virgin Mary of the Gospels has always been a person of communion. Popes like Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have presented Mother Mary as the supreme expression of human love, freedom and sacrifice in the co-operation of a human person with the plan of God. Her life has been a life of Communion. Her “Fiat” to the **Father** integrated her in the saving plan of God towards the humanity.

The Virgin Mary’s presence with **Jesus** is a presence of true ‘discipleship’. It is a presence which signifies a journey of faith. She integrates herself in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. She became ‘the most excellent fruit of redemption’ (SC 103).

At the Annunciation, she conceived by the power of the **Holy Spirit**. Mary surrendered herself to the Holy Spirit. Her whole life was a life-in-the-Spirit.

Today, The Virgin Mary is a signpost for every Christian. As at Cana, she says to each one of us; “Do whatever he tells you.” (Jn 2:5). Thus, after reflecting on her life, we should ask for ourselves what her life implies for the Church and for each one of us. What are we supposed to imitate from her in order to put into practise what the Holy Spirit wanted to communicate to us through her?

### Mary in Communion with the Father:

The whole scene of Annunciation is Trinitarian. It is strikingly obvious that it has a structure which amounts to reveal God as three persons. The angel’s initial salutation, which calls the Virgin Mary, the one full of grace par excellence (**kecharitomene**),

brings her the greeting of the “Lord”, “Yahweh”, the Father, whom she knows as a Jewish believer. As she ponders what this greeting might mean, the angel responds to her that she will give birth to the “Son of the Most High” (Lk 1:32). “Rejoice” – what reason does Mary have to rejoice in such a world? The answer is: “The Lord is with you”.

The Virgin Mary is called “full of grace” (Lk 1:28). The Greek word for *grace* is **charis**. Thus, we see that, Mary, who is in the state of grace, can rejoice with deep-going joy. “Full of grace” could also be translated as: “You are full of the Holy Spirit; your life is intimately connected to God”. Here, the Virgin Mary is in “I-Thou” relationship with the Father; a life of Communion.

The Virgin Mary accepts that this is an extraordinary greeting. Later, when the angel explains it further saying that she will bear a Son, she affirmed her virginity: “How can this be? I do not “*know*” a man” (Lk 1:34). Mary finally accepts this annunciation when the angel explains that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that with God nothing is impossible. Mary is chosen by the Father to give birth to the Son through the Holy Spirit.

Mary is a wholly open human being, one who has opened herself entirely, one who has placed herself in God’s hands boldly, limitlessly, and without fear of her own fate. It means that she lives wholly by and in relation with the Father. She is a listener and a praying person, whose mind and soul are alive to the manifold ways in which the living God quietly calls her. She is one who prays and stretches forth wholly to meet God; she

is therefore a lover, who has the breadth and magnanimity of true love, but who has also its unerring powers of discernment and its readiness to suffer.

When she asks what is expected of her, the angel reveals to her that the Holy Spirit will overshadow her. In reply, Mary declares her readiness to let this be done to her, the handmaid. Here, the Virgin Mary is the beloved of Yahweh because; her faith transcends that of Abraham in the Old Testament. She is identified with daughter Zion; she is the daughter Zion in person. In her is the fulfilled of the Immanuel prophecy made to king Ahaz in Isaiah 7:14.

#### **Mary in Communion with the Son:**

The relationship that unites Mary to Jesus Christ is certainly maternal in as much as Mary is “the Mother of Jesus”, as it is testified by all the gospel writers (Mt 1:18; 2:11; 12:46-49; Mk 3:35; Lk 2:33-34; Jn 2:1.3.5.12; 6:42; 19:21-26). The gospel writers mostly describe everything that Mary did as being his Mother: She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger (Lk 2:7), she saved him from the death from the hands of King Herod (Mt 2:13-15), she went to search him when he was lost in the temple of Jerusalem (Lk 2:48), she followed him in his public life (Lk 8:19-21), she was with him at Cana (referred as the mother of Jesus) (Jn 2:1) and was present at the foot of the cross, where she is called “woman” (Jn 19:25).

Mary, at the same time, is different from the other mothers because she is related to Jesus in faith, who is the Messiah and the Son of the Most High. In the gospel of Luke, Mary is presented as a model of the Church. As it is spoken by Luke, she is present in the whole mystery of Christ because “she has believed” (RM 12) and more so because “she

believed first” (RM 26). She is *through* him, *with* him and *in* him.

Right at the moment of Annunciation, Mary is the one who believed in the Saviour and in this sense she is the *first Christian* who initiated the movement of faith in Christ. In the Old Testament, we have Abraham who had only hoped to see the day of the Messiah, who would be his descendent (Jn 8:56), but the Virgin Mary is the first one to believe in Christ and his salvific mission (Lk 1:32-33; 2:34-35). Only in the mystery of Christ is her mystery fully made clear, for everything is related to Christ (MC 85).

Luke integrates Mary in the mission of Christ when he speaks of her encounter with the aged Simeon. This old man speaks to her in the following words; “Behold, this child is set for the rise and the fall of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also)”. This foreshadows the Son’s Passion, which will become her passion.

The disciples of Jesus know that the Blessed Virgin Mary had and continues to have a very important role in the history of salvation in Christ. Their profession of faith leads the disciples to contemplate the figure and mission of the Mother of the Lord. They note that the figure of the Virgin, as found in the Gospels, is that of a specific woman, someone who is close, in communion, to Christ and to them, who experiences joys and sorrow. They note the value of her ‘presence’ in crucial moments of the life of Christ and the qualities of her soul – humble, strong, generous, compassionate – and her concern for the trials of contemporary men and women.

#### **Mary in Communion with the Holy Spirit:**

The Immaculate Conception (Mary

conceived in the womb of Ana without sin) was a moment of great importance in the history of salvation. In the first moment of her existence, the Holy Spirit filled Mary with heavenly graces (cf. Lk 1:28). In the grace of the Immaculate Conception, the Holy Spirit formed Mary as a new creature in the womb of her parent (LG 56). The Spirit overshadowed Mary at the dawn of her existence. She would have no need of holy signs; of being born “of water and Spirit” (cf. Jn 3: 5). Her Baptism was the presence of the Spirit within her, in the depths of her being.

In the scene of Annunciation (Lk 1:26-38), Mary receives a vocation from the Holy Spirit in the history of Salvation. By the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, she has virginally conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit and is to give birth to him who is the Son of the most high. It creates in her a new heart. She responds with her heart of love and freedom. She opens herself to the interpersonal dialogue of faith and freedom, of call and response, of love and obedience. Being transformed by the grace of God, the Holy Spirit would raise in her the New Adam. After accepting the divine call, the Son of the Most High is formed in her. She is elevated to give birth to the divine Son in her. The coming of the Holy Spirit results in her divine maternity.

When we look at the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of Mary, we see that the Holy Spirit acts in the whole life of Mary. The Holy Spirit fills her with the abundance of graces and thus the angel Gabriel greeted her “hail full of grace” (Lk 1:28). The Spirit helps her in surrendering her life to the will of the Father (Lk 1:38). She has conceived by the power of the same Holy Spirit (Lk 1:31). She is acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the Messiah. It is the same Spirit that sings in Mary the canticle of praise

to God, the redeemer (Lk 1:46-55). It is the same Spirit that leads her to follow Jesus, making her the first disciple of faith even at Calvary (Jn 19:25).

This new awareness of the role of the Spirit and its relationship to Mary in the bible has taken Mariology in a new direction. Mary is seen as the first realization of and the most eminent “member” of the Church formed by the Spirit. Her gift of the Spirit does not leave her passive, but moves her to communion and action.

### Conclusion

Right from the period of the Fathers of the Church, efforts have been made to present the Virgin Mary as a woman in “communion” with God. It has always been one of the most beloved titles of the spiritual authors along the tradition. Even though they had tried to express themselves, these attributions at times lacked a lot of dogmatic basis. The Trinitarian recovery of the Second Vatican Council has permitted new ways of search to be opened that have demanded several hypotheses. The Council did not exclude Mary but dedicated a special chapter to this woman of Communion (LG VIII).

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# KNIT TOGETHER...

## Understanding the Paul's Way

\* Sem. Roman Rodrigues

### INTRODUCTION: *Before Knitting...*

Pope Francis calling for unity exclaimed "How much damage divisions among Christians, being partisan, narrow interests causes to the Church! Divisions among us, but also divisions among the communities: evangelical Christians, orthodox Christians, Catholic Christians, but why divided? We must try to bring about unity." Unity, he exclaimed, "is beyond all conflict."

Division within and outside, hinders the growth of the community. As we dedicate this year to Small Christian Communities (SCC) in our diocese and unity being at the heart of community, I would like to draw an inspiration from St. Paul, who knowing the Problem appealed people of Corinthians 'to knit together'. I hope this paper will channelize to understand the worth and the way of uniting together.

### SPLITTING THE 'KNIT TOGETHER'

'*Knit Together*' is a metaphorical axiom used by Paul in Eph 4:16. This expression is also used by some biblical versions in Cor1:10b. It can also mean *to mend*, *to weave* or *to unite together*.

'*Knit Together*' is a medical word used of knitting together bones that have been fractured, or joining together a joint that has been dislocated<sup>1</sup>. In simple terms '*Knit Together*' means 'be united'. Paul uses two interesting phrases in 1Cor 1:10b: *to make*

*up their differences* and *to knit together*: in the same mind and in the same opinion.

### A CRACK IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH (1Cor 1:10-17)

**Editorial Theme:** the title of the pericope i.e. '*Division in the Church*' clearly indicates the crack.

'**No Divisions among You**' (1Cor 1:10b): Greek word for **division** is '*Schismata*' - to split, to rend, to tear apart. '**Among you**' means in the Church and not outside the church. Division in the Church was a threat. "Any kingdom divide against itself will be ruined and a house divided against itself will fall" (Lk 11:17).

The word '**Quarrel**' (11b) — brings out the seriousness of the division. The Church was arguing and splitting into groups, contending and quarrelling over something.

### PAUL; KNITTING THE CRACK (Cor 1:10-17)

Paul's major concern in this letter is unity i.e. to heal the division and to display the church's unity. And hence he begins the letter with the question of division.

**St. Paul an ardent advocate for unity**- based on 1Cor 1:13 *admonishes* Christians with powerful question. Is Christ divided? And in Eph 4:6 *exhorts* the people of Ephesus about unity in — one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one

God. Both can be encapsulated in the Plea for unity.

**Love language:** “Love can do what the sword can’t do.” Paul doesn’t rebuke the people but appeals (*parakalo* - to call one’s side). Paul says, “I call you to my side... I beg, plead, ask... Paul speaks love language (1Cor 10). He calls brothers in just two verses (w10, 11).

**WHY KNIT? (Basis For Unity) (Eph 4:6)**

In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul identifies the unity of the Church with the unity of “*one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all...*” (Eph 4: 1-6).

The purpose of the call — ‘lead a life worthy of the calling...’ (v 1b) is unity. Paul suggests **Seven Is** so as to why we should strive to maintain peace and unity of God’s spirit in the church:

1. **One Body:** oneness in the church is essential for the work of Christ. However the brain may plan or intend to do something but if the body parts doesn’t harmonize with the brain than everything may frustrate.

2. **One Spirit:** Greek *pneuma* means breath or Hebrew *ruah*. For a human being to live, breath is necessary, so also the spirit is the life-giving breath of the body of the church<sup>2</sup>. It is the same spirit that is present in all its members.

3. **One Hope:** we all are proceeding towards one goal and have one Hope, i.e. the hope for eternity, the hope —that fills us with a desire to live together in peace and harmony.

4. **One Lord:** Greek *kurios* means master. Phil 2:11 will say “Jesus Christ is Lord.” This is the confessional statement

which recognises His dominion over the world, in other words the sole authority is accepted.

5. **One Faith:** the word *pistis* in Greek usage has two meanings: ‘trustful acceptance of Christ’ and ‘saving faith’. But Paul’s implication of faith is ‘a common act of complete surrender’ to the love of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christians are bound together.

6. **One Baptism:** Baptism was a public confession of faith<sup>3</sup>. For a person to enter into a Roman army, he had to swear an oath. Similarly for a person to be a Christian he too had to receive the baptism, which was the only way. So all Christians were Christians by one Baptism.

7. **One God:** He is Father of all and a creator of all and hence supreme over all. And this expression of ‘father of all’ implies Love.

**HOW TO KNIT? (Virtues of Unity) (Eph 4:2)**

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:2). The way to walk worthily implies three things: *humility, gentleness and Patience*.

**Humility (*tapeinophrosun*):** Christian humility is based on the sight of self, the vision of Christ and the realization of God<sup>4</sup>. We can summarize Paul’s attitude in his own words: “live in harmony with one another, do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.<sup>5</sup>” In other words be humble.

**Gentleness (*prautes*):** members of the community should also possess this

characteristic so as to build unity. Since these people are God controlled and they are angry at the right time. An attitude of gentleness would resolve many a church conflict. Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23).

**Patience (*makrothumia*):** Patience is exercised in putting up with one another over a period of time. It restrains outbursts of anger. It is developed by waiting and trusting God. Patience comes through complete faith in God in all circumstances. Christians should have patience towards their neighbours and members in the community thus preserving church unity.

#### KNITTING THE DAILY CRACKS

- \* As members of the same body of Christ, we need to assist other members of our community especially in SCCs, which provide many opportunities in building an united community.
- \* Ecumenically speaking, the Catholic Church can take a leading step in knitting up with the non-Catholic communities through one Christ, one Baptism, one Gospel, one Spirit, which unites both the communities.
- \* The three virtues: *humility, gentleness and patience*, if put to work in our SCCs, I think the feeling of ‘superiority and inferiority’ among the members will shrink, which may help to build a just and united community.

#### CONCLUSION: *the final stitch.....*

“*Father, just as you and I are one; so also, let them be one.*” Let this prayer of Jesus be ours today and let us work to build and maintain the unity in and outside the church. Thus we may be able to surpass all

the difficulties that come on our way. For unity is strength and “Unity is beyond all conflict.”

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Barclay William, *The New Study Bible: The Letters to the Corinthians* (Theological Publication, Bangalore, 2010), 17.

<sup>2</sup> Barclay William, *The New Study Bible: The Letters to the Ephesians* (Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, 2010), 162.

<sup>3</sup> Barclay William. *The New Study Bible: The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, 2010), 163.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, 158.

<sup>5</sup> Rom 12:16

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# SCCS and the EPC

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## I. Introduction

At the very start of this Theo-politico reflection on the role that the Small Christian communities can play or have to play in the political arena, I would like to clarify and explain the concept of an 'EPC'. EPC is nothing else but the abbreviated form of 'Essential Public Community'. This concept is grounded on the social teachings of the Church as found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church about 'Common Good'.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines Common Good as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily."<sup>1</sup> In the achievement of this Common Good, the document lays more responsibility and an obligation on the shoulders of the Political Authority. Many groups and individuals strive to achieve this Common Good in their own creative yet limited perspectives and abilities but these efforts tend to remain halfhearted and half implemented unless they are attuned or are in convergence with the political authority. Thus this word 'Essential' becomes an indelible mark of the political community.

Common Good is the good of the whole community in totality and not the partial good or development of only minuscule individuals, select families, or vested groups or systems. However, individual development is the essential criteria for moving forward to common or public development. As the good of the individual is not at odds with the communitarian good or vice versa but both

reciprocate.<sup>2</sup> In doing or working for this communitarian good or progress the word Public gets synonymous with the political system. Lastly, I analyze the word 'Community'. Humans are essentially communitarian.<sup>3</sup> We receive and give to each other's in order to attain full growth and development. The word community gives a more human and a pastoral dimension to the political process rather than system or an institution, which convey a very machine and a formalistic orientation. A human political community of saints as well as sinners thereby shifting from the negative perception of politics of just producing results to positive sincere efforts and attempts.

In this analysis, I would focus not to explain the concept of an EPC but see the role of SCCS in the political community or the EPC

## II. Relation between the Church and the Political Community

The document *Gaudium ET Spes* highlights that the Church is not to be identified with any political community nor it is to be bound to any political system. The Church becomes in a political community a sign and safeguard of the transcendental dimension of the human person.<sup>4</sup> The Church and the Political authority are though autonomous and independent but both are devoted to the personal vocation of man in different spheres. The Church despite its independent status seeks the cooperation of the political authority in order to achieve the

welfare of all. This is because humans have not only a temporal dimension to their existence but also integrity of eternal destiny. The Church by her preaching of the Gospel and the witness of her members encourages the political freedom and responsibility of the citizen. However, a note of caution is added about the privileges that are often being granted by the political authority and asks us to give up these privileges, if they act as an obstacle or compromise to sincere witness. To preach the Gospel and to voice out the immoral actions of the state in respect to the rights of the human persons, the Church has full freedom and uses means which are in accordance with the Gospel and also with the welfare of all men according to the diversity of times and circumstances.

### III. Contribution of the SCCS to strengthen the EPC

Recognizing the need felt for the participation of SCCs in the political discourse of our country, they being a leaven can be agents of political transformation or renewal. The SCCs using their divine yet human resources can contribute three major elements of themselves in order to achieve the transformation of EPC.

1. Firstly the SCCs by involving themselves in the Essential Political Community can contribute the very basic and fundamental aspect of Christian life and that is 'Faith'. In the murky world of politics, the near total absence of faith or fading away of the faith dimension aggravates the situation gravely. Faith in the divine can work wonders and help the active stakeholders to participate in the EPC as per the diktat of Faith and morality.

2. The SCCs by drawing inspiration from

the Word of God can powerfully contribute 'Ethics' to this area. SCC members are called to live their lives in conformity with the life of Christ. For his political followers he is an example of or the ultimate norm of morality. Christian members in the EPC by their very life-witness can move members of other faiths to live life worthy of the political call.

3. Lastly the SCCs can by their life example contribute to the realization of the virtue of 'Service'. Jesus Christ said I came to serve and not to be served. The members of SCCs are bound to follow the call of Christ to service and humility, which is a much forgotten virtue. A realistic revival of this virtue can hasten the pace of political transformation especially in our country.

### IV. Conclusion

Often the Political Community is shunned aside due to the negativity associated to it. Recent scams and scandals have aggravated the negative outlook towards it. The SCCs can greatly contribute in bringing about a transformation, which is secular at the same time spiritual in nature. Thus with the help of SCCs, the political community will turn into an EPC – Essential Political Community an inalienable part of man's life and living.

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> CCC-Page-375

<sup>2</sup> Community of Justice and Peace, Theological Anthropology pg. 2711

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pg. 2551

<sup>4</sup> Gaudium et Spes pg. 865

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# THE BIBLICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNION OF COMMUNION

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

We have marched into the year dedicated to the Small Christian Communities in our Archdiocese of Goa. This pastoral year has given us a lot of incentives to ponder upon the ways of strengthening our communities and to build up an active church. The 1<sup>st</sup> National Convention on Small Christian Communities held in Goa in the month of November last year, was an ‘opening ceremony’ and also a ‘closing ceremony’ for the year of Faith, proclaimed by our Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. Many priests who attended this convention have voiced out their support to strengthen their communities in their respective parishes. These community meetings, in a way, give our pastors an opportunity to go out, ‘to take on the smell of the sheep and the sheep are willing to hear them’ (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 24). There are lots of ideas that help us to have an enriching ‘*somudai*’ (SCC) in the Holy Bible. We can also trace great insights in philosophers like Max Scheler, Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Emmanuel Levinas. In this small paper, I will critically analyse these views about communities expressed in the Bible and the views of the above philosophers and ultimately relate each philosophical idea with the biblical message.

## 2. BIBLE: THE FOUNDATION STONE OF COMMUNITIES

Francoise-Marie Arouet, a famous French philosopher, who is better known by his pen name Voltaire once spoke against the Bible, “In one hundred years, the Bible will be an extinct book.” But Voltaire died in 1778 and in 2014 (236 years after his death), Bible is still the

bestseller in today’s modern world. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8). Without doubt, Bible is the foundation on which our lives are built, a constitution which helps us to live a happy and a holy life. St. Paul praises this great fount of wisdom, “O, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and how inscrutable His ways” (Romans 11:33).

### 2.1. FOUNDATION OF COMMUNITIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

I would like to quote a few lines of Fr. John Ponnore from his article, *The Diocesan Priest and the Community*:

“According to the Christian revelation God is a community. The biblically revealed divine project of human salvation is a work of a community – the Father who created the universe and the crown of creation, the son who redeemed the fallen human race through his death and resurrection, and the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the human race in the process of reuniting it with the creator God. The divine project of redemption is a ‘team-work’, a work of the Triune God, a work of the community.”<sup>1</sup>

When God created Adam, He thought he would enjoy the companionship of the animals, of the plants, which were different from Adam. Animals, plants, the sea-monsters, the stars, all these are the creations of God. Man, albeit a creation of God, is uniquely different. We read in the book of Genesis, “God created humankind in his image; in the image of God he created them,” (Gen 11:27a). As a uniquely different being, man wanted ‘someone’,

someone with whom he could talk to, with whom he could relate. He wanted the 'other' to live in a community. God acknowledges man's desire and creates Eve from the body of Adam. This shows that we are indeed dependent on the 'other'.

Man sinned and God tried to destroy sin by "opening the fountains of the great deep and the windows of the heaven." (Gen 7:11). It rained for 40 days and 40 nights during the time of Noah. But God remembered the humanity and saved as communities. He asked Noah "to take with him seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth," (Gen 7: 2, 3) along with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. 'The God of the Bible is the God of the community'.<sup>2</sup>

## **2.2. THE NEW TESTAMENT: AN EPITOME OF COMMUNITIES**

The New Testament begins with an account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham (cf. Mt 1:1-17) as told by St. Mathew. The genealogy is an embodiment of communities. The Old Testament told us stories about people living in the communities, each tribe having its own community. On the other hand, the New Testament gives us lessons on how to live in a community. Jesus himself went about building communities among people. Jesus lived in a community. He himself formed his community (cf. Mt 10:1-4). He taught them to be "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32). And after teaching them to love, he sent them out two by two (cf. Lk 10:1-12). The core of Jesus' message is 'love'. If you can love your neighbour then it isn't difficult to serve him. It is also easy to work in a team. The sending of the disciples two by two points towards a ministry of 'team-work' so as to build up a community. There are many other examples of how we can live in a community. The notable

ones are those of St. Paul (cf. Acts 13:5; 16:19; 14:7). So love and 'team-work' are like sugar and tea powder that can make a nourishing tea.

## **3. THE COMMUNITARIAN PHILOSOPHERS**

Here we will talk about four philosophers who are well known for their 'philosophy of the other' or rather we can call their philosophy the 'philosophy of communion'. They are Max Scheler (1874-1928), Martin Buber (1878-1965), Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) and Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995). These philosophers describe human as a being-in-relation, a being with others. Human is not only an individual being, but also a being in communion. In order to lead a meaningful and authentic existence, one must establish a loving and mutually reciprocal relationship with other human beings.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.1. MAX SCHELER'S DIALOGUE**

Max Scheler was born in Munich, Germany, August 22, 1874, to a Lutheran father and an Orthodox Jewish mother. As an adolescent, he turned to Catholicism, because of its conception of love, although he became increasingly non-committal around 1921, committing himself to philosophical anthropology, and strove to the philosophical method of the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl. In 1928, Heidegger praised him as "the strongest philosophical force in modern Germany, nay, in contemporary Europe and in contemporary philosophy as such". In 1957, Karol Wojtyla, later Pope John Paul II, defended his doctoral thesis on "An evaluation of the possibility of constituting a Christian ethics on the basis of the system of Max Scheler".<sup>4</sup>

According to Max Scheler, the human being lives first of all, and principally in others and not in oneself. One lives more in the community than in one's own individual self.<sup>5</sup>

He speaks about the concept of dialogue, especially a face-to-face dialogue. He says when we dialogue with others, we enter into a relationship with that individual. When we dialogue, we recognize the other, his limitations, his strengths and this makes it easy to converse with the other. This takes place especially when we meet and interact with strangers. Dialogue is the core of Scheler's philosophy.

### 3.2. BUBER'S SPHERE OF THE BETWEEN

Martin Buber was a prominent twentieth century philosopher, religious thinker, political activist and educator. Born in Austria, he spent most of his life in Germany and Israel, writing in German and Hebrew. He is best known for his 1923 book, *Ich und Du* (I and Thou) which distinguishes between 'I-thou' and 'I-it' modes of existence.<sup>6</sup>

For Buber, life is a relationship with others from birth to death. His main focus is on the 'sphere of between'. We as humans have privacy in our life. There are certain things which we feel are easy to share while there are those that are to be shared with a selected few. In other words, there is a certain 'private space' for each one of us. According to Buber, the 'sphere of between' is not something permanent but is created whenever two human beings meet. When we turn to the other, to communicate with them, we must enter into a sphere beyond our own i.e. the 'sphere of between'. According to him, there are three spheres of between: (i) I-It: First one is related to the world and to the things (ii) I-Thou: This is related to humans – both to individuals and to many (iii) I-Eternal Thou: Third one is related to the absolute. Absolute is the Absolute Being who makes possible every 'I-Thou' relationships. We 'exchange' in language with man, 'transmit' below language with nature and 'receive' above language with spirit. Therefore, 'I-Thou' relationships are the essence of Buber's communities.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.3. MARCEL'S AVAILABILITY IN COMMUNITIES

Gabriel Marcel, a World War I non-combatant veteran, pursued the life of an intellectual, and enjoyed success as a playwright, literary critic and concert pianist. He was trained in philosophy by Henri Bergson<sup>8</sup>, among others. He was interested in idealism. After converting to Catholicism in 1929, he became a noted opponent of atheistic existentialism, and primarily that of Jean-Paul Sartre. Marcel's philosophy has been called the 'philosophy of communion'.

Gabriel Marcel develops Buber's philosophy on relationships, particularly the human relationships. According to Marcel, to be genuine in our interpersonal relationships, we must be totally and unreservedly be 'available' to others. He says, "A really alive person is not merely someone who has a taste for life, but somebody who spreads that taste, showering it, as it were, around him".<sup>9</sup> He says that one should place oneself at the disposal of others. Authenticity of a person depends upon his/her availability to others. If somebody is living a closed life, making oneself unavailable to others then he is living an inauthentic life. A person living an authentic life is the one who is 'open' to others in love and sharing. Availability is the theme of Marcel's philosophy of communion. He says, "I can become myself only through the other, my friend".<sup>10</sup>

### 3.4. LEVINAS' RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OTHER

Emmanuel Levinas was born in 1906 in Lithuania. Most members of his family were killed by the Nazi, apart from his wife and daughter, who were protected by his friends. Later, he went to France to study philosophy. He was greatly influenced by Edmund Husserl, Martin Buber and Martin Heidegger. He even planned to write a book on Heidegger but abandoned it in disbelief at Heidegger's action to join the Nazis.<sup>11</sup> He died in Paris in 1995.

Humans are social beings. We live in a society where we brush our shoulders with different kinds of people. There are rich and poor, educated and uneducated, influential and non-influential. The 'living together' with the others demands a response from us. Levinas calls this 'proximity'.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Levinas claims that proximity is responsibility or the ability to respond. It is an order for us to live ethically with the 'other'. Each human being is a unique creation of God. And so there is unity in diversity among us. Rev. Dr. Victor Ferrao once asked a question during a class, "What would have happened if all the fingers of our hand were of the same size?" It would have been an impossibility to grab things or to catch hold of anything. Levinas focuses on the other as the one who cannot be reduced to oneself. This other can be anyone and everyone outside us. One is held to bear the burden of others.<sup>13</sup> The Levinasian ethics purely focuses on the otherness of the other and our responsibility towards the other.

#### **4. THE BIBLICO-PHILOSOPHICAL RELATIONSHIP**

There is a mutual relationship between the biblical and the philosophical understanding of community. Max Scheler's dialogue, Buber's sphere of between, Marcel's availability and Levinas' responsibility can be related to the other aspects of communities in the Holy Bible.

##### **4.1 DIALOGUE**

Pharisees were like a bunch of cops who tried to catch Jesus red handed. They found happiness in condemning a person who threatened their position. But Jesus as divine as his nature was tried to build up a relationship by having a dialogue. Just to note one example: When Jesus goes with his disciples to the garden of Gethsemane to pray before his suffering, the soldiers of the Pharisees along with Judas stalk him. Jesus begins a dialogue with them, "Who are you

looking for?" (Jn 18:4). Jesus stands as an example before us and inspires us to clarify the misunderstandings among our neighbours through dialogue which can be very strategically done during the SCC meetings. Max Scheler once said, "There is not enough love in the world to squander it on anything but human beings".<sup>14</sup>

##### **4.2 SPHERE OF BETWEEN**

Everyone living in this world has his/her own private space. If an unknown person enters into our private space, we tend to dislike him/her. Buber spoke about these spheres of between by classifying them into three kinds. Relating them to the Bible: (i) I-IT: - Jesus built up this relationship with the nature. When he was feeling troubled, he went to the mountain to spend some time in silence with the nature (who knows he might be even speaking to the trees there). This relationship was so strong that even the stormy waters of the sea gave heed to his commands (cf. Mk 4:35-41). (ii) I-THOU:- Jesus was a man of relationships. He had friends and also enemies. He went on building bridges throughout his life. (iii) I-ABSOLUTE THOU:- The presence of the absolute cannot be denied in Jesus' life. From his birth till the ascension into heaven we find the hand of God guiding and protecting him.

We have to build up the broken relationships, which make us difficult to enter into the other's sphere in our communities.

##### **4.3 AVAILABILITY**

Jesus made time for his flock even when he was tired. Being available to them, he was able to win them. He won their hearts, if not their intentions which were brainwashed by the Pharisees. He made time for them. Speaking on the availability of priests, Pope Francis writes in his apostolic exhortation that priests need to keep the doors of the church open for the people. "The church is called to be the house of the father with the doors

always wide open” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no.47). Being available to our neighbours strengthens our communities during SCC meetings as it helps us to know our neighbours whom we rarely meet during the daily busy schedule.

#### 4.4 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OTHER

Levinas quotes Dostoyevsky, the Russian author, in his book *Entre Nous*, “We are all guilty for everything and everyone, and I more than all the others”.<sup>15</sup> How was Jesus responsible? Jesus after spending an entire day preaching to the people about the treasures of the kingdom of God has compassion on them as they were hungry listening to him. He asks his disciples to feed them. But they don’t have a clue as to how to fulfill their need. Ultimately Jesus performs the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and feeds the five thousand (cf. Mk 6:30-43). This explains Jesus’ responsibility for the other. SCC meeting is a platform where we can taste the needs of our neighbours. As responsible beings, we can help them in whatever way possible.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

There is a relationship between the Biblical and the philosophical vision of communion. The philosophical vision of communion finds its roots in the Holy Bible. If we introspect the history of philosophy, we will see the transformation from theocentric philosophy to anthropocentric. Philosophy, in some way or the other, has helped us to know the true value of man, the apex of God’s creation. Understanding the profound relationship between the biblico-philosophical communion, it is an imperative focus to live as the first Christians lived “with one mind and soul” (cf. Acts 4:32-37). I again quote Gabriel Marcel, “I can become myself only through the other, my friend.”

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Fr. John Ponnore, “The Diocesan Priest and the community,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 77, no. 10 (October 2013): 725-726

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 726

<sup>3</sup>*Metaphysical Nature of Finite Being* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Open University, Bk.3, 2010), 21.

<sup>4</sup>*Max Scheler*, [article-on-line] (accessed 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2014) available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max\\_Scheler](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Scheler); Internet

<sup>5</sup>*Metaphysical Nature of Finite Being*, 21

<sup>6</sup>*Martin Buber*, [article-on-line](accessed 19<sup>th</sup> January,2014)available from <http://www.iep.utm.edu/buber>;Internet.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> Henri Bergson was a noted French philosopher of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He believed that we can know reality more through experience and intuition than rationalism.

<sup>9</sup>*Gabriel Marcel*, [article-on-line] (accessed 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2014) available from <http://www.iep.utm.edu/marcel/>;Internet.

<sup>10</sup>*Metaphysical Nature of Finite Being*, 21

<sup>11</sup> Sem. Fraser Fernandes, “Levinasian Ethics and Faith”, *Luceas*, (2012-2013);84

<sup>12</sup> Anthony F. Beavers, *Introducing Levinas to Undergraduate Philosophers* [paper-on-line] (accessed 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2014) available from <http://faculty.evansville.edu/tbz/PDFs/undergradphil.pdf>;Internet

<sup>13</sup>AlphonsoLingis in the translator’s introduction to *Otherwise than Being*, xxxi. Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, translated by AlphonsoLingis (Boston: MartinusNijhoff Publishers, 1981)

<sup>14</sup> Available from [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Max\\_Scheler](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Max_Scheler) (accessed 19<sup>th</sup> 2014); Internet.

<sup>15</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: Thinking of the other* (London: Athlone Press Ltd, 2007),90

## SCC's in Rachol Parish

\* Sem. Aleston Vaz

### Introduction

'A good time for women to gossip' was the reply by a youngster when inquired about the SCCs. This disturbing remark somehow urged me to know what SCCs are. Everyone of us have adequate knowledge of what SCCs are. It may be through the Pastrol letter by our beloved Archbishop where he clearly has elaborated the meaning of SCCs and also the National Convention have enlightened us with required knowledge of SCCs. Having heard lot about SCCs I had the urge to experience SCCs in my own village.

### Historical Background

The SCCs were introduced around 1990's by Fr. Asusanv D'Silva as the parish priest of Rachol with the aid of Br. Anthony. At the beginning they took the initiative to educate the communities about SCCs through various mass media tools. By personally visiting each house the importance of community living and relationship between God, humans and neighbours was made known to people. Due to good response from the communities gradually the 7 steps method was introduced by the then Parish Priest Fr. Visitasanv Monteiro. After electing leaders for particular wards and by educating them with required training, he surrendered the responsibility of conducting the meetings to the trained leaders. Every month each ward had a meeting in an designated house. The various responsibilities of the church were distributed according to the wards. In the time of Parish Priest Fr. Agnelo Bonamis, the seminarians from the Rachol Seminary were introduced to the

SCCs as a part of formation for them for their future ministry. Fr. Roque da Costa, who is the current Parish Priest, has revived the leadership formation of the wards. Through the formation of CATs and PATs and has already made some strides in leadership formation marking certain area to a particular person within the SCCs. This has brought about delegation of leadership.

### Working of SCCs

As SCCs are 24X7 and not limited to one hour meeting, let us look for some of the enriching things or activities which builds the community of Rachol.

The death of someone in the community disturbs not only the family, but also the whole ward. As community, they come together and pray not only on the funeral day but till the 7<sup>th</sup> day at the house. In the month of October people from the ward gather together near any cross closer to them and pray the rosary interceding for their unity. For any celebration people come forward to help each other in several possible ways e.g. wedding, baptism, birthday, Holy Communion, etc. During Christmas neighbours share their presence in preparing sweets. So the joy of the celebration is well maintained by the people. There is sharing of joy with Hindus. Hindus also become the part of any Catholic celebrations and vice-versa. Also the birth of Christ is celebrated in every ward through the organised get-togethers where different activities take place like games, singing, dancing, eating, etc. Annual picnics also help in building the unity among the people.

Though at times neighbours are not in good terms but still when any trouble comes on their way neighbours are first one for rescue. In some wards they pay visit to the old-age homes and other less fortunate people. At times collect funds and give to the poor. At some places in the SCCs meetings, the community problems are brought to the pro and solution is provided by the other members. The possible help is also provided in case needed e.g. financial or material help.

**Obstacles**

World is not heaven, so do SCCs are not perfect. There are thorns among the flowers. Some of the thorns are:

- In some wards the participation is very minimum. The few chosen people participate in the meetings. Especially the youth show less interest attending the SCCs meeting.
- The pride and differences among people at times disturbs the spirit of SCCs.
- No collaboration of members with the leaders sometimes bring about division in the SCCs and demoralises the leader as well as lack of motivating and enthusiastic leaders makes the community lethargic.
- Selfish nature at times blocks some members from being sensitive to the needs of others.

**Need of the hour**

- Good Leaders: People demand enthusiastic and motivating leaders who are willing to work for the Lord. Leaders who encourage and bring people together for different activities. A leader who knows everyone and who does not distinguishes according to status.
- 'Inness' to 'Otherness': Today somehow the self-centeredness is blocking us to accept the others. There is a need to go beyond the boundaries of Inness and look

the other as the part of Inness. Differences of the other makes difficult for the person to accept him but realising that difference or uniqueness is the joy of the community that can build an effective SCC.

- Sharing: Sharing can be understood in a broader sense. Sharing your talents, time and sharing in the joy of others is deepest way of living a life of sharing. One should work for sharing their talents for growth of community. Sharing in the joy of the others. If someone achieves success in anyway instead of being jealous, sharing can be done in the joy of others and also encouraging and motivating them for their future.
- Attending SCC meeting: Concept about the SCCs is somehow misunderstood by many people. Proper education about the seven steps should be provided. Youth participation should be encouraged by making the meetings in creative ways. Use of various tools which attracts youth would be fascinating in order to make the participation effective.

**Conclusion**

Rachol does not only holds one's eyes on the external beauty but also the internal beauty by living a good community life. Unfortunately today everybody desires for perfect thing for themselves. Lack of perfection becomes a reason of rejection of others. We cannot find the perfection in the community which we desire. In order to build the community we need to accept the uniqueness of others which we see as weakness. Instead of looking for the perfection let us be happy with the differences which unites the community. It is not in changing other we can build community, but changing our own self. So let me give initiative.

## **LECTIO BREVIS**

*This was the lecture given by Rev. Dr. Victor Ferrao, during the Inauguration of the formative year 2013-2014 on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013....*

— Editors

### **The Other Orientalism and the Challenge and Opportunities for the Church in Goa**

**\* Rev. Dr. Victor Ferrao**

Edward Said's magnum opus, *Orientalism*,<sup>1</sup> has exposed the epistemic violence of the West. In the same vein Dipesh Charavorthy has laid bare how we Indians have cultivated and exoticized Europe of our imagination.<sup>2</sup> While we can sympathize with the noble projects of both Said and Chakravorty, we cannot certainly accept that there is a single monadic, essentialist and substantive conceptualization of orientalism or grant that there is a single imagination of Europe. Both Said and Chakravorty admit the complexities of their theoretical frameworks. Yet one might trace that majority of the Indian intellectuals seem to feed on the Anglo-germanic orientalism and have almost forgotten that there are other orientalisms that operate parallel to the mainstream orientalism that they follow. This main stream orientalism has almost orientalized the intellectuals of India. Some have become sucked into the project of construction of the orient as mystical other

of the rational Europe. This attempts have succinctly been psychoanalytically nuanced as the shadow side of the West by Ashis Nandy, which functions as the inversion of the West. Since enlightenment, the dominant representation of Western culture seems to have subordinated its own aspects of culture and tradition that are viewed as Dionysian (those trends that have been viewed as irrational, poetic, uncivilized and feminine as opposed to the Apollonian). The projection of the mystical character on the orient legitimated the domination as well as colonization of the East by the West.

The subaltern studies collective and postcolonial scholars like Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bahaba, and others have produced a substantive critique of orientalism and have exposed the politics of knowledge that produced the asymmetrical power relations within the West and the East. But all these studies have mostly dealt with the Anglo-germanic shades of orientalism and have not

considered the lusotopic orientalism. The lusotopic orientalism cannot be reduced to a mono-form of a stereotype. There is definitely dynamic pluralism into it.<sup>3</sup> But the fact that it is forgotten by Indian intellectuals is certainly impoverishing our intellectual gaze. This lusotopic orientalism that was experienced by the Goans can definitely open new windows to look at India. Goans have not only experienced lusotopic orientalism but have also have been swept by an indology soaked in Anglo-germanic orientalism. Hence, this study attempts to de-center the power relations involved in the history of ideas both as subject of analysis and disciplinary regime of institutionalized knowledge. Hence, lusotopic orientalism is an alternative orientalism that can illumine both how we view India as well as Goa. Indeed, this project has the potency to explore how the main stream orientalism that has become the heritage of all and continues to affect us and can be renewed from and for the marginal locations like Goa.

Hence, we join the movement that is greeted as Occidentalism.<sup>4</sup> It is a counter field of research that is developed in the orient to study the West from the Non-Western point of view. The West in its quest to expand its borders attempted to understand the people of the East better in order to dominate better. Thus, orientalism was born as a western activity, an expression of Western *Elan Vital*, determining the power of the relationship of the West and its other, between the Europe on one side and Asia, Africa and Latin America on the other side. Orientalism converts the West into a knowing subject and the East into a known object. But Occidentalism switches a change in the roles of the East and the West as the East

becomes the knowing subject and the West becomes the known object. The *Cogito ergo sum* of the West becomes *studio ergo sum* of the East.<sup>5</sup> Among the different shades of Occidentalism, one must prefer a constructive Occidentalism that strives to build a sane inter-subjective relationship between the East and the West.

Thus, Occidentalism is a de-colonial movement. It is an attempt to shift the balance of power within the politics of knowledge. The Occidentalism that I have proposed in this context is different from the one that is studied by the Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit in their Book *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* which tries to capture the hostile Islamist reaction to the West.<sup>6</sup> Our use of the term Occidentalism is also not associated with the use of same by Walter Mignolo, who uses it to refer to the universal cosmology or monotopical modernity while opting for a pluritopical pluriversality of worlds and knowledges otherwise. Mignolo succinctly argues that modernity is inescapably conjoined with history and reality of what he calls coloniality. Coloniality does not just refers to the Western covert colonial occupation, but also to the overbearing West's ongoing economic, political, and epistemological domination throughout the world. He asserts that coloniality is the dark side of modernity. Occidentalism for Mignolo is the location from where the world was classified and ranked.<sup>7</sup> What Mignolo calls occidentalism, is the point of reference that produced orientalisms.

We have deliberately chosen the term 'other orientalism' because it assists us to understand the intertwining of different shades of orientalisms that afflict our country. All these orientalisms might have different

occidentalisms underpinning them. But we use the word Occidentalism to mean the critique of these different orientalisms. Within this critique, we place the importance of Portuguese orientalism in a prime location because it was historically first as well as significantly different from the reigning Anglo-germanic orientalism. Though the term other orientalism is already used by Flipa Lowndes Vicente in his book, *Other orientalisms: India Between Florence and Bombay, 1860-1900*, to mean Italian orientalism that developed in Mumbai<sup>8</sup>, I use it for its contrastive force that can help us to understand Lusotopic orientalism that is forgotten by the Indian intelligencia. Our work does critically view our society in the light of this other orientalism but at the same time attempts to explore the challenges and opportunities it offers in convergence to the British orientalism to the Church in Goa.

### **The Different Colonization of the Portuguese**

Dutch Governor Antonio Van Diemen is said to have stated in 1642 “ Most of the Portuguese in Asia look upon this region as their fatherland, and think no more about Portugal”.<sup>9</sup> With almost two centuries of colonial experience ahead of the British, expansion in Asia, the Portuguese had developed their own framework to interpret the cultures that they encountered.<sup>10</sup> The Portuguese exhibited a different relation to the cultures they conquered. Alito Siqueira states that this policy of the Portuguese was christened as the doctrine of *assimilados* (assimilated).<sup>11</sup> This means the Portuguese in Goa rather than seeing the difference laid the emphasis on the absorption of Goa and the Goans into the Portuguese culture and

identity. This led to the lusitanization of the Goans. For the Goans to be lusitanized meant to be like the Portuguese. This lusitanization was interpreted as de-nationalization of the Goans by Dr. Tristao Braganza Cunnha.<sup>12</sup> The project of assimilation and lusitanization was successful because of the myth of the absence of racial discrimination.<sup>13</sup> Hence, the results were different from what has been described by Fanon in *Black Skins and White Masks*.<sup>14</sup> Even in our Post-colonial times Portugal has exhibited a strange possessiveness of the territories that it once colonized.

### **The Portuguese Imperative to Occidentalize**

Siqueira states that there is a strong relation of identity and territory among the Portuguese. That is why the Portuguese having come into what we now call Indian Union much before the notions of evolution and racisms were generated in a post-enlightenment era in Europe, choose to Occidentalize (lusitanize) rather than orientalize the Indian as attempted by the British colonizer. That is why it is argued that difference in the forms of Portuguese and the British colonization lie in the different historical periods their colonial enterprise operated.

We might understand the Portuguese colonization, if we consider the work Johannes Fabian that attacked the hegemonic ‘positivistic pragmatist’ philosophy of science and demonstrated that the temporal depiction of the other is stained by the ‘schizonic use of time’. Fabian views it as the denial of coevalness’ - a term that becomes the gloss for a situation, where the other’s hierarchically distancing localization

suppresses the simultaneity and the contemporaneity of an ethnographic encounter.<sup>15</sup> Such a temporal distancing banishes the other to a stage of a lesser development. Fabian christens such a denial of coevalness as the ‘allochronism’ of anthropology.<sup>16</sup> Thus, in the context of Portuguese colonial enterprise, we can trace a lesser degree of allochronism that their British counterparts. This is the reason why the Portuguese colonization that belonged to the pre-enlightenment era primarily exhibits the imperative to Occidentalize and when influenced by the enlightenment switches to a more forceful orientalizing mode. The Portuguese orientalism by a large reduced difference into sameness. They viewed the other as a mirror of themselves. Yet it still inferiorized the other because they relegated the other to a stage in their own past. Therefore, it is said that the Portuguese perceived in the indigenous people they had conquered as reflecting their own ‘uncivilized Past’ which they wanted to erase and transcend. This is the reason why they took upon them the civilizing mission. One might see conversions to Catholicism in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century by religious fervor as well as the imperative to occidentalize in this light. Yet there was a clear hierarchy in the social order inaugurated by the Portuguese where the white Portuguese were on the top, next followed the Mestizos, third came the native Christians and lastly the ‘Hindus’<sup>17</sup> and the Muslims.<sup>18</sup> The Portuguese sociological and historical discourse appears excessively derogatory<sup>19</sup> as it is soaked in their orientalism.

#### Other Orientalism of the Portuguese

Allochronism being less in degree, the

Portuguese orientalism is certainly distinct from the British, French, or American experiences. It is established that the Portuguese hit the imagination of Europe about the East as the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries circulated images from Portuguese travel narrative representing the Asian societies in Europe.<sup>20</sup> By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, discourses about Asia furnishing certain ideas and views of its societies were already relatively current across Europe. Fernao Lopes de Castanheda’s, Joao de Barros’, and Gaspar Correia’s expansion chronicles that were written mainly in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century depicted the Portuguese presence mainly in India and were concerned with the need to show how powerful the emergent empire was. Indeed, we can discern a Portuguese imperial gaze in the above works. Fernao Lopes de Castanheda, Gaspar Correia and Afonso Albuquerque himself write that the Portuguese could control the natives without any recourse to violence because of the policy of inter-marriage/ *Politica dos Casamentos* (miscegenation) which was thought to eventually incorporate the Goans into the dominant Portuguese culture and society through a creation of a class of mixed blood who would be loyal to the state.<sup>21</sup> Many travelers uncritically accepted and disseminated the image of harmonious Goa. This harmony is inscribed in the image ‘*Goa Dourada*’ (Golden Goa). One can trace this picture of Goa from Albuquerque to Linschoten, Thevenot, Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Carreri, Pietro della Valle, Samuel Purchas, Abbe Carre, and contemporary historian like Hernani Cidade and Jaime Cortesao.<sup>22</sup>

This orientalism succeeded in constructing

Goa as the other India. This means Goa emerged as a space of difference within India. Indeed, Goa became the capital of the Portuguese possessions in the East. During the liberation debate Portuguese dictator Salazar argued that Goa was the province of Portugal and Goans were Portuguese citizens. He further stated this province was in existence for four fifty years and India as a nation was of recent origin.<sup>23</sup> Within this stream of thought, we will have to agree that India would not be a Hindu majoritarian country had it not been the Portuguese that acted as a buffer against the Islamic forces from the middle East.

### **Dynamic Cross-pollination of Portuguese Orientalism**

Portuguese orientalism like other orientalisms cannot be viewed from an essentialist, positivist, reductionist and overly homogenized framework. Such an approach occludes the dynamic cross-pollination and hybridization of every shade of orientalism and results from an academic myopia. It evolved in relation and interaction with other orientalism and their impact on the contexts in the colonies. Hence, it is important for us to discern the subtle dynamism that shaped Portuguese orientalism.

### **Orientalism as a Fusion of Horizons**

Knowledge as the product of a detached, dispassionate and neutral researcher is no longer tenable. The notion of objective and value free knowledge has come under increasingly critical scrutiny in the light of developments in Hermeneutics. Following Martin Heidegger, we have come to accept that understanding is the fundamental way of being in the world.<sup>24</sup> Hans George Gadamer

takes this insight further and teaches that one cannot avoid being involved in interpretation by virtue of one's historical situated-ness (facticity of ones being-in-the world). Gadamer locates the ills that affect our quest for objectivity in enlightenment. He teaches that enlightenment thought displays the prejudice against prejudice. He clearly points out that our understanding is conditioned by the past (our tradition), as well as our present circumstances and agendas (prejudices). The prejudice derives itself from what Gadamer calls 'effective history' that is our historical situated-ness that provide the basic framework that facilitates understanding.<sup>25</sup> Our prejudice is never really purely individual since it remains constrained by the past interpretations of our traditions. This is why we cannot accuse Gadamer of crass subjectivism or relativism.

This means one cannot understand anything without relating to ones being-in-the world. There is no universal bird's eye view or God's vantage point for anyone. Meaning results from the fusion of horizons.<sup>26</sup> The interpreter's horizon is fused with the horizon of the author. There is no univocal meaning. In this sense, there is no univocal orientalism. Different orientalisms are born in the interactions of diverse European traditions with the Eastern traditions. Thus, for instance, the mis-identification of the 'Hindu' Goddess as exotic image of Mother Mary and the temple as a Christian Church by Vasco de Gamma clearly demonstrates how a fusion of horizons of two distinct traditions results in the emergence of Portuguese orientalism.<sup>27</sup> Alito Siqueira and Alexander Henn greet this moment as the emergence of early modernity where a Portuguese is confronted by otherness, which he in the beginning

assimilates into sameness.

### **Portuguese Orientalism as Isogetical**

Following Gadamer, we must admit that meaning is isogetical in so far as it involves an unconscious reading into the text. There is a degree of isogenesis or reading into and therefore prejudicing aspects of the encounter with another tradition. But this isogenesis is never arbitrary. In this context, it seems more appropriate to speak of what Gilbert Ryle and Clifford Geertz call 'thick description.'<sup>28</sup> A 'thick description' is one that contains high degree of contextual richness—that is, an attention to the socio-cultural and historical circumstances which contribute to the meaning of an event.

This would mean that there is a continuous to and fro interaction that encounter of the Portuguese lusophonic tradition with Goan culture as well as Indic culture at large that symbiotically produced what we call the Portuguese lusotropical orientalism. Thus, orientalism does not result from isolationism and never remains strictly monolithic. All forms of Portuguese orientalism were the result of cross fertilization. Thus, it is an immersion of the lusotropical tradition that emerged into a complex lusitanized tradition that we might call Portuguese orientalism. Thus, like every other orientalism, the Portuguese orientalism is also construction of the orient that is at the narcissistic best in the creation of a superior Europe.

### **Orientalizing Dynamics of the Portuguese Orientalism**

Orientalizing the orient was not just the project of European. It was also the orientals who participated in the orientaling the orient. There is no pure orient any more. What exists

is an orientalized orient. Hence, we must get out of occidentosis (the pathological attitude to blame all ills on the west). The very fact that we in Goa tolerated the Portuguese rule for 450 years compels us to realistically look at our contribution to the construction of the colonial relations. This will certainly save us from extremely crass Occidentalism (dehumanizing picture of the west as painted by its enemies). Homi Bhabha teaches that the appropriation of the master discourse by the native is a form of resistance that takes the shape of mimicry and parody of colonial authority.<sup>29</sup>

### **Acceptance of Asymmetrical Power Relations**

Goa remained colonized for four hundred fifty years. The issue of the subjection of the Goans to the foreign rule for a long time is also an important issue to contemplate.<sup>30</sup> How could Goa tolerate the foreign rule for such a long time? This acceptance of the asymmetrical power relation as normal and natural also has a Goan contribution. The work of Jacques Rancière might give us some insight into the question under our consideration. Rancière teaches that the child has a natural capacity to learn his mother tongue without a teacher. The child understands the distribution of the sensible in his context. Hence, learning a mother tongue is a political act.<sup>31</sup> Though a child inserts himself in the sign system of its context in a random manner yet he learns to accept its own place in the scheme of its context as he learns to speak its own mother tongue.

Now following the insights of Rancière, we can certainly understand how Goans learn to accept an asymmetrical power relation and

tolerated the colonial rule. This orietalization of the Goan is described in the twentieth century as denationalization of Goans by Dr. Tristao de Braganza Cunha. This means Goans also joined in the project of orientalization and ended up accepting their subjection without any question. Some even saw it as a progressive step which became the foundation of 'Goa Dourada' Paradigm. Dr. Tristao de Braganza Cunha further accuses the Church as doubly denationalized based on his own subjection to the British orientalism which led to evolution of the concept of India as a nation. We can also trace similar indebtedness to British orientism earlier in the work of Gerson de Cunha. Goa indica is born out of such a British orientalism.

The intrusion of few select Portuguese words into the Mando that were composed during the Portuguese era also indicates the orientalization of Goans. Selects words like *felicade*, *igrand*, *adeus*, etc have come into Mando, showing how Konkani, the mother tongue of Goans was orientalized. But is interesting that after the liberation new composition of Mando exhibits a purging of Portuguese words. We can also similarly, trace a movement of cleansing of Portuguese words from liturgy after liberation. Thus, we have *cummunao* became *kristprasad*, *padri* became *Iadnik*, *altar* became *Vedi* etc. This suggests that the dominant sections in Goa under colonization lusofonized themselves and then recycled or invented themselves through British orientalism. The Indian Government continued the Portuguese education for some time till liberation. It was the Goans who choose English education against the Portuguese leading to closure of the institutions that imparted Portuguese Education. This is nothing but exchange of

orientalisms. We can still find shades of this exchange dynamism even today with regards to the controversy that surrounds medium of instruction. Post-colonially, Goans seem to have engaged in the politics of exchange of British Orientalisms between the Hindus and the Christians and both together share a lusitanized orientalism that forgets that the Muslims have a legitimate share in the story of Goa.

### Double Orientalization of the Goans

The orientalization of Goans is complex and dynamically intertised and intertwined with the British orientalism as well as pre-Portuguese Goan culture.<sup>32</sup> There has been to and fro intermingling of these orientalisms and hence one must agree that Goans are doubly orientalized. There is a symbiotic relations between the orientalized India and the lusitonized Goa. They seem to overlap and penetrate each other. That is why Goans occupy a special status among the orientalized orientals. Hence, Goa has been always and still remains other India.

It is not easy to articulate the complexity of the dynamic mobility and migration of these two orientalisms. The evolution of caste and Hinduism might demonstrate this dynamism. How they evolve, travel and re-inscribe both in Goa and the rest of India that united into a country under the British orientalism has to be studied with attention. It is difficult to place an Archimedean point or a firm ground for the exchange of these orientalisms. Yet there is certainly a complex interweaving of the different threads and fibers of these two orientalisms, though one might not find a perfect transfusion between the two.

Among the ideas in motion caste, Hinduism, nationalism have evolved as result

of inter-relations of the two orientalisms. Nicholas B. Dirks demonstrates that Caste as we know it today is the product of British colonization. Indeed, caste is not something that survived unchanged from ancient times into our country. It is under the British that 'caste' become a single term capable of expressing, organizing, and above all 'systematizing' India's diverse forms of social identity, community and organization.<sup>33</sup> Caste organization certainly became a cultural technology that served British colonization of India. This means caste system of today is largely a product of British orientalism. But the Portuguese are credited to the use of the term *casta* to refer to the social stratification they encountered in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when they colonized the then pockets of our country. It has been argued that Portuguese had a rather broader idea of the social order they conceptualized as *casta*. Dirks reports of a travel narrative of 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese Duarte Barbosa who speaks of the threefold caste hierarchy of the Kshatriyas, Brahmins, and the Sudras with the ksatriyas on top of the hierarchy.<sup>34</sup> This narrative seem to have credibility as legend of Parashurama<sup>35</sup> is based on the defeat of the Kshatriyas.<sup>36</sup> Even D. D Kosambe seem to merge caste into loosely viewed class in its origin. This perhaps explains why only three castes have survived among the Catholics in Goa even against the spirit of Christianity till today. Some opine that the Vaishya got merged with Kshatriyas among the Christians.<sup>37</sup> This view is contested by Pissurlenkar who teaches that the Chardos originated from the converted Marathas.<sup>38</sup> The work of Fr. Ignazio Arcamone's, *De Sastana Peninsula*, a commentary on the Peninsula of Salcete written in 1664 describes the

caste geography of Salcete. The vocabularies that were developed in the College of Salcete also give us an information of caste system in Salcete. Caste is certainly one body politics, that like racism, refuses to die.

Scholars of repute like Rumila Thapar demonstrate that the evolution of monolithic Hinduism reached its high point in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>39</sup> Hence, Hinduism as we know it today began to unify against the Mughal Empire and reached its climax in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> I have argued else where that it is an epistemological error to reduce the seminal Hindu/pre-Hindu religions, cults or sects like Shaivism,<sup>41</sup> Vashnavism<sup>42</sup>, Saktism<sup>43</sup> and cults like Nathism<sup>44</sup>, Betal or Vetal,<sup>45</sup> Malikarjun<sup>46</sup>, Sateri<sup>47</sup> etc under Hinduism which reached a unified form by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Such a reductionism and ahistorical approach is a hindu-ology. We can also say the same thing about the nationalism that developed in 20<sup>th</sup> century in our country. It constructed the view of our glorious past not as a logical fulfillment but in an evocative sense to build a sense of we-feeling among our countrymen.

### **Challenges and Opportunities to the Church in Goa**

The other orientalism that we have studied opens a new window on our country. It can help us understand our society particularly in Goa. We have shown how a clash of orientalisms has become an inevitable part of our society in Goa. While we seek a response to our realities it is important to discern these various orientalisms that are operating and come to understand the challenges they pose and opportunities they offer.

### **Challenge to Take Charge of our History**

The history of Goa and the history of Goan

Christianity is not free from orientalism. The colonial historiography with its 'Goa Dourada' Paradigm tends to convert the pre-Portuguese Goa into a tabula rasa. The reactionary historiography that took shape in the Post-colonial times with its paradigm Goa Indica, strives to present pre-Portuguese Goa as Konkan Kashi, the holy land of the Hindus.<sup>48</sup> Such a historiography views colonization and subsequent conversion only from the narrow religious point of view. Thus, in painting of the Pre-Portuguese Goa as Hindu, there is a direct attempt to turn the historical facts about conversion against the Church and the Christians of Today. This political motive of appropriating Goan history is highly reductionist and distortionist in its approach. I have described these attempts as Hindu-ology. In fact, even the Word Hindu does not exist in the entire sixteenth century indo-Portuguese historiography.<sup>49</sup>

That is why the Christian in Goa have the imperative to lay their claim on their own History. It is important to assert that we have not come from Hinduism of today but the then seminal beliefs, cults and practices that have been steadily assimilated into Hinduism of today. We may not call them religions because religion itself is a Christian/ Western term and its applications to the worship and sacred practices of our people in India and Goa is nothing short of orientalism. But for lack of better word I use it with this caveat. The temples that were destroyed were not the Hindu temples but of this smaller, different and independent cults and religions of the then seminal Hinduism which were often at war with each other.<sup>50</sup> Of course, there is no attempt to condone the wrong done by the colonizers but only a sincere desire to nuance our understanding and free our society from

some of the burdens of the past. Prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was no conflict between the Vaishnavites and the Shaivites in Goa. But with the conversion of some of the Vaishnavites to the Dvaita Philosophy of Madhvacharya, the Saraswat community in Goa got divided into Vaishnavites (Madhavas) and Shaivites Smartas.<sup>51</sup> In the absence of this critical discourse about the different pre-Hindu / seminal Hindu cults, the gap is filled by the reductionist, hinduo-ology.

### **Challenge to Respond to the De-historicized condition of Theology in our Country**

There is a forgetting of history in our theologizing in India. There seems to be a discomfort to deal with the colonial past that we have inherited. The colonial experience is conveniently bracketed by our Indian theologians.<sup>52</sup> But this theological vacuum is speaking loudly and perhaps has become a major hurdle to dialogue with the majority of countrymen. Hence, it is important to bring about a response of faith to our colonial experience. Felix Wilfred sees the distancing of the Indian theologians from the colonial past is a way of delegitimizing it. He sees colonialism as an estrangement of West from the spirit of Christianity and asserts that colonialism cannot be reconciled with compassion and humanism of Christianity.<sup>53</sup> But the colonial cloud cannot be allowed to disfigure the face of Christ. In this noble task, we in Goa have a great opportunity as we are uniquely positioned to theologize in the context of our colonial experience.

We have a theology of inculturation. But we seem to forget our history. A society that forgets its history is condemned to repeat its mistakes as well as become victim of the

political exploitation of history. In this task, we in Goa can generate an uniquely creative theological response to the colonial experience that would illumine our country as well as the entire Asian continent. In this context, Rachol Seminary has a special Imperative to work to occupy the theological vacuum created by our de-historicized theology. This theological imperative can be viewed within the call for new evangelization given by the universal Church. We have presented Jesus as a teacher, healer and social worker through the power of our institutions. We can already notice the collapse of our institutional power as we find better and efficient competitors for our schools, hospitals and charity centers. Hence, a fresh theological energy might ignite new ways of evangelizing ourselves and our society.

### **Therapeutic Dialogue with the Hindu Community in Goa**

The exchange of orientalisms that we have discerned in this study is a sign of a wounded society. The Hindu community of today is still haunted by the loss of brotherhood due to conversion under colonization. Conversion is not merely an exchange of Gods but an interrogation of the tradition that one exchanges for another. Hence, trauma of loss of brotherhood is being re-enacted in Goan society. One community seems to have forgotten while the second remembers the pain of separation. Yet the second community forgets that it is not ahistorical and has changed and evolved over period of time. Indeed, it is paradoxical that both the communities in Goa exhibit an amnesia that affects both of them. This gap afflicts the Goan Society and is primarily responsible for the politics of identity that has been played on the soil of Goa for the past fifty years.

The claims about forced conversions, demolishing of the Hindu temples abound in the narratives of the post-colonial historiography mainly authored by the Hindu historians in our days. Though the temples that were demolished were not Hindu but one that belonged to different cults that have united into Hinduism of today, the Hindu community is certainly carrying the pain of the past. Similarly, the pain of conversion and separation is real though the conversions took place from the fragments of the religious cults of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century which had the seeds of the Hinduism of today. This does not mean that Hinduism of today is completely alien to the past of our land. Indeed, there are continuities as well as complexities in the evolutionary pilgrimage of Hinduism. The Christians too having forgotten their own origins and are wounded and continue to be victims of the some kind of silent aggression of their Hindu counterparts. They are frozen in the past by the Hindus of today and are viewed as clones of the colonizers. The Christians share no awareness of their origin while the Hindus appear to forget that they have evolved and changed over time as well as like them, it is fact that Christians have also changed. This means the Christianity of today is not the same as the Christianity of the colonial times and same is true of the pre-Portuguese seminal Hinduism and the Hinduism of today. I believe this awareness of the forgetting of our history in Goa can heal our society. Hence, I propose that there is an inevitable need of dialogue that can heal wounded memories in our Society.

### **Challenge to Theologize on the Shores of Colva and Calangute**

Goa is certainly other India. Its unique

cultural otherness and natural beauty has become a major tourist attraction after liberation. Being insulated from the rest of the mainland for four hundred and fifty years, it seems to have fired the imagination of our fellow Indians as an unspoiled virgin. It is almost seen as a place outside time and has become a hot spot for international tourists. The need to develop tourism infrastructure has become the boon for the real estate barons and five star hoteliers. All these developments have disrupted traditional Goan Culture which seems to survive in a commodified *avtara*. Besides, it has led to the alienation of land from the traditional owners as a result of high inflation. The drug trade, the flesh trade, casino gambling, HIV infection, Child Abuse and Alcohol abuse is already exposing the dark side of tourism in Goa. The enclave tourism that is showing its ugly face in Goa is de-goanizing Goa. The fact that some of our Goan beaches today are known by Russian names is enough to drive home the de-goanizing dimension of the kind of tourism that we are promoting.

Therefore, the Church in Goa has a profound imperative to respond in faith to the phenomenon of tourism in Goa. We can already see some steps initiated in this direction. The founding of the Center for Responsible Tourism, the consultation for the development Curriculum of theology of tourism are important steps in this direction. Ecumenical Coalition for the Third World Tourism (ECOT) and some Protestant groups like Serampore College in West Bengal are already making great effort to develop a theology of tourism. The Great Rachol Seminary cannot remain behind in this effort.<sup>54</sup> Theological as well as pastoral formation of our seminarian to meet the

challenges of the pastoral care of tourism is both urgent and inevitable.

### **Challenge to Theologize on the Mining Dumps of Sanguem and Bicholim**

The first reference to the presence of mineral content in Goan soil dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is reported that a Dutch traveler, John H. V. Linschoten has written that in Goa there are stones containing iron. He also opines that scientists had indicated that gold and copper might be also found in those stones.<sup>55</sup> Fonseca in his book, *Historical and Archeological Sketch of Goa*, in 1878 notes that Iron in Bage, Sattari, Pernem and in the province of Zamboulim. He also clarifies that since no adequate scientific exploration is done the above is not a total representation of the entire mineral picture of Goa.<sup>56</sup> The prospecting of iron and manganese ore as early as 1905, through regular iron ore export begun 1947 and reached its momentum in 1949. In 1905, few French and German companies had carried out iron and manganese ore prospecting in Goa. But with the outbreak of the first world war mining activity simply came to a halt only to begin in 1947. The 23 mining leases given by the Portuguese Government were continued by free India.<sup>57</sup> The concessions given by the Portuguese were converted into mining leases by the parliament of India in 1987.<sup>58</sup>

Today mining is mostly concentrated in three talukas, namely Bicholim, Quepem and Sanguem. The Center for Science and Environment says that about 400 mining leases were granted in Goa till 2002-2003 covering 10.5 % of the total geographical area of Goa.<sup>59</sup> The excessive mining activities that led to the faulting of all regulating green laws led to the depletion of the forest cover and

displaced wildlife. Selaulim and Bicholim rivers have become polluted and are choked with silt of mining rejects. Rivers Mondovi and Zuari are said to be contaminated with arsenic.<sup>60</sup> Mining has steadily made inroads into eco-sensitive zones like Goa's wild life sanctuaries.<sup>61</sup> The Shah Commission appointed by the central Government exposed the illegal mining in Goa leading to the BJP Government imposing a ban on mining which was upheld by the Supreme Court at the behest of an NGO, Goa Foundation. This has brought a great debate on mining as many mining dependent people took to the streets. Within these complexities the Church has the responsibility to bring the light of faith in context of mining in Goa.<sup>62</sup>

#### **Reaching out to the Goan Diaspora**

Until 1961 Goans migrating to any part of India had to cross international boundaries. Migration from Goa has a long history and is documented at least from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on words.<sup>63</sup> Thus, we have the Catholics Goans migrating into Magalore from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on words. There was and there is both in migration as well as out migration from Goa. The Hindus have also migrated out of Goa but their scale and pattern was different from the catholic migration. The Portuguese Estado da India was originally conceived as stretching to Cape Of Good Hope in Africa to far East. But in the course of the four centuries due the competition with other European powers, the Estado progressively shrunk. These and other reasons, particularly because of lack of agricultural and industrial development in Goa, led to the economic deterioration of Goa and simultaneously there came up external job opportunities outside Goa. In the absence of

indigenous people familiar with the western concepts of administration, Goans were preferred in many colonies in Africa. But most of the migrants from Goa as well as other parts of India were unskilled labourers recruited during the building of Railway. In the same way the development of international shipping opened possibilities of many Goan opting to become seamen. Today we have a sizeable Goan Diaspora across the Globe.

The continuous migration of the Catholics through Portuguese citizenship is another factor along with the family planning that has led to the downsizing of the catholic population in Goa. Though the pattern of migration is highly complex even in our days yet it requires to be studied<sup>64</sup> and pastoral strategies need to be devised to deal with the same. Today this migratory movement has produced a global Catholic Goan Diaspora. The large Catholic migrant community certainly offers new challenges as well as opportunities for the Church to reach out in pastoral care to Goan Catholic Diaspora.

#### **Conclusion**

Our study has shown how the lusoptical orientalism opens another window on India as well as Goa. We have come to realize that Goa exhibits a kind of exchange of orientalisms in our post-colonial times. This is perhaps the cause by amnesia afflicting both the Christians and the Hindus in Goa. The Christians have no memory of their conversion, while the Hindus have also forgotten that they have evolved and changed as we march into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence, there is an urgent imperative to generate a therapeutic dialogue that can respond to the wounded memories that disturbs our society in Goa. Moreover the otherness of Goa along

with its natural beauty that is being exploited to promote mass tourism needs a theological response. The Church in Goa has this great opportunity develop a theology that would generate effective pastoral care of the people of God affected and afflicted by mass tourism and mechanized mining. The migration and the growing presence of a large international Catholic Goan community offers profound opportunity to devise new ways of reaching out to them as well as get them to help the church projects at home.

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> Dipes Chakraborty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2000)

<sup>3</sup> Afonso de Albuquerque declared with Pride that he has converted Goa “the mother of the whole India” See *Relatorio Anuario de Administracao do Concelho da Illhas* (Panjim ; Imprensa National, 1904), p. 762. Life in Goa during the early period of the Portuguese conquest is described in the book, *A Summa Oriental* of Prince D. Afonso who came to Goa in 1511 as Factor of Drugs. See P.P. Shirodkar ‘Socio-Cultural Life in Goa During 16<sup>th</sup> Century’ in Charles J. Borges and Helmut Feldmann, *Goa and Portugal: Their Cultural Links* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1997), p. 24. Tome Pires also described the life and the People of Goa during the early period of colonization. He also describes the practice of Sati and how women who refused to subject to it were driven to become *devadasis* (Dancing temple girls) See Armando Cortesao, Ed., *A Suma Oriental de Tome Pires e o Livro de Francis Rodrigues* (Coimbra: University of Coimbra, 1978), p. 14. Brazilian Ana Cristina Santos Parrieras says that Goa is more like Brazil rather than the rest of India. see Fatima Da Silva Gracias ‘‘ the Impact of Portuguese Culture on Goa: Myth or Reality, in Charles J. Borges and Helmut Feldmann, *Goa and Portugal*, p. 42. Similarly, the otherness of Goans form the rest of Indians is articulated by Monahar Malgonkar and is attributed to the Portuguese colonizers. See Manahar Malgonkar, *Inside Goa* (Goa: 1982),p.18.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/From%20Orientalism%20to%20Occidentalism.pdf> accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/From%20Orientalism%20to%20Occidentalism.pdf> accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

<sup>6</sup> See Ian Buruma and A vishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: the West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New Delhi : Penguin Books, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> <http://escholarship.ucop.edu/uc/item/1dj093nw> accessed on 8th June 8, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Flipa Lowndes Vicente, *Other Orientalisms: India Between Florence and Bombay, 1860-1900* (New Delhi: Orient Black Swan, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.goanobserver.com/archive/27-11-2004/globalgoan.htm>.accessed on May 4, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/483320?uid=3738256&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21101981288643> accessed on May 4, 2013

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.lusotopie.sciencespobordeaux.fr/siqueira.pdf> accessed on May 4, 2013.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.lusotopie.sciencespobordeaux.fr/desai.pdf> accessed on May 9, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Franz Fanon makes sociological study of Psychology of racism using the theory of psychoanalysis. See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skins and white Masks* (London: Pluto Press, 1986). We cannot apply directly Fanons ideas to the Portuguese orientalism as it has its origin in the pre-enlightenment Portugal.

<sup>15</sup> See Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other : How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. xi-xi.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> I use the term ‘Hindu’ in inverted commas because there was no Hinduism of today in those days what was there were different cults that today have united in to a monolithic pan Indian Hinduism. What was there may be called seminal Hinduism that has evolved into the shape it has acquired today.

<sup>18</sup> See Bento Graciano D’souza; *Goan Society in Transition: a Study in Social Change* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1975), p. 148.

<sup>19</sup> Delio de Mendonca, *Conversions and Citizenry: Goa under Portugal 1510-1610* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company , 2008), p.41.

<sup>20</sup> Ines Zupanov, *Disputed Missions: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth Century India* (New York: University Press, 2001) Also see John Correia-Afonso, *Jesuit*

*Letters and Indian History 1542-1773* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1969). This works attempt to expose what has been also termed as catholic orientalism.

<sup>21</sup> Pearson, M. N. *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat: The Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1976. Also see ———. *The Portuguese in India*. The New Cambridge History of India I.1. (Hyderabad: Orient Longman Limited, 1990).

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Rupture+and+continuity+in+colonial+discourses+%3a+the+racialized...-a0122767916> accessed on May 5, 2013.

<sup>23</sup> Salazar, Oliveira. "Goa and the Indian Union: The Portuguese View." *Foreign Affairs* 34, no. 3 (1956): 418–431.

<sup>24</sup> See Richard Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation in Scheiemacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: North Western University Press, 1969), p. 33.

<sup>25</sup> Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 267.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p. 268.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.oldnewspublishing.com/dagamma.htm>, accessed on 9, May 2013.

<sup>28</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). p.6.

<sup>29</sup> Goody, *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986) p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> Today we have some reactionary revolts to conversion drive like the one in Cuncolim in 1583 is being appropriated as the first freedom struggle. <http://www.mangalorean.com/news.php?newstype=broadcast&broadcastid=50760> accessed on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1, 2013. The real revolt against the Portuguese rule took place in 1787. Unfortunately , this momentous period in Goa's history is only in J H da Cunha Rivera's, *A Conjuração de 1887em Goa e Varias Causas desse Tempo*, thanks to Dr Celsa Pinto's new book, *Revolt of the Natives of Goa, 1787*, the orientalized perspective on the event is challenged. See extract of the book published in "Panorama: the Sunday Reading Journal", The Navhind Times, Sunday June 30, 2013.

<sup>31</sup> Charles Bingham and Gert J.J. Biesta, with Jacques Ranciere, *Jacques Ranciere: Education, truth, Emancipation* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group 2010), pp.53-59.

<sup>32</sup> The primeval history of Goa is shaped by the

people like the Gavdas , Kunbis ( Kols, Mundas and Ouraons) and the poor peasants who tilled the land and helped the advancement of the mode of agriculture production from the days of early humankind. Rock engravings of these ancient settlers in Goa are found in Usgalimol in Sanguem Taluka and Mauxi in Satari Taluka in Goa by the Archeological Survey of India. Goa later was populated by the Dravidians and the Aryans. It was ruled by various dynasties, some local and others from the neighbouring states of Maharastra or Karnataka. Beginning with the Mauryas, the Satvhanas, Chutus, Kshatrapas, Abiras, Kalachuris Bhojas, Kaikeyas, Konkan Mauryas, Guptas, Sendrekas, Chalukyas of Badami, Rastrakuttas, Shilaharas, Kadambas, Hoysalas, Yadavas, of Devagiri, Delahi Sultans, Nawab of Honavar, Bahamanis, Vijaynagar and the Adil Shah of Bijapur, held sway over the whole or parts of Goa during their hay days. These ruled Goa as emperors or feudatories of other emperors. Some were also independent rulers. see Fr Cosme Jose Costa, *The Heritage of Govapuri : A Study of the Artifacts in and Around the Pilar Seminary Museum* (Pilar: Pilar Publications, 2002), pp. 2-4. All these rulers made their mark on Goa. Indeed, both territorially as well as socio-historically Goa is not timeless and has evolved into what we now know as Goa because of its pre-colonial past, colonial past and the post colonial present. We can notice a strong influence of Marathi as well as Kannada on Goa. even the names of some villages in Salcete Taluka bear Kannada lineage. The villages of Benaullim, Babolim, Carambolim, Cortalim, Panelim, Talaulim, Navelim, Zamboaulim etc., have the Portuguese corruption of the Kannada word *halli* as their suffix in the form of alim, olim or elim. Halli in Kannada means Village. Kandu (Forest) and Kona (Bison), both Kannada words come to mean a forest abounding with bison. Hence we have Canacona. See P. D. Xavier, *Goa a Social History* (Panaji: Rajhauns Vitaran, 2010), p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> Nicholas B. Dirks *Castes Of the Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002), p.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p.19.

<sup>35</sup> Historical chronicles and holy texts, such as the *Konkanakhya* and the *Skanda Purana*, (were used to reconstruct the historical immigration and settlement of Brahmins in Goa) were used to recall the mythology of Parashurama, the martial *avatara* of the great Hindu god Vishnu, who, according to the legend,

once claimed the land of Goa from the sea by shooting his seven arrows into the ocean. These efforts eventually, found its condensation in the image of Goa as a “Konkan Kashi”, through which Hindu nationalists, in the post-liberation time, attempted to equal the religious significance of the history of ‘Hindu’ Goa with that of historical Benares. Today the legend of Parashurama and the origin of the land of Goa has been given a decent burial as new archaeological research uncovered the stone age of Goa. See Victor Rangel-Rebeiro, Ed., *Goa Apranta Land Beyond the End* (Vasco de Gama: Goa Publications, 2008), p. 13.

<sup>36</sup> Anant Ramkrishna Sinai Dhume, *The cultural History of Goa : From 10000 B. C.-1352 A. D* (Panjim: Broadway Publisher 1986), p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> A. B de Braganza Pereira, “O Sistema das Castas”, *O Oriente Portugues*, 1920, 17 (1,2), p. 41.

<sup>38</sup> P. Pissurlencar, “O Elemento Hindu da Casta Chardo”, *O Oriente Portugues*, 1936, 12-13, PP. 203-232.

<sup>39</sup> Romila Thapar, “Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity”, *Modern Asian Studies* (Cambridge, UK, 1989), XXIII (2), pp. 209-231., also see Romila Thapa, *Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp.102-1054. Some scholars claim the Hinduism was the product of a single category imposed by the British on the heterogeneous collections of sects, doctrines and customs they found among the people of India. such an approach denies the agency of the people of India. I rather hold that the unification of Hinduism is a social process dynamically interacting with the historical circumstances of the day. This means monolithic Hinduism emerged from a seminal Hindu (Pre-Hindu) scenario.

<sup>40</sup> Scholars like David Lorenzen do not agree with this position but says that Hinduism reached its organizational uniformity between 1200-1500 and was firmly established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. See David N Lorenzen, “Who Invented Hinduism?”, *Comparative studies in Society and History*, in Vol. 41, No. 4 (O ct., 1999), pp. 630-659.

<sup>41</sup> Most scholars agree about the non-Vedic origin of Shaivism. This is perhaps the reason why the priests in the Shavite temples in Goa and the Deccan are usually non-Brahmin and are called Guruvas. The well known Shavite sacred places like Gudimallan (Andhra Pradesh), Trimbakeswar and Walkeshwar are

located respectively in tribal belt of the district of Nashik and Mumbai, in Maharashtra.

Aspects of Shiva as Mangesh and Nagesh have their origin in Goa. The Gavdas were closely associated with these deities in Goa. The Velips of Canacona who worshiped Mallikarjun are also closely associated with Shiva. The worship of Shiva can be traced from about 5th century A.D. Places that were associated with Lord Shiva are Harmal (Pedne Taluka), Haravale ( Bicholim Taluka), Sivoli (Bardez Taluka), Shivapur (Ponda taluka). It has been suggested that Shivapur is the present Shiroda. The Kadamba dynasty was the strong patron of Shaivism. Shiva was worshiped as a family deity and was invoked as Saptakoteshwar by the Kadambas. It is said that the three shrines of Shaivism (somnath) were built in Bardez during the Kadamba era but were later destroyed by the Portuguese in the 16th century. Only three temples of Kadamba Period have survived. These were: Saptakoteshwar of Opa (Ponda Taluka) Curdi Mahadeva temple which is transplanted from the site of selaulim dam project by the Archeological Survey of India. Tambdi surla Mahadeva temple. The Kadambas had also built the Saptakoteshwar temple in Diwar but was destroyed during the muslim invasion and was later re-built by the rulers of the Vijaynagara empire. It is said that Shaivism had the largest following in Goa. See V. R. Mitragotri, *Socio Cultural history of Goa from Bhojas to Vijaynagar* (Panjim: Institute Menezes Braganza, 1999), pp.108-112.

<sup>42</sup> There is a suggestion that the Vaishnavite tradition spread into Goa during the Satavahanas rule over Goa. But the earliest evidence of Vaishnavism as far as Goa is concerned emerges from Vadgaon Madhavpur in Belguam District. From Goa the earliest reference to worship of Vishnu in Goa are found in the Bhoja copper plates of Devaraja which are Paleographically dated to C. 400 A.D. Vishnu is invoked as Narayana and hence many villages bear their name from it. Thus, the village of Narve is said to be the corruption of Narayana. Narayana is abbreviated as Naru and from it came Narve. In Naroa, Navelim and Bicholim there are Lakximi- Narayan temples. So also there are similar temples in Mopa, Sarmal and Virnoda of Pedne taluka. In the Tiswadi taluka there were five Narayana shrines, four in Bardez and thirteen in Salcete. All these twenty two shrines are said to be destroyed by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. In the Cola village of Canacona taluka, there is a temple of Narayana. Vishnu is also invoked as Kesava. There are two shrines of Kesava

in Priol (Ponda) and Loilem (Canacona). Vishnu is also worshiped as Vamana and Trivikrama. The Salcete Taluka had a shrine of Vamana and Trivikrama in Loutolim and Raciam respectively. Another name of Vishnu is Padmanabha and He is worshiped in this name in Cuncollem Ponda. A stone sculpture of Padmanabha was discovered in the debris of an ancient Temple of Vichundre in Sanguem Taluka. Damodor is another name of Vishnu. It is an epithet of Krishna. The ancient temple of Damodor was in Margao (Mathagram) and was destroyed by the Portuguese in the 16th century and was reconstructed in Jambavalim. Vishnu is also invoked as Narasimha. In Goa, there were two shrines of Narasimha: Shankhavi (Sancole) in Salcete taluka and Daugim in Tiswadi Taluka in Tiswadi taluka. Both these shrines were said to be destroyed by the Portuguese in the 16th century. There is a tradition that the devotees of Narasimha reconstructed the image of Lakshmi Narasimha at the end of the 16th century and consecrated it in Veling Ponda. The only reclining stone image of Vishnu known as Ananta is found in Priol Ponda that is why the Ponda region is called Antruz. Parasurama is the sixth of the ten incarnations of Vishnu. The legend of Parasurama is famous in the whole of the West coast. In the Painguinim village of Canacona, there is a temple of Parasurama. There were two shrines of Rama in Goa. One that was in Pilgaon was destroyed by the Mughals in the 17th century while the other shrine of Rama and Krishna was in Cuncolim village in Salcete and was also destroyed by the Portuguese in the 16th century. During the last decade of the 15th century, some of the Sarasvats were converted to the Davaita sect. Villages of Madakai and Vovoi have the shrines of Ramapurush. A large stone plaque of Hanuman with no ornamentation was found in Telaulim and belongs to c. 1400 A. D. North Goa boasted of many temples of Laxmi Narayan. There is a temple of Mahalakshmi in Bandivade Ponda. The Mahalakshmi temple of Colva (Salcete) was destroyed by the Portuguese in the 16th century. *Ibid*, pp.98-108.

<sup>43</sup> Shakti cult can also be traced in Goa. Some scholars say that the Gavdas and Velips worshiped the Goddesses like Sateri, Bumika, Bauka and Kelbai. However the inscriptional evidence of the Shakti worship in Goa is available only from the Boja period only. The Aravale inscription refers to Shiva as Bhavanish, that is the Lord of Goddess Bhavani. The Chalukyas paid homage to Saptamatrikas. The Silahas and the Kadambas of Goa were the devotees

of Mahalaximi of Kolhapur. In Goa we can trace Mahalaximi temples in Netravali (Sanguem), Bandivade (Ponda), and Colva (Salcete). Mahishasuramardini is said to have become the epitome of shakti worship in Goa and she is considered to be Sateri, Shantadurga, Mahamaya, Ela (Parvati), Kamakshi, Arya Durga and Nava-durga. Today there is no division between the Vaishnavism and Shaivism in the shakti cult. *Ibid*, pp.113-114.

<sup>44</sup> Like Buddhism and Jainism, Nath cult was not a revolt against Vedic religion. It is reported that Nath cult is said to have spread in Goa by c. 1200 A. D. Nath Panthis were worshipers of various forms of Shiva. It is said Chandranath and Nagnath were worshiped in Goa before Nath Panth arrived on the scene. It appears that the local deities were assimilated into Shaivism through the Nath Panth. In the similar fashion, Ravalnath and Ramnath who were Shaivite deities got integrated into the Nath Panthi fold. Nath Path was wide spread from the North to South. The shrines of Adinath have been reported in Goa. The Nath Panth shrine of Mallinath on the island of Chudamani (Chorao Tiswadi). After its destruction in the 16th century it was reconsecrated at Marcel in Ponda taluka. There were two shrines of Nath Pathis; Matsyendranath and Gorakhnath. The abode of Nath yogis was called a Math (Monastery). Madgao was called mathgram on account of this Math and not on account of the Math of the Vaishnavite that belonged to the Devaita sect and one that was in the later 15th century and shifted to Partagal after the establishment of the Portuguese Power. Nath Panthis cut rock caves in Diwar, Pilar in Tiswadi, Khandepar, Iswarbhat, Kodar in Ponda, Salulim canal caves, Dharbandoda caves in Sanguem, Aquem and Malangini in Salcete. See *Ibid*, 114-117.

<sup>45</sup> The lower strata of the Goan Society worshiped spirits. They are namely Mharu, Joting, Devchar. The chief of all spirits was called B(V)etal. The Tall image of Vetal is called Betal and a shorter image is called Vetal. The temples of Betal lined the entire Coastal length of Goa from Paliem and Alorna in the North to Betul in the South. His main shrines are in Assolna, Chinchinim, Carmona, Colva, Utorda and Arossim. Chinchinim had two temples; in one he was honored as Betal and in the other he was worshiped as Aguiobetal (fiery Betal). In Bardez, he was regarded as the gramdevta or village God of Arjuna, Arpora, Calangute, Nagoa, Siolim, Saligao, Pilerne and Nerul. In Serul he was upgraded to Mukidevata or Chief God. See Antonio Mascarenas, *Goa From Pre-historic Times*

(Vasco, 1987), p.16. Betal later got associated with Shaivism.

<sup>46</sup> There is a shrine of Mallikarjun at Shristal near Canacona in South Goa. This shrine is associated with the backward community called Velips. Four months in a year one of the Velips acts as a priest and rest of the year Chitpavan Brahmins officiate as priests. Antonio Macarenhas in his book, *Goa from Pre-historic times*, states that Malik Arjun is a Shaivite deity and was associated with the kundbis tribe. See *Ibid*, p.20.

<sup>47</sup> Sateri is a earth Goddess that was symbolically worshiped at the ant hill in Goa. She became a gramdevi. Sateri of Pilerne is called Pilemkarin in Naroa, in Fatorpa she is honored as Fatorpin and exiled Kunkolkarin of the neighbouring village is in separate shrine. Kutorkarin of Kurtorim is unforgotten in Avedem of Quepem Taluka. As time passed Sateri got Sanskritized with Durga and became Shanta-durga. See R. Mitragotri, *Socio Cultural history of Goa from Bhojas to Vijaynagar*, pp.135-137.

<sup>48</sup> Many of the God's worshiped in ancient Goa do not belong to the main stream Hindu pantheon but appear to be steadily accommodated within it through the passage of time. Besides there seem to be an erasure of some elements of history. Thus for instance, Today there is a interest in the formidable 'Sangma' dynasty that is said to have originated in Sanguem Goa whose kingdom reached up to Hospet in Karnataka. This sangam dynasty had its origin among the chieftains of the 'gavlli' community of Sanguem. The five brothers who founded the Sangma dynasty established Anagod in Karnataka as their capital and christened their kingdom as vijaynagara. The Sangma bothers belonged the Kurubal cult that worshiped Goats. <http://royalprobitry.blogspot.in/2012/01/vijayanagara-kingdom-and-goas-sangam.html> accessed on 24th Jan 2014.

<sup>49</sup> See Delio de Mendonca, *Conversions and Citizenry: Goa under Portugal 1510-1610*, p.41. David Lorenzen goes further to state that the word Hinduism became common in English only in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See David N Lorenzen, "Who Invented Hinduism?" P. 632.

<sup>50</sup> See Noel Sheth, "Conflict and Reconciliation between Hindu Deities Vishnu and Shiva" in Kuruvilla Pandikattu and Andreas Vonach, Eds., *Religion, Society and Economics : Eastern and Western Perspectives in Dialogue*, European University Series 23, Theology, Vol. 758 ( Frankfurt am Main; Peter Lang, 2003).

<sup>51</sup> See R. Mitragotri, *Socio Cultural history of Goa from Bhojas to Vijaynagar*, p. 108.

<sup>52</sup> See Victor Ferrao, "Hermeneutics of Authenticity

and Edward Said" in George Panthanmackel, Ed., *Authentic existence, a Philosophical Probe* (Bangalore : Asia Trading Co-operation, 2012), p 381.

<sup>53</sup> See Felix Wilfred, *From the Dusty Soil: Contextual Re-interpretation of Christianity* (Madras: Department of Christian Studies, 1995), pp. 2-3.

<sup>54</sup> Some seminarians of Rachol did a special study of the enclave tourism of the Israeli Tourists in Goa and published in the Book, *Claiming the Right to say No*. See ----- *Claiming the Right to Say No: A Study on Israeli Tourists Behavior and Patterns* (Panjim: Council for Social Justice and Peace, 2009). Also Fr Donato's paper on the ethics of Tourism, presented in a National Seminar in moral theology, at De Nobile College Pune in Oct. 2012 is another attempt to build a theological response to Tourism. See Donato Rodrigues,, "Ethics and Tourism: the Ethical Challenges of Tourism in Goa" Mimeograph notes , Oct. 2012.

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.digitalgoa.com/eg\\_disp.php?cid=25&typ=eg](http://www.digitalgoa.com/eg_disp.php?cid=25&typ=eg), accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> June 26, 2013.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.cseindia.org/node/386> accessed on 29 June 2013.

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.vanashakti.in/Goa.pdf> accessed on 29 June 2013.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.cseindia.org/node/386> accessed on 29 June 2013. Also see <http://www.vanashakti.in/Goa.pdf> accessed on 29 June 2013.

<sup>60</sup> [http://old.cseindia.org/programme/industry/mining/1district\\_goa.htm](http://old.cseindia.org/programme/industry/mining/1district_goa.htm) accessed on 29 June 2013.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>62</sup> I made the first attempt in my Book, *Being a Goan Christian*. See Victor Ferrao, *Being a Goan Christian: the Politics of Identity, Rift and Synthesis* (Panjim: Broadway Publishers, 2011). The Pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Goa on the occasion of the golden jubilee of liberation of Goa in 2011 is also a very important starting point to developing a theological response to mining in Goa.

<sup>63</sup> T. R. De Souza , *Medieval Goa: Socio-Economic History* (New Delhi; Concept Publishing Co, 1979), pp.54-55.

<sup>64</sup> There already few studies about Goan Diaspora. See Stella Mascarenhas, *Colonialism, Migration and the International Catholic Goan Community* (Saligao: Goa 1556, 2011), Also See Selma Carvalho, *Into the Diaspora wilderness: Goa's Untold Stories from British Empire to the New World* (Panjim: Broadway Publications, 2010).

## ***Religio-Cultural Conditions***

### **GALILEO BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD OF SCIENCE**

\* Sem. Stevan Crasto

#### **Introduction**

Galileo Galilei, an astronomer, physicist, mathematician, and inventor, is one of the most famous scientists of all time. He was born in Pisa, Italy. At first, Galileo enrolled in the University of Pisa to earn a medical degree, but he switched his focus to mathematics. Galileo was a proponent of the heliocentric theory of the universe, which was an unpopular theory at the time because it was disapproved of by the Roman Catholic Church and believed to be false by the majority of people. Galileo stood trial for heresy in 1633 after he published his book, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, which discussed the theory of heliocentrism. Because the heliocentric model was in direct contrast with the Church's view, Galileo was forced to withdraw many of his theories and spent the last years of his life under house arrest. Galileo's works were banned from being reprinted until 1718, which was over 60 years after his death. While he was under house arrest, Galileo went blind but he continued to invent and theorize.

#### **Views and Theories of Universe**

##### ***A) Heliocentric View***

Astronomy until the 1400s was dominated by the idea that Earth stood at the centre of the universe; this was called the Ptolemaic system, after Claudius Ptolemy, a Roman astronomer who worked circa 150 CE. He is considered the last of the great ancient astronomers, and he took the astronomical

systems developed by the ancient Greeks, such as Pythagoras and Aristotle. These Greeks argued that the planets<sup>1</sup>, the moon, the sun, and the stars circled the Earth. There were, however, problems with the notion that the planets orbited the Earth as did the sun and moon; their behaviour through the heavens is not one of constant motion but of jerky motion, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another. This phenomenon is known as retrograde motion, and occurs only among the planets with orbits exterior to Earth's — Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the other outer planets discovered since the 1700s.

The man that we credit today with the heliocentric system (with the Sun at the centre of the solar system) is Nicolas Copernicus, a Polish canon of the late 15th and early 16th centuries. What Copernicus did with his theory was place all objects — Earth, sun, moon, the planets — in orbit, not of the sun or the earth, but around an unseen point in space. This created an incredibly messy system, for Ptolemy's system required forty flycycles to account for all observed motions, while the Copernican system required *forty-eight* flycycles since the Earth now orbited the point on its own system of flycycles.

Galileo didn't so much refashion the Copernican system into the current heliocentric model so much as he misinterpreted it. If anyone deserves the true credit for the heliocentric system, it would Johannes Kepler and not Galileo; Kepler

fashioned the three laws of planetary motion, based on the assumption that the sun sat at the centre of the solar system and the planets carved out ellipses around the Sun. Galileo's role in these events is his use of the telescope, until this time used only for land observations, in the study of the heavens; he made the discovery of the Galilean satellites of Jupiter (Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto). It was for the discovery that he was placed on trial, as these bodies, which clearly did not orbit the earth, altered the unchanging nature of the heavens. Now, the discovery of the Galilean satellites is seen as confirming the Copernican system, though at the time it was seen as a great heresy, and Galileo was forced to recant his discovery. If Galileo did anything counter-intuitive, it was his use of the telescope to observe the heavens, not creating the heliocentric model. While he did argue for it, he also tried to make the heliocentric model fit under the Christian doctrinal beliefs regarding the heavens.

#### **B) Controversy over Heliocentrism**

Biblical references text stating that "the world is firmly established, it cannot be moved."<sup>2</sup> In the same manner, Psalm 104:5<sup>3</sup>. Further, Ecclesiastes 1:5 states that "And the sun rises and sets and returns to its place." Galileo defended heliocentrism, and claimed it was not contrary to those Scripture passages. He took Augustine's position on Scripture: not to take every passage literally, particularly when the scripture in question is a book of poetry and songs, not a book of instructions or history. He believed that the writers of the Scripture merely wrote from the perspective of the terrestrial world, from that vantage point that the sun does rise and set. Another way to put this is that the writers would have been writing from a phenomenological point of view, or style. So Galileo claimed that science did not contradict Scripture, as Scripture was discussing a different kind of "movement" of the earth, and not rotations.

By 1616 the attacks on the ideas of Copernicus had reached a head, and Galileo went to Rome to try to persuade Catholic Church authorities not to ban Copernicus'

ideas. Galileo revived his project of writing a book on the subject, encouraged by the election of Cardinal Maffeo Barberini as Pope Urban VIII in 1623. Barberini was a friend and admirer of Galileo, and had opposed the condemnation of Galileo in 1616. The book<sup>4</sup> was published in 1632, with formal authorization from the Inquisition and papal permission. Pope Urban VIII had personally asked Galileo to give arguments for and against heliocentrism in the book, and to be careful not to advocate heliocentrism. He made another request, that his own views on the matter be included in Galileo's book. Only the latter of those requests was fulfilled by Galileo. Whether unknowingly or deliberately, Simplicio, the defender of the Aristotelian Geocentric view in *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, was often caught in his own errors and sometimes came across as a fool. Unfortunately for his relationship with the Pope, Galileo put the words of Urban VIII into the mouth of Simplicio. However, the Pope did not take the suspected public ridicule lightly, nor the Copernican advocacy.

Galileo had alienated one of his biggest and most powerful supporters, the Pope, and was called to Rome to defend his writings. In September 1632, Galileo was ordered to come to Rome to stand trial. He finally arrived in February 1633 and was brought before inquisitor Vincenzo Maculani to be charged. Throughout his trial Galileo steadfastly maintained that since 1616 he had faithfully kept his promise not to hold any of the condemned opinions, and initially he denied even defending them. In view of Galileo's rather implausible denial that he had ever held Copernican ideas after 1616 or ever intended to defend them in the *Dialogue*, his final interrogation, in July 1633, concluded with his being threatened with torture if he did not tell the truth, but he maintained his denial despite the impending threats. The sentence of the Inquisition was delivered on June 22. And he was sentenced to house arrest.

#### **Discoveries**

##### **Jupiter**

On 7 January 1610, Galileo observed with

his telescope what he described at the time as “three fixed stars, totally invisible by their smallness”, all close to Jupiter, and lying on a straight line through it. Observations on subsequent nights showed that the positions of these “stars” relative to Jupiter were changing in a way that would have been inexplicable if they had really been fixed stars. On 10 January, Galileo noted that one of them had disappeared, an observation which he attributed to its being hidden behind Jupiter. Within a few days, he concluded that they were orbiting Jupiter. He had discovered three of Jupiter’s four largest satellites (moons). He discovered the fourth on 13 January. Galileo named the group of four the *Medicean stars*, in honour of his future patron, Cosimo II de’ Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and Cosimo’s three brothers. Later astronomers, however, renamed them *Galilean satellites* in honour of their discoverer. These satellites are now called Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto.

His observations of the satellites of Jupiter caused a revolution in astronomy that reverberates to this day: a planet with smaller planets orbiting it did not conform to the principles of Aristotelian Cosmology, which held that all heavenly bodies should circle the Earth, and many astronomers and philosophers initially refused to believe that Galileo could have discovered such a thing. His observations were confirmed by the observatory of Christopher Clavius and he received a hero’s welcome when he visited Rome in 1611. Galileo continued to observe the satellites over the next eighteen months, and by mid-1611, he had obtained remarkably accurate estimates for their periods—a feat which Kepler had believed impossible.

#### **Sunspots**

Galileo was one of the first Europeans to observe sunspots, although Kepler had unwittingly observed one in 1607, but mistook it for a transit of Mercury. He also reinterpreted a sunspot observation from the time of Charlemagne, which formerly had been attributed (impossibly) to a transit of Mercury. The very existence of sunspots showed another difficulty with the unchanging

perfection of the heavens as posited in orthodox Aristotelian celestial physics. And the annual variations in sunspots’ motions, discovered by Francesco Sizzi and others in 1612–1613, provided a powerful argument against both the Ptolemaic system and the geoheliocentric system of Tycho Brahe. A dispute over priority in the discovery of sunspots, and in their interpretation, led Galileo to a long and bitter feud with the Jesuit Christoph Scheiner; in fact, there is little doubt that both of them were beaten by David Fabricius and his son Johannes. Scheiner quickly adopted Kepler’s 1615 proposal of the modern telescope design, which gave larger magnification at the cost of inverted images; Galileo apparently never changed to Kepler’s design.

#### **Moon**

Prior to Galileo’s construction of his version of a telescope, Thomas Harriot, an English mathematician and explorer, had already used what he dubbed a “perspective tube” to observe the moon. Reporting his observations, Harriot noted only “strange spottednesse” in the waning of the crescent. Galileo, due in part to his artistic training and the knowledge of chiaroscuro, had understood the patterns of light and shadow were in fact topological markers. While not being the only one to observe the moon through a telescope, Galileo was the first to deduce the cause of the uneven waning as light occlusion from lunar mountains and craters. In his study he also made topological charts, estimating the heights of the mountains. The moon was not what was long thought to have been a translucent and perfect sphere, as Aristotle claimed, and hardly the first “planet”, an “eternal pearl to magnificently ascend into the heavenly empyrian”, as put forth by Dante.

#### **Milky Way and stars**

Galileo observed the Milky Way, previously believed to be nebulous, and found it to be a multitude of stars packed so densely that they appeared from Earth to be clouds. He located many other stars too distant to be visible with the naked eye. He observed the double star Mizar in Ursa Major in 1617. In the *Starry Messenger*, Galileo reported that

stars appeared as mere blazes of light, essentially unaltered in appearance by the telescope, and contrasted them to planets, which the telescope revealed to be discs. But shortly thereafter, in his letters on sunspots, he reported that the telescope revealed the shapes of both stars and planets to be “quite round”. From that point forward, he continued to report that telescopes showed the roundness of stars, and that stars seen through the telescope measured a few seconds of arc in diameter. He also devised a method for measuring the apparent size of a star without a telescope.

### Philosophical Implication

The early traditions held the view that the Earth was the centre of the universe and thus human beings claimed to have a central and important place in universe. As the Church taught that man was the crown of creation it was believed that everything was made for men. However, when the geo-centric view was being dismissed and the heliocentric view was being accepted, human beings were losing their place of pride and importance. Earth became just an ordinary planet like others. The religious beliefs came to be challenged and thus people began to feel that religion was fooling the people with all sorts of imaginations. Thus, there came a rift between science and religion as science depended on observation and phenomenal realities. This led to the growth of tension between science and religion. This conflict also caused political tensions in the state as the church held political rule. People were confused and did not know which view to hold. Thus arose secularism and humanism in the medieval renaissance period and science began to dominate. Slowly this led to rise of atheism and religion was more and more challenged.

### Conclusion.

Today the most accepted view of the universe is the heliocentric view of Galileo and the studies that he made on the planets have been useful to the present generations. Though Galileo tried to measure the size of

the planets he did not realise that his method would be insufficient. With the invention of highly advanced telescopes now it is possible to determine the not only the size of planets but also observe them more closely. His discovery of the Milky Way invoked a desire to know it further and thus we have humans going into the space and doing research on cosmic secrets. We want know more and more of what is there outside the earth and beyond whether earth is the only planet holding life or not. Thus the discoveries of Galileo were important. The church realised how wrong it was to punish such a great man and thus Pope John Paul II begged forgiveness for such a crime and injustice from the church towards Galileo.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Which at this time were known only as far as Saturn.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 93:1, 96:10, and 1 Chronicles 16:30

<sup>3</sup> “the Lord set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.”

<sup>4</sup> *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*

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**Galileo Galilei**  
(1564-1642)



# God of Philosophers

\* Sem. Melito D'Costa

## Introduction

We can know God in many ways. Jean Danielou in his book '*God – and the ways of knowing*'<sup>1</sup> brings out six different notions of God. He speaks of God of the religions, God of the Philosophers, God of the Faith, the God of Jesus Christ, the God of the Church and the God of the Mystics. In this paper we shall focus on 'the God of the Philosophers' and seek to raise a fundamental question whether such a view of God allows any meaningful relationship with humanity, that is, we wish to ask – Is the God of philosophers – The Most Perfect, The Highest Good of Plato, The Unmoved Mover of Aristotle, is a God of communion?

In this paper we shall dwell on the Brahman of Sankara, the Being of Spinoza and the Absolute mind of Hegel and illustrate the fundamental incapacity of relationship in the God of the philosophers.

## The Brahman of Sankara<sup>2</sup>

The Advaita Vedanta of Sankara is one of the most popular philosophy of India. It is also known as 'maya-veda' meaning the theory of illusion. God according to Sankara, can be conceived from two different points of view.

If we look at God from the ordinary practical standpoint from which the world is believed to be real, God may be regarded as a cause,



the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of the world. He appears to possess all these qualities. God in this aspect is called Saguna Brahman or Ishvara. He is the object of worship.

Brahman from the higher or transcendental point of view, paramarthikadristi, cannot be described by qualities which relate to the world. Brahman in this aspect is devoid of all qualities. It is this absolutely transcendental aspect that Sankara calls the Brahman. Brahman cannot be described at all and it is, therefore, called indeterminate, characterless or Nirguna. Sankara's conception of God, as Parabrahman or Nirguna Brahman differs from the God or Religion, that is, God conceived as an object of worship, distinct from the worshippers and endowed with the highest attributes.

Thus Sankara's Brahman is not a personal God but an absolute and nirguna philosopher's God with whom common people can have no relation with.

## The Being of Spinoza<sup>3</sup>

'*The Ethics*' is a work of ethical philosophy by Spinoza. Its ultimate aim is to aid us in the attainment of happiness, which is to be found in the intellectual love of God. For Spinoza God is the infinite, necessarily existing (that is, uncaused), unique substance of the universe. There is only one substance in the universe; it is God; and everything else is in God. "Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God." Those things are 'in' God (or, more precisely, in



God's attributes) are what Spinoza calls modes.

Spinoza was excommunicated from the Jewish community as he defined God as "God existing in only a philosophical sense." Spinoza was against the anthropomorphizing of the divine being. In the scholium, he writes against those who feign a God, like man, consisting of a body and a mind, and subject to passions.

According to the traditional Judeo-Christian conception of divinity, God is a transcendent creator, a being who causes a world distinct from himself to come into being by creating it out of nothing. God produces that world by a spontaneous act of free will and could just as easily have not created anything outside him. By contrast, Spinoza's God is the cause of all things because all things follow causally and necessarily from the Divine nature. The existence of the world is mathematically necessary. It is impossible that God should exist but not the world. This does not mean that God does not cause the world to come into being freely, since nothing outside of God constrains him to bring it into existence. Spinoza advocates that in nature there is nothing contingent, but all things have been determined from the necessity of the divine Nature to exist and produce an effect in a certain way.

Spinoza's Being is an impersonal being who cannot be related with. We can only believe that we are 'in' God as Spinoza puts it, thus there is no personal relationship.

### The Absolute Mind of Hegel <sup>4</sup>

Compared to other Philosophers, it is difficult and harder to understand Hegel. He differs from Parmenides and Spinoza in conceiving the whole, not as a simple substance, but as a complex substance like an organism. Hegel calls, 'The Whole' in all its complexity as 'The Absolute'.

The Absolute is not a Being separate from the world, nature or even individual persons, thus not making a sharp distinction between appearance and reality as in Plato's Philosophy. In Hegel's view, nothing is unrelated and whatever we experience as separate things, will upon careful reflection, lead us to the other things to which they are related, until at last, it will end in the knowledge of the Absolute. The Absolute is not the unity of separate things. He never accepted Spinoza's view that, everything is one. But, Hegel describes the Absolute as a dynamic process, as an organism having parts but nevertheless, unified into a complex system. Therefore, the Absolute is not an entity which is separate from the world as Kant's noumena, but it is in the world in a special way.



Hegel's Absolute mind is a complex system which is beyond the grasp of common people.

### Conclusion

We have dwelt on just three of the notions of God given by three philosophers. The God of the philosophers is abstract and no personal relationship is possible. The God

of the philosophers is so self-absorbed in his perfection that everything is assimilated in him and there cannot be anything distinct from him. Thus, to know God is not to hold Him in the intellect but on the contrary to rediscover one-self as measured by Him. We have similar abstract notions of God, like God is the unmoved mover, God is the Efficient cause, God is the Unproduced Producer, God is the Uncaused Cause and many others. Finally what philosophy can assert of God is that He is pre-eminently the being in whom the reality of all things is exhausted. Reason does not give us a God with whom we can relate but can we throw away reason from the scheme of things? No, reason is necessary in exercising the knowledge of God. Nothing is more dangerous than to claim that a certain religion has outdistanced reason; it can only lead to fanaticism, illuminism; it is lost in a jungle of superstition. Above all, it runs a risk

of being an idle solution. It claims to find mystery where there may only be ignorance.

A God whom reason dominates would be neither a personal God nor a transcendent God. It is by affirming at the same time that He exists and that he surpasses reason, that reason itself knows Him to be God indeed. A more perfect knowledge of Him would only be His free gift<sup>5</sup>.

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Jean Dan Ielou, *God – and the way of knowing* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1957), 52.

<sup>2</sup> S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (Kolkata: Calcutta University Press, 2004), 387.

<sup>3</sup> George Edayal, "The Ethics," *Modern Western Philosophy* (December 2010): 19.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Y. S. Gowramma, "The concept of Absolute," *Modern Western Philosophy* (December 2010): 31.

<sup>5</sup> Jacques Martain, *Approaches de Dieu* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1952), 66.

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"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee."

- John Donne, *No Man Is An Island*

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# Religious Experiences and Mysticism

\* Sem. Mathew Almeida

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Every person in the world believes in a supernatural being or God. Everyone follows and practices a religion which has its own beliefs and rituals. It is, therefore, worth knowing that every religion begins with a Religious Experience by the founder of the religion. Every Religious Experience is a unique event and different from the other. In this paper I have made an attempt to understand Religious Experience in four major religions; Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. So also I have attempted to explain mysticism and the mystic movements in these religions.

## 2. RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

### 2.1 Definition

To define religious experience we need to know the meaning of religion and experience. It is difficult to define what religion is and to put it in fixed words. However the etymology is derived from the Latin word 'religare' meaning to bind together. Religion truly binds a group of people together under certain sets of beliefs and customs. Experience is a lasting memory of an event that makes an impact on our lives. Thus we could define religious experience in these following words: "Religious experiences can be characterized generally as experiences that seem to the person having them to be of some objective reality and to have some religious import.

That reality can be an individual, a state of affairs, a fact, or even an absence, depending on the religious tradition the experience is a part of. A wide variety of kinds of experience fall under the general rubric of religious experience."<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 Religious experiences in different religions

Different religions have different founders and they have their own religious experience. Let us briefly look at some of them.

#### 2.2.a Hinduism

Though Hinduism does not have a particular founder, we are aware of the different schools and sects of Hinduism. Thus the religious experience differs according to the sects or schools of thought. For the Advaita Vedantins founded by Sankara the realization of Brahman is the religious experience. This experience is fulfilled when one realizes that he is Brahman (tatvam asi)<sup>2</sup>. In realizing that oneself is God and this world is an illusion is the point of one's liberation. Most of the Advaitins believe that Siva is Brahman. The Visistadvaita school founded by Ramanuja, God is a separate independent soul and human soul is a dependent on Brahman. The reality is one but having duality due to the independent Brahmin and dependant human soul. Most of the followers of this school believe that Visnu is Brahman.

These people thus believe in the incarnations of Visnu; the famous of these incarnations is Rama and Krisna.

#### 2.2.b Buddhism

Gautama was depressed and was in search of answers about this life and the world. Thus he renounced the whole world and set under a piple tree to meditate. After a long time he is believed to get enlightened that this world is just a prison and that the body causes suffering to the soul. Therefore, he felt that meditation is the best way to liberation. This was a religious experience for him and he began preaching this path to all those around him.

#### 2.2.c Islam

Mohammed was a simple trader. The people around him were polytheists and idol worshippers. as it is said that an angel( Gabriel) of All'lah appeared to him and gave him the Qura'an.<sup>3</sup> It is said that he was lifted in the sky from Jerusalem by the angel Gabriel and thus he was given the Qura'an. This is the religious experience of Mohammed that made him establish the Islamic religion.

#### 2.2.d Christianity

Though the story of Christianity is well known to everyone it is worth recalling how Christianity was established and how it survived the long persecution of 300 years under the Roman Empire. Jesus of Nazareth son of a Jewish carpenter began preaching repentance and performing miracles. He was arrested and crucified on charges of claiming himself as Son of God and the king of the

Jews. He had a band of twelve followers who were afraid. Three days after the death of Jesus they suddenly came out and began preaching that Jesus is risen from the dead and they stuck on to this belief even in the midst of severe persecution.

So we have seen the different religious experiences in some of the major world religions. This experience led o the spread of the beliefs by those who had it.

### **3. MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE AND MYSTICISM**

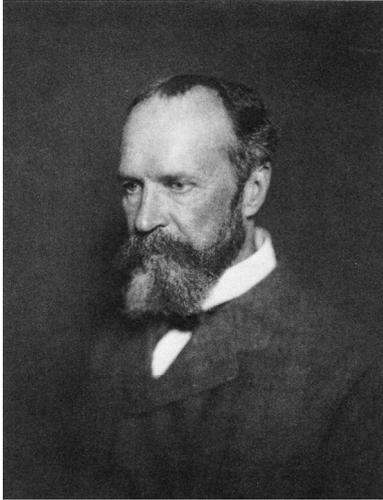
#### **3.1 Definition**

Mystical experiences tend to be experiences felt or experienced beyond the realms of ordinary consciousness. Occasionally they are referred to as states of altered consciousness (Altered States of Consciousness). Such states may involve ineffable awareness of time, space, and physical reality. Mystical experiences often defy physical description, and can best be only hinted at.<sup>4</sup> It is yet another part of religious experience that keeps the religion alive. It is the deepest form of religious experience.

#### **3.2 Views of William James on Mysticism**

William James would say that mysticism is the highest religious experience. In mysticism a person receives direct experience of God. He gives the four marks of mystical experience.<sup>5</sup>

- a) Ineffability- At this mark the subject says that it defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be



given in words. It follows from it that its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others. In this peculiarity mystical states are more like states of feeling than like states of intellect.

- b) Noetic quality- Although so similar to states of feeling, mystical states seem to those who experience them to be also states of knowledge. They are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for afterlife.
- c) Transiency-Mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade into the light of common day. Often, when faded, their quality can but imperfectly be reproduced in memory; but when they

recur it is recognized; and from one recurrence to another it is susceptible of continuous development in what is felt as inner richness and importance.

- d) Passivity- Although the oncoming of mystical states may be facilitated by preliminary voluntary operations, as by fixing the attention, or going through certain bodily performances, or in other ways which manuals of mysticism prescribe; yet when the characteristic sort of consciousness once has set in, the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power.

### 3.3 Mysticism in the major religions

We shall now see how the major religions mentioned above look at mysticism .

#### 3.3.a Hinduism

As mentioned above the religious experience differs according to the schools of thought and sects in Hinduism and therefore it is difficult to bring them on one line. However there is the most famous Hindu mystic movement called the Bhakti movement started by Mirabai, a devotee of Vishnu, who denied to have any relationship with men and took Krishna, one of the incarnations of Vishnu, as her husband. She went on singing to Krishna. She also claimed to have visions of Krishna. Bhakti movement stressed more on devotion to god than to perform many rituals.

#### 3.3.b Buddhism

Though Buddhism in its origin was Atheistic, that is, there was no belief in

God. However, as Buddhism developed, it started to consider Buddha as God and the concept of Bodddhisatva developed in the reformed sect of Buddhism called the Mahayana<sup>6</sup>. Bodddhisatva is person who is enlightened and receives the mystical experience of Buddha, however he delays his Nirvana in order to help other people to reach the knowledge of Nirvana and attain liberation. Thus he is called the enlightened soul.

### 3.3.c Islam

In Islam the Sufi movement is well known mystical movement. Sufism is the name commonly given to the mystical tradition in Islam that arose from Shiite belief. It has been marked by extensive borrowing from other mystical religious practices- Christianity, Buddhist and Neoplatonic<sup>7</sup>- and by the great literary flowering it inspired. Many of the most famous Persian poets( eg. Jami and Rumi) were Sufis, as were some of Islam's most important philosophers (eg. al-Ghazali and ibn al-Arabi).

### 3.3.d Christianity

Christianity is well known for many mystics. Some of them are St Teresa of Child Jesus, St John of the Cross and Padre Pio. In Christianity, these saints are believed to have either got visions of Jesus or Virgin Mary. Some are claimed to have experienced immense suffering and pain and some have been stigmatized due to these pains. Some of the mystics have written down their mystical journeys and what they experienced, however, at one point they say that this experience is inexpressible.

## **4. CRTICAL APPARAISAL**

As some thinkers have questioned the authenticity of mystical experiences, let us look at some of the criticisms laid down against this concept.

If mystical experience is direct experience of God, then why does it differ from one person to another? Meaning, why does one experience Krishna and someone else experience Jesus? Some critics have concluded saying that since all mystics do not experience God as he is, such an experience must be mediated. But some critics have gone to the extent of saying that such an experience is just a result of suppressed emotions and desires. The psychologists suggest that since the person undergoes persecution and oppression he creates a path for himself in spirituality to release these negative feelings<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, whatever visions or feelings they undergo is just hallucination. Thus there is really no mystical experience so called.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Religious experience is unique and different to every religion. Thus today thinkers talk in terms of religious pluralism. Mystical experiences provide as boosts for the survival of the religion. In response to the criticisms, many religions, especially, Christianity (The Catholic Church in this regard) started investigating such experiences and followed certain steps to test whether they are authentic or not. According to the personal opinion of many people, they felt that if God exists and if some people do get mystical experience, then it should

give some signs, in other words if there is a spiritual reality it has to be manifested in some way in the physical reality too. Thus the concept of miracles or wondrous signs comes in. If at all mystical experiences are true. They have to be tested and checked. However, an experience is personal to oneself and no one can change one's conviction and belief. Hence we can see how, across all religions, there is a transcendent drive in all of us in search of communion with the transcendent.

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Information available on internet; *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "Religious Experience," ( accessed on 14 January 2014), available from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/religious-experience/>

<sup>2</sup> Satishchandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta, *An Introduction To Indian Philosophy*, (Kolkata: Calcutta University, 2004), pg 387-392.

<sup>3</sup> Information taken from, *Islam*, article online (accessed on 14 January 2014) available from <http://www.greenstar.org/Islam/>

<sup>4</sup> Information online, *Mysticism*, article online (accessed on 12 January 2014) available from [http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/m/mystical\\_experiences.html](http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/m/mystical_experiences.html)

<sup>5</sup> Baruch A.B.Rody, *Reading In The Philosophy Of Religion*, (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1974), pg 478-479.

<sup>6</sup> William .G.Oxloby, *World Religions*,

(Canada: Oxford University Press, 2002) pg 128.

<sup>7</sup> *The Reader's Adviser, Philosophy And World Religions: Islam*, vol 4 ( New York: R.R.Bowker Company, 1988) pg 429 and 433.

<sup>8</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, (New York: Meridia Books, 1974) pg 44-45.

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# Mahadeva Temple, Tambdi Surla

\* Sem. Clive Diniz

## Introduction

Six or seven hundred years ago, the Goan coast and its hinterland were scattered with scores of richly carved stone temples belonging to many cults and religions. Only one, though, came through the Muslim onslaught and religious bigotry of the Portuguese era unscathed. Erected in the twelfth or thirteenth century, the tiny Mahadeva temple at Tambdi Surla owes its survival to its remote location in a tranquil clearing deep in the forest at the foot of the Western Ghats, which enfold the site in a sheer wall of impenetrable vegetation. The river Surla flows nearby. It is the most ancient temple in whole of Goa and was built in the twelfth century by Hemadri, the minister of the Yadava King Ramachandra. The Jain style construction has led to debates about the origin of the temple, since the Kadamba Dynasty ruled Goa between the tenth and fourteenth centuries. The temple is built in a place which is quite, inaccessible and away from the main settlements of the time. The size of the temple is quite small as compared to the size of the average Goan temple. This also reveals about the size of some of the temples that were destroyed by the Muslims and the Portuguese. The top part of the temple has never been completed. The small, beautifully carved and perfectly proportional black basalt temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is reminiscent of the temples of Aihole in neighbouring Karnataka. It is considered to be the only specimen of Kadamba – Yadava architecture in basalt stone preserved and available in Goa.

## Location

The temple is near a small village called Tambdi Surla, located 13km east of Bolcornem village, in the northeast region of the Bhagwan Mahaveer Sanctuary and Mollem National Park. Mahadev temple is approximately 65km from capital city of Panaji. It is accessible from the north via minor roads 22km south from the main town of Valpoi in Sattari taluka. The temple is at the foot of Anmod Ghat, which connects Goa to the state of Karnataka.

## History

The temple was built by Hemadri, the minister of the Yadava King Ramachandra. The Jain Style construction has led to debates about the origins of the temple, since the Kadamba Dynasty ruled Goa between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The temple is built in Hemadpanthi style from grey black talc chlorite schist soap stone, carried across the mountains from the Deccan Plateau and carved craftsmen. Its weather resistant properties make the handwork adorning the walls of temple still seem fresh. It is considered to be the only specimen of Kadamba-Yadava architecture preserved and available in Goa. The temple survived the invasions and the Goa inquisition due to its remote location in deep forest at the foot of Western Ghats.

## Religious significance

Facing East – so that the rays of the rising sun light its deity at dawn. The temple is composed of a Mandapa, or pillared porch, with three stepped entrances, a small

antaralhaya (vestibule) and garbhagriha (shrine) surmounted by a three-tiered sanctuary tower, or shikhara. The tower's top section has collapsed, giving the temple a rather stumpy appearance, but the carving on its upper sections is still in good shape. There are beautiful bas-reliefs that project from the sides. Punctuating the four cardinal points, these depict the Gods of the Hindu trinity, Shiva (north), Vishnu (west) and Brahma (south), with their respective consorts featured in the panels above. There are very beautiful bands of delicate carving that pattern the sides of the porch, capped with an oddly incongruous roof of plain grey sloping slabs.

After a purifying dip in the river Surla immediately east of the temple, the worshippers would proceed to the main mandapa, or porch, for darshan, the ritual viewing of the deity. In its centre stands a headless Nandi bull, Shiva's vahana, or vehicle, surrounded by four matching columns, one of whose bases bears a relief of an elephant trampling a horse – thought to symbolize the military might of Kadamba Dynasty. The building's finest single piece of stonework, however, has to be the intricate lotus motif carved out of the mandapa's ceiling. Flanked by four accessory deities that include a damaged dancing Goddess (left) and an elephant headed Ganesh (right), the pierced-stone screen surrounding the door of the vestibule comes a close second. The shrine itself houses a stone shivalingam, mounted on a pedestal.

### **Local Beliefs and Worship**

The local legend has it that a huge King Cobra is in permanent residence in the dimly lit interior. According to the folklore, the temple has an unfinished look as the Pandavas of Mahabharata built it in a hurry in a single night. The festival of Mahashivratri is celebrated with pomp and gaiety, at the

temple by local people residing in the surrounding villages. Hundreds of devotees assemble here during the festival of Mahashivratri in the month of February/ March.

### **Keeping Intact The Hindu Cultural Heritage**

In the temple "Agamic Puja" with all rituals is being conducted demonstrating that the much-adorned ancient Saivism has not lost its vitality, nor has bartered away its glory during the foreign rule. The Mahadev temple at Tambdi Surla where ancient traditions are followed serves as an example to this. The 12<sup>th</sup> century temple boasts of some fine relief's on the 'Shikhara' (spine) depicting a plethora of Gods and Goddesses.

### **Conclusion**

We have somewhat able to piece together a continuous politico-religious history of the Mahadev Temple of Tambdi Surla from the religious significance and artefacts dating back probably to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The little Mahadeva Temple is a witness to rich cultural heritage to a great extent, the heritage of Kadambas of Goa (1020 – 1345). Right through the Muslim and Portuguese conquests, the history continues down to the present day Goa state of the Indian Union.

We conclude that the Mahadev Temple has seen the footprints of the Neolithic man and the saffron robes of the Buddhist monks. It has witnessed the rise and fall of empires, dynasties, invasion and destructions. To add to this it has heard the chants of the monks, and witnessed local religious festivals. The glory and architectural wonder of this temple has come through the rigorous period of time to tell the world the value of its intricate handiwork as poignant memorial to the Goa's lost religious Architectural Legacy. The temple is a masterpiece of past and continues to mesmerize everyone even today.

# BETAL OF BETALBATIM

\* Aestrony Costa

## Introduction:

Goa is a beautiful, multi-cultural and multi-religious state of India. Although being the smallest state of a vast country it has contributed a lot towards the culture, traditions and folklore of it. Goa by itself is a rich state. And its richness lies in every nook and corner of it. Every town, every village of Goa has something unique, something special to give. They echo the historical events that took place in the distant past. They showcase different monuments which are standing from the time immemorial. Going back to the history, specially that of its religions, we find a number of deities which were of great importance in those days. They belonged to the different sects which existed then. History fully clarifies that they never belonged to any one religion. Historical evidences show that both male as well as female deities were worshipped. Most of the villages of Goa were named after these deities. Places like Siolim, Shiroda were named after Lord Shiva. Places like Betul, Betalbatim were named after Betal.

Betalbatim is a village located towards the west in the Salcete taluka. A village situated on the coastal belt of Goa. It was once a place where a deity named Betal was worshipped. He was called the grama devata of this beautiful and small village. Being a villager of this place which was once believed to be looked after by this deity which is now standing as a historical monument in the Archeological survey of Indian museum at Old Goa I have just tried to find a little more about it. While we have the theme of this year

Luceas is Church as a Communion, I Attempt to study hoe communion has been always present in Goa, since ancient times with the special reference to Betal cult in Betalbatim.

## Vetal or Betal ?

It is indeed very difficult to name this deity which was being worshipped from the time immemorial and is continued to be worshipped even today. The austric tribes called Gaudas were the worshippers of this deity. The term Vetal is considered to be of Austric origin and is thus a loan word in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit dictionary clearly mentions that Vetal is a non-Sanskrit word. This Austric term consists of two words *Bet*: bent stick and *La*: dig. Australoids brought the word Betal to Sanskrit and with the passage of time it has become Vetal. But some still claim that they are different. The tradition of Hadkon village in Ponda says that the taller image of Vetal is called Betal and the shorter ones are called Vetal. But both the images have similar features and they differ only in height. This tradition is considered to be non-historical as the interchange of *Ba* to *Va* is quite common in Indian Languages. It is also found that during the Vedic period along with non-Aryan Deities many non-Sanskrit words were also absorbed in Vedic Sanskrit. It is important to note that independent shrines of Betal with Betal in ages have not been reported from many parts of India except Goa and South Sindhudurg. Betal was thought to be a destroyer of storms and promoter of trade and commerce and is

said to be patronized in Goa by merchants during the Kadamba period.

#### **Non-historical Etymology of Betal:**

There were a quite a number of people who made attempts to find the actual meaning of the word Betal. Only some are taken into consideration. Even these are not considered to be historical ones. Following three are some of them:

1. There is an attempt made to associate the origin of the word to the Portuguese navigator Bartholomew and the navigator became Betal as both the names start with the letter 'B'.
2. The Rig Vedic word for plough *Langula* has austirc origin. *Langula* means bent stick or a digging stick which means Betla. *Langula* is associated with fertility just like the word *linga*. It may be noted that in Vetal sculptures phallus is shown in prominence indicating the fertility.
3. There is a view of the Sumerian origin of the word Vetal. According to this view the word Betal consists of *Bel* and *tal* which means a warrior in Sumerian Language.

#### **Description of the Betal sculpture of Betalbatim:**

The stone sculpture of Betal from Betalbatrim is presently at display in the Archeological Survey of Indian Museum at Old Goa. The head and hands of this sculpture are broken. The ribs are shown projecting and the image has unemaciated belly. He wears a necklace of *Naga* (cobra) and the head of the *naga* is shown as pendant. This association of Betal with naga (cobra) led some to interpret Betal as Shiva but it has been shown that it is associated with belief that Betal is Patalvasi (the resident of

the world below the earth which is the abode of the nagas. He wears a long necklace of skulls (*rundamala*) which riches below the knees. A scorpion is shown horizontally on the abdomen. The waist band (*Kantibanda*) is shown excessively broad and looks like a belt. On each side below this waist-belt a bell is suspended to a chain. The legs of this sculpture are cylindrical. Its thigh bones and knee-caps are not visible.

#### **Functions of the Deity:**

Betal is considered as the chief ghost and an Devchar. He is also a *grama devata* and therefore guardian of the village. He moves throughout the village at night and keeps vigil on the property of the devotees.

#### **Cult of Vetal:**

Like all the other deities vetal also had a cult associated to it by the people of that time. There was a wide variety in the worship of Vetal. It has evolved over time. Let us have a glance at the rituals that were performed during those days.

#### **Vetal Worship and Offerings:**

Occasionally devotees of Vetal offer cocks, goats and buffaloes to him. In Pernem, Sanguem and Sattari talukas a hunted animal was offered to Vetal and was later shared among the devotees. Vetal was worshipped on every Tuesday. In addition to Tuesday, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of every dark fortnight (*Krishna Paksha*) was for the worship of Vetal. He being the *grama devata* i.e. the guardian of the village, he would roam throughout the village during the night and so his sandals would get worn out. So the devotees would take a vow and offer him sandals. Annual fairs were celebrated in many of the temples

of Betal. These festivities commenced from *Asvina* (September-October) and continued upto *Phalgun* (March –April).

#### **Priests:**

Priests for Vetal worship were mostly non-Brahmins. This was so because no elaborate mantras were necessary for the worship of Vetal. Hence, there was no need of a Brahmin priest well versed in scripture. The priests for Betal worship were mostly Guravs, Ghadi, jalmi and Ravals. Although at a certain stage in 1200 AD the Betal cult was Sanskritized in Goa, still his popularity as a village deity of the non-bramins did not diminish. Hence, even when a Chitpavan Brahmins were acting as priest in a Betal temple the Ghadi or the Jalmi still remained indispensable one of the rituals performed during the Jatra (fari) was self-torture like fire walking or hook swinging taken up voluntarily by the devotees. It was a way of pleasing the deity and it was believed that the deity

thereby would protect the devotee from all kinds of calamities.

#### **Conclusion:**

This short study attempts to manifest how a local deity Betal kept the people together. In fact it gave its name to villages like Betalbatim and Betul, strengthening the bonds of 'we feeling' among the villagers. Today, Betalbatim does not exhibit a Betal cult, but the villagers are still bound by the oneness of the 'we feeling' generated by the Betal cult of their ancestor. Unfortunately with growth of tourism, materialism and secularism has begun to erode these profound bonds in our village. It may hope that the land of Betalbatim rediscovers its bondedness to each other through their new faith in Jesus Christ, the new betal of our village.

#### **Reference:**

1. Socio Cultural History of Goa: From Bhojas to Vijayanagar

"The United States is the wealthiest nation in the history of the world, yet its inhabitants are strikingly unhappy. Accordingly, we present to the rest of mankind, on a planet rife with suffering and tragedy, the spectacle of a clown civilization. Sustained on a clown diet rich in sugar and fat, we have developed a clown physiognomy. We dress like clowns. We move about a landscape filled with cartoon buildings in clownmobiles, absorbed in clownish activities. We fill our idle hours enjoying the canned antics of professional clowns... Death, when we acknowledge it, is just another pratfall on the boob tube. Bang! You're dead!"

- James Howard Kunstler