

MISSION AS DIALOGUE WITH CULTURE

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Bachelor in theology**

BY

ROBIN JOSEPH

Reg. No: 0603-22

Moderator

Rev. Dr. MATHEW KALATHUNGAL



St. Peter's Pontifical Institute

Bangalore- 560 055

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Date: 16-02-2009

Robin Joseph Thekkel
St. Peter's Pontifical Institute
Bangalore-560055

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled '*Mission As Dialogue With Cutlure*' has been prepared by me during the academic year 2008-2009 under the guidance and supervision of Rev. Dr. Mathew Kalathungal, professor at St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore.

I further declare that this dissertation has not been previously submitted for any degree in this institute or in any other Institute.

Robin Joesph

Reg. No. 0603- 22

Certified that this dissertation has been carried out under my guidance and supervision.

Date: 16-02-2009

Rev. Dr. Mathew Kalathunkal

St. Peter's Pontifical Institute

Bangalore-560055

Contents

Aknowlegement	i
Declaration.....	ii
CHAPTER ONE	2
MISSION	2
Introduction	2
1.1 Concept of Mission.....	2
1.2 Jesus and Mission	4
1.3 Teaching of the church.....	5
1.4. The Need of Mission.....	6
1.5. Important ways in Mission	8
1.6. The Challenges of Mission.....	9
1.7. Mission Today.....	11
Conclusion.....	13
CHAPTER TWO	14
DIALOGUE	14
Introduction	14
2.1 Concept of Dialogue	14
2.2 Foundations of Dialogue	15
2.2.1 Biblical Background	15
2.2.2 Theological foundation.....	15
2.3 Teaching of the Church	16
2.4 The Need of Dialogue in Mission.....	18
2.5 Precautions for dialogue	19
2.5.1 Jesus model.....	19
2.5.2 People friendly.....	19
2.5.3 Means of seeking the truth.....	20
2.5.4 Love	20
2.5.5 Openness to the other	20
2.6 Types of dialogue	20
2.6.1 Dialogue of Life.....	20
2.6.2 Dialogue of common action	21
2.6.3 Dialogue of Experience	21

2.6.4 Dialogue of worship	22
2.7 Challenges in Dialogue	22
2.8 Dialogue in mission	23
2.8.1 Dialogue with religions	23
2.8.2 Dialogue with poor and marginalized	24
2.8.3 Dialogue with pluri –dimensional society	24
2.8.4 Dialogue with cultures	24
Conclusion	25
CHAPTER THREE	25
CULTURE	25
Introduction:	25
3.1 The Concept of Culture	25
3.1.1 General view of Culture	25
3.1.2 Sociological view	26
3.2 Culture and Human Beings.....	27
3.2.1 Person and Culture.....	27
3.2.2 Existence and culture.....	27
3.2.3 Society and culture	27
3.2.4 Environment and culture	28
3.2.5 Psychology and culture.....	28
3.3.Characteristics of Culture:.....	29
3.4 Mistakes in understanding culture.....	30
3.4.1 Cultural	30
3.4.2 Anthropological	30
3.4.3 Solutions	30
3.5 Indian Culture:.....	30
3.5.1 From 2500 BC to 1000 BC.....	31
3.5.2 1000 BC to 700 BC	31
3.5.3 700 BC to 100 AD	31

3.5.4 Arrival of Europeans	32
3.5.5 Today's context	32
3.6 Christ and culture	33
3.7 Mission and culture	33
Conclusion	34
CHAPTER FOUR	35
MISSION AS DIALOGUE WITH CULTURE	35
Introduction	35
4.1 Evangelization	36
4.1.1 Concept of Evangelization.....	36
4.1.2 Evangelization for all.....	36
4.1.3 Methods Evangelization	36
4.2 Inculturation	37
4.2.1 What is Inculturation?	37
4.2.2 Goal of Inculturation	37
4.2.3 The need of Inculturation	38
4.2.3.1 Spiritual	38
4.2.3.2 Social	38
4.2.3.3 Theological	38
4.2.4 Characteristics of Inculturation	39
4.2.5 Challenges in Inculturation.....	39
4.2.5.1 Social	39
4.2.5.2 Liturgical	39
4.2.5.3 Economical	39
4.2.5.4 Cultural	40
4.2.6 Teaching of the Church	40
4.2.7 Foundations of Inculturation	41
4.2.7.1 Biblical Foundation	41
4.2.7.2 Theological Foundations	42

4.2.8 Some areas of Inculturation.....	43
4.2.8.1 Liturgical, Theological and Catechetical.....	43
4.2.8.2 Socio Economical	43
4.2.9 Models of Inculturation	43
Conclusion.....	44
General Conclusion	45
Bibliography	46

General Introduction

The right and duty of the church is to continue to manifest its creativity in the spirit and becomes truly catholic in different culture and different epochs of human history. The culture in which the gospel is proclaimed affects the gospel and the gospel affects the culture. Awareness about one's own culture and about other's culture and dialogue with culture is very important for the mission of proclamation of the good news.

First chapter speaks about mission in its different level. After the general thought about mission it is discussing about mission's relation with Jesus as founder, model and part of it. This is leading to think about mission's needs, ways and challenges. This part ends with the mention of mission in today's context. That is nothing other than dialogue with culture as one of the best ways and need of today's world.

The second chapter discusses about the concept of dialogue in the field of mission. After explaining the definition, it goes through the models, teaching of the church, need of the time, challenges and its relation with mission. Here analyzed models are mainly on the basis of bible and theology. Teaching of the church brings its context, goals, scope and interest of the church in dialogue; Challenges are helping to take the precautions. This chapter ends with the new meaning of dialogue in mission, which is dialogue with religion, poor, society and most importantly with the culture.

The third chapter is discussing about culture through its general view, relation with human beings, characteristics and its relation with Jesus and mission. First part shows mostly the secular sense of culture. When it relates with mission, here comes the need of dialogue with culture.

The last chapter brings as the conclusion for the all studies. It introduces a new mission movement which is nothing other than mission as dialogue with culture. Through the reference of church teaching and common understanding it shows that this process is happening through evangelization and inculturation. Here the importance is given to inculturation. In the analysis of its definition, need, church teaching, history and challenges we find that inculturation is the best and unavoidable part of mission. That is nothing other than 'Mission as Dialogue with Culture.'

CHAPTER ONE

MISSION

Introduction

Fundamentally, one of the basic characteristics of Church is its mission. Mission of the church is always same, that is to proclaim the good news in all the culture. without culture there is no existence for human beings. Therefore dialogue with culture is relevant subject in the field of mission in yesterday today and tomorrow. Here we are trying to understand this mission on the basis of the process of dialogue with culture.

1.1 Concept of Mission

The word 'Mission is derived from the Latin word *Missio*. It stands for 'sending'. In a general understanding this is movement from past to present or situation to another situation.

When we are analyzing the definition of mission, in the words of Bp. Joseph Mattam, "The definition of mission determines the methodology of mission rather than vice versa".¹ This is leading to the importance of the definition of mission. But at the same time it is very difficult to give one answer to this question. What is mission? Because the word missions itself have different dimensions. And according to the context also it is changing. From the view of 'Missio Dei' we can understand, Mission must be faithful to him and His world and how we are specially looking into the perspective of mission in different culture.

Within the changing style of mission, searching is happening behind the basic facts. One of the modern concept is showing, "The general mode and the nature of mission have changed radically in the last decade."² Therefore the better understanding or 20th century understanding is needed more than the old style of proclamation. When we regards the concept of mission "In the past missiology has been regarded as a matter of missionary methodology namely "How to do mission"

¹ Joseph Mattam and Sebastian Kim, eds., *Mission Trends Today* (Mumbai: St. Paul's, 1997) p.7.

² Milton Jaganathan, ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, (Delhi: ISPK, 2000) p. xv.

but in 20th century have been focused on “What is mission”.³ But in the modern time also “in some contexts mission became merely proclamation of the gospel”.⁴ Proclamation of the gospel is the important part of mission and it is leading to the basic concept of mission but the problem is to giving an explanation to the word ‘proclamation’. Each one in his own context giving different meaning. “This is precisely the task of mission: to embody the life, mission and message of Jesus in all the diverse soio-cultural groupings of the world”.⁵ It means that mission will assume different forms in different contexts. Here directly it is showing the importance of dialogue with culture in the field of mission.

In the Biblical point of view the apostles understood the meaning of mission is to preach the good news in different culture. “In Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.⁶ Not only in the New Testament, the Old Testament also shows that, the living God of Bible is a sending God. Sending of Abraham (Gen12:1-3), Joseph (Gen45: 4-8), Moses (Ex3:10) and all the prophets and finally sending his Son. Father and Son send the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Gal 4:4, Jn14:26, 15:26, 16:7, Acts 2:23). Still God is continuing his sending work through his church to fulfill His mission.

The Biblical view is leading to the aspect of the church. “Mission describes everything the church is sent into the world to do”.⁷ In the church truly the plan of God is happening. Therefore in the church the continuing mission of God is happening. “All of us should be able to agree that mission arises primarily out of the nature, not of the church but of God himself”.⁸ At the same time “Each member of Christ’s body is called and each is sent”.⁹

From the view of the church, saints also leading us to the concept of mission. One of the biggest missionary activities in the church is society of Jesuits. Especially after the reformation period this societies and its founders view affected the concept of mission in the church. The Jesuit Acosta reflected the mind of the founder Ignatius Loyola. “By mission I mean journeys and undertakings carried on from town to town

³ Joseph Mattam and Sebastian Kim, eds., *Mission Trends Today* p.7.

⁴ Milton Jaganathan, ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, p.1.

⁵ Julian Saldalha, “Mission and Context”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, eds. Joseph Mattam and Joseph Valiyamagalam (Delhi: ISPK, 2006) p.3.

⁶ Acts 1:8

⁷ John Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World* (Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1975) p.30.

⁸ John Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World*, p.23.

⁹ Ogbu U. Kalu, “Not Just New Relationships but a Renewed body” *International Review of Missions*, April (1975) p.144.

for the sake of the word of God”.¹⁰ In the modern time missiologist are giving importance to this type of concepts. From the view of Julian Saldanha “Common to all is the communication of the good news of the Risen Lord”.¹¹

In a social manner mission is worldwide and its service unlimited by time or place, by differences of race or social status, by education and riches or ignorance and poverty.

More than any other concepts our Lord’s message to proclaim (Lk 4:18-19) is the basis of mission in every context and every culture. This is more relevant all the time, now it is more relevant than ever before. “The poor cry out for good news. Prisoners of oppression await release. Those who are blinded by ideologies of right and left need recovery of sight. The broken victims of this world’s struggles long to be freed”.¹² Therefore all the Christians are missionary. As a Christian “Doing mission is the life blood of a living Faith”.¹³ In all this way a Christian means a missionary. Mission means the mission of God the Father through the Son and the Spirit in all the beings.

1.2 Jesus and Mission

The mission of the Church is nothing other than the mission of Jesus. Mission of Jesus was happened through his words and deeds. It is impossible to separate his ministry of word from deed, with the teaching mission; He fed the hungry mouths and washed dirty feet, healed the sick and comforted the sad and even restored the dead to life.

From the Biblical view Jesus’ mission is comprehensive and holistic. His purpose is to “reconcile to himself all things, weather on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood on his cross” (Col 1:20). As the Father sends him Jesus is sending us, He emptied himself of status and took the form of a servant, and his humble mind is to be in us (Phil 2:5-8). John Scott’s view is going with these Biblical ideas. “According to the specification of the Risen Lord, is exclusively a preaching,

¹⁰ Carl Muller, *Mission theology an Introduction* (Indore: Sad Prakashan Sanchar Kendra, 1987) p.30.

¹¹ Julian Saldanha, “Mission and Context”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.4.

¹² Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* (Philadelphia: West Minister Press, 1977) p.11.

¹³ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian C H, eds., *The Church in India : Its Mission Tomorrow* (Delhi : ISPK,1996) p.ix.

converting and teaching ministry”.¹⁴ When we are connecting the words in Luke 4:18-19 and 21; First Jesus read the prophesy that “Bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and new sight to the blind, to free the oppressed and announce the Lord’s year of mercy” After this expression Jesus himself is telling in words 21, “Today these prophetic words come true even as you listen”. This is clearly explaining Jesus’ mission in his own words.

Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 9:35). Here we can see two specialties in his mission. When we are analyzing Jesus’ mission this is very important. They are “For all the cities and all the villages and He had compassion for them”.¹⁵ In all his actions, in his mission we can see Jesus sees, sympathizes and saves (heals). After so many years, the duty or the mission of the Church is the same and its basics are Seeing, Sympathize and Save. After the explanation of a Christian mission Milton Jaganathan says that “involvement and activities should be based on the life and work of our lord Jesus Christ, he is our ‘model’ and he is the ‘contextual reality.’”¹⁶

1.3 Teaching of the church

Missionary activities are as old as the church itself, in a deeper sence more than that. But only in 20th century it began to introduce as in a systematic way. “The first Vatican general council intended to consider a draft text on the missions but never came to it.”¹⁷ the new missionary spirit came in the church through the starting of ‘congregation for the propagation of faith’ by Pope Gregory xv in 1622. After Vatican II council they changed the name as congregation of the evangelization of peoples. Vatican II documents are the basic teaching of the church about mission.

Lumen Gentium says “the church on earth is by its very nature missionary.”¹⁸ In another document it is explaining clearly the mission “Wishes to unite the efforts of all the faithful, so that the people of god, following the narrow way of cross, might everywhere spread the kingdom of Christ, the lord and beholder of the ages and prepare the way for his coming.”¹⁹

¹⁴ John, Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World*, p.23.

¹⁵ Pixly G V, *Gods Kingdom* (London: SCM press, 1981) p.72.

¹⁶ Milton Jaganathan , ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, p. xv.

¹⁷ Julian Saldalha, “ Mission and Context” , *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.15.

¹⁸ L.G. 48.

¹⁹ Ad Gentes Divinitus. 1.

Incarnation of god is the basic of salvation. Christ started in one place, as his body church is responsible to follow that mission. In that perspective church teaches, “What was accomplished for the salvation of all may, in the course of time ,achieve its universal effect.”²⁰

According to the context and in the better understanding of the challenges, in the case of mission church is teaching, “Mission must involve a process of inculturation if the gospel is to take flesh in each people’s culture.”²¹ Mission is the central part of the church. Therefore its teaching about it is very vast, here gives a little importance to the need of dialogue with culture in mission.

In the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*, *Dei Verbum*, *Nostra Aetate*, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Ad Gentes* were clearly mentioning about the missionary aspects. *Ad Gentes* 4,6,8,9,10,15,18,19,21,22,25,26,31, are directly telling about missionary aspects especially about mission and inculturation.

1.4. The Need of Mission

From the unchanging aspect, “mission is to participate in God’s liberty and transforming act”.²² This is happening through the words and deeds of each Christian, mainly that is happening through the ways as agent of life, peace, harmony, serving the poor etc. in today’s world of globalization, inequality (in different level), social and personal problems of inequality these are leading to the urgent need of Christian mission or Christ’s mission.

In today’s killing culture of Abortion, mercy killing etc., Church has the mission to work as an agent of life. Pope John Paul II says about Mother Theresa, “an icon of the service to life which the church is offering to Asia”.²³ From the Holistic concept of context mission is happening according to the context. From a theological view “Gospel should specifically answer the contextual needs of the people”.²⁴ This type of view is including the need of mission in present contexts. Actually we are doing God’s mission for the well being of others. Therefore as a Christian “we are

²⁰ *Ad Gentes* Divinitus. 3.

²¹ *Ridemptoris Missio*.524.

²² Milton Jaganathan, ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, p. xvii.

²³ *Ecclesia in Asia*. 7.

²⁴ F Frangkhuma , “A holistic concept of context” , Julian Saldalha, “ Mission and Context” , *Emerging Indian missiology* , p.11.

required to enter into partnership with God in history to renew society”.²⁵ When we are thinking in this social level mission as a need “mission embraces the church’s double vocation of service to be the ‘salt of the earth’ and ‘light of the world’”.²⁶ Which means not only preaching of word but also social activities are important part of Christian mission, especially in today’s world. Already we see that Christian mission is nothing other than God’s missions “As creator and redeemer God’s mission embraces the whole universe and all the people”.²⁷

The establishment of the kingdom of God is the basic mission of Jesus and Church. “The kingdom of God meant the transformation of all human structures in favor of justice and rights of the poor”.²⁸ Justice and rights of the poor is a challenging fact in all over the world. Most of the time money is ruling the world; therefore Christ’s mission is needed in past, present and future. From the past Britain is an example for the success of this mission. About the evangelical awakening of Britain, historians are telling, “it saved England from a social revolution”.²⁹

In this same aspect of social mission “justice is basic to the renewal of Christian mission”.³⁰ This issue of justice has become a significant part of mission in our day. Justice has always been a part of the mission of God’s people, although a part that is easy to target when people especially Christians become materially blessed. In England, social impact of mission resulted “prison reforms, schools for the previously neglected miners, regulation about child labour, abolition of slaves, refuge for freed slaves etc.”,³¹ from this lesson when we are looking into our own world mission is an unavoidable need.

Particularly in India on the basis of senses of 1996, “there are 3000 unreached people groups. There are 26000 caste groups.”³² The gospel has to be preached to all the people, for the particular groups in their mother tongue in a meaningful way. This is showing the need of mission in the level of preaching the gospel. Due to ignorance,

²⁵ John, Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World*, p.18.

²⁶ Ibid.30.

²⁷ Julian Saldalha, “Mission and Context”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.132.

²⁸ Pixly G V, *Gods Kingdom*, p.72.

²⁹ Arther E R. Boak , Albert Hyma and P W Slosson, eds., *The Growth Of European Civilization* (London : FS Crofts and Co, 1938) p.213.

³⁰ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.56.

³¹ Arther E R. Boak , Albert Hyma and P W Slosson, eds., *The Growth Of European Civilization*, p.213.

³² F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian C H, eds., *The Church in India : Its Mission Tomorrow*, p.38.

poverty, adultery, drinking, communal rights are increasing among the *Adivasi* people. “The *Banchara* people in Madhya Pradesh practice adultery at the road side, giving the eldest daughter in the family for this purpose”.³³ To appealing the rain Gods still some tribes are conducting child sacrifices regularly. “In Bihar, 150 block development areas have no churches and in rural villages of Rajasthan and Haryana not even a single Christian witness”.³⁴ In all the aspects this is showing the urgent need of witnessing in different ways.

Human beings are living closely related or inside the culture. When we are hearing the voice of the needy in the society, to dealing with the subsystem of culture mission is needed in the fields of religion, poverty, oppression, exploitation etc.

1.5. Important ways in Mission

Ways in mission is a vast subject. In the analyzation of the basic facts prophetic style or preaching method and witnessing community are the basic and important ways in mission. In the Holistic view of Hrangkhuma there are three types of mission. “Which are Redemptive, Lacerative and Ecological model”.³⁵ Redemptive method is including Atonement, Justification, Conversion and church planting. Liberative models are including Justice, Gender equality and social transformation. Ecological model means, Eco Justice, soil erosion, pollution etc. In this way of understandings are also affecting the cultural studies. From this view inculturation is a basic fact in mission.

More than everything in Early Church and Modern Church witnessing community is the most important way of mission. On the basis of Lk 2:4, Acts2:14 easily we can understand the power of witnessing community. The gospel of St John is giving more importance to the community witness and fellowship (Jn 13:35, 17:21-23). In Mathean view “mission is not so much noisy proclamation as infectious witness”.³⁶ Beyond the time and space for Christians “to proclaim Christ means above all we live like him in the midst of our neighbors of other faiths and persuasions, and

³³ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian C H, eds., *The Church in India: Its Mission Tomorrow*, p.38.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ F Frangkhuma , “A holistic concept of context” , Julian Saldalha, “ Mission and Context” , *Emerging Indian missiology* , p.18.

³⁶ Sores Prabhu.G. “ Following Jesus in Mission”, *Bible and Mission in India Today*, eds., J Kavumkal and Hrangkhuma (Mumbai : St.Paul’s 1993) p.64.

do his deeds by his power of grace”³⁷. But most of the time mission is lacking to remember the grace and as a result communities were losing the unity, here again comes the importance of witness, “unity and witness should go together and it has to be revealed in all its involvements in god’s mission. From the view of Acts 1:4 the small community of Jerusalem changed into a ‘witnessing community’. Still it is continuing its important role in the mission. In the words of Ernest W. Talibuddin, “During every era and area ahead of it, on its missionary journey, the witnessing community was also to encounter the plurality of religious beliefs and ideologies.”³⁸

The traditional way of understanding, missionary means a preacher. This means through proclaiming, converting the soul is the only aim of mission. R. N. Cust in 1988 arguing that, “missionary money was collected For the purpose of converting a soul, not sharpening an intellect”.³⁹ Till 17th century there are a lot of misunderstandings about ways of mission. Even St Thomas Aquinas also justified the idea of military religious order. Gradually the changes came in all the church. But it is very sad to know that “Except Mother Theresa and a few others, there is no national Christian leader to voice out Christian noble values being the ready answer to the hopeless Indian society”.⁴⁰

In today’s context of persecution in India, the ways of mission is very important. ‘Witnessing Community’ is a better way in better understanding. When it is relating with the new problems and *Hindutva* agenda the need of dialogue with culture is getting more importance. Still Christianity is a Foreign in the view of other Indians. In a large part Christians are also responsible to this. “It is also time to evolve an ecumenically oriented theology and meaningful to the religiously pluralistic and culturally diverse Indian context”.⁴¹

1.6. The Challenges of Mission

- “Success brought privilege and power; it also brought corruption and confusion”.⁴²

³⁷ Rosales and Arevalo ,eds., *For all the People of Asia Vol.I* (New York : Orbis Books, 1992) pp.281-282.

³⁸ Milton Jaganathan,ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, p. i.

³⁹ Earnest W Talibudin, “Mission context Today”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.23.

⁴⁰ John, Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World*, p.16.

⁴¹ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: its Mission Tomorrow* (Delhi: ISPK,!996) p.39.

⁴² Earnest W Talibudin, “Mission context Today”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.33.

- “There is a lack of spiritual knowledge in the church”.⁴³
- “In Christian colleges, schools and hospitals are not bearing effective witness in Indian society”.⁴⁴
- “Few missionaries would admit to the guilt of racism”.⁴⁵
- “Many missionaries have fallen victim to sense or their own superiority”.⁴⁶
- “There are stilling structures and over centralization which does not permit the growth of mission in India”.⁴⁷
- “Many are reconverted into Hinduism for scholarships. 55000 Christians were reconverted to Hinduism by R.S.S. protest groups in Orissa”.⁴⁸
- “Among the revolting Hindus, revenging Muslims, disturbed Sikhs, the Christians are silent spectators in India today”.⁴⁹
- “Offering our world hope and salvation within the faith justice paradigm as a form of integral evangelization is the challenge of mission before the society.”⁵⁰
- About the weakness of missionaries, “we have done everything for them except acknowledge any equality. We have treated them as dear children but not as brethren”.⁵¹
- From the view of Rolland Allen, “In everything we have taught our converts to turn to us, to accept our guidance. We have asked nothing from them but obedience”.⁵²
- “Secularism, Right-wing Hinduism, Islam, Communism, Cults and industrialism are the present day forces which are threatening to overtake the tribal’s”.⁵³

⁴³ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.17.

⁴⁴ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: its Mission Tomorrow*, p.39.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.11.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: its Mission Tomorrow*, p.39.

⁴⁹ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: its Mission Tomorrow*, p.39.

⁵⁰ Joseph Marianus kujur, S J. *Jivan: News and views of Jesuits in India* , August,2008,p.6.

⁵¹ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: its Mission Tomorrow*, p.39.

⁵² Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.32.

⁵³ Roland Allen , *Missionary Methods : St.Paul’s or Ours?* (London : Eerd man’s publishing company,1962) p.143.

- “The failure of the rich to relate to the poor and the church buildings are constructed in city centers”.⁵⁴
- “Racism is a disease of the soul. A racist has no place in the mission of Jesus Christ until the disease of the soul is cured”.⁵⁵
- “Ethnic consciousness, rights and tension between various Christian groups and individuals on the basis of tribe, caste, language and religion”.⁵⁶

For the egoistic attitude we want to change it into the view of John the Baptist, “He must increase, I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). For the cultural and social problems dialogue with culture and inculturation are the solutions for the challenges in mission.

1.7. Mission Today

The great important speciality of today’s world is its very fast changing style. Change is an uncontrolled reality of the world. In this context “we are in great need of having radical shift in our mission paradigm. Reinterpreting the meaning and message of mission in our present context is very much needed”.⁵⁷ World is full of material things which man can use for his own pleasure, but still the emptiness is a real fact. Now people recognized that imported materials and techniques cannot successfully improve the quality of life of people constantly. World views and values of various cultures came into conflict, which becomes a great barrier to the effectiveness of today’s mission. In this context without losing the basic facts (Jesus’ mission) Church want to change his style of mission. It is here coming the importance of Dialogue with Culture particularly in Indian context. To remove the idea of ‘Foreign Religion’ this is the only solution for fruitful mission.

Particularly in India, “The Muslims are asserting their Islam city, Hindus their *Hindutva*, Sikhs asserting Guru and so on. Therefore it will be increasingly difficult to present the gospel as before”.⁵⁸ Unfortunately many of the church activities and people are in the hangover of the western culture. Still they can’t distinguish between Hinduism and Indian culture. In this special context “The mission command for Asia

⁵⁴ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: Its Mission Tomorrow*, p.43.

⁵⁵ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian CH, eds., *The Church in India: Its Mission Tomorrow*, p. 72.

⁵⁶ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.83.

⁵⁷ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.8.

⁵⁸ Milton Jaganathan, ed., *Mission paradigm in the New Millennium*, p. i.

today is reformulated in terms of a dialogue with Asia's poor, with its local cultures and with other religious traditions".⁵⁹

From the etymological meaning we got the idea that, Mission means 'sending' that is from one situation to another of human beings. "No human being is without culture and customs".⁶⁰ Therefore whatever may be the 'mission' Dialogue with Culture is an unavoidable part of today's mission. This mission does not mean it is affecting only the missionary, more than that each situation a Christian is responsible to do his mission. That is nothing other than "to seek to maintain Christ's standards of Justice, righteousness, honesty, human dignity and compassion in a society which no longer accepts them".⁶¹

It has been said that "Christianity both weakened and prolonged by the Roman Empire and Greco-Roman culture".⁶² Therefore, Dialogue with Culture or inculturation is the basic need of today's mission. According to the culture, the renewal is the basic fact and need. In the bottom level this is nothing other than a radical change in our life. "It is a call radical enough to show that we truly love one another in whatever our race or nation".⁶³ Culture is a closely related fact in the mind and understanding of human beings. "Every people understand and believe in terms of their culture".⁶⁴ The gospel can only be effectively communicated in the context of people's culture.

In scholar's view "this is an era of mission".⁶⁵ World is under one umbrella. The communication facilities are wider than ever. "The Church will have to fulfill God's mission in today's context of culture, world and cosmos, transforming the world view, values and even societal human institutions".⁶⁶

In this century theologians understand our own problems and trying for solutions. "The mission was no longer viewed as mere administrative units or territorial subdivisions of one church but as local church".⁶⁷ Here the local churches

⁵⁹ M Devadas, "Mission to slums", *The church in India its mission Tomorrow*, p.68.

⁶⁰ Julian Saldalha, "Mission and Context", *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.8.

⁶¹ Ibid.14.

⁶² John, Stott, *Christian Mission in Modern World*, p.16.

⁶³ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.16.

⁶⁴ Ogbu. U. Kalu, "Not Just New Relationships but a Renewed body" *International Review of Missions*, p.15.

⁶⁵ Paul A Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* p.45.

⁶⁶ F Hrangkhuma and Sebastian C H, eds. *The Church in India : Its Mission Tomorrow*, p.38.

⁶⁷ Ibid.p.xiv.

are very important because people can accept them as their own not as foreign. “In and from such individual churches then comes into being the one and only Catholic Church”.⁶⁸

Conclusion

In analyzing the *Mission*, the word itself gives the basic as *Sending* and proclamation, from that the giving meaning and understanding is important. Here the model Jesus is giving the exact meaning from Biblical perspective. That is the **liberation** from all type of bondages. From the founder Jesus Church is receiving and teaching the same mission. This is leading to the importance and need of mission in today’s context as agent of life, peace, harmony and serving the poor etc. Here comes the question of the ways which the people want to fallow, that is nothing other than, prophetic style and witnessing community through the dialogue with culture. Here the understating of challenges itself helping to move forward and when it is coming into the mission today dialogue with culture as one of the best and easiest way to fallow the mission of Jesus Christ that is liberation from all types of bondages.

⁶⁸ Julian Saldalha, “Mission and Context”, *Emerging Indian missiology*, p.8.

CHAPTER TWO

DIALOGUE

Introduction

In a secular sense dialogue can be understood in different ways. But in the Church it has a wider meaning. Here it is to analyze that wider meaning, goals and challenges, in relation to our mission.

2.1 Concept of Dialogue

Etymologically the word 'Dialogue' comes from the Greek word 'Diaegomai' which means to discuss or to speak. The Latin word 'Dialogus' means philosophical conversation between two people. The second meaning of Webster's Dictionary, it is "a conversation between two persons to have an exchange of ideas and opinion."⁶⁹ According to Oxford Dictionary 'dialogue' is a formal discussion between two groups or countries especially when they are trying to solve the problem'. These are some ways of understanding in a secular sense. In the Church this word is used in a larger sense. "It is a process of talking and listening, of giving and receiving, of searching and studying. For the deepening and for the enrichment of one another's faith and understanding."⁷⁰ More related with the view of the Church Pontiff Recommendation says, "Dialogue must be prompted by a genuine love of truth and by a readiness to accept it wherever it may be found".⁷¹

In general sense both from the background of secular and Church view "The object of this dialogue is understanding and appreciation, leading to further reflection upon the implication for one's own position of the conviction and sensitivities of the other traditions."⁷² In this sense the mission of the Church has close relation with dialogue, especially Dialogue with culture.

⁶⁹ Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Vol. I, Encyclopedia Britannica, IMC, Chicago, 1971, p.623.

⁷⁰ Sampran, " The First Institute For Inter Religious affairs ", *East Asian Pastoral Review*,18,(1980p.156.

⁷¹ Jacob Manathodathu, *Culture, Dialogue and the Church* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publication, 1990) p.101.

⁷² Gerald A. Anderson , *Mission Trends* ,No.5,p.94.

2.2 Foundations of Dialogue

“The model of dialogue is God Himself”.⁷³ God dialogued with human beings in the history of salvation, taking initiative without any calculation, love as the source of God ‘s dialogue, no pressure on any one and dialogue of salvation accessible to all. These factors are working as the foundation of dialogue in the Church.

2.2.1 Biblical Background

In the Biblical point of view, dialogue which makes man as man, we must turn to the first chapters of Genesis. The phrase *Image of God* is famous. “The image of God in man is to be understood as primarily a relation which is of the order of communion or fellowship.”⁷⁴

Directly from the text the creation story in Genesis and Dialogue with Patriarchs and prophets gave the best example for dialogue. In Ex 3:1ff in the long dialogue, God Himself was revealing to Moses “I AM WHO I AM” (Ex3:14)

In the New Testament directly and indirectly we can see the examples for dialogue. The Roman centurion and his servant’s curing (Mt8:10, Lk7:9), Syrophenician women’s incident (Mt15:21-28, Mk7:24-30) and very clearly in the dialogue of Jesus and Samaritans (Lk10:37, 17:11-19)

The Gospel of John is giving more examples for the foundations. In John’s gospel most of the time it is coming as the dialogue between Father Son and the Holy Spirit, Jn3:5, 14:15-17, 26-31, 15:26-27,16:7-15 are examples for this dialogue. These are showing that Bible is not against dialogue with other religions; in fact it encourages such endeavor.

2.2.2 Theological foundation

Christian unity through dialogue takes its origin from the Trinity. This dialogue is leading everyone into a real communion. In the report of WCC stated that “The love of the father and the son in unity of the holy spirit is the source and goal or the unity which the triune god wills for all men and creation.”⁷⁵ It is coming all the basis need of the church in today’s context. “Today we cannot fail to take note or an

⁷³ Jacob Mananathodathu, *Culture, Dialogue and the Church*, p.108.

⁷⁴ Reid J.K.S, *Our Life in Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1963) p.38.

⁷⁵ Visser’t Hooft Willem, ed., *The New Delhi Report* (London:WCC,1962) p.116.

increasing interest in a deeper ecumenical understanding or the holy trinity as the basis and model of church unity in many bilateral dialogues.”⁷⁶

The fundamental task of the church is to call everyone to enter into communion with god. Faith and order commission explains “The faithful as the body of Christ participate in the Trinitarian life of communion and love. This makes the church a koinonia rooted in and restrained by the communion of the father the son and the holy spirit.”⁷⁷ Dialogue has its basis in Bible and theological reflections. Along with these things teaching of the church is another important part. As a conclusion for this part we can see three types of basis for dialogue. They are man, universe and God.

- Man : he is the source because he is created in relation to God and he can become truly a human person only in relation with others.
- Universe: the modern ecology teaches that the destruction of one species will automatically be threat to another species for their existence. The Decree for Jesuits in Canon 34 says “ They have a special responsibility to show effective ecological solidarity in their spiritual, communal and apostolic life.”⁷⁸
- God: the universe and all its being exist only in dialogue with God. GC35 says about “building right relationship with God.”⁷⁹

2.3 Teaching of the Church

From the Biblical and theological basis Church gave importance to dialogue. Especially dialogue has become an essential activity of the Church after the second Vatican council. From the teaching of this council “today dialogue is accepted as a part of the Church Evangelizing mission.”⁸⁰

In the Indian context it is more relevant because of its multi-religious social system. In the words of John Paul II “ The Christians in India have an important

⁷⁶ Thomas K J, *Ecumenism a call to unity* (Bangalore: St. Peter’s pontifical Institute Publication, 2007) p.8.

⁷⁷ WCC, *Church and the world*, (Geneva: Faith and Order ,1990) p.23.

⁷⁸ Joseph Marianus Kujur SJ, “ Sent to the frontiers – Decree on mission”, *Jivan*, (2008) p.6.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Dialogue and proclamation, NO.2, in Bulletin No.77, 1991, p.210.

responsibility to come into contact with the other religions enriching themselves from the contact with them.”⁸¹

Vatican second document teaches that “it is necessary to have dialogue with men and women of other faith as they are also trying to find solution to the various problems of humanity.”⁸² In the awareness and understanding the Church is making a relationship with other religion. This is happening only through the dialogue in the large sense. Therefore “the Church should enter into dialogue with the world in which it exists and labours. The Church has something to say, a message to deliver and has a communication to offer.”⁸³

In Christians themselves the dialogue is helping us to understand each other and experience its specialty. Each group will grow in its own identity. It is for this reason Ad Gents called for a ‘unanimous witness’ common profession of faith and mutual respect and love of all Christians.⁸⁴

In *Nostra Aetate* (1965) church has her exhortation to her children about dialogue with other religion and culture, “prudently and lovingly through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religion... knowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral good as well as the socio cultural values found among them.”⁸⁵ This is considering or giving importance to the value level or theoretical level. More exactly the church is reaching, “by virtue of her mission...in the one spirit all people of every nation, race and culture the church stands forth as a sign of that kinship which makes possible, indeed stimulates a sincere dialogue.”⁸⁶

Very clearly in the teachings of pope john Paul II this aspect of dialogue is coming. During his journey to several Asian churches in 1981 Pope delivered a message to the people of Asia from the auditorium of Radio Veritas in Manila. He says “in this age the church of Jesus Christ experiences a profound need to enter in to contract and dialogue with all their religions.”⁸⁷

⁸¹ John Paul II , *Address to the Non Christian representatives in Madras*, Feb 5 , 1986 in OR ,No.6,feb.10,(1986) p.14.

⁸² *Nostra Aetate*:1

⁸³ *Ecclesiam Suam* , 65

⁸⁴ *Ad Gentes*:6

⁸⁵ *Nostra Aetate*:2

⁸⁶ *Gaudium et Spes* :92

⁸⁷ John Pau II, *Message to the people of Asia* ,No.4, , Manila,21 Feb , 1981, ND.1040

2.4 The Need of Dialogue in Mission

Modern man accepts dialogue as the effective means of coming into common agreement. So he adopts it in all level. Such as trade, politics and religions too. Pope John Paul II says “even a man of hardened heart can and must preserve enough confidence in man, in his capacity of being reasonable, in his sense of what is good, of justice, of fairness in his possibility of brotherly love.”⁸⁸

When we are analyzing this related with culture, dialogue has been found beneficent. Since it promote an effects better understanding and growth of one self, ones culture and ones neighbor. So it is persuading at all spears of human life. “Only through open dialogue and frank sharing of one’s belief with people of other faiths can prejudices be overcome and each time in a religious tradition given in proper value and priority.”⁸⁹

In today’s understanding Christ is the savior, but his salvation reaches out to people in ways often unknown to us. In the words of Amaladoss, “we should look at salvation not from where people are but from the point of view of god and his freedom and ability to reach them.”⁹⁰ From this wide view of modern church what to make dialogue with other religions in every sense. About the dialogue which closely related with today’s society “ it will call further to collaborate in the promotion of common human and spiritual values which might even involve a common struggle for human rights, justice , peace etc.”⁹¹

In today’s world religions have been politicized and even criminalized since corrupt politicians have succeeded in hijacking religious sentiments to suit their own selfish interests. “Religion touches people at their deepest core, and any preserved threat to their religious traditions and worship forms arouse them to violent action.”⁹²Therefore only through dialogue we can understand each other. As well as this is the best way to the peace and harmony in the society, especially in today’s Indian context.

⁸⁸ Voice of the church, (Feb 1983) p.54.

⁸⁹ George Koovakal, “Restructuring the Dialogue Ministry” , *Jeevadhara* 28 (1998) p.342.

⁹⁰ Michael Amaladoss , *Mission Today*, (Anand : Gujarath Sahitya Prkash,1989)p.79.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁹² George Koovakal , “ Restructuring the Dialogue Ministry”, *Jeevadhara*, p.342.

Related with the ministries of church “the ministry of reconciliation of the servant Church is the restoration of communication of society.”⁹³ Church is part of the society. Church has no existence outside the community or society. In this perspective the existence of the Church is related with its ministry. Therefore ministry of reconciliation is not only the need of the Church but also the need of the society.

Purely in spiritual sense also “it provides an opportunity for non Christian to experience gospel values.”⁹⁴ But at the same time “it dispels negative attitude we have about people of other faith.”⁹⁵ This is one of the important part because our negative attitudes also will affect the well being of the church and all human beings. In this sense “dialogue is urgent and essential particularly for people in Asia in order to repudiate the arrogance, aggression and negativism of our evangelic crusades, which have obscured the gospel and caricatured Christianity as an aggressive and militant religion.”⁹⁶ In all the sense dialogue is an unavoidable need of the time.

2.5 Precautions for dialogue

In the modern world, modern situation and in modern culture precautions are needed in the ministry of dialogue.

2.5.1 Jesus model

Jesus’ life and ministry is the model for church in dialogue. As a precaution more than another thing to follow Jesus in a real sense is the important fact. “Reaching out to the people in the community with the message of agapic love was the characteristic nature of Jesus.”⁹⁷ Church also want to take this as the model and precaution for its ministry. Thus the Christian community must be the same. As Jesus’ church also want the dialogue with the sinners and marginalized. As his words are not for the righteous but for sinners.

2.5.2 People friendly

Dialogue must be “People Friendly.” “The church should become community centers, when people on the community regardless of their religious, ideological, racial, financial or sexual differences can come together for recreation, reflection,

⁹³ Gisban Winter , *The new Creations as Metropolis* (New York: Macmillan press, 1963) p.130.

⁹⁴ James H Kroeger, “ Dialogue : Key to Mission in Asia” , *Indian Missiological review*18 (1990) p.85.

⁹⁵ Smarta SJ , *Courage for Dialogue* ,(Geneva :World council for churches , 1951)p.59.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Varghese G , “ Mission of the local Church” , *Jeevadhara* 28(1998) p.334.

interaction and recognition.”⁹⁸ Very specially in modern culture even in the teaching methods also friendly aspect is much important then rule and obey system.

2.5.3 Means of seeking the truth

Dialogue is not to be undertaken of its own sake as if it were an end in itself. Pope Paul VI says. “It is not an end but a means. It does not give the truth, but seeks it. It is a method not a system.”⁹⁹ This important thought always in mind is a basic precaution in dialogue.

2.5.4 Love

In order to understand the Non- Christians and the values they treasure “We must love them and accept them as they are, as persons with a different religious allegiance and cultural heritage.”¹⁰⁰ Because it is by loving them that we come to know them. Without the relation with this also Christians by name itself are responsible to love others.

2.5.5 Openness to the other

In olden days hiding and only personal interests are parts of dialogue. But in modern culture ‘respect to the oppose’ of the culture. In that sense therefore “Our readiness to listen to the other is necessary, not only to a man’s voice, but to his heart. A man must first be understood; and where he merits it, agreed with.”¹⁰¹ In a minute analyzation some precautions are coming but that also including one of these five ways in directly or indirectly.

2.6 Types of dialogue

Mainly they are divided into four groups, dialogue of life, dialogue of common action, dialogue of experience and dialogue of worship.

2.6.1 Dialogue of Life

Human beings are social beings, for the harmony dialogue is needed. Dialogue of life means “one discovers one’s own true identity in relationship with the other.”¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Jacab Manathodath, *Culture, Dialogue and the Church* (New Delhi: Intercultural publications , 1990) pp100-101.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p102.

¹⁰¹ Jacab Manathodath, *Culture, Dialogue and the Church*, p103.

¹⁰² Gracy Ruban , “ Inter Religious Dialogue”, *salaam* 23(2002)p.57.

In the encyclical of Pope John Paul II it is clearly mentioned the relation, “One in which believers of various religions bear witness to one another in daily life concerning human and spiritual values and help one another... All the faithful and every Christian community is called to practice dialogue.” Generally when we are relating liberation as an important part of mission, “The dialogue is a common quest for liberty and as a consequence of progress in the liberty of each one, a common effort to advance in the direction of truth.”¹⁰³

2.6.2 Dialogue of common action

Dialogue of life is lead to dialogue of common action. “Dialogue of common action can happen not only as collaboration in the defense and promotion of human and spiritual value but also as working together at socio-economic and political levels with a view to transforming the human community.”¹⁰⁴ This common action is happening in the process of witnessing. This “Christian witness to the lordship of Jesus Christ is not in danger, in situations of dialogue.”¹⁰⁵ In narrow way of understanding it is only the actions. When it is coming to the wider sense it is not only human action but also work of Holy Spirit. “For this common action two things are needed one is overcome prejudices and to respect the integrity of other religious community.”¹⁰⁶

2.6.3 Dialogue of Experience

This is the result of the common action. Actually for the experience we are doing the actions. Actions we leading to experience and from experience one is easily understanding the facts. “One discovers one’s community with the other in the care of one’s being, where one is in touch with God.”¹⁰⁷ Here the doubt is summing that of the change of faith and practices. “Dialogue does not in any way diminish full and loyal commitment to one’s own faith, but rather enriches and strengthens it.”¹⁰⁸ In this way experience is an unavoidable fact in the realm of meaningful sharing or dialogue.

¹⁰³ Dubarle .D , *Dialogue and its Philosophy* (Spring :Concurrence, 1969)p.3.

¹⁰⁴ Gracy Ruban , “ Inter Religious Dialogue”, p.58.

¹⁰⁵ Samarta SJ , *Courage for Dialogue* , p.100.

¹⁰⁶ Gracy Ruban , “ Inter Religious Dialogue”, p.51.

¹⁰⁷ . Gracy Ruban , “ Inter Religious Dialogue”, p.6.

¹⁰⁸ Samarta SJ , *Courage for Dialogue* , p.59.

2.6.4 Dialogue of worship

All the aspects of mission or dialogue are leading to dialogue of worship. From the view of limited human being this is one of the culminations of ones faith, experience and actions. “Mission responding to the human situation, co operating with people of good will is service, sharing mutual spiritual experience in prayer and participating prudently in life that is celebrated in feast and festivals.”¹⁰⁹

2.7 Challenges in Dialogue

Understanding the challenges itself is half part of precaution in ministry. In the midst of multi religious and different type of culture dialogue is a difficult task. When it is connecting with culture it is going to be too difficult. So here it is turning to understanding process more than solving the problems.

- It is very difficult to achieve. It demands more attention and aims at an encounter between different cultures.¹¹⁰
- Psychologically ,fear creates a feeling of distrust in others and this will curtail the aim of dialogue and so it should be avoided.
- Dialogue is blocked by an apriori decision concede nothing by a refusal to listen, by a claim to be oneself and only oneself the measure of justice.¹¹¹
- Any form of superiority complex and suspicions or doubts about the motives of one another on the part of the dialoging partners would hinder genuine dialogue.¹¹²
- Michael L Fitzgerald observes two kinds of obstacles that hinder inter religious dialogue.
 - Internal obstacles: elements and attitudes in the dialogue partners themselves, which hinder dialogue.
 - External factors: elements from outside that hinder dialogue¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Gracy Ruban , “ Inter Religious Dialogue”, p.63.

¹¹⁰ John fuellenbach SVD, “ Some thoughts on Cultural Orientation” , *East Asian pastoral review* 42 (2005) p.268.

¹¹¹ Voice of the Church, Feb, 1983, p.53.

¹¹² Bastire P C , “ Mission in a Changing World ”, *Ishvani Documentation and mission digest* 20(2002)p.113.

- “ Suspicion about others motives”.¹¹⁴ (why do they engage in dialogue? What are their gains ? etc.)
- “Prejudice rooted especially in insufficient knowledge of other religions”¹¹⁵
- “ The life style of Christians in general is another hindering block. It seems foreign.”¹¹⁶
- “ Historical memory” ¹¹⁷(past bitter experiences are preserved in memory)

2.8 Dialogue in mission

The Christian mission being a mission to the world interacts with diverse churches, religious and multi dimensional aspects like science, technology etc. dialogue is a relational process and a method of extracting truth. As we come across cultures, religions and other factors. Our duty is to rebuild society in accordance with the gospel values. Mainly they are dialogue with culture, religions, poor and marginalized and pluri- dimensional society.

2.8.1 Dialogue with religions

In the context of communalism and fundamentalism dialogue with religion had a major role in the society. “in a multi religious society one cannot think of building a just society without the effective co operation of all religions to work for liberation.”¹¹⁸ In the four aspects of the specific role of dialogue in the WCC programme the second one is telling that, “ As an enabler and partner in encouraging inner dialogue were Christians come to terms with their own cultural loyalties or ideological pre suppositions.”¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Michel L . Fitzgerald, “ Inter Religious Dialogue Today: obstacles and opportunities”, *Journal of dharma* 19 (1994)pp. 68-73.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Luciano Odorico, “ Evangelization and Inter Religious Dialogue”, *Indian Missiological Review*18 (1996) p48.

¹¹⁶ V Mathaji , “ My Experience in Interfaith Dialogue”, *Mission Today*.3 (2001)pp.7-21.

¹¹⁷ Michael Amaladoss, “ The Challenges and Opportunities of Dialogue with other Religions”, *Prophetic dialogue*,eds. L Stanislaus and Alwin D’souza (Delhi : ISPK and Ishvanikendran, 2003) pp.103-119.

¹¹⁸ Bastire P C, *Mission in a Changing World*, p.113.

¹¹⁹ Samarta SJ, *Courage for Dialogue*, p.62.

2.8.2 Dialogue with poor and marginalized

The church is called upon to identify her with the poor like Jesus, who showed special love and compassion to the poor, the sick, the distressed and the marginalized in the society. The church should become the church of the poor not just as a church for the poor. This would mean “Being with poor in their daily experience of poverty , injustice and oppression and help them to liberate from the injustice and oppression for a fuller human life.”¹²⁰ The teaching of the WCC programme also is supporting this idea. As an enabler and partner in dialogues with people of various faiths and ideologies. “Attention should be focused on specific issued such as spirituality , poverty , science and technology , education , the status and the role of women , power , land and peace.”¹²¹

2.8.3 Dialogue with pluri –dimensional society

All other aspects are happening in this field. “Dialogue would imply a dialogue with scientifically and technological advancement, dialogue with political development, dialogue with social and international organizations, dialogue with ethical problems.”¹²² This is facilitating a better understanding in modern situations of the world.

2.8.4 Dialogue with cultures

The faith that church professes and practices is carrying a culture totally different from where the mission is carried out. Therefore the need of hour is dialogue with culture or inculturation. “Inculturation is the result of genuine encounter of Christ and the gospel with the soul or spirit of a culture or people.”¹²³ In today’s context it is coming as a basic need for the survival for all the religions “Dialogue of culture is not merely the need of the hour but only hope to survival.”¹²⁴ It shows the importance of this dialogue in today’s context. When it is relating with mission of the church this is an unavoidable fact. “By inculturation, the gospel of Christian faith will

¹²⁰ Cf. CBCI, Jalandhar , March.1-August 2002.

¹²¹ Samarta SJ, *Courage for Dialogue*, p.62.

¹²² Basti re P C, *Mission in a Changing World*, p.114.

¹²³ Ibid., p.113.

¹²⁴ Kuruvila Pandikattu ,“ Dialogue as a Human Need, Religious task and Mysical experience”, *Samanwaya* 3 (2002)p.82.

be purified from its human deficiencies and on the other hand, gospel will be enriched and its catholicity will be enhanced.”¹²⁵

Conclusion

God dialogued with men in the history of salvation, taking initiative without any calculation, love as the source of god’s dialogue, no pressure on any one and dialogue of salvation accessible to all, still church is continuing this factors. From the practical part, we can understand that dialogue is good and needed in the society. At the same time it is very difficult to achieve. Therefore it demands more attention and aims at an encounter between different cultures. In different ways dialogue is working as an unavoidable fact in the mission of the church.

CHAPTER THREE

CULTURE

Introduction:

The study or better understanding about mission and dialogue is leading to the question of how? As the disciples of Jesus’, mission is our duty, dialogue is the way. Here is the foundation of society and human beings that is nothing other than culture. Therefore better future of dialogue in mission is leading to the understanding of culture as a basic need.

3.1 The Concept of Culture

3.1.1 General view of Culture

In ordinary speech we use the term ‘culture’ to refer to the behaviour of the rich and elite. But anthropologists in their study of all human kind, in all parts of the world and freed it from value judgments, such as good or bad. For our purpose compared with this we can follow culture “as the integrated system of learned patterns or behaviour, ideas and products characteristic of a society.”¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Bastire P C, *Mission in a Changing World*, p.113.

¹²⁶ Paul G. Hiebert , “ Culture and Cross Cultural differences “ , *Perspectives on the world Christain Movement*, ed . Ralph D. Winter and Steven C .Hawthorne (California: William Carey library, 1981)p.367.

As a surprise in different culture the word culture is used in different meanings. Therefore the word culture is a term which is not easily susceptible of definition. “In the broad sense, it means simply the patterned way in which people do things together.”¹²⁷ Here is the communitarian aspect of culture. It can’t exist without the people or outside the society. From this perspective Hrankhuma teaches, “Culture is the entire way of life of a group of people”.¹²⁸

It is looking as a characteristic of culture, but for the general view it is the basic need. From this view we can say self understanding or accepting one’s own culture is the foundation for the general view of everything. In that way to lead to this level “at the very heart of any culture is its world view, answering the most basic question ‘What is real?’ These are of culture concerns itself with the great ‘ultimate’ question of reality...”¹²⁹

3.1.2 Sociological view

To get a general view the sociological view is an unavoidable fact. In that way “culture is the design for living of a group whose members share a location, free responsible for one another, and call them by the same name”.¹³⁰ Without the mentioning of Tyler’s definition cultural studies are not complete. Actually this is an anthropological approach but it can include all other aspects. Therefore this is one, world widely accepted definition. It says, “That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.¹³¹

To summarize these different views, culture could be a balanced cultivation of all the human faculties and “a search for ultimate values expressed in language and literature, science and philosophy, music, art, architecture and customs as well as

¹²⁷ The Lausanne Committee, “ The Willow bank Report ”, *Perspective on the world Christian Movement* ,ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C .Hawthorne (California: William Carey library, 1981) p.486.

¹²⁸ Hrankhuma F., “ A Wholistic Concept of context ” , *Emerging Indian Missiology*, ed . Joseph Mattam and Joseph Valiamangalam (Delhi: ISPK , 2006), p.14.

¹²⁹ Lloyd E. Kwast, “ Understanding culture”, *Perspectives on the world Christian Movement* , ed . Ralph D. Winter and Steven C .Hawthorne (California: William Carey library, 1981) p.363.

¹³⁰ Beth B. Hess, Elizabeth W. Markson and Peter J. Stein, eds. *Sociology* (London: Collier Macmillian Publishers, 1982) p.56.

¹³¹ John Friedl and John E Pfeiffer , eds. *Anthropology* (London: Harper and Row, 1977) p.284.

religious social and political organizations”.¹³² from a missiological view and related with mission as dialogue with culture in shortly we can say that “Culture is the refined behaviour of human kind constantly adapted to the challenges of the living environment and changing times of the growth of a people”.¹³³

3.2 Culture and Human Beings

3.2.1 Person and Culture

Culture has its existence only related with the persons. Person’s world view and philosophy is the basis of culture. All other factors are only supporters of human beings in the development process of culture. “Religion is here as a vital component of culture. Language is a vehicle of culture in as much as it reflects world view and expresses the soul and mentality of a people”.¹³⁴

3.2.2 Existence and culture

In all the aspects again it is centralizing upon the human beings. From the part of human beings also this has a relation between their own existence. In all the sense, man cannot live alone. Society or social life is one of the unavoidable fact and reality. “One’s own culture and customs are the most natural ways of living together as human beings”.¹³⁵ All the religions are trying to make togetherness or unity in the society. Related with mission of the church this is one of the basic facts. When we are analyzing culture we can “call culture the ‘super glue’ which binds people together and gives them a sense of identity and continuity which is almost impenetrable”.¹³⁶

3.2.3 Society and culture

Culture is originating and growing from the society and in the society. It has a close relation with all the aspects of human beings. “Culture is a design for living. It is a plan according to which society adapts itself to its physical, social and ideational

¹³²Jesuino Almeida, “ Does India have a common culture?” *Christ and culture*, ed. J Kavunkal and F Hrangkhuma (Bombay : St .Paul’s , 1994) p.182.

¹³³ Thomas Manickam, “Myths A Missiological understanding”, *Third Millennium*, July-sep (1998) p.56.

¹³⁴ Julian Saldanha, “ Mission and context” , *Emerging Indian missiology and concept*, ed. Joseph Mattam and Joseph Valiyamangalam (Delhi :ISPK, (2006) p.1.

¹³⁵ Hrnkhuma F., “ A Holistic Concept of Context” , *Emerging Indian Missiology*,p.14.

¹³⁶ Lloyd E. Kwast, “ Understanding culture” , *Perspectives on the world Christian movement*,p.362.

environment”.¹³⁷ In the society, according to the situations man is creating his own culture. This creation is happening knowingly or unknowingly. “Man copes with ideational environment through knowledge, art, magic, science, philosophy and religion. Cultures are but different answers to essentially the same human problems”.¹³⁸

Another important realm in this field is connected with sociological view. “All human beings are fully evolved members of the same species: Homo Sapiens. What distinguishes one group from another is not different type of body or mind but differences in culture”.¹³⁹ For the better fruits, religion wants to start from this basic of humans. Therefore cultural studies especially the relation between humans are very important part of mission.

3.2.4 Environment and culture

Every culture is changing or growing everyday according to the environment. This process is helping the human beings” to understand the meaning of life. “Culture offers a unique opportunity to be human. All the same, because of the free will of man, he can transcend his culture either for good or evil”.¹⁴⁰ All the more related with the existence, “Diversity of culture is an inbuilt element of human existence”.¹⁴¹

3.2.5 Psychology and culture

The strength of culture is creation of the personality of human is showing the close relation of culture and human beings. And at the same time for the spreading of God’s own personality, understanding and changing of culture is very relevant. In the example of Margret Mead in her studies, she is comparing the period of Adolescence for Samoan and American girls. In a psychological view also we can see the relation between culture and personality. “Principles such as repression, the formation of guilt and anxiety, the relation between frustration and aggression and the concept of sublimation were all used to illustrate the connection between childhood experiences and adult personality”.¹⁴² In spiritual and scientific level these are proving the close

¹³⁷ Louis J Luzbetak, *The church and cultures*(Techny: Divine word 1963) pp.60-61.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Beth B Hess, Elizebeth W and Peter J S, *sociology*,p.58.

¹⁴⁰ S M Michael SVD, “ What do we mean by the term Culture? ”, *Christ and Culture*, p.19.

¹⁴¹ Anto Karokaran, “ Faith and Culture”, *Christ and culture*, p.57.

¹⁴² John Friedl and John E Pfeiffer, *Anthropology*, p.302.

relation between culture and human beings, and at the same times its role in mission also is coming out here.

3.3.Characteristics of Culture:

- “Cultures are constantly changing and change in one subsystem of culture always affects the entire configuration of culture”.¹⁴³
- “Culture is constantly changing, and what is vital for our purpose, it is constantly changing from within”.¹⁴⁴
- “Cultures are influenced by physical environment which is which they originally grew. Man can transcend his culture either for good or evil. Cultures are bound by time and space”.¹⁴⁵
- “Culture gives security in the midst of insecure situations”.¹⁴⁶
- “One can transport words across cultural boundaries but interpretation will depend on the context which their different interpreters bring to them”.¹⁴⁷
- “Culture is a way of thinking, feeling and believing. It is the group’s knowledge stored up for future use”.¹⁴⁸
- “To understand a strange culture one must enter as much as possible into the very life and view point of the native people”.¹⁴⁹
- “No human group is without culture, although the patterns devised to meet the basic survival needs differ widely among the thousands of existing culture”.¹⁵⁰
- “Cultural ideals reflect the highest virtues and standards of a society, whereas real culture refers to actual behavior”.¹⁵¹

¹⁴³ Hrnkhuma F. “ A Holistic Concept of context ” , *Emerging Indian Missiology*,p.14.

¹⁴⁴ Dale Keitzmen and William Smelly, “The Missionaries role in Culture” , *Perspectives on the world Christian movement* ,p.505.

¹⁴⁵ S M Michael SVD, “ What do we mean by the term Culture?” *Christ and Culture*, pp.17-19.

¹⁴⁶ Locke John RSJ, “ Some reflections on the phenomenal of fundamentalism” , *Vidyajyothi* 55 (1991) p.241.

¹⁴⁷ Robert Parks , “ Reflections on communication and culture ” , *Reader in public opinion and communication*, ed. Berard Berelson and Morris Janowitz (New York: Free Press,1966)p.167.

¹⁴⁸ Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man* (New York: Whiesev, 1949) p.23.

¹⁴⁹ Eugena, A Nida, *God’s World in Man’s Language* (New York: Happer and Raw, 1952,) p.45.

¹⁵⁰ Beth B Hess, Elizebeth W and Peter J S, *sociology*,p.56.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*,65.

➤ “Values are the central principles of a culture that provides a standard for the evaluation of rules of conduct”.¹⁵²

3.4 Mistakes in understanding culture

3.4.1 Cultural

One of the big black marks in the mission of Catholic Church is that, the missionaries destructed many of the important and valuable cultures. “When Fray Diego de Landa, a Catholic Missionary accompanying Spanish Tories in the new world, discovered extensive Maya Libraries, he knew what to do. He burned them all”.¹⁵³

3.4.2 Anthropological

This is only one example; there are so many unforgettable stories like this. Therefore to avoid their malice in the future ministry, otherwise historians will repeat that “the missionaries are also coming under attack by anthropologists and other observers for attempting the almost total destruction of local cultures in the areas they evangelize”.¹⁵⁴

3.4.3 Solutions

The only solution for this one is the proper understanding which means “Don’t expect all people to view as you do this thing called progress or even to understand the idea. Remembering this can save a great deal of frustrating misunderstanding”.¹⁵⁵ This immediate and unavoidable need of solution leads us to the process of dialogue with culture in mission.

3.5 Indian Culture:

The uniqueness of India is said to be its religious plurality and cultural diversity. Therefore it is too difficult to introduce Indian culture in words or sentences. A historical analysis is the only way for getting an idea about Indian culture.

¹⁵² Ibid.,73.

¹⁵³ Don Richardson, “ Do Missionaries Destroy the cultures?” *Perspective on the world Christian movement*, p. 482.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.,p. 486.

¹⁵⁵ James F Downs, *Cultures in Crisis* (Beverly Hills: Glencoe,1971)p.128.

3.5.1 From 2500 BC to 1000 BC

With the available historic facts, trace back the origins of Dravidian Tamil Culture to 2500 B.C. “The Dravidians had reached a high level of civilization in agriculture, engineering, cotton and woolen industry and silver and gold jewellery. There is evidence of cultural conduct between South India and Egypt about 2000 B.C. They had their own script numerals and calendar”.¹⁵⁶

By 1000 B.C. the immigrant Aryans laid the foundations of a new vigorous culture between Yamuna and Ganga. “Their hymns to their God’s collected in Rig Veda are not only a holy scripture of Hinduism but also the earliest document of Indian History”.¹⁵⁷

3.5.2 1000 BC to 700 BC

In the next four centuries (1000 – 600 B.C.) the Aryan mind gave a philosophical depth to the idea of unity which had already grown though the Rig Veda and in the end made the old Indian traditions mostly taken from the Dravidians an integral part of its religion. Then a new common religion was developed which we may call the Vedic Hindu religion which served as the foundation of a new culture, the Vedic Culture.

3.5.3 700 BC to 100 AD

India had assimilated all immigrant peoples and cultures; on the other hand, Islam had usually assimilated the culture or the lands to which they went. “But in India, Islam neither lost its identity nor conquered the country culturally; both appropriated something of each other”.¹⁵⁸

Before India was exposed to the alien culture of Islam (700 AD – 1000 AD) it had already struggled with several native cultures i.e., Dravidian culture in Vedic Age, Buddhist just culture in the epic age and the cultural vacuum created by extreme traditions of ritualism and intellectualism of the Classical Age and it had come out successfully from all the three struggles. It was

¹⁵⁶ Jesuino Almeida, “ Does India have a common culture? ” *Christ and culture*,p.182.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.184.

¹⁵⁸ Singhal Damodar, *Modern Indian Society culture* (Meerut: Meenakshee Mudralaya,1980)pp.3-4.

therefore mature enough to bear now the impact of the Muslim culture.¹⁵⁹

3.5.4 Arrival of Europeans

After the coming of Muslims, coming of Europeans affected a lot in Indian culture. G. T. Garratt, a British Civil Servant declared that “the period of Indo-British Civilization of one hundred and fifty years had been most disappointing and in some ways the most sterile in Indian history”.¹⁶⁰ But at the same time one of the Indian writer’s says, “There can be no doubt that British impact led to such a transformation of Indian society that the Indian can be grateful for the British did regardless of what they did not.”¹⁶¹

India had reigned in the fields of literature, art, philosophy and spiritual knowledge but “when the British came to India, the west had an economic system which was the result of new scientific and technological advances”.¹⁶²

In both positive and negative level this British culture affected a lot in Indian culture. In a positive sense revival of Hinduism, administrative level (centralized government), democratic way of ruling industrial field and railways are always thanking about the British rule. Like a *bedel* to the negative facts Indian National Congress came in 1885. In the starting time it was cool and calm by the arrival of Gandhi it got its real strength. Here also “the alliance between the imported concepts of liberty and equality of the west and the ideals of revived Indian culture that gave Indian nationalism its distinctive character”.¹⁶³

3.5.5 Today’s context

In today’s context the materialistic trends and “The unbridled liberation of the modern society shocks a country which is by and large religious by nature and proud of its culture.”¹⁶⁴ The fundamentalist groups are trying to go behind the world and modern people are in uncontrolled liberalism in the hands of globalization. Political people are using religious fanaticism as tool for the destruction of the moral fabric of the Indian culture. “Hinduism is spiritually inclusive of all but practically they are

¹⁵⁹ Jesuino Almeida, “Does India have a common culture?” *Christ and culture*, p.1190.

¹⁶⁰ Garratt GT, *The Legacy of India* (London : Orford , 1937)p.304.

¹⁶¹ Singhal Damodar, *Modern Indian Society culture*, p. 165.

¹⁶² Jesuino Almeida, “ Does India have a common culture?” *Christ and culture*, p.199.

¹⁶³ Jesuino Almeida, “Does India have a common culture?” *Christ and culture*, p.201.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

changing everything. The popular claim of unity in diversity for the Indian culture and society has already been destroyed”.¹⁶⁵ A better understanding and positive change is the need of today’s Indian culture.

3.6 Christ and culture

In the creation story of book of Genesis the blissful state on creation was interrupted by the fall. The fall let its mark inn creature and culture (Genesis 3: 14-19). Man’s hope rested on the promise of the “Seed of women” who would break the serpent’s head. Therefore only under Christ can men be redeemed and his culture renewed.¹⁶⁶ We find in the New Testament in the life and ministry of Jesus the “concept fulfillment process.” Jesus is teaching on the basis of their own culture and practices. Jewish people practiced lamb sacrifice, John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God. Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so also son of man be lifted up. Once Jesus told Moses gave you not the true bread from heaven. The true bread from heaven is he who comes from heaven.

Jesus brings his real background to his preaching. He uses similes of fields and vineyards, sowing and harvesting, fig trees, lilies and mustard seed. “ Christ takes the life of people in his hands, he renews and reestablishes the distorted and deteriorated,he fills each thing, each word and each practice with a new meaning and gives it a new direction.”¹⁶⁷

3.7 Mission and culture

The first southern cone consultation of mission trainers published one missionaries competencies profile which says that “ missionary is able to analyse his own culture , respects other cultures , can contextualize biblical principles , creates a kingdom of culture , can adapt to another culture, is willing to identify with host culture , knows how to manage culture shock.”¹⁶⁸ These words are coming from years of experience. Therefore it shows the importance of culture in mission.

When we relate communication and mission here also we find the importance of culture and mission. “The missionary cannot communicate without concerning

¹⁶⁵ F Hrankhuma, “ A Holistic Concept of Context”, Emerging India Missiology,p.14.

¹⁶⁶ CF David J Hesselgrave, “ Christ and Culture” , *Perspectives on the world Christian Movement*, eds., Ralph D. Winter and Steven C .Hawthorne (California: William Carey library, 1981) p.365.

¹⁶⁷ John Herman , *An Introduction to the science of Missions* (Grand Rapids : Baker , 1969) p.179.

¹⁶⁸ F Harnghkuma and Sebastian CH , *The Church in India its Mission Tomarrow*,p.224.

himself with culture because communication is inextricable from culture.”¹⁶⁹ Directly connected with Indian context this is an unavoidable fact, there is an increased amount of urban poor living in slums and platforms in utter poverty leading to several street cultures like drinking, drug abuse, adultery etc. in tribal areas also we find such a situation.

Conclusion

Culture is a complex of factors that make a person what he or she is as an individual and as a member of a community. It is acquired after birth, and through it a person inserts himself or herself in to the human universe. In the biblical view it has its origin in the book of Genesis itself. When it is coming to Jesus as God and human he had a close relation with his own culture in every sense. As the messengers of Jesus this is our right and duty to understand and study about the culture and its relation with mission.

¹⁶⁹ David J Hesselgrave, *Christ and culture*, p. 366.

CHAPTER FOUR

MISSION AS DIALOGUE WITH CULTURE

Introduction

Culture as we have seen, is a developing process, as part of mission there must be a continuous dialogue between faith and culture. Therefore mission as dialogue with culture is a relevant subject in yesterday, today and tomorrow. In that case there is no discrimination between old and new developed or developing countries this is the need of the time, a process never ends.

All of this means that when we are discussing the dialogue with culture “we are really speaking of a dialogue between a culture and the faith in cultural form, in the first instance a dialogue between the christianized cultures of missionary and hitherto un christianized culture to which he comes.”¹⁷⁰ In this way evangelization or the mission can take place only through this process of dialogue with culture. That is “the message of the gospel passage from culture to culture and from history to history.”¹⁷¹

For the growth of the church this is the important part. Church clearly says that the young churches “must graft elements on its tradition on to their own culture and thus, by a usual out pouring of energy, increase the life of the mystical body.”¹⁷² From the view of the Asian Bishops council, “evangelization and inculturation are the steps through which we come to discover this work of the spirit in the hearts of humans and their world.”¹⁷³ In a deeper understanding the process of mission as dialogue with culture is happening mainly in two ways. They are evangelization and inculturation.

¹⁷⁰ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988) p.12.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² John XXIII, *Princeps Pastorum* (AAS, 1959) p.838.

¹⁷³ Francis X D'sa , “ Evangelization and Inculturation: A Two Way communication”, *Evangelization and Inculturation*, ed. Fr. Saturnino Dias (Delhi: Pauline Publications, 2001) p.128.

4.1 Evangelization

4.1.1 Concept of Evangelization

God is present in every human being. Human beings are the basis of every culture. Therefore god's presence is working in every culture. Evangelization is the doing, giving the structural idea of their inner power through the ways of Christ. Which means through the church Christ is continuing his work of salvation. From the view of Karl Rahner, "he is convinced that the salvific will of god is proclaimed as so universal and effective that it can be restricted only by a person's decision made with a bad conscience at no other point."¹⁷⁴ From this view when we are analyzing evangelization church also says "for the evangelization of cultures the Christian message must touch the essentials of cultures and change them from within. In this process the gospel renews, corrects, purifies and nourishes the culture."¹⁷⁵

4.1.2 Evangelization for all

Evangelization is including all the human beings, especially after Vatican.II it has a wider meaning that is expressing the broader sense of modern churches, " to evangelize the various cultures or various areas of regressive cultures (the drugs scene, prisons, broken homes , unwed mothers etc) commitment to social justice on the part of every group is most necessary."¹⁷⁶

4.1.3 Methods Evangelization

In the new situation of the world, church is introducing the new methods for evangelization "the witness of life, a living preaching, and the liturgy of the word, catechetical, utilization of mass media, personal contact and popular piety."¹⁷⁷ Both liberation and human promotion are integral parts of the work of evangelization. However we should avoid the mistake of limiting the missionary task to working merely for the temporal wellbeing of the people. Awaken the people for their eternal destiny is part of evangelization.

¹⁷⁴ Hendry Jose, " Karl Rahner's Christology in the context of religious pluralism", *Indian theological studies*, 36 (1999)p.315.

¹⁷⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*: 58.

¹⁷⁶ Arch. Bp. John R. Quinn, OSS. Rom (Nov.14, 1974, p.12.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*,13.

4.2 Inculturation

Inculturation is today a burning issue, particularly in the younger churches. From the view of St Augustine, II Vatican council quoting, “whatever goodness is found in the minds and hearts of men or in the particular custom and cultures of peoples, far from being lost his purified, for the glory of god, the confusion of the demon, and happiness of man.”¹⁷⁸ Church wants to do its evangelization process.

4.2.1 What is Inculturation?

Inculturation is another important part of mission as dialogue with culture. It has different types of definition, commonly accepted one is “it is creative and dynamic relation between the Christian message and a culture of cultures.”¹⁷⁹ In the Indian context “inculturation refers to the process by which a particular church expresses its faith and life in and through the local culture.”¹⁸⁰

4.2.2 Goal of Inculturation

The goal of inculturation or gospel-culture encounter is transformation of the culture through the human beings. Because this transformation is happening from within the human mind. “Culture do not change their own, people change their culture. Therefore transformation through incarnation is the way of inculturation.”¹⁸¹ Some times the word inculturation hiding the real meaning of this process, this is not only expressing in the idea of observing from other cultures but it is including the socio economic struggle of the people. In a simple way through inculturation, the faith is grasped in a more profound and personal manner by the local people and it can take deeper root among them.”¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ *Ad Gentes*: 9.

¹⁷⁹ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*, p.11.

¹⁸⁰ Julian Saldanha, *Inculturation* (Mumbai: St.Paul’s 1997)p.14.

¹⁸¹ Michael Amaladoss, “ Liturgical Inculturation and Post modern Culture”, *East Asian pastoral Review* 44, 2007, p.5.

¹⁸² Julian Saldanha, *Inculturation*, p.14.

4.2.3 The need of Inculturation

4.2.3.1 Spiritual

Before the opening of II Vatican Council Fr. Joseph Masson (Professor in Gregorian University) wrote, “Today there is more urgent need for Catholicism that is inculturated in a variety of forms.”¹⁸³ When we are analyzing the salvation history from Adam to the last one of her world, we can easily understand that for the salvation of human beings, incarnation happened in a particular culture (Judaic). However, it is needed to spread in all the culture based on this. John Paul II says, “Mission must involve a process of inculturation if the Gospel is to take flesh in each people’s culture.”¹⁸⁴

4.2.3.2 Social

In the field of mission, alienation is a big handicap. Because Christianity originated and gowned in Judaic and Greek- Roman culture but its basic mission is to proclaim it in all over the world. Here inculturation is the basic solution for the problem of alienation. It is leading to think about the needs of inculturation in yesterdays, todays and tomorrows context. As we mention earlier this process of inculturation is including the socio economic struggle of people, therefore, until now especially in third world countries inculturation is the basic need.

4.2.3.3 Theological

Another fact is that experience of God is the basic thing of all the religions. Many of the cultural facts are originating from the context. Therefore, inculturation is a need for the experience of god. “The problem facing the Hindu covert to Christ today’s is that in the Christian Church he finds himself to a foreign religious world.”¹⁸⁵

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “I must follow them for I am their leader.” That means I f someone wishes to take leadership or change in any cultural process, they must keep close to the cultural group, which they are trying to serve.

¹⁸³ Massan J , *Eglise ouvert sur le monde* , in NRP, Vol.84,1962,p.1038.

¹⁸⁴ *Redemptoris Missio*: 524.

¹⁸⁵ Julian Saldanha, *Inculturation*, p.86.

4.2.4 Characteristics of Inculturation

“Inculturation cannot be pressed. It cannot be preplanned, programmed or test-tube produced. It cannot be rushed. It takes place by itself, by its own strength, at its own pace. It is a mysterious hidden process.”¹⁸⁶ This beautiful definition is showing the speciality and real character of inculturation. The duty of evangelizers to be with the culture or live in the culture. It is originating, growing and happening basically in the mind of the people. From this type of people or community the expressions are coming out. In this process “evangelizers are picking up the vibration and catch the mood of the people. They feel in themselves the aspirations and ambitions of the community.”¹⁸⁷ This is leading the people to the inner struggle, evangelizers and people together trying to solve this problem that is leading to the process of inculturation.

4.2.5 Challenges in Inculturation

4.2.5.1 Social

Inculturation is a slow process in the church today as it is seen as the adaptation of the gospel from the Judaic and Greco Roman world to the cultures. “When the gospel encounters the culture, it evolves a call to conversion, a turning to god and as turning from egoism and pride.”¹⁸⁸ Culture is a social product as such it shares in the limitation of the human.

4.2.5.2 Liturgical

Inculturation itself is a challenge because it is the task of every local church to develop a pastoral practice, a theology, liturgy etc of its own, which leads to the intellectual and other effort and hard work. Related with liturgical part “the efforts at liturgical inculturation gave rise to tensions, which became particularly evident over the issue of the Indian Eucharistic prayer.”¹⁸⁹

4.2.5.3 Economical

Most of the time Indian church is giving rise dependence on foreign funds for basic life and pastoral action. Indirectly it is affecting the inculturation process.

¹⁸⁶ Menamparpil Thomas, *Thoughts on Evangelization* (Mumbai: St.Paul’s, 1997)p.38.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.,p39.

¹⁸⁸ Michael Amaladoss, *Liturgical Inculturation and Post modern Culture*, p.5.

¹⁸⁹ Julian Saldanha, *Inculturation*, p.70.

“Church was started in India with western institutional model and structures; even today that model continues to survive in administration, religious life, formation houses and seminaries.”¹⁹⁰

4.2.5.4 Cultural

From the view of the great cultural expert Bishop Thomas Menampambil “Inculturation cannot fail when the all community is involved when a true encounter has taken place between Christ and the people.”¹⁹¹ but in a multi cultural society like India it is too difficult.

4.2.6 Teaching of the Church

Before second Vatican Council, “the first modern mission encyclical issued by a Pope was the apostolic letter ‘maximum illumed’ of Pope Benedict XV in 1919.”¹⁹² It says that “... in order to achieve this (Gospel within everyone’s hearing successfully and quickly) to collaborate with one another and negotiate common interests together.”¹⁹³ Finally, Pope strongly opposed any cultural domination by catholic missionaries “...bearing perpetually in mind that, he (missionary) is ambassador not of his own country but of Christ”.¹⁹⁴

After seven years in 1926 Pope Pius XI (Pope of missions) issued his Encyclical Letter *Rerum Ecclesia*. This is also strongly supporting the process of inculturation. In 1944, Pope Pius XII addresses pontifical mission and society. Here Pope recognizes the plurality of culture. In his encyclical, he says “for the church, when she calls people to a higher culture and better way of life under the inspiration of the Christian religion, does not act like one who recklessly cuts down and uproots thriving forest.”¹⁹⁵ After this Pope John XXII also supported this process again, his idea comes through the Vatican Council II.

Vatican Council II firstly discussed with renewal of the liturgy. It says, “The Latin of this rite could be translated into the local vernacular, according to the policy and approval of the Local Episcopal Conference.”¹⁹⁶ Again, in *Lumen Gentium, Dei*

¹⁹⁰ Prasad Pinto, “Mission in the North Indian Context”, *Emerging Indian Missiology*, p.143.

¹⁹¹ Menamparmpil Thomas, *Thoughts on Evangelization*, p.38

¹⁹² Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*, p.179.

¹⁹³ Hickey, *Maximum Illud*, 1982, p.30.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.180.

¹⁹⁵ Hickey, *Evangelii Pracones*, 1982, p.76.

¹⁹⁶ *Sacramentum Concilium* : 35

Verbum, Nostra Aetate, Gaudium et Spes and *Ad Gentus* were clearly mentioning about inculturation. *Ad Gentus* numbers 4,6,8,9,10,15,18,19,21,22,25,26,31 are mainly discussing about this. Number 10 says “then it (Church) must implant itself among all their groups in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the men among whom he lived.”¹⁹⁷

After the council, Pope Paul VI and John Paul II have contributed a lot in the field of inculturation. *Africae Terrarum, Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Pope Paul VI) and *Catechesi Tradendae, Slavorum Apostoli, Redemptoris Missio, Ecclesia in Asia* (Pope John Paul II), these are the best examples of their contribution. More than everything Pope John Paul II used the word ‘inculturation’ first in a papal document (*Catechesi Tradendae*). From the words of Aylward Shorter “it is not easy to summarize Pope John Paul II’s contribution to the theology of Inculturation.”¹⁹⁸

4.2.7 Foundations of Inculturation

Mainly they are biblical and theological in missiological perspective

4.2.7.1 Biblical Foundation

People are considering Inculturation as a new system. But O.T and N.T are giving examples of this process.

From O.T

- Dt. 21:1-9 forbidding the human sacrifice.
- Dt. 26:12-15 Jews directed to offer to the Levites and other needy persons.
- Ex. 12:13 Feast of unleavened bread, beginning of harvest.
- Is. 66:18-21 All the nations into one

From N.T

Best example is that “Jesus and his immediate disciples were all Jews and spoke Aramaic. Yet the N.T was written in Greek, Disciple was conveying the same

¹⁹⁷ *Ad Gentes* :10.

¹⁹⁸ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*, p.236.

message, they used expressions that would best make clear to their readers the intension of Jesus.”¹⁹⁹

- Eph. 2:24 so then putting away falsehood let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors or we are members of one another.
- Rom. 1:16 It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jews first and to the Greek.
- Mt. 25:32 “All the nations will be gathered before him.”
- Jn. 4:21 Jesus said to her “Women believe me: the hour is coming when you will worship the father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem... When the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and truth...”
- Lk. 13:22-30 “People coming from east and west, from north and south”.

4.2 .7.2 Theological Foundations

The incarnation of the divine word has happened in the history. This incarnation is not for a particular community. Therefore, “mutual encounter of the speaker and the hearer that the full meaning of the divine word becomes incarnate in history, maturing in to fullness till the end of time.”²⁰⁰

In this way, inculturation is doing the theological work often Church. Thus, theology is not simply the explanation of the word to the community, but “An explanation given in a language that they understand, and explanation that throws light on their real problems.”²⁰¹

The church is the community of Jesus she is not an institution of dogmas, system of sacraments and tires or a code of laws. Surely, these are important parts but an encounter with risen lord is much great. Therefore “to be a Christian one need not renounce one’s culture, customs etc.”²⁰²

Second Vatican Council clearly explains the theological foundation of inculturation. “ It (Church) must implant itself among all these groups in that same

¹⁹⁹ Subash Anand , *The Local Church And Inculturation* (Pune: Iswani Kendra,1985) p.34.

²⁰⁰ Sampran , “ The First Institute For Inter Religious Affairs ”, *East Asian Pastoral Review* 18 (1980) p.155.

²⁰¹ Subash Anand , *The Local Church And Inculturation*, p.32

²⁰² Ibid.,33.

way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the men among whom he lived.”²⁰³

4.2.8 Some areas of Inculturation

Mainly church is giving importance to three areas which are liturgical, theological and catechetical. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* introduced these aspects “the field of liturgical expression... areas of catecheses, theological formation, secondary ecclesial structure, and ministries.”²⁰⁴

4.2.8.1 Liturgical, Theological and Catechetical.

After Vatican II, the liturgical part simplified its rites and adapted to the cultural patterns of the people. In the words of cardinal Montini, “Liturgy is for man and not man for the liturgy.” The greatest inculturation happened the use of the vernacular. This led to the better understanding and experience of the people, cultural adaptations also happened in local churches. In a theological and catechetical perspective, inculturation introduces the ideas that in a form which allows the teaching to reach their spirit and heart of all men, to whom it is addressed.

4.2.8.2 Socio Economical

From social manner socio-economic development is an important part of inculturation. In some places after the natural calamities of poverty situations, “what was required, healthy socio economic development and aid to people in need.”²⁰⁵

In the literary meaning also, inculturation is expressing the areas of the buildings, arts, festivals etc. These are also important areas of inculturation. More than everything, it is a way of life.

4.2.9 Models of Inculturation

Jesus Christ himself is the best model for inculturation. He understood the culture, made stories for that, and conveyed the message through those stories.

His disciples also followed this. St. Thomas in India, St. Paul (Champion of purifying pagan cult) in the case of gentiles. After that also Matteo Ricci in China, Robert Nobilli in India, Padre Pacz in Ethiopia, Mother Theresa in India and many

²⁰³ *Ad Gentes* :10.

²⁰⁴ EN :63, AAS 68, (1976)p.53.

²⁰⁵ Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*, p.242.

evangelizers and encouraging people. In this case, John Paul II was a great personality.

Conclusion

Mission as dialogue with cultures an ongoing process. In other words, it is a way of life, knowingly or unknowingly, it is happening in the society and in the church. Some experts or well wishers of the society and followers of Christ are assisting this process. As an expert Catholic Church understands and encourages this process generously. When we analyze the positive factors, there is another side which happens here. Pope John Paul II points out that “Inculturation is a lengthy, difficult and delicate task.”²⁰⁶

It is also facing many problems, cultural conflicts, ethnocentrism, discriminative situations, false witness, and degradation of God etc. However, the characteristics of evangelization and inculturation are giving hope. Which are mainly compassion, study of language, mutuality, proper witness, proper understanding and selfless love.

Generally, dialogue with culture or evangelization and inculturation is aiming the promotion of unity, fellowship and peace among men. From the view of the church and as a lover of human society, these are needed facts. In that way it is helping all human being in different culture to experience the incarnate God, who came in Jewish and Greco Roman culture.

²⁰⁶ *Redemptoris Missio*: 52

General Conclusion

Mission, at the dawn of the 21st century, calls for a new way of dialogue with culture. Mission in the face of religious pluralism and cultural background poses several challenges. First we want to recognize that, incarnation of God happened in one culture with the purpose of spreading it to the entire world. With that purpose we want to understand what is mission, dialogue and culture. These Understandings leads us to the need of dialogue with culture in mission. This happens in two ways i.e. 'Evangelization' and 'Inculturation'. More than the process of evangelization, inculturation can do a lot in this field. This is one of the best ways of mission especially in our Indian context.

In Indian context Inculturation can do a lot in the field of mission in the wider sense. Poverty is the touchstone of Christian spirituality. We know that the church from its beginning was a sharing community (Acts 2 and 4) and it was always in great spiritual danger when it become rich and uncommitted to the poor.

After the consideration of all the important aspects of culture and mission experience leads to the truth that there have been difficulties in the way of harmonizing culture with Christian thought, which are arising out of contingent factors. There difficulties do not necessarily harm the life of faith, but can rather stimulate a more precise and deeper understanding of that faith. In the experiential realm also deep experience leads to deep faith.

Modern man is connecting everything with the modern understanding of science. In this context archeology, sociology and even secular science can do a lot in the field of religion, especially in the field of mission of the church. But lack of proper understanding and fact of misunderstanding is leading to egoism and selfishness. Basically these are not part of Christian faith.

In the real sense the churches in order to fulfill their mission must use all human means to anticipate the kingdom of God on earth. This would involve not a mere passive solidarity with the poor by a dynamic participation in their struggle for full humanity. That is very close to the culture of human beings. Therefore if Christianity has a message of liberation for the wretched of the world this is the hour to proclaimit. For that the best and easiest way is nothing other than 'Mission as Dialogue with Culture.'

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