

TANGAZA COLLEGE
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

THE RANGE OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL
COMMUNICATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT
IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE
CHURCH.

BY:
VINCENT MANG'ONG'O

TUTOR:
FR. DECLAN BROSANAN O.S.A.

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STUDENTS DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material used here has not been submitted for academic credit to any other institution: all sources have been cited in full.

(Signed) Vincent Mang'ong'o .
VINCENT MANG'ONG'O

Date: February 2000

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acts	Acts of the Apostles
AMECEA	Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi (Apostolic Exhortation)
Gen	Book of Genesis
G.S.	Gaudium et Spes (Conciliar Document)
L.G.	Lumen Gentium (Conciliar Document)
R.M.	Redemptoris Missio (Encyclical Letter)
URTNA	Union of National Broadcasting Authority

All the Biblical Quotations from this work are taken from The Catholic Study Bible Edited by Dianne Bergant et Alii, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

African traditional media had a strong tradition of Oral communication. Apart from Islamic literature that can be traced in North Africa especially in Egypt and Sub-Sahara, there was little opportunity or need for the development of written materials, let alone newspapers, magazines, television or radio as in the secular world or as we have it today in the church. It was only after the coming of the early missionaries and the introduction of new Communication media and literacy in Africa, that we saw the beginning of the local media and the advancement of technological information in the church.

In this essay we shall see in Chapter One how the range of communication from the African perspective, in advancement has evolved historically. Then in Chapter two we shall look at how far modern information technology of media in the church has been established, the problems being encountered and search for the ranges of religion and mass media. This of course has to do with the "word" or the messages involved in communication. That is, messages have the capacity to influence people, thus owners of the means of mass communication of different kind, indeed contain the power to influence those who receive their message.

In Chapter three will examine the theological implications of communication in our contemporary world , especially in meeting the challenges that Christians face and how to give positive responses to the question people out there are asking about media. Eventually will find a theology of

communication and see how Jesus if he were alive today, the methods he would use to spread the gospel.

Then finally we shall give in Chapter four the suggestion and recommendation of communication in range of technological development in the Church of Africa. It should not be taken for granted that the Media can perform miracles in bringing transformation in the society. Otherwise this be left as one of the methods; simple because "it" has to take careful planning analysis of the phenomena that covers the whole communication process, and evaluation in order to design and prepare communication that will achieve the desired results.

CHAPTER ONE

THE TRACES OF COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

0.1 INTRODUCTION

As an African, traditions are part and parcel of us. From the beginning this concept has been lived and still will remain part of our existence and relevant in any context of any cultural background. The modernisation and outcome of translations, priorities have played a big role in traditions. This is why my point of interest resolved to penetrate further and search the details concerning this aspect in the realm of the traditional means of communication particularly from the original traces of my tribe the Luhya community.

The late founding father, Jomo Kenyatta (First President of the Republic of Kenya), used to say in his casual speeches in post-colonial days that "Mwacha Mila ni Mtumwa" (He/She who forgets traditions is a slave). There is a lot to be admired in him as an African nationalist. One may ask: how do we live these traditions? The mode of updating is through a medium that I will develop in this chapter from an African perspective. I will unfold this view from the ideas of Mr. Samuel Masheti, an old man aged ninety-eight years I met in the field work research (from Western part of Kenya - Luhya Community), when he said:

"Our only way of conveying and preserving our tradition was basically oral and was carried forth from generation to generation."

This happened during different social events such as initiation or any kind of festivity in the community. At homes, at the fire places, young children were

taught the basics of their tradition orally. This was carried forward to the next generation. This has somehow changed because of modernisation.

1.1 THE MEANING OF THE TERM: "COMMUNICATION"

Communication is a human activity which is recognised but few can define it. This is not because it is beyond human comprehension but due to lack of agreement on the nature of communication. We have about twenty different definitions. The common strand running through each is the principle of social interaction through messages. It comes from the Latin word "communicare", meaning to share.¹

Simply, one could define communication as natural conversation with one another. It is television, it is sign language, it is spreading information, it is our hair style, it is literacy criticism. The list is endless! I will base this study on one specific definition that seems most appropriate. According to H.P. Fourie in his work "Communication by Objective 2nd Edition", "*Communication is man's most important activity . . . the one he indulges in most, the one he cannot exist without, the one that ensures his personal and collective progress.*"²

¹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. Vol. 6 p.403.

1.2 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERM “COMMUNICATION”

The build up of the term developed over four consecutive periods in the history of mankind, namely: the oral, writing, printing and electronic age. The sequence of time differed in each period. Oral communication lasted for over a period of time.

*Oral tradition is the face to face or public communication. It is very space bound since only those actually present will hear the message.*³ Perhaps performed through a kick, clapping of the hands, a stroke, a grunt, a yell and a scream. Eventually this type of communication gave birth to the development of oral language. Specific groups of people created their own language with a particular sound to describe specific objects or activities. However of all living creatures, man alone have the ability to speak to one another in a developed language of words. Alongside this development we have traces of visual communication such as the rock paintings found in many parts of the world as we shall see in the history of Media in Egypt.

Over time oral tradition developed into writing. This became the first "technical" creation in human communication.

Then came the age of printing. In 1450 in a German town called Mainz a gold smith, Johannes Gutenberg, created the first printing press in Europe with movable type. This invention of printing in Europe encouraged a major step forward in communication. As a result of this invention missionaries found this

² Basic Human Communication Vol. 1 Pauline Publication Africa. 1999. pp.51.

machine more effective to store their work. Printing played a particularly great part in mission work and, in some places, Christians were only known as "the people who read". Soon there was the birth of African language, being put into translation of the Bible and other church books for converts.

Finally, we have the latest development in technology with the use of Electronic Communication. This is the era of the present day that we know from our computer, transistor radios, television sets and telecommunication.⁴

Since then Gutendeg Bible of 1450, technical development of later centuries saw the gradual emergence of the wireless, the telephone and the audio tube.⁵

1.3 MEDIA IN EGYPT

*Egypt being in North Africa is one of the first places of early civilisation. It's civilization dates back to around 10000 B.C. When man descended into the Nile Valley and settled.*⁶As a result of this various kinds of developments became prominent. For instance in communication. This does not mean that communication never had before arisen else-where but this was the core place besides other recorded and traced in history.

Therefore, oral communication, as already mentioned is one of the oldest and certainly most enduring forms of human communication. Putting oral

³ John Downing and Ali Mohammed: Questioning the Media a critical Introduction, (London Sage Publications 1990). p.44.

⁴ Basic Human Communication, (Vol.1 Pauline Publications Africa 1999.) pp. 53-56.

⁵ Charles Steinberg, (Edit) Mass Media and Communication, (New York: Communication Art Books, 1966.) p.5.

⁶ New Catholic Encyclopedia (Vol. V) p.1997.

communication into script form became one of the greatest communication modes. Hieroglyphic was the first pictorial style form of writing. This took place only in Egypt more than 3000 years before Christ. The symbols were simple drawings of familiar sights/shapes to follow after one another.⁷ We also had the art of pyramids and tombs well designed.

However Egyptian Hieroglyphics, went through great changes over many years until it became an alphabet form of writing such as we have today. Another invention made by Egyptians was papyrus paper from sedge weed (2500) BC.

The development in information in this region, (Egypt) is an undisputed fact. The ancient Egyptians were the first to realise the usefulness of spreading news and the importance of announcing current events to the public. This was done in the temple. At such gatherings, news was communicated to the people through engraving on the walls, or on stones and slabs erected at the entrance, or in the corridors of the temples. Men meeting in the temple were undoubtedly impressed by the news and so spread it amongst their folk, when they returned to their homes in towns or villages. No wonder, we find a certain papyrus that states, "*King NAFER-KE-RE ordains that a copy of this document shall be engraved on stone and be placed at the entrance of KOPTOS temple wall to be read by all the inhabitants of that vicinity.*"⁸

1.4 COMMUNICATION IN SUB-SAHARA

The name sub-Sahara is given to countries lying south of Sahara desert. This region contained a well advanced methodology of interpersonal

⁷ Basic Human Communication. (Vol. 1 Pauline Publication Africa 1999.) p.53.

communication in which the community could reach everyone. The basic ways of communication were for instance, music, dance, drama, story telling, art, painting and poetry. It is unfortunate that time has passed and that this tradition can no longer be heard, simply because most of them were destroyed with the coming of the foreign media. Despite their diversity, the nations of black Africa and their media share some community traits. This can allow the generalising of their way of perceiving communication. The collapse of the tradition was a result of imperialism. Mass media in sub-Saharan Africa has been affected to varying degrees by three factors: *the pre-colonial legacy of the oral tradition for example initiations, rites, the presence of an alienated managerial class, and the domination of modern African societies by systems of political patronage.*⁹ A fact to support this view is seen in the concept that African oral tradition corroborates the view of the African power of rites and spiritual symbol of the people. Shaka, the greatest warrior King of Zulu's is presented in oral poetry as the "paradigm of the greatness and the regenerative vitality of ancestral values". This shows how his fame gained the aspect for transmitting values of passage among the Zulu.

During this study, I visited the Nairobi National Museum of Kenya and I discovered that there was a lot of detailed account of communication which have been preserved in the Institute of African Studies University of Nairobi in co-operation with the National Museum of Kenya. Meeting Mr. Ivan Langat Head of Department of Ethnography said that "communication" was an essential tool in Africa. In most African societies and like here in Kenya, communication was

⁸ M. I. Khan, Kaushal Kumar, Studies in Modern Mass-Media, (London, Kanishka Publishers Distributors 1993) p.82.

done at the fire place, where riddles and history of the clan or community was explained. According to Magaga Alot in his work "*People and communication in Kenya*", state that "where there is life there is communication".¹⁰ This covers wide a range of, means of communication. For instance smoke is a means of communication. It was not quite plausible merely to state 'I did not see the smoke'. For the smoke was there for all to see! Nor 'I did not hear the drum'. For the drum beats were for all to hear.¹¹ Besides other communicative activities were carried on forward namely, craftsmen, blacksmiths and medicine-men were taught by means of observation in an informal manner. Also women were taught how to make robes, house mats, cooking food while in some communities African women were to construct huts.

Among the Samburu of Kenya who live in the Northern Part, artifacts such as beads had symbolic meanings. Males wear green beads, while females white and red. These were worn on the neck for beauty and cultural significance. However the green beads were associated with milk. Most East African communities wore cowry-shells symbolising the safety of cow milk.

Another useful tool to communicate messages in the African set up was the horn blown to wake up people at certain times of the day during ceremonies.

Pieces of bark cloth/skin were used to pass messages, if it was white and visible in the distance it meant peace, in case it was red it showed there was danger. Drums were also used to alert and gather people.

⁹ Ibid. p.xiii-xiv.

¹⁰ Magaga Alot, People and Communication in Kenya, (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, :1982) p.2.

¹¹ Ibid. p.12.

1.5 A CASE STUDY AMONG THE LUHYA TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION

The Luhya Community is a diverse community with extended sub-tribes. These are inhabitants of Western Kenya.

Like the majority of the sub-tribes of the Abaluhya, the Babukusu people regard "Egypt" as the original homeland of their ancestors. For these people, therefore, "Egypt" represent the beginning of time and the centre of creation-in short mans cradle land.¹² This portrays the reason why Egypt has an added influence on the Luhya community in terms of traditional communication as already seen. But this may remain at the level of mythical belief because there is no founded source to support these allegations.

1.6 FIRE

A long time ago, in the land of the Luhya, fire had a particular meaning for the people. "Mbwali" (bonfire) as it was known, communicated alot. For instance according to Mr. Samuel Masheti, an old man in the region, who said, "This kind of fire was made at the centre of the cross-road once in a year to signify thanksgiving to god. This sort of fire was lit up by a virtuous person who was "pure", without sin. Fire again was lit at the funerals. This was to sum up the vigil and to keep the dead person's spirit warm, since it was believed that the soul of the dead person was joining the ancestors as a young one and so needed warmth. People would cook food using fire. It was also used by blacksmiths. It

¹² Gideon S. Were, A History of the Abaluhya of Western Kenya, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House: 1967) p.84.

was seen as a sign of life. In addition, fire was prepared on top of a hill to alert people of an approaching danger.

1.7 SONGS

As a means of communication a song contained important messages of warning, encouragement, and hope. Songs have no boundaries. Songs are sung during moments of peace, joy, happiness and during sorrowful situations of the community. Among the Abaluhya, especially during the circumcision, brave songs were sang for those being initiated to gain strength. After the initiation rites songs were accompanied to give a sign of unity. These songs were accompanied by different instruments for instance, string instruments (Vukhana) and (Isikuti) drums. This was to add flavour to the rhythms and melodies. Beside, these instruments were used to give glory to "Were", supreme god of the Luhya community.

Funeral songs expressed grief the loss of the member of that particular homestead. For instance women danced, particularly at night, and composed dirges:

Nishina shyachila yee - what made

Labani Watsia - Labani go

Nukhulekha - leaving us?

Lidala lia mama - Mother's home

Lishindi - is cold

Woyii Yee - Woyii Yee

Lidalo lia Mama - Mothers home

lishindi - is cold

Tsimba Basi - Sorrow for

Mama - Mother¹³

Dancing and singing lessen the bitterness of family loss experienced by the bereaved member, and are essential for the ritual of burial. The above song is addressed to the dead, asking him why he has left us! He has wronged the living by leaving them without warning.

1.8 NATURAL BODIES

Just as the astronomer of today could use heavenly bodies to communicate to us the future, so also in the Luhya community we had special people filled with wisdom.

For instance the sun; gave light to mankind. Every morning a respected old man prayed to “Were” god to give thanks for the new day and at the end of the day he would give thanks for the day well spent. It was believed that, if the sun ever failed to rise, this would mark the end of the world. However this has never happened before and it is not even expected because the community kept communicating with God every morning and evening.

¹³ Joseph Malusu, The Luhya Way of death (Nairobi: Oxford University Press: 1978) pp.3-4.

The moon was seen as a sign of peace. This was known in the order it appeared. Pregnant women would communicate about their monthly periods and child birth using the moon. Also the moon was used to tell people when the next rainy season was to appear. According to Mr. Samuel Masheti when there was a full moon it was a joy to the young ones, since they would play in the fields, sing, recite riddles, poems under the mercy of the light. From a distance old songs were sung, showing a healthy sign of the community. At bed-time the old people would recall those songs, sung during their youth repeated once again and this was a glorious moment for them.

1.9 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SET-UP WITH REFERENCE TO THE LUHYA COMMUNITY.

1.9.1 TRADITIONAL

Communication in African tradition was mainly interpersonal and group communication. This strengthened the community ties by influencing individual attitudes, beliefs and values that shape the society.

Freeman David in his work "Communication: A challenge in Worldwide" points out that, establishing a relationship in Africa is more important than action. The act of communication is a value, regardless of the message. This is because communication and interaction nurtures and nourishes community.¹⁴

1.9.2 MODERN

¹⁴ Freeman David, Communication: A Challenge in Worldwide, August 1995.

The coming of the foreign colonialists, missionaries, traders and explorers to Africa brought a new change to the mode of African communication.

The modern media helped us to watch the horizon as the ancient messenger once did. No longer depending on the running messenger or the distant drum, we watch the horizon through News Bulletins or on the scene broadcast.

According to Alan Casty in his work "Mass Media and Mass Man" communication helps us to correlate our response to the challenges and opportunities which appear on the horizon and then reach consensus on social action. In reality, tribal action and town meetings have given way to mass communication, which enables us to read the rival arguments, see the rival candidates and judge the issue today in any local gatherings.

2.0 MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Unlike the traditional means of communication modern means of communication tend to weaken traditional relationships and community ties as they require a person's attention once they are operated. For instance, people listening to radio programmes, watching a television or reading a book: cannot meaningfully engage in a conversation with each other. They do not speak to each other and listen to the radio, watch the television or read the book at the same time.

Some types of modern communication means are:

Radio

Telephone P.A.S

Television

Books

Video Cassettes

Posters

Newspapers

Satellite Dishes¹⁵

2.1 THE IMPACT OF COMMUNICATION ADVANCEMENT

The effect of mass media has generated a big generation gap today. The elders in society have nothing to offer to the running of the society. Their wisdom has been ignored and termed old fashioned.

Mr. Langat the head of Department of Ethnography in Nairobi University (National Museum of Kenya) says that, the coming of the new communication era in Africa was viewed with great suspicion. Sometimes it was seen as ghost, like the echoes normally heard in the valleys. The same was seen with the Radio. While the introduction of the T.V. gave the impression that turned completely movable pictures be ghosts. In fact in some pastoralist communities here in Kenya, like the Samburu, taking pictures is still prohibited, because the people think, the one taking the picture goes away with the spirit of the living person. Your spirit is taken away and incase you have had a picture this is a clear sign you are a moving ghost or a vacuum.

2.2 INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

As already discussed in the previous topics African traditional communication was basically oral. It is my concern to put across the idea of

¹⁵ Communication, Culture and Community, (Vol. 2, 1999.) p.108.

communication as something lived, not static but in development. This is because Africa cannot isolate herself from the rest of the world. She forms part of the “global village” and consciously or unconsciously is affected socially, politically, economically, religiously and culturally by the powers and strength of modern means of communication.

The crucial question and challenge is not whether or not to use these modern means of communication, but rather how these can be used in such a manner as not to weaken but rather enhance the, African traditional relationships and communities.

In other words, culturally relevant materials should be produced and disseminated through these technologies. For instance, the use of culturally relevant video material. The communication interaction that would follow watching the video programme, would be interpersonal and consonant with their cultural identity. In this way, the technologies would be used in a manner that makes them adaptable to the immediate needs and concerns of the people. However from the traditional point of view I suggest that the former be accessible in various circumstances. For example in church circles, inculturation festivity like sacrament of initiation (Bablism, marriage, and Eucharist) would help to arrest the deplorable situations.

2.3 CONCLUSION

As we have already seen, traditional African communication has been a obvious experience. It could be said that to live is to communicate, for to cease to communicate is to be dead. That’s why the African way of communication

suiting its context. It may be appropriate for it to be viewed as a treasure which may seem to be lost but this needs to be revisited cautiously.

However with the concept of inculturation, much has to be done to bring a sort of this to realisation. To forge some of her Church concepts to propagate the faith in this age. I've no doubt opting the modern means for they accommodate the sphere of the needs of the times though we can not totally ignore or reject the traditional modes of communication. Thus in our modern world, both means of communication are needed and can be used effectively.

CHAPTER TWO

MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION AS USED IN THE CHURCH

2.4 INTRODUCTION

“In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. (Jn 1/1). It’s the “word” that has to be communicated via given medium and channel. As Gods creatures we have an obligation to carry God’s word. God himself is a pure spirit not touchable. God is all things. He is a God who communicates love. Mankind developed various channels to communicate message. We now encounter the modern technology which offers mankind round table to participate in world wide exchange of communication and co-operation with one another.

2.5 COMMUNICATION AND THE CHURCH PROGRESS

Since the church looks for ways of multiplying and strengthening the bonds of union between her members. The church lives her life in the midst of the whole community of mankind. She must therefore maintain contact and lines of communication in order to keep a relationship with the whole human race. This is possible with the use of these modern media modes. Particularly the church has no problems using technological media whether print, visual or audio as an extension of its own ‘Bible, eyes, ears, tongues, antenna and pulpits’. This is so because the church is a medium of communication in its own right. It is God’s instrument and the other forms of media are inferior to it, the later being

easy subjects of manipulation and abuse. This how the media can help the church's by becoming the church's extended organ.¹⁶

This is well supported by a number of church documents, namely the second Vatican Council document, Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication in Inter Mirifica¹⁷ which was published on December 4th 1963. With this document for the first time in history, the church officially treats the subjects of "social communication"¹⁸ some major conciliar and post conciliar documents refer to inter mirifica (I.M.). Examples are Lumen Gentium 8, Gaudium Et Spes nos. 6, 32, 44, 57-62, Sacrosantum Concilium no. 20, Redemptoris Missio nos. 26, 29 & 36. Inter Mirifica deals with theoretical and practical preparations for all users of media. It recommends the use of media for pastoral purposes. The document also appreciates media and technological development as an appropriate means of communication.

2.6 NEW FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY

Although the church must use all the resources of the modern means of communication and keep them in mind, until now her attention has been focused on the so called mass media, the press, radio, television and cinema. Effort in this direction is a way of development in modern technology. It would be more realistic to look at the mass media today from the perspective of one concerned

¹⁶ Kizito Robert, Communication and Human Right in Africa, (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1992) p.104.

¹⁷ The Decree on the Means of Social Communication - Dec. 4, 1964: Flannery Austin (Gen. Ed.) Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Bombay, St. Paul's, 1975, pp.262-69.

¹⁸ Flannery Austin, Inter Mirifica IM Ibid 1.

with the mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ at the threshold of the Third Millennium.

2.7 LOCAL LANGUAGE AND CUSTOM

Since time of their coming to Africa many missionaries became successful in their Mission by mastering the primitive languages. The learning of a language is a sign of respect and a desire to be at home in this community. Even if people do not know the complexity of their own language, they are still aware that their very identity is wrapped up in it. They can afford to speak it badly, but they will not tolerate a foreigner who uses it adequately.

2.8 GESTURES LANGUAGES

Sign is an important tool for communication. Today travellers are often embarrassed by the offence which they cause with gestures they take for granted: When you are in Greece, raising both arms in the air, palms forward, is as rude as the V sign, palm backwards would be in Britain.

In a foreign country whose language you do not speak, you depend heavily on gestures, and some basic form of communication is usually possible. Beneath this surface of shifting arbitrary codes, it may be possible to find a few universals of non-verbal communication. Individual signs may not work across a cultural divide, but sequences of action and the combination of several channels may help reduce confusion. Thus when touch, eye-contact, posture facial expression are used in co-ordination the ambiguity of each and may be reduced.

A case of importance is the modern significance use of sign language used on T.V. set. This is meant for the deaf to share in information technology with the rest on the screen on various selected programmes.

2.9 MASS MEDIA AND THE CHURCH

The arrival of Christianity and colonization in Africa had a great impact on the continent. Religion was the centre of influence. The effects were both negative and positive, for instance the introduction of modern technology. When we trace the history of the evangelisation of the world it becomes obvious that the missionary, concerned with proclaiming the Gospel, did not hesitate to use whatever media was available: film strip, magic lantern, print material, picture tract and book, Bibles and bible stories, with visual charts. Fulton J. Sheen, the renowned American Bishop, author and television personality used media effectively to reach millions by.¹⁹ His radio broadcasts were so popular that he came to be known as “the angel of the airwaves”. Sheen did not have to buy air time or prime spots on the television as religious leaders are compelled to do today. Sheen spent about 30 hours each week preparing for the telecast. Many bars tuned their television sets to his programme, taxi drivers would stop work for half an hour in order to watch. Mothers could get kids scurrying to watch T.V. by saying Bishop Sheen was coming on the television. In our own day the media continues to be keenly interested in religious leaders like Mother Angelica whose Eternal Word Television Network Inc. Is the first Catholic cable television network

¹⁹ H. V. Morton. This is the Holy Land (New York, Hawthorn Books Inc. 1960) p.1.

in America and Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II, Billy Graham or the Dalai Lama.²⁰

3.0 RADIO AND THE CHURCH

The invention of the transistor radio has been an immense success and has revolutionised our developing countries especially in Africa. Today a relatively poor minority can now own receiver sets which have found their way into the smallest villages, the remotest and most isolated communities linking them with far away countries which now feel that they live among a large community, that they are citizens of a nation.

However the case may seem to look, rural radio transmission stations for instance here in Kenya have been mostly sponsored by the government and are a real help in a few places. This is a great admiration on the side of this kind. The church should understand media work as a true Christian vocation whether they are employed by the church or by the government.²¹ As such we can then talk of development technologies in communication in the church. It is a feat the church in Kenya is doing in conjunction with Kenya Broadcasting Corporation programmes aired in items on line by Fr. Joseph Simaru's "Tumaini" Kiswahili service on Monday at 10.45 a.m. (Nairobi Diocese), and in the General Service by Sr. Maggi Kennedy "Journey to Faith" on Tuesday 8.30 p.m. (Mombasa Arch-Diocese). Also with Vatican Radio: English Service: Time: 6.10, 8.00: P.30 and

²⁰ A message from the directors, producers, executive editors Fr. Richard J. Quinn M.M. of Ukweli Video Productions (Nairobi, Kenya).

²¹ Communication Era p.67.

2300. MB Swahili Service Time 6.50, 19.20, 41.25 MB.²² An advanced venture of this kind is well-established in the Arch-Diocese of Mombasa. We have got St. Lwanga Communication Centre, which is hoped to expand and receive full status of a Radio Station in the coastal region.

To quote a speech made by the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting Hon. Joseph W.N. Nyagah during the celebration of the 33rd World Communications day at Consolata Shrine Westlands, Nairobi on Sunday 1st August 1999,

"It is noteworthy that, while KBC was the only broadcasting organization in this country at the beginning of this decade Kenya now boasts over thirty licensed radio and television stations although only a few of these such as KTN, STV, CITIZEN, NATION and FAMILY TV have started operating. Meanwhile the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has received and continues to receive applications for broadcasting licences which are being processed by my office in the normal manner".²³

Nevertheless the idea of church owned broadcasting station is appealing but the cost is out of proportion to the result that can be expected. The history of church owned broadcasting station clearly indicates that only a minority of listeners would tune in to such stations.

²² A discussion with Sr. Maggi Kennedy on 5th June 1999 in St. Charles Lwanga Archdiocese of Mombasa.

²³ Speech by the Hon. Joseph W.N. Nyagah, EGH MP. Minister for Information and Broadcasting 1st August 1999.

3.1 TELEVISION AND THE CHURCH

Television became available to the public in the 1950's. Like many other media/communication inventions, it was a result of military research for rapid communication during the war. The original TV pictures, like early film, were black and white. Television even more than radio, demands the complete attention of the programme makers. Full time employment in television is necessary if a person is to make a real contribution. This is so especially long before a television station opens, its first years programmes. It is important to produce specific offers of religious programmes at a very early stage. I am glad to say, watching television this day, religious programmes in Kenya have tried to achieve momentum in the new channels introduced recently. One would be contented to watch religious programmes on KTN²⁴ and Family channel T.V. in the region of Nairobi.

We hope and pray that the Church will soon broadcast religious programmes in (U.R.T.N.A.) whose headquarters are in Dakar. We would want to see the religious values aired in our Church, mainly programmes having strong influence on the people just as other secular programmes have a strong influence on fashion trends, cultural morals, economic and political choices and our value system.

3.2 THE PRESS AND THE CHURCH

²⁴ TV Cinema and Video, The Nation Saturday June 12, 1999 p.12.

Although printing started in the 15th Century (Thanks to Johannes Gutenberg Invention) the reading of Newspaper, periodicals and magazines has remained low in Africa due to illiteracy, poverty, long distance, obstacles to freedom of opinion. Only three to three and a half percentage of Africans in the most developed areas have access to newspapers and magazines. Elsewhere the proportion is between 0.3 and 2%. The reading materials offered are magazines published outside Africa, many of which have little significance.

Here in Kenya, there are a good number of religious newspapers reviews and magazines for instance, Mwananchi now called "The Catholic Mirror". "The New People" and "Seed Magazine" which have been accessible to the majority of Kenyan Christians. But we must confess that their distribution and readership is still very limited.

The managing editor of Mwananchi Magazine Mr. Joseph G. Murithi told me that, there has been a great achievement in informing, educating and entertaining its readers especially in matters pertaining the Catholic Church and its relevance.

Citing the future of the Magazine Mr. Joseph G. Muriithi mentioned to me that, the paper has adopting a new name "The Catholic Mirror" but retaining "Mwananchi" as a four page pullout exclusively in Swahili. This effect was due to the public demand reverting to its old Kenya Episcopal Conference (KEC) name "The Catholic Mirror".²⁵ As a matter of accessibility the paper contains Kiswahili language which any rural dweller with average Kiswahili literacy can enjoy reading comfortably as opposed to the other papers.

3.3 PUBLISHING IN THE CHURCH

In the field of the print media the church should give priority to publishing rather than printing. The running of the church's own printing press however is often a pre-requisite for publication. The communication department of the National Catholic Secretariat in Kenya (Nairobi) should be made aware that the promotion and co-ordination on Christian book publishing is one of their responsibilities. Therefore where publishing houses already exist at diocesan or sub-national level, their activities should be co-ordinated and their sales increased by joint publishing under the auspices of a national Christian publishing house.

For instance Paulines Publications in Africa should co-operate with each other in co-publishing of publications in English and other widely spoken African languages for example Swahili, giving translation right of successful books. A kind of this enforced is well established in East Africa with Pauline publications Africa. This is a publishing house of the Daughter of St. Paul, began its activities in 1929 in Uganda under the name of St. Paul Publications Uganda. In 1985 it moved to Nairobi and since then has expanded its catalogue to over 400 titles, published in English, Swahili and other local languages. Recently following the congregation policy, the name was once more changed to Paulines Publications Africa.²⁶

²⁵ The Catholic Mirror "Mwananchi" No. 278-Nairobi- August 1999.

3.4 CINEMA IN THE CHURCH

There is not the slightest doubt that among the modern technologies of Mass communication none affects human beings more totally than films and TV shows. How could any person of good will neglect such an effective media? This machine (motion picture camera) however was invented by William Dickson in 1888.

This has penetrated everywhere and as a result of the immense power to captivate audiences, exerts considerable influence over everyone, everywhere and particularly in African countries. Its invention and its development are one of the most impressive phenomena of the 20th Century. (Morlana and Wilson, 1990 p.143) they say,

Film can have advantages and uses that go beyond other forms of mass media. Film has the advantages of mobility and flexibility, which the broadcast media alone do not possess. Although frequently used in conjunction with broadcast technology such as television, film can also be used independently in local gatherings or for project training purposes.

But what do films provide there? An occasional documentary may be instructive and useful. Much more often, what is offered is tasteless, mediocre and even vicious.

Eroticism and violence are the two main themes of the cinema today. Besides, the film world is incredibly artificial. There is nothing in it that

²⁶ Pauline Publications Africa Catalogue 1997-1998 (Limuru: Print by Kolbe Press Limuru May 1997) p.1.

corresponds to everyday reality. Such a world encourages escapism and irresponsibility. It is like a drug that makes one forget all ones problems.

However, a new positive approach to cinema was warmly welcomed in the course "Religion goes to Movies" an appealing course taught by Fr. Alfred Lacomara in the Dept. of Social Communication. This course advocates for the measures which the church in this modern times can make use of the movies likely shown in cinema hall and be planted in church halls and used to educate the Christians. Watching the movie entitled "Shane" I was glad to note that, the movies contain admirable religious symbols which can be of use to the Christian in an advanced stage to dedicate religious symbolic features.

In regions where there is illiteracy, films can make a very effective contribution to basic education. It can help in teaching religious truth. The illiterate are profoundly affected by images and can readily grasp the facts and ideas presented to them.²⁷

3.5 THE COMPUTER

The first computing machines were built to tabulate the 1980's census in United States of America. They were not computers but electro-mechanical devices that could read the holes in punched cards and performed simple arithmetic.

The first computer therefore was developed to break Nazi military codes during World War II.

²⁷ Communications: A pastoral Instruction on the Media, Public Opinion and Human progress. (Washington U.S.A. Catholic Conference. 1971) p.44.

However the good effect of computers are that, there are thousands of potential computer applications that can be of great use in the church. At least in research labs, the blind are “seeing” in new ways via computer and computer in controlled body braces are helping paraplegic to walk.

3.6 INTERNET IN THE CHURCH

This being one of the groups known as personal media is the modern means of communication of late. This has ushered in a major revolution. Perfected just the other day, in the mid-80’s after trials that began in the 60’s, this mode of communication has changed the way the world operates.

Today the Internet is a collection of communities and technologies. Its development is closely linked to know-how gained over the years in the manufacture of computers and the software that operate them.²⁸ Its functioning can effectively pave way for efficient communication of church’s mission in the world especially in communication centres.

3.7 VIDEO AND CULTURE

As in many other African countries the video is considered to be an alien influence which helps to impart foreign values. Visiting Ukweli Video Centre in Nairobi Father Richard Quinn one of the staff told me that, because most of the imported cassettes are in English and Hindi, fears have been expressed that videos will downgrade Kiswahili the Kenyan national language. A response to

²⁸ Notes from the cause of International News-gathering offered by Lecturer Mr. Henry Owuor Nation Centre Nairobi.

this will slow down the Catholic education on very needed topic in media, such as Aids programme, contraceptives and abortion.

However, video is now well established as a form of entertainment in Kenya and it is unlikely that critics will be able to halt what they see as its adverse cultural influence.

3.8 CHURCH ATTITUDE TO MASS MEDIA

All this does not say that the Church should look at the modern mass media with downright suspicion and extreme caution, and consider media as a monster untenable with the precepts of the Gospel. Enthusiasts who jumped out of the bandwagon of mass media, which moved along the superhighway, hoped they would be able to do a far better job than St. Paul or St. Francis Xavier in preaching the Gospel and winning the world for Christ. The phenomenon is referred to as "the Electronic Church". That kind of enthusiasm is no longer widespread today. Such electronic optimism about evangelising the world quickly through the electronic media of the information super highway is just too idealistic and fallacious. However, the churches today should not develop a kind of paranoia or phobia about the mass media. After all virtue lies in the middle.

The church's attitude towards the media and technical advancement in general should be positive given the benefits obtain from it. Namely to help make life better for human kind. The Church would do well to make use of the media and reach out to both the urban and rural Christians.

3.9 MORALITY AND THE MOVIES

There have always been voices raised decrying the often negative values and immoral conduct displayed in the movie screen. Early attempts to force the movie industry to “clean up its content” met with minimal success until the Christian churches joined hands to effect the change.

For instance in U.S.A church people led intensified effort to clean up movies. The 1930 Code was largely the product of Father Daniel Lord, a Catholic Priest and Martin Quigley, a Catholic lay person. In 1934 after an apostolic delegation from Vatican berated movies in an address to a New York Church convention, United States Bishops organised the Legion of Decency which worked closely with the movie industry’s code administrators. In the late 1940’s the influence of the policing agencies began to wane. The 1948 Paramount Court decision was one factor. The movie, “THE MIRACLE”, became a First Amendment issue in 1952. The movie was about a simple woman who was sure St. Joseph had seduced her. Her baby, she felt, was Christ. Critics wanted the movie banned as sacrilegious, but the Supreme Court sided with the exhibitors on grounds of free expression. Filmmakers became a bit more venture some.²⁹

However censorship is one of those exasperatingly complex and elusive subjects that vex the mind so much that those who think about it are tempted to plunge toward one extreme or the other. I have defined the position that stresses the primacy of freedom and remains as close to it as possible. But I know also that we become irresponsible if in this matter we become absolutonists and

²⁹ Article “Movie Censorship”(Study Preview) pg. 153.

allow the governments to make no discriminations whatsoever between what should and should not be censored.

The distinction we need to make is not between art forms and entertainment media as such but in the accessibility of their presentations to children. I, for one would allow almost boundless attitude to the theatre in the presentation of sacrilege, political radicalism, and sexual obscenity.

4.0 THE BAD INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA

These days people are worried that children are interested in the electronic media and not interested in the books to read. This may create a phenomenon of illiteracy in future³⁰ if taken for granted.

But not everything is easy! Mass media is also to blame for the deterioration in the value system which youngsters experience nowadays. Mass Media has a profound kind of care free type of life-style to the youngsters through some of the entertainment programs which it offers. Books, magazines, films, popular songs, and dances have been noted to carry pornographic information to the public. This has corrupted the mind of our youngsters. Girls cheated through the media yield to an uncommitted sexual permissiveness, through contracting venereal diseases, AIDS and early pregnancy leading to single motherhood.

To compact this situation sex education in the public and parochial schools was suggested to be introduced in Kenya but the Catholic Church was against the idea in the late 90's. Basically to curb illegitimate birth, disease,

divorce, mis-information and self doubt is an era when children were starting puberty earlier, dating earlier and were exposed to pornography.³¹

At this moment I am reminded of an incident which took place in August 1995 (Nairobi Kenya in Uhuru Park) when the former retired Cardinal Maurice Otunga and the Imam of Jamia Mosque took the time together, the time-light, when they demonstrated against some publication by the Scouts Society of Kenya, which apparently contained some information that promoted sexual promiscuity, especially our youngsters.

In analysing what fostered the ethnic hatred leading to the massacre that left between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people died in Rwanda in 1994, all the reports point out that the role of Radio Television Libre Mille Collines (RTLM) a private station which began an intensive hate campaign against the Tutsis in the autumn of 1993. RTLM encouraged “racist propaganda” that was the result of political policy elaborated and applied systematically from the 1920s onwards in the media, political thought and official documents. This led to organised masscre and inter-ethnic cleansing fanned by some media stations.

Another parallel incident regarding media to encourage meat of war can be seen in the former Yugoslavia, where television was the predominant medium. Frances D’Souza a journalist with CNN reports that “the government controlled media constantly put before the people words and images of crude nationalism that played upon ancient fears existing long before the setting up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia”. Thus in former Yugoslavia, death threat

³⁰ Programme on BBC Radio 19th August 1999 Time 8.30 E.A. time. “Focus on Africa”.

were used to ensure that few opposed the rules of the game defined for media.³²

Thus another yet unhappy aspect of the media.

4.1 CONCLUSION

The church has to proclaim the message of Christ, to evangelise in this space of time. In this Chapter I have mentioned a number of new technological or advancement which the church in modern times has surely benefited from greatly. A great deal of research has been put to give the backbone of the Thesis in this century, how this tool can be of influence for mankind.

Positively this gives us a framework of which the church receives options to participate freely in spreading the Gospel of Christ to all nations in a simple way in modern times. The church can do this if at all she co-operates. Scientifically to elevate doubt in the mind of many that all this is only possible through the mighty work of God.

³¹ The World in 1970 HISTORY AS WE LIVED IT, Associated Press, (New York: Western Publishing Co. Inc. Wes Gallagher, 1971.) p.38.

³² Dafue Sabanes Plou, Global Communication, Is there a plan for Human Dignity, (Geneva, WCC) 1996.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SPIRITUALITY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

4.2 INTRODUCTION

The word Spirituality means “a way of life” creating communion that leads to communication.

As we have already seen communication is as old and as new as creation is. Creation itself is in essence communication - God communicating Himself to us. The goal and fulfilment of creation as well as that of humanity is to enter into and share the life of God.

Therefore, in this chapter I shall focus on the various ways that communication has effected the Church and its mission.

4.3.0 COMMUNICATION IN THE BIBLE

4.3.1 OLD TESTAMENT

Since in God revelation has been a communicating instrument to his creation, the goal and fulfilment of creation (as well as that of humanity) is to enter into and share the life of God. God chooses to communicate with people. When the Old Testament talks about people (“Laos” LXX ‘am’ in Hebrew) it basically refers to Israel as God’s people.

This relationship between God and Israel is based on three beliefs:

First that it is God's free choice (Deut 4, 37: 7-6). It is God who communicates Himself and who wants to do so in the daily life of his people.

Secondly, the choice has a purpose, the people have to serve God and to serve Him in particular historical acts. The people were liberated from the oppression of Egypt (Ex 7:16, Deut 4:7-49). This liberation is a call to serve. God communicates to his people calling them to serve him.

Thirdly, this relationship established by God's Communication is a mutual relationship of love and responsibility. When God communicates his love, He will take off the people whose lives will flourish and a community will be formed. The people will communicate with God by responding to his liberating message and by serving Him.³³

Every human person is for a life and beyond, seeking relationship of love and self-giving, people are only complete when in communion with others. Human history is the story of God entering into communication with His people.

We see what God wanted for men and women but the first rebellion cut communication and placed the first man and woman in isolation and fear and in hiding. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden, Gen 3:8.

With this break, man and woman lived in isolation not only from God but also from one another. Without ability to communicate, people live in confusion, which easily leads to fear, suspicion, mistrust, anger and war. The widespread

decisiveness of this break in communication becomes evident in the story of the Tower of Babel. (Gen 11: 1-9). The effects of the destruction of communication remains today. On every level the severe lack of communication contributes to our isolation.

4.3.2 NEW TESTAMENT

The heart of Communication in the New Testament is found in the heart of the trinity. God is essentially communication and the author of communication perfectly given and perfectly received. In a mysterious way we too are drawn into the life of trinity.

There is in fact no true interpersonal communication that does not begin in God the mystery of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Every human person bears the mark of the Trinity. This mark is also seen in the ability and the need to establish a relationship with others by communicating.

Communication is the very heart of the trinity. All created beings, have come into existence by an act of communication. The human person is empowered to communicate with others. Above all he/she is invited into dialogue with God who is communion and communication. By allowing us to communicate with one another God has healed our communication blocks established by the Tower of Babel (Gen 11: 1-9).

The whole life of Jesus was the communication of truth of life and of love. In the institution of the 'Holy Eucharist, Christ gave us the most perfect, most

³³Kizito Robert (Ed), OP. Cit. p.22-23.

intimate form of communication between God and Man possible in this life, and out of this, the deepest possible unity between man.³⁴

Even his technique of teaching with parables, images and symbols next to the very heart of his hearers spread new vision and hope. His style spoke not just to the mind but also to the heart. He went to great length to touch, heal and save.

However, in this context we need to view communication as what God of the Bible does best and superlatively in Christ. Communication rising toward communion is what mankind at his best does. Therefore, when we discuss communication we have a religious, a moral and spiritual rather than a technological theme.³⁵

4.4 THE CHURCH IS COMMUNICATION

In fulfilling its mission of evangelisation, the Church adopts different pastoral responses with respect to communication, its problems and perspectives, according to different circumstances and the basic attitudes assumed by Christian communities and by pastoral ministers.³⁶

In leaving his Church, Jesus meant to keep alive for all times the meaning of what God has done for us and to help us to enter more profoundly into the communication - covenant that God offers us.

³⁴ Communication a pastoral Instruction on the Media public opinion and human progress, United States Catholi Conference, (Washington, 1971), p.3.

³⁵ Kyle Haselden, Morality and Mass Media, (Nashville; Broadman Press, 1968), p.53.

³⁶ Philip Lee (Edit), Communication for all, (New York, Orbis Books, 1985), P. 95

Avery Dulles a Jesuit Theologian puts it like this,

“The basic reality on which the Church is founded is a mystery of communications: the communication of the divine life to all people through the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ as a divine person is God the communicator.

In contrast to Avery Dulles quote our homes and especially within families great difficulties exist between husband and wife, between parents and children by virtue of lack of communication. How much grief, pain and separation are caused by silence which comes from the closing door of communication. Little time is invested in listening to and believing in one another. This remain a social problem.

4.5 THE MESSAGE OF THE POPE ON 33RD WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

“The Mass media, a friendly companion for those in search of the father” is the theme chosen by Pope John Paul II for the 33rd World Day of Social Communications, held last year on Sunday, 16 May 1999.

He said to the media, has a special responsibility to witness to the truth about life, about human dignity and about the true meaning of our freedom and mutual interdependencies. The Pope emphasises the great need of companionship between the media and the Church as they complement each other.

He said media can help the Church to proclaim the gospel in all its enduring freshness in the everyday reality of people's lives.³⁷

4.6 DIALOGUE BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

On the journey of human searching, the Church wishes to befriend the media, knowing that every form of co-operation will be for the good of everyone. It is true that Church culture and media culture are different, indeed at certain points there is stark contrast. But these is no reason why differences should make friendship and dialogue impossible.

From what we have already seen in the previous chapter dialogue between theology and communication gives proof of what is taking place simply because its unavoidable. Major questions such as the appropriateness of the "Electronic Church" almost immediately have become a theological issue.

Surprisingly many major contemporary theologian such as Schillebeekx, Lonergan, Tracy, Ellul and Bastion are taking up questions of communication that are using the language and concepts of communication sciences.³⁸ In Rahner emphasises that theology needs to rediscover the challenge of the contemporary Areopagus to overcome like St. Paul, any merely dismissive attitudes to the culturally embodied forms of religiousness and to discern what is spiritually valuable in the artistic expressions of time. Indeed theology needs to be pushed out of its sacred enclosure and to plug itself into the languages and

³⁷ Leadership April 1999, Mass Media A Friendly Companion?, No 379 P.7.

³⁸ Paul Asoukup "Communication and Theology" (London; Printed and Bound by I and T Press Ltd. 1983) p.7.

other forms of knowing, engaging other questions other than those that belong to its own territory.³⁹

The reasons for increasing the theological discussion on the introduction of new methods of communication, have leapt into the forefront.

One can detect several stages in the rise of the present dialogue between theology and communication. At first stage, when the phenomenon of popular mass communication burst upon the world of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many Christian traditions ignored it as unimportant or rejected it as somehow vulgar and evil. The faithful were warned against indulgences in cheap and sensational press, cinema, popular music and magazines. Seminaries and other institute preparing pastoral personnel who were to be the models of Christian life, carefully protected their students in splendid isolation from the taint of popular media. In a world where many of the institutions of small peasant communication and close urban neighbourhoods still hung on, the oral communication of traditional preaching and the privacy of the "church press" seemed to be enough. Traditional implicit theologies of communications also seemed to suffice.

However, once it was realised that popular press and broadcasting were having a significant cultural influence, there began to be a new stage of wanting learning to use the mass media for the Christian message. No one questioned the traditional theologies of oral and rhetorical communication because the media was considered to be more than improved channels for the same oral style of preaching. The only new dimension was the emphasis on evangelisation

³⁹ John R. May, New Image of Religion Film, Kansascity, Sheed and Ward, 1997. p.156.

using the amplifying power of the Mass Media to reach into the social group of the unchurched. The view of communication technology as evil was abandoned and the mass media was enthusiastically embraced along with the institutional structure and programming formats as a providential gift of God to spread Christianity.⁴⁰

4.7 THE PULPIT

People today are so bombarded with information that most just turn off. The art of communication in our modern times has paved the way for getting attention of the listeners. The Pulpit is a position to convey the message of God.

Many in our Sunday Morning Congregations are present for a variety of reasons. Parental pressure, to placate a spouse, or a friend who wishes to be accompanied and indeed many more. Others look forward to this period of peace and quite away from crying children or a nagging partner. "Sitting at last" "Silence". Thank God for the nice rest. If I believe that my few words are important then I must arrest the attention of my listener in the first three seconds. I can do this in a variety of ways by use of: story, question, riddle, proverb, a recent incident, recall, novelty and overhead projector. This then can serve the purpose of communication efficiently.⁴¹

Here in Nairobi, we often see public places with people at lunch time who want to hear someone preaching. Every Sunday afternoon, many people go to Uhuru Park to listen to an excited preacher. In this case where orality takes

⁴⁰ Paul Soukup, Ibid p.8.

⁴¹ Notes of Fr. Declan Homiletic Class September 1999. p.23.

prominence we should consider that the pulpit could perhaps remain the most powerful and most accessible instrument of communication here in Africa, especially in the rural areas where the majority of people will continue to live throughout the twenty first century without being able to read and write.

4.8 THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication technology and its advancement is a vital need for our time. Church personnel as well as lay people need training. The problem is not to train people for machines but to be able to share faith with a knowledge of society today. We would like the idea of community radio to be looked into. Income generation has to be further developed in order for the institution to become more self reliant. There is a felt need to train people in business administration especially for marketing.

There is need to work in closer collaboration with other Dioceses in Kenya. It is vital at this time of transition to keep people informed so as to live their Christian commitment today thus making the world active.

The journalist ethic should be emphasised and not be abused. Incidents to mention is that I witnessed on 13th August 1999 during an ordination of a Priest at the Shrine of Apostles of Jesus (Langata Nairobi) archbishop Raphael Ndingi of Archdiocese of Nairobi ordering the photographers to clear up from the sanctuary on a bad note. He said "There is no longer respect of this holy place the – "sanctuary" they have become too common in the sanctuary".

We hope and trust that there will be people in both the church and the media prepared to co-operate to ensure that the world of the media become more and more friendly companions to all people, presenting them with “news” wedded to remembrance, information wedded to wisdom and entertainment wedded to joy. It will also ensure a world where the church and the media can work together for the good of humanity. That is what is required if the power of the media is to be a force which does not destroy.

4.9 CONCLUSION

It is therefore that the Church in this age urgently needs these modern means of communications and should ensure the presence of Christian values in them so as to put them at the service of the Gospel to evangelise our world.

Still, with this focus, more Christians should be raised with spiritual qualities like those of the early Christians of the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of St. Paul, the glorious Confessors and Martyrs of North Africa and the Martyrs of Uganda. To this end we further aim at forming apostles the Jesus way. These will become multipliers of the agents of evangelisation. Furthermore we continue to place a high premium on our traditional African ways and means of bringing home truths, about life and its meaning to learners.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a chapter which provides us with the outcome of the thesis in view of its originality, particularly meeting the range of African traditional communication and the development in Information Technology in the Church. To do so a careful synthesis has been made to achieve this phenomena.

5.1 WHY THIS STUDY WAS IMPORTANT

Communication should not be taken for granted. It should not be assumed that merely publishing something is successful communication. The success of communication effort will depend on whether all the various factors affecting the effectiveness of communication have been taken into account. For instance when we look at publishing in Tangaza College, we need guidelines for effective strategy.

The study provided me with an insight into the dynamics of viewing the range of communication from a traditional to a modern scope in the Church of Africa. Particularly seeing how the Church has enormous responsibility in communicating the message of the Good News of the Gospel and all the available resources which must be taken advantage of in the accomplishment of this task. However this should be seen as one of the brightest challenges faced by the Church in Modern times.

Financing the media, effectively for the use of its kind by the African Church for Evangelicals and development has to be considered as top priority.⁴² Considering the financial burden of media projects, it's not easy. The project needs to be well planned and managed in such a way that they become self-financing, in order to ensure their survival not to limit on donation. Sacrifices in capital, time, and energy are needed to acquire, success, use and raise the level of awareness of the communication media in the Church. On the one hand the Church in Africa still appeals to the partner agencies and to give the layman, aid women among them competitive salaries and that will make them happy to continue to work with us. Besides, the Church should find ways to raise money for the media. This should include appeals for donation, advertisements, charging for professional press and printing services which should be rendered with expert managerial and business insight.

However it still remains a big responsibility. The Church must be serious with, Christian publishers in Africa if they are to use this modern medium in performing the role of "light of the world". In addition to the religious issues, social, political, economic, social injustice and the like may be of great concern to the members of the society.

5.2 OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY

The major objective of this study was to discover the range of communication in the church sphere and see how it has benefited with the new technological framework of information tools in the Church.

⁴²Phillipart Michel, The African Church in the Communication Era, (Nairobi: St. Paul Publications Africa 1992) p.17.

This objective was well realised by taking advantage of the new Department introduced in Tangaza College namely "Department of Social Communication" paving a way of helping those involved in the Ministry of evangelisation both ordained and lay members to explore practical ways which communication media can support and enhance their ministry in this age for Pastoral needs. This was a response to the agenda of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication chaired by Archbishop John P. Foley,⁴³ Chairman of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications (PCSC) in 1986 in Rome that those in the formation of future Priests and Pastoral Workers is a pre-requisite to be trained in Media Technology.

It should be realised that in this, thesis a number of Modern Technology information in the Church has paved way enormously. The only measure needed in this is the laying of strategies, or principles to make effective use of the media in the Church otherwise it will miss the point. Therefore a study of this kind, obviously will help one identify with the Church, to tell historical development of communication and highlight the need for a planning process careful, evaluation of the factors surrounding communication process in the Church and suggest means the Church can adapt to consider in developing communication principle.

⁴³ Ibid.p.21.

5.3 GENERAL CONCLUSION

Each period of human history has its own marks in time. Ours is surely that of communication, with TV, Radio, Video and Books, everything has become instant. Journeying in this thesis we have been provided with the range of African Traditional communication and the development of Information technology in the Church. All has been penetrated and exposed very well, both for good and evil. The thesis has given us a scope of development of change and way of seeing and relating with Mass Media and communication often without realising it. We live in “a global village”.

The challenge was how to bring Jesus, using this new culture to God's people. Modern Information Technology in the Church has become powerful means. However we are only too well aware of the amazing speed at which the world of communication is being transformed. In our day and age, we have witnessed the incredible advances in these technologies. They can challenge our basic belief and customs. They can also twist the truth. If we are not sure of our values, they can manipulate us into changing our beliefs. We have to grow in critical awareness and the power to choose what is right and good.

It is not exaggeration to assert that the communication media are constantly, if at times imperceptibly, modifying and shaping the cultural and moral habits and attitudes of people. Their impact on the thinking, the choices and the options of individuals and communities is at the least profound.

All the time God never stops speaking to his people. If the changes ignore the use of the media in the modern world, a way of God's speaking to many people will be closed and we will never know the needs of our brother and sister as we try to build one world. We can no longer say we don't know as Christian or God Seekers". We cannot hide from our responsibility in the face of the Gospel. For instance the story of the deaf mute in the Bible, what Jesus did and said "What do you want me to do for you? I want to see...if we see we are responsible to bring the love of God in every sense to all in justice forgiveness and peace. This is because these modern means of communication as already seen are sometimes employed to propagate hatred, intolerance, oppression, domination, crimes, immorality and deceit. They are thus cruelly abused.

To be in support of this project we have a mission. We maintain that if ever there was a time to fulfil Christ's Mission of the Church in Africa in fidelity to the mandate of the Lord Jesus, it is now. Now, more than ever before, is the moment to announce Christ boldly, proclaim Christ unequivocally and communicate Christ and his Gospel wholly to the African world. This demands the inculturating of the African means of communication values into the church.

In view of this fact I register the prophetic word of Pope Paul VI on the value of witnessing Christ in evangelisation: "Modern Man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses". (En 41).

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The Author, Sample Questionnaires for Communication and Information Technology in the Church (Range of African Traditional)

_____ Interviews.

_____ Personal Reflections and Experiences.

APPENDIX

Sample Questionnaires for Communication and Information Technology in the Church (Range of African Traditional).

(Please write your name and occupation on the answer sheets provided. Then, read carefully each question and answer it as faithfully as possible. The range of African Traditional Communication and the development of Information Technology in the Church. It is existence and that parity which I wish to trace in these Questionnaires. I will greatly appreciate your contributions. Thanks in advance.).

1. How can the traditional means of social communication be assessed and used to proclaim the Gospel and advance human promotions.
2. How can Africa best adjust to the new situations created by the invasion of modern mass media.
3. What are the means of Evangelisation, which ought to be given the benefit of attention and reflection today in the particular churches, especially according to the official documents, Inter Mirifica?
4. Would it be desirable to make an objective inventory of those modern means of communication more widely used in the Church.
5. What percentage of population in your area makes use of the following radio, press, cinema, television and video.
6. Do groups of young people and adults show up preference for certain kinds of mass media?
7. In this "era of communication" have Church leaders and the faithful in your area been concretely aware of the phenomena both in the world and in Africa of how social communication and others, in their collective and individual behaviour?
8. How are the leaders and faithful concretely engaged in the Ministry of communication?
9. Has there been any effort to develop sharing communication resources between the African Churches.
10. What is the general historical set up of the Mombasa Arch-Diocese centre of communication?
11. What are the future dreams of this kind of communication centre compared to the aspects of media in technology?
12. Has there been any effort to develop sharing communication resources between the secular and the Africa churches?
13. Does a concerted and effective strategy exist in the church for the training of Christian communicator. (Priest, Religious, Laymen and women)?
14. What do you think about the mutual relations between bishops and religious, laity in particular churches in Africa?
15. Is it possible to do a research study on the kind of films usually available in the video clubs, which are opening in your area?

NAMES AND RANKS OF MY INFORMANTS

1. Mr. Joseph G. Mureithi, Managing Editor Mwananchi Newspaper.
2. Mr. Ivan Lagat, Head Department of Ethnography (National Museums of Kenya - Nairobi Museum).
3. Sr. Maggi Kennedy Msola, Communication Co-ordinator, Catholic Arch-Diocese of Mombasa.

Mr Samuel Masheti, An Old man 98 years. In Ikolomani Division, Kakamega District.

5. Fr. Richard J. Quinn M.M. Director of Ukweli Video Production (Nairobi, Kenya)