

KERYGMA AND CONSTRUCTION OF SENSE

Communicative Competence as a key concept of a communicological interpretation of ministry

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When we find ourselves involved in a communication society (defined subsequently), and when we realize that we are part of a huge and rapid cultural change, any attempt to define what a life in faith or a religious life is under the conditions of a media-, communication, knowledge, or (even) event-society, needs to be precluded by thoughts on the paradigmatic meaning of communication (in the context of media, in a context of societal organization of knowledge and in an event-environment) in relation to church-life as well as all things which could define church life as a special version of communication. That means, we have to rethink not only the ministry, we have to rethink - in relation to communication – all moments that constitute church-life, which is the system (community) of believe – both the practical side (culture of faith) and the scientific or logical side (theology of faith).

Any attempt in developing an outline of a communication-logical interpretation of religious ministry (especially of the kerygmatic service) should begin with the following question: Is there a logical system of communication that gives an idea how to understand the communication character of a kerygmatic (faith-) community (church life)? And if there is, we need to ask ourselves: Is there a key concept that explains the special criteria of religious communication and, above all, that is able to explain the intrinsic paradigm as one in all, as one and the same in church-life's practice (Faith life) and theory (theology)?

Good reasons for a social theory of faith

There is first of all a reason for theory of knowledge. How do we know that we believe, if we think we believe? We know because we have systems of interpretation, both formal ones and informal ones that state: taking part in social activities of a community of those who, on the one (social) hand, declare themselves as believers, and, on the other (individual) hand, identify themselves as individuals who overtake the orientations of the system of believe (published in forms of communication, mission, kerygma) as an individual reason for thinking of their own orientation towards life – thus, directing one's own distinctions and decisions in an identifiable individual habitus – all that is a declaration of a self-understanding in relation to others. That means, we know that we believe while we relate to others. To identify oneself – for oneself and for others – as a believer is in any way and in any case an act of communication.

But, the question, how we know that we believe, if we think we believe, has to be considered on a second level of observation, in order to find supposable reasons of a social theory of faith: how do we observe how we use that (formal and informal) system of believe, in order to declare us for ourselves and before others as ones who believe,

how do we explain that we know that we believe? This question brings us to the scientific level, from where all consideration turns to an (theoretical) observation of (practical) observation. In order to decide, by which theorems it could be explained, what it scientifically means to believe in God and to believe all the interpretation of God's meaning and relevance to ones personal and social life, why this has consequences for the direction and the management of personal life - and why all those (at least the formal) interpretations are reserved to officers of ministry; and if that is because of danger of wrong (heretic) interpretations, how is it, outside the theology, explainable, what is right and what wrong believe? This complex issue needs to be thought through and analyzed in a framework of theory of knowledge.

Meta-theoretical positioning:

Let me suggest a phenomenological model for that. A discussion of what faith is about in a scholarly context needs to adopt a point of view (consideration, observation) which is located on a vertical scale between an idea (or ideal, sense) of faith and the everyday realization of it. That point needs to be defined by a scientific method, which is by itself a communication strategy of relating theory to practice in the way of a horizontal intermission (SCHMIDT 2003:133) of the vertical direction of the question, what faith is substantially between its idea and its realisation. The scientific analysis does this by pointing out general and abstract characters or criteria observing the practice through models of explanation, by finding out orders of the phenomenon to be interpreted and by classifying types of realisation of an ideal. Through that crossing of vertical interpretation and horizontal definition emerge at least four different fields of interpretation of the phenomenon of faith: (1) a normative logic, which is the field of theology; (2) an empirical logic, which is the field of history, sociology, etc.; (3) a pragmatic logic, which is the field of "praxeology" of faith; and (4) a critical logic, which tries to find the criteria of an idea of faith in practice and tries to confront the idea of faith with the conditions of practice.

What I am asking now is this: Is there a model of knowledge that explains the communicability of faith. In practice, I assume, it is the credibility of communication that makes faith communicable. But, is credibility a model of knowledge? As far as we are in search for a theoretical system we need a connection that makes possible an interchange of paradigms between the two systems of thinking: theology and "communicology". If we conceptualize theology as a theoretical order of consideration of how and why man observes his relation to god and what it is what he reflects in relation to god; and as we conceptualize "communicology" as a theoretical order of consideration of how and why man tries to achieve a common point of mutual understanding and what it is what he reflects in relation to himself and to others, then we have arrived at a level of order, where the observation is the observation of observation. At this level, we may bridge the gap. At this level, we have left the order of a theory of a subject and have reached at a level where we consider how and why we construct such subjects as they are by themselves (just) observations of experience.

The weakness of theoretical explanations often is that they are not related to a universal theoretical framework of legitimacy of thinking. Since thinking always is connected to

communication or since it is a way of creating reality by means of communication, it makes sense to clearly explain where one starts from. I argue for a constructive methodology, because the system of constructivism challenges us to understand truth, insofar we are in search of it, as a relational (not relative) measure of interpretation of world.

Relationality of truth means that all what we are able to think about truth becomes real by means of relation or by referentiality, by power of relationship, and in respect of relationship. Truth of relationality reflects the experience that we observe ourselves becoming true and that we identify ourselves as true by relationship, always related to the other. Relation generates truth and truth generates relations. Relation is capable of truth and truth is capable of relation. It is relation that is responsible for truth and it is truth, of course, that is responsible for relations. It is truth that makes relations capable of responsibility and it is communication that makes relations capable of truth.

Clearly, we now find ourselves in the middle of constructivism. In constructivism, in so far it is based on neuroscience, theology was challenged in multiple ways. Since neuroscience “tends towards a reductionism of naturalism” (NEUNER 2003) some of the fundamental theological concepts are challenged for change. The claim of the neurosciences on being able to explain spirit, mind, and soul as an expression and assertion of the body and as a body-work, brings the Christian theology to some extent to the end of Latin: the dualistic concept of man - being consisted by soma and psyche, body and soul (as an energy of life), two different principles with different quality of existing – which always has been a central of Christian anthropology, might lose its persuasive plausibility. In that context it seems the Christian religion would be without a reasonable concept of man and its relation to god. But it also may be that the neuroscience knowledge is to take as a challenge to overcome the Greek mythology as a reference of biblical thinking. At least that situation brought the theology back to realize the holistic view of man, especially in relation to the eschatological (ultimate) expectations.

But it may be much more the Christian theology that is challenged by the cultural-science version of constructivism (SCHMIDT 2003). This direction of constructive interpretation of world and reality stresses the power of communication as a cultural good, the power of culture as a communicational good, both realized under the condition of a societal environment. Observing experience is the way of how we make sense to what we experience. In search of meaning of experience we develop a social system of exchanging and interchanging the concepts of signification in order to reduce the workload of individual search of sense. Sharing this observation brings us to common concepts (or: cultural models and terms), what makes us capable to communicate and to establish communities interrelated through common rules of observation. The sharing of our experiences thus creates systems of meaning: culture. In that sense, culture describes a program of evolution, a program of human emancipation, a program of social appropriation, and a program of symbolic environment – thus, creating models of knowledge and models of reality. Sharing those models over time and times creates a

system of reference, a cultural memory, structured by means of media: language, rituals and social rules. All that is living through change and is in same time the principle of change that comes in danger to die through any attempt of regulation or making viable models of truth to definitions of truth (BAUER 1982, MITTERER 2002)

As far as faith is a cultural concept of observing the viability of truth, it is a social model of sharing the credibility of truth. In scholarly terms, faith is defined as a communicational system. That is, faith is not an individual good, but is to be considered as an individual decision of sharing and benefiting from a cultural good that signifies the viable and credible model of truth. What is theologically defined as grace of revelation of truth, experienced by faith, is “communicologically” conceptualized as a social model of culture of truth that is constituted by communicational sharing of sense and by socializing with others because of that distinctive character. That means, what we explain as truth or as a content of faith is a result of communication and what and how we communicate is a matter of culture, while culture itself is as matter of communication and of its societal organization. This conception, somehow cybernetic (the one is in relation to the other always the next order of consideration), brings much more challenge to the theology of faith, since it makes clear: communication does not relate to any natural reference, by which it would be definitely defined, what it is about. Defining communication means to communicate about communication. Defining communication is to communicate the definition.

There are some good reasons for a social theoretical interpretation of faith. How could it be explained to a non-believing or secular society, what faith is like, what it means, what it does, what it affects, how one can find it and what is missing, if s/he is not believing in God, if there could not be used a model of value that is understandable for everybody and that gives communicative connection. Connecting the explanation of faith to the cultural logics (system of characters) of communication is somehow using an extrinsic model of value, where an (or the) intrinsic semantic model, what within a Christian theological store of significations is grace and revelation of God, does not exist within the store of significations of a secular environment. Faith contains all characters that are in general characters of communication: sociality and relationality, culturality and reasonability, insight and understanding – all these concepts make faith being a model of communication.

Faith as a concept of sociability

There is a broad convention that, if there is a model of valuable experience at all, it is communication. Communication is somehow the term for a model of luck that best describes the inner and outer life of human being; it is also a term that is capable to describe the transcendent character of religion. Faith – if it is really the background and the reason of participation in church-life - is an attitude that expresses the knowledge of relationship among members of a community (church) as the community (church) building energy. Using such a paradigm calls for an interpretation of church-life according to the implications of that paradigm. Such an interpretation would decode some surprising perspectives. That means, to understand the church as a model of communication and community building (not as a model of organization and organization

building) and – following a cultural interpretation of communication, not a technical one – to understand church as a model of culture and cultural development (not as a model of structure and structural self-reference). It has yet to be explained, what can be understood as the cultural logic of communication in difference to the technical logic of communication. Of course, any social body needs social reasonability, which normally is realized by organization. But it makes a difference, whether the organization is built on communication or communication is built on organization. While the first version follows more a cultural (and by that an open and horizontal) rationality of community building, the second version follows more an institutional (and by that a vertical, technical, jurisdictional and bureaucratically) rationality. But in any case faith is a model of social practice, since it socializes, as it in the same time is a conception of reality and of life that is shared, delivered, rationalized and organized by the way of social interaction.

In that context I also would like to stress the postulation of the political theology (METZ, J.B.; 2006). According to the political theology, a commitment in faith implies necessarily (and not just accidentally) a commitment to societal causes. A commitment to society can be an affirmative or an emancipatory one.. If the commitment is affirmative, then it reflects a belief in society and its (real existing) order but not a belief in revelation. The belief in revelation contains necessarily a social commitment in an emancipatory sense. That is, on the one hand, a socio-critical engagement against authoritarianism, demanzipation, dogmatism, institutionalism; and, on the other hand, a socio-critical engagement for a diversely explicable world and the just distribution of equal chances of societal participation (T.W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, J. Habermas – vgl. BEHRENS 2002).

Faith as a concept of culture

Cultures represent those communicative contexts, which individuals use for decision-making. This allows individuals to declare their sense of belonging to life-worlds, milieus, organizations, or societies. The existence and dynamics of cultures is therefore dependent on the quality of communication in organizations, milieus, and life-worlds. The patterns, by means of which communication generates cultures and cultures generate communication, are diverse and may be located on a broad spectrum ranging from repressive to emancipatory interpretation of social experience (i.e., society). Communication is first and foremost a social practice of culture and a cultural practice of the social. Communication creates cultures, out of which social, ethical and aesthetic guidelines may be drawn from. Communication and culture represent two sides of the same coin, namely social practice. They each define social practice as well as they mutually define themselves out of social practice.

Understanding, which is what social communication is all about, is not just the result of coordination and agreement, but is itself a cultural creation, a cultural good, and a cultural reflexion of sociability of mankind. In that sense, it may be seen as a postulate of mankind and a cultural interpretation of the human's quest for a place to stay. Contrary to popular belief, understanding does not require cultural-technical competence.

Understanding is (itself) a cultural and cultural-operative competence in the use of sign structures and media. Because it is not the sign structures which signify reality, but the individual who uses the signs in regards to his social and symbolic environment in such a way that reality, which needs to be constructed, may be signified between communicators. And this turns symbolic interaction into communication. Therefore, the notion of competence as a technical capability, by means of which one could realize such a natural model of (effective) communication, is obsolete (RABINOV 2004). Competence is the complimentary cultural model to the knowledge model of communication.

Faith is the habitus to be in relation to what is the content of faith – God. In that sense, faith is expressed by a communicational relationality (re-ligion), has special formats which are prayer, meditation, or contemplation, theologically spoken: Sacrament. That by itself is a sign that effects what it designs not being itself what it reveals (i.e., the sign is not magic, but displays the believe) for those who believe. That means, one needs to do a distinction of what is taken real and true – and what is not. Such a distinction between reality and truth in a climate of faith is only possible, if one has done a general and generally valid decision in relation to what is finally meaningful and advisable in constructing ones own reality. But constructing reality – what may be understood so far as the decisive effect of communication – never can be done outside of a community and never outside of means of communication of a community. People – according to the general enlightenment of theory of symbolic interaction – understand each another on the basis of signs and symbols. People need to locate themselves in an environment of meaning and relevance in order to believe their own existence. Using the symbols as a means of communication mediates the one with the other. People learn that by connecting themselves to a cultural program – what again they need for their statement of identity - and by enculturation, which is thought to be a process through which one learns to express one’s own and to understand other’s messages and addresses by means of a common symbol system.

Faith as a concept of communication

As we accept that faith has a foundation in reason, we accept that there is a reasonability of faith, that is, communication since reason never can be found outside or without communication. But the communicational reasonability is the reasonability of variety and diversity. The reason of communication is difference. The good of communication – thought in relation to faith – is then confidence and trust because of difference and distinction. It does not make sense to invest trust, if there is no possibility of difference. Communication is the cultural model to give space to difference (DELEUZE 1992). Trust is the communicational and relational investment (LUHMANN 2000) not to become disappointed. It relies on responsibility – one’s own responsibility and that of others.

In order to explain an individual’s or community’s project of faith by way of communication, it is necessary to deliberately depart from the traditional view of communication. According to the traditional view, communication designates every behavior which is used among individuals for sense-making. The communication values

(e.g., understanding, agreement, cause, and effect) which are included in the common communication process models are often treated in a trivial manner. Therefore, such models have produced rather weak explanatory theories. This is particularly apparent in stimulus- and response theories, which use metaphors of transport or transmission. Such theories explain only mechanical orders, but not the creative chaos. They favor effectiveness but neglect crisis. They regulate truth, but know nothing of deceit. Because of their all too singular focus on (mechanical) effectiveness and because of their failure to consider contingency and complexity, most of the existing and common communication theories are unsuitable for the analysis and interpretation of communication processes. That is to say, communication processes which are contrary and effective, because they create chaos. Communication processes which are true, because they create crisis. And communication processes which are heretical and which create understanding, because they are diverse.

The technical perspective of communication trivializes the cultural complexity of sensemaking between communicators (as well as between social bodies such as politics and the media) to hollow and dull acts of mutually attempted dominance. From this perspective of communication, cause and effect are seen as strategic measures of the intended effectiveness (FASSLER 1997). The actual communication models lie beyond the technical perspective. Communication needs technique, but technique needs culture. That is, a technique which may be interpreted through culture and which is based on mutual recognition and attention, trust, relation and closeness. Cultures, however, are undergoing constant changes, because cultures themselves are made of the stuff communication is made of.

In describing the culture of communication as a model of an ideation of societal order, it is useful to draw on different perspectives, which Villem Flusser (FLUSSER 1998: 16 – 50) locates between two figurative models: dialog and discourse. Dialog describes a form of sense-making, whereby realization is reached through contradictions. In contrast, discourse is a form of sense-making, whereby knowledge, opinions and experiences are distributed and exchanged. Both models need a social arrangement. And for both models an organization (e.g. the church), which puts value on sustained existence, must create sufficient cultural conditions. To create such conditions, it is presumable insufficient to set a sign in form of institutional symbols and rites. It will be necessary to create conditions, which set signs by means of communicationally shared signification of observation and experience. By that way significations turn to be preconditions for new settings. Seen from this perspective, cultures are communicatively linked processes of mutual references (and the knowledge of these referrals) based on interpretation – on the basis of which new signs are set, and in turn, new interpretative ground is created. That is, interpretative styles for life and interpretation matrixes for life-worlds, which create social belonging (cohesion and control).

The society we live in is culturally constituted. That is, the society is organized around organizational structures of communication. Society (only) exists as a communicative object; society is a communicative construct. If societies flourish depends on their culture, which contains implicit notions of society. But it also depends on how these

notions are processed communicatively. If societies flourish thus depends on its culture of communication and its communication of culture in three respects: ethically, aesthetically and socially (BAUER 2006a: 46)

- The Ethical Dimension. Communication is ethically-relevant behavior. Because and if communication relates to value and knowledge models of the people, communication strains the communicator's moral competence and in that sense may be effective or ineffective.
- The Aesthetical Dimension. Communication takes place in aesthetical structures. Communication is realized in perceptual processes, which, because they may be right or wrong, may be effective or ineffective.
- The Social Dimension. Communication is dependent upon signs and usage models of those signs. Because those signs and usage models are intentionally used and generalized, they may subjectively be considered as effective, even though they may objectively be ineffective.

The effectiveness of communication is a question of cultural models. If the model applies the perspective of technical plausibility, communicative effectiveness is presumably based on the aversion of surprise. These models furnish evidence for truth ?reality? in such a way that the technique of representation depicts the represented object as identical as possible. Incongruities – due to their imperfections – are seen as a loss of truth. If the model applies the perspective of communicative rationality, effectiveness is presumably based on the production of surprise. In such a model, a unified truth is sought within an argument of contradictions and it is discovered that in order to perceive truth, one has to be aware of those complementary perspectives, which are farthest removed from one's own perspective (BAUER 2006c: 148).

A conception of communication which is based on the technical paradigm, seeks the communicative aim in agreement. Agreement is considered as the ascertainment of unanimity and consent of the communicators' different perspectives. A conception of communication, which is based on a cultural paradigm, seeks the communicative aim in the disposition of difference in the way of declaration of multi-coherence. (DELEUZE 1992). Whereas the former is nothing but an adjustment of the information state, the latter is nothing but an attempt to create a destination of reality out of the position of acknowledging the human situation of perplexity (aporia). The former model makes sense, because it re-produces (already existing) knowledge on knowledge. The latter makes sense, because it generates knowledge on not-yet-knowledge.

Considering that communication is construct, which itself may only be grasped through communication, it should be evident that communication is not a socio-natural format or naturally given behavior, but a cultural interpretation. It should also be evident that the cultural rationality of communication may not be directed at unanimous destination of reality and that the theological rationality of communication may not lie in becoming identical with what already exists, but must identify what has not yet attained relevance. All of that can only concern those phenomena which are different (surprising) in relation to what is already known. Seen from this perspective, difference makes sense: in reference to unification, perceptual differences make (cultural, not technical) sense. But

even sense, which is constructed in such a way, is not useful, because it does reveal what reality is. It is useful because it brings about realization on what is sought to be revealed. In this construal, sense is a project which makes communication possible and not an object because of which communication is possible. Apart from having far reaching consequences in regards to the relation between revelation and faith, this interpretation of sense deconstructs the common relation between communication and understanding.

If we adopt this construal of communication, and if we conceive revelation as a model of communication, then – from the perspective of faith - it can only be perceived and decoded as such. This leads necessarily to the reversal of the hitherto dominant question – from „What does the revelation do to faith?“ to “What does faith do to the revelation?“ Therefore, the quality (i.e., content) of the revelation it is not relevant. What is relevant is the quality (i.e., intention, insinuation, hope, expectation, intention) of faith. In this construal of communication, the content of the revelation is not pre-specified, but the content includes everything that confirms our faith. According to this construal of communication, understanding is not the result of (presumably effectively executed) communication, but the unpredictable outcome of communication. Therefore, communication cannot be directed at a specified/intended outcome. All communicative behaviors that are directed at specified outcomes, should not be referred to as communication but as organization of knowledge.

Faith as a public concept

Cultures represent those communicative contexts, which individuals use for decision-making. This allows individuals to declare their sense of belonging to life-worlds, milieus, organizations, or societies. The existence and dynamics of cultures is therefore dependent on the quality of communication in organizations, milieus, and life-worlds. The patterns, by means of which communication generates cultures and cultures generate communication, are diverse and may be located on a broad spectrum ranging from repressive to emancipatory interpretation of social experience (i.e., society). Communication is first and foremost a social practice of culture and a cultural practice of the social. Communication creates cultures, out of which social, ethical and aesthetic guidelines may be drawn from. Communication and culture represent two sides of the same coin, namely social practice. They each define social practice as well as they mutually define themselves out of social practice.

The claim that nobody in society and in the community should be excluded from participating in his/her echatological (history of salvation) interpretation of life should not only be a theological one, but a communicational one too. In a normative-theoretical concept of participation, this requires the recognition of communication's sense-, healing-, and truth-constituting powers – under the conditions of diversity and ambiguity of the possibly (only) singular and comprehensive version of revelation. In that sense, faith is a political project. The epistemological inspirations for such a perspective, which argues for an emancipatory interpretation of the political implication of faith (as opposed to an affirmative or perhaps even a regressive interpretation: national obedience), are not to be found only in critical theory.

They are also found in those widely dispersed communicational approaches (FLUSSER 1998: 17) which are theologically paraphrased as commitment to faith. If communication is described as “a trick against the loneliness of death” or as “a process which runs contrary to the general direction of nature towards entropy” (V. FLUSSER 1998: 13), then this implies that communication is to be conceived of as a commitment of free faith against nature (“as an attempt to deny nature” - FLUSSER1998: 13), beyond all theological interpretations of faith as an act of mercy – as a cognitively-spiritual attitude of a distinctive perception of reality, which is based on a thesaurus for spiritual interpretation and the attribution of meaning, which itself was codified by means of cultural evolution and programming.

In that sense, faith is not only an attitude of commitment or education, but an attitude of publicity, which is gained by means of symbolic interaction. This attitude is expressed in behavioral patterns (perhaps rituals) directed at oneself and towards one’s environment in such a way that one establishes a relationship to one’s environment, which is not due to by chance but which is due to conscious decision-making. Faith, in this construal, is a competence program of individual or societal/communal life. That is, the ability (willingness) and responsibility to reflect oneself in regards to oneself and one’s (social, cultural, symbolic, and natural) environment and to keep oneself in a constant state of correction due to one’s focus on a religiously-normative program.

Evidently, responsibility is an implement of communication, that is, a characteristic of acknowledgement and visibility. Responsibility is a statement of the communicative intention to remain distinguishable or to make oneself distinguishable through communication and at the same time to make communicative contact, because of one’s decision to distinguish. Responsibility is the intention to be authentic and as such it is an expression of competence in highly self-willed declarations. These declarations may (should) be all the more arbitrary, the closer (or similar) the environment, in which we find ourselves, is. But responsibility is also the intention to be empathic – the willingness to consider the situation of other worlds, which must be all the more obliging, the more foreign (or different) one’s intellectual environment is.

Shared responsibility is the performance benchmark of society’s democratic and communicative competence. In a society, which increasingly communicates through the medial systems of social communication, shared responsibility increasingly becomes a qualitative criteria of its own self-organization. With the increasing degree of organization within a society, the probability of encountering foreign interests and different ideas of being and having increases. Or to put this differently, the more far-reaching a society wants to be, the more strategic its organization must be. The more organized a society is, the more open it must be. The more open a society is, the more organization it needs. The organization lives because it communicates itself. But communication lives because it organizes itself.

The public is an organizational concept of societal communication as well as it is a communicative concept of its (own) organization. This the fluidity of politics. Because

politics would not be the same without power, the public is the net that connects the discourses with each other; the public is the dispositive (FOUCAULT 1978) of power. The public orders and hierarchizes the discourses and gives those meanings to the events, issues, and people which they may have in society or organizations, but in and of themselves possibly may have been misattributed. In order to be capable for responsibility for one's own actions in such a social and cultural, and symbolic ambience, a degree of intrinsic communicative competence is needed. That is, a degree of competence which concerns not only taking responsibility for one's own behavior, but also feeling responsible for the effectiveness of the public discourse.

Social understanding is the mutual unreasonable demand of differential interpretation by way of reciprocally conceded transformation of complexity, which only achieves a community building framing through respecting the fact of public environment. As trivial as this may sound, as complex is the definitional background for communication: Communication is the unification of differences (dialogical dimension) and the distribution of "societalness" (discursive dimension). The differences make sense under the principle of unification, which if socially defined, is a value that cannot be privatized („stolen“) (MÜNCH 1991), because it belongs to each and everyone of us: the public.

The communicative value of public lies in the multi-optionality of interpretation and in the differentiation (critic) of all that that presents itself as obvious: truth. The concept of public is the communicative unity of the possible difference between truth and meaning. (Just) because of it, dogmatism, orthodoxism, authoritarianism, and total hierarchies are discredited. The concept of public is the societal reference model of (individual) freedom, the societal concept of individuality, and at the same time the societal characteristic which gives social sense to individuality and gives individual sense to "societalness". For this reason, the public concept is eclipsed in totalitarian institutions and regimes, as they well know that they would fail because of it. Similarly, individualism is considered as a disturbance in closed societies.

The difficulty in understanding public issues and in gaining understanding for one's own issues in public lies in the difficulty to take up and absorb public discourses in such a way that an interference of one's own (Christian) perspective in those discourses is not considered as a disruption, but as an a broadening and enrichment of perspectives. This is what communicative competence is all about.

Public is not a natural norm, but a culturally developed knowledge model which makes (ethical, aesthetical, and useful) sense of the different interpretations of truth. In that sense, open societies are of use to their democratic constitution as a matrix. Mankind had to arduously earn this status through cultural contact and through an intelligent bargaining for (and against) itself. It is a model of social (i.e., cultural) emancipation and still the main issue of humanism and enlightenment, which aims at freeing oneself from domination of institutional or the governmental right to destine the interpretation of truth. Here, too, the model of auto-constitution applies: If society is conceived of as societal (social), then nothing that is not (simultaneously) public can be societal (social). Because it belongs to everyone, it is a competence which may not be taken away from anyone.

Thus, it cannot be claimed just for oneself. It is a societal, a social model of power, which maintains that truth has no right to un-ambiguity and un-ambiguity has no right to truth. Whenever truth and un-ambiguity are linked, the freedom of communication ceases to exist. If the public is seen as a matrix of the unification of differences, ambiguity can be a qualitative criterion for truth. If this is true, then it is apparent that from the perspective of the public something is true only if it is ambiguity is maintained.

Communicative competence the social fundament of ministry

The sociological interpretation of a divine or an ecclesiastical office (ordination) that includes mission of message of faith, must focus on communication – to all intents and purposes in a normative perspective. But here we do not talk about competence as the capacity and responsibility to publicly say what the assignment (mission to preach the gospel) is, supported and assigned by the ordination. In the context of communication competence is a concept of giving and taking statements by own and personal responsibility. That includes that competence is not a position of never making mistakes, but is a concept that is considerate of the principle of fallibility of communication or of any action in communicating faith. The concept of competence, referring to the principles of communication, says that awareness, perception, and attention are habitual measures of an active mind and not just unavoidable reactions by chance or coincidence due to an extraordinariness of an object. The principle of active construction of meaning and sense through communication is the fundamental concept of any theory of competence (BERGER/LUCKMANN 1972, FOERSTER 2003). It pretends that competence is a construct qualified by communication and communication is a construct qualified by competence. One benefits from the other's capacity (BAIUER 2006a). But the intrinsic reasonability of communication is not to homogenise, but to diversify the meaning of world (BAUER 2006b). Following this option, competence of communication in the kerygmatic context is not to get reduced just to promising strategies of success, but is the habit of interest in complexity, both: in complexity of content and in complexity of signification.

So, if we consequently conceptualise communication as a social practice in developing a cultural and symbolic ambient of multi-meaningful life, the cultural meaning of communication cannot be reduced just to an instrument for asserting domination. If culture is an open and self-generating system of meanings and values, then communication is the cultural practice of society, as at the same time it is the social practice of (and for) culture. In that wide context culture and communication are not absolute, but heuristic measures in search for sense and meaning of life. That makes communication to be a social model between trial and error. As in that sense culture in principle is a fallible system, communication as well as a model of fallibility.

The principle of fallible quality of communication is the only guarantee for the quality of freedom of communication as a construction of sense. Only the rationality is, so to say, the search for the most rational compromise among various definable options makes it reasonable to figure out communication as the best way to come so far. Following that

argumentation, it is just a question of consequence to conceptualise competence - especially within the context of society - as a cultural reference measure for the social quality of individual life. The psychology-oriented interpretation, by which competence should be thought as a personal good of assertion or even domination and power, must be critically valued as an ideological theorem within the tradition of social-technological concepts of personality.

Consequently, following the cultural theory of communication, which understands communication as a social practice of development and sharing of cultural meaning by the way of mediating information, experience and knowledge - thus constructing mutually committing and meaningful views of reality - competence is not just a socio-technological concept, it is a cultural model (or a normative option) of social agreement for reason and a reasonable model for a cultural programming of society. Such a re-definition implicates a theoretical turn from a technological paradigm to a culturological one. The technological interpretation of communication competence follows the ideal of success: communication is a means of personal success that is easier (and free of error) to be achieved knowing and practicing a technical system. In that tradition, communication competence is something that can be realised by personal cultural techniques.

The culturological interpretation of communication admits communication to be a model of social agreement facing the fallibility of construction of sense.

This interpretation of communication has to follow the destination of communication competence not to be something (capacity, skills) in the hand of one (capability), but is a cultural good in the authority of a community (of all). The community is the guarantee of the freedom of communication (speech) as communication is a phenomenon (criterion) of human freedom. Communication competence only is possible under conditions of communication freedom (freedom of speech). Wherever this freedom of speech (diversity of meaning) is not given, there never can be claimed or developed communicative competence unless as an indication of an exceptional position or as a parameter of a hierarchical graduation. But then the argumentation of communication of communication and communication truth as conditions and/or goals of interaction has been – because truth in speech context is a question of the pragmatic dimension of encoding and decoding messages (F. de SAUSSURE 2003) - caught up in serious dilemma: ecclesiastic communication the reason of loss of communication (T. A: BAUER 1982) – and in consequence the reason of loss of faith?

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