

Πορευθέντες

μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Ματθ. κη. 19)

Π

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTER - ORTHODOX MISSIONARY CENTRE "POREFTHENDES,,

NUMBER 23

VOLUME VI 1964 (III)

scene from an educational Missionary camp in South Mexico,
departure for spending the night in the woods (see p. 40)



<i>Bishop Sabapathy Kulandran: Witnessing to men of other faiths</i>	34
<i>A. Y.: A letter from the other hemisphere</i>	40
<i>Arch. Nectarios Hatzimihailis: Orthodox Ecumenism and External Mission (D')</i>	42
<i>Mission News</i>	47

WITNESSING TO MEN OF OTHER FAITHS

There are three questions round which a discussion of the subject of this Conference will have to converge, viz: the Why?, the What? and the How? of it. The first arises from a doubt; the answer to the second will decide whether that doubt is legitimate or not; and it is only if is not that we can go on to the third.

The Why

A doubt as to whether we have a right to preach our gospel to people of other Faiths is a late-comer into the Church. There was of course some doubt in the matter at the start among the Palestinian Jews who were Christian (the Hellenistic Jews had none); but that doubt was not merely confined to a certain group or a certain area, it was technical and temporary. It was technical because, though the Palestinian Jews had come across many nations in their history and were even then living under the Romans, they had looked upon them almost as a part of Nature, and had never allowed them to enter into their religious thinking. It did not strike them that these nations needed to be saved. The Palestinian Jews were living in a narrow mental world. It was temporary, because once Paul widened their outlook, that doubt was lifted from their minds.

In the long centuries that followed, doubt on the subject hardly reappeared in the Church; and neither in the Dark Ages, nor the Middle Ages, nor through the greater part of modern times did the matter become a live issue. The behaviour of the Portuguese, who came East in the wake of Vasco de Gama's discovery of the Cape route, might have laid itself open to question from many points of view; but nobody

could have questioned their evangelistic zeal. And after the Reformation, as soon as Protestantism realised it was still alive after its life and death struggle, it began to send out Missions in successive waves.

There have, of course, always been many individuals who for reasons of their own have disapproved of efforts to convert people of other Faiths; but in each of these cases the reason has been particular and not general. For instance, Sydney Smith, the English clergyman and humorist, was always making fun of William Carey's efforts in Bengal; but he was also making fun of the Methodists and the Evangelical clergy in his Church. He was not grieved at Brahmins being asked to give up their Faith; he was against enthusiasm in any form.

A general doubt in the matter may be said to have crept into the Church only in the twentieth century; and the explanation commonly given is that only now have Christians begun to realise that there are other great and enlightened Faiths in the world besides their own; until now they have believed that all other religions were masses of debased superstition. Throughout the nineteenth century the great systems of Eastern religions were being opened up; and in this present century Christians have begun to feel the full impact of that new knowledge. The doubt of the Palestinian Jew was caused by living in a narrow intellectual world; the doubt of the modern Christian is caused by his living in a wide intellectual world.

The doubt that had crept into the Church became embodied a little more than 30 years ago in a movement of considerable momen-

tum and expressed itself in such books as "The Re-thinking of Missions", issued by a band of American thinkers headed by Dr. W. E. Hocking of Harvard. That movement was handled rather roughly by Hendrik Kraemer in this famous book "The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World", and since then the doubt has expressed itself more mildly and with far greater hesitation. But however it might express itself, it is reasonable to believe doubt will continue to exist in the Church as long as it has to face numerous closely reasoned out and highly coherent intellectual and religious systems.

Does it mean then that Ignorance can be the only sure basis for Evangelism? Ignorance has been considered a basis for many things, including the Universe itself. Writers from such widely divergent backgrounds as the great ninth century teacher of Hinduism, Sankara, and Bertrand Russell can give no other reason for the existence of the Universe. "There is nothing but prejudice and habit for the view that the world exists at all", says Russell. Whether the Universe likes to owe its existence to Ignorance or not, Ignorance as a basis for Christian Evangelism is quite unsound. Ignorance is temporary; and is always meant to be displaced by Knowledge. "When the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away". The security of a narrow, intellectual world is illusive, because that world is now large and will become larger.

But those who think that an urge for Christian Evangelism can exist only when there is Ignorance about other religions must reckon, in the first place, with the fact that for long the Church's evangelistic efforts were directed to people whose Faiths it knew, and not to people whose Faiths it did not know. If there were many Faiths it did not know, neither did it make any evangelistic efforts among those who professed them. The Hellenistic Christians who took the gospel into the Graeco-Roman world knew that it was a world where Plato and Aristotle had taught; and they knew the various religions that had come into Rome from the various parts of the Empire. Origen, Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria knew all the systems that prevailed in their time. Yet they preached the gospel. In the Middle Ages, when these religions had faded and Islam had swept into dominance, it became well known in the Christian world. The great Islamic Universi-

ties in Spain catered for most European scholars of the time. The Islamic philosophers, Avicenna and Averroes, were held in high respect in Christian circles. If the Crusades did not express evangelistic zeal, they certainly enlarged Christian knowledge of Islam. The interest in that religion was sufficiently deep to produce a translation of the Koran into Latin as early as 1143 (though the book itself was published much later); and Martin Luther himself issued a German translation in the 16th century. All this knowledge did not create the slightest doubt in the mind of the Church as to whether the gospel should be preached to Moslems. It may be seen, therefore, that Ignorance did not in practice provide the basis for Evangelism.

In the second place, if Christian evangelists in later times went out to preach the gospel among those whose Faiths the Church did not know, the fact must be reckoned with that these men who played a major part in opening up these Faiths to the world at large. B. Ziegenbalg, Constantine Beschi and Philipp Fabricius opened up the Tamil language in the eighteenth century; and a host of American and British missionaries did so in the nineteenth. William Carey put out one of the earliest Sanskrit dictionaries and translated the Ramayana in three volumes; H. R. Hoisington, G. U. Pope and Schomerus opened up Saiva Siddhanta; Bishop R. S. Coplestone was one of the pioneers in presenting Thera Vada Buddhism to the West; and Nicol Macnicol in throwing light on the Hindu poets of Western India; more German names could be added to this list. It may be seen, therefore, that neither was Ignorance regarded in principle as a basis for evangelism.

Again, whilst it has to be admitted that evangelism has often been carried on when there was Ignorance of other religions, it has also to be admitted that more often it has been carried on when there was Knowledge. Obviously then, though Ignorance might co-exist with Evangelism, it could not be its basis. Therefore we must conclude that a Knowledge of other religions may be an occasion for doubt about the legitimacy of evangelism, but cannot be its cause. Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, professed a sublime admiration for the Upanishads and for Buddhism, and affected a supreme contempt for Christian Missions (refusing even to believe that they could have succeeded). But his attitude to the Upanishads

and to Buddhism was not the cause of his attitude to Missions. Doubt or certainty about the legitimacy of evangelism arises not from one's attitude to anything outside Christianity, but from one's attitude to something within it. Both arise from one's attitude to "The What" of the Christian Faith.

The What.

All religions have certain common features; places of worship, rituals, priests, laws that favour order rather than disorder, customs and ceremonies bearing on social and domestic life, differing no doubt from country to country, but suited in their diversity to the various places where they prevail. The tendency at the first sight of this fact is, therefore, to equate them all, and to account for their differences by the variety of their origin. This is what the Roman Magistrates did: they found all of them equally useful. Peace-making on the basis of these common features is quite easy.

These features, however, in each religion cluster around certain affirmations about what is considered ultimate Reality. The Graeco-Roman philosophers regarded all these affirmations as equally false; but they were asserted, and are asserted now, because they are considered true; and religions exist because they want to assert them. As against the Graeco-Roman philosophers, it is declared by the author of "Upon the Earth" (1962) that no religious system is of purely human origin. Religious systems are vast and complex things and may contain great and noble ideas; but we are concerned with their basic affirmations.

The obvious difficulty about attributing all affirmations to divine inspiration is that often the basic affirmations of one religion contradict those of another: and God is a God of order and not confusion. The Hindu affirms "Aham Brahmaasmi" (I am Brahman or God): the Buddhist denies the existence of both. To push the doctrine of the sovereignty of God to such lengths as to attribute divine inspiration to all affirmations is to push monism beyond itself, because monists are always arguing with non-monists, trying to convince them that they are wrong. When we want to fix responsibility outside the realm of human agencies, it is also scripturally unwarranted to fix it solely on God: St. Peter makes it clear that outside that realm there are other agencies also at work.

Religions often co-exist because of political necessity; but a concordat based on a mutual recognition of equality can be possible only on two grounds: either that of regarding their

affirmations, though different, as not very important, or on the ground that opposites may still be equally true and be two sides of the same Reality, meaning by this that as long as they are opposites they do not have real validity and do not amount to much. It is on the basis of the first that a recent Christian scholar of Buddhism takes up the well known Christian hymn "Immortal, Invisible, God only wise", etc. and sweetly suggests that if only we could leave out the word "God" from the entire hymn, the Buddhists could fill it with such words as "dharma", "karma", "Buddha" and "Nirvana", (and we can all live happily ever afterwards). It is on the basis of the second that Hinduism is willing to accept every view-point, affirmation and religion, holding that at the level of Reality differences do not exist. Therefore, the Bhagavad Gita makes Krishna say, "Even those who worship other gods come to me", and Vivekananda goes to the extent of saying that all religions are forms of the Vedanta.

It will, however, be apparent that neither of these grounds is a sound basis for a concordat. It might perhaps be asked how it is that the basic affirmations of a Religion ever come to be regarded as unimportant. The answer is that because of their importance they are put at the centre; and because they are at the centre, they are taken so much for granted that they often come to be overlooked, their very importance being the reason why they are sometimes allowed to sink into unimportance. But a concordat based on an oversight can be of little use. As for the other basis, if people would not like to build on an oversight of the importance of the central affirmations of all religions, they would like still less to build on the deliberate repudiation of the importance or validity of any affirmation. Hinduism, which invites us to do so, itself drove out Buddhism when it refused to accept its view-point. In practice Hinduism absorbs rather than tolerates. To ask religions for an enduring concordat between themselves that would ignore the importance of their respective affirmations is to ask too much of them.

From the time of Kraemer's second big book it has become customary to speak of the task of evangelism as basically that of producing an encounter between God and man. But God is always meeting with man in many different ways and in many different places. What is the task of the Christian evangelist? It is to make man meet with God in the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the evangelist brings about this encounter, then indeed he is presenting the gospel; that is, he is presenting the good news that God was in

Christ reconciling the world unto Himself: he is preaching the word. That word is a proclamation and is at the heart of the Christian Faith. It constitutes "The What" of the Christian Faith.

A proclamation is also an affirmation; but is more than an affirmation. An affirmation may be general; an affirmation about ultimate Reality may be to the effect that it is personal, and an affirmation about God may be about His being and nature. A proclamation is definite and pointed. An affirmation need not bear upon the immediate situation and therefore need not have any urgency; whereas urgency is of the essence of a proclamation. The Christian proclamation is that God has come in Christ and has saved man; it is news of an event, an event of cosmic significance, but with a bearing upon the immediate human situation. It declares how the Almighty, King, Creator of the ends of the earth has come down in a human being; how that human being has died for us and risen in glory; and how by saying "yes" to this event man is saved. From many angles it is quite incredible, but if it is true, all general affirmations about the Ultimate Reality dwindle into insignificance, if not irrelevance. It will mean that upon mankind's "questions, its dreams and hopes and intimations, its discussions, its pitiful and fruitless efforts to win peace and purity and home", there now shines "a light that never was on land or sea". If such an event has taken place, mankind's age-long quest has ceased to be a quest, and the "low, sad music of humanity" may well turn into a paean of triumph.

The event which the Church proclaims is not the fact that there was a human being at a certain place and time, that he did certain things and that certain things happened to him; but the fact that God was in that human being, and through the things he did and which happened to him, God was saving man.

It is the divine, cosmic significance of these that constitute the event which the Church proclaims. It is this significance which constitutes "The What" of the Christian Faith. If that significance is denied, the Church has nothing to proclaim. If we accept that significance, we accept that the event has taken place; and if it has, then we accept that the Christian gospel must be proclaimed, no matter how many great religions there are in the world. A realisation of the presence of other great religions actually does a service to the Church, in that it makes her examine what it is she wants to preach. It draws attention to "The What" of the Christian Faith.

That the existence of other religions does not bear fundamentally on the legitimacy of Christian evangelism may also be seen from another angle. If those who discover the fact of other religions claim that it unsettles their previous thinking, what about those whose thinking has always had to assume that fact? Neither my own father, nor my mother's father discovered non-Christian Faiths. They were born in them. These faiths do not come upon our horizon as a sudden and unexpected phenomenon; they are the environment into which we are born. A Professor from a Western country once told me that while he could intellectually defend the divinity of our Lord, he found it difficult to believe it in his heart. "On the other hand", I said, "even if we cannot find intellectual arguments for it, we find it easy to believe this in our hearts, because without believing it we cannot be Christians at all." The presence of non-Christian Faiths serves only to sharpen the focus of "The What" of the Christian Faith in places where men live all their lives in the midst of them.

If there is no doubt about "The What" of the Christian Faith, there is not merely a legitimacy about Christian evangelism but an urgency. The daughter of Karl Marx once confessed to a friend that she had never been brought up in any religion and had never been religious. "But", said she, "the other day I came across a beautiful little prayer which I very much wish could be true." "And what is that prayer?", she was asked. Slowly the daughter of Karl Marx began repeating in German: "Our Father which art in heaven..." etc. That God whose conceivability itself raises questions about His very existence should not merely exist, but could be called "Our Father" is a profoundly consoling thought; but that God should have come down in a human being, who "has borne all our griefs and carried our iniquities" and has saved man for ever, transcends all human aspirations and all human imagination and endows all life with a new aspect. "If I believe that Jesus Christ really died for me, I would not write or speak about anything else," said Lord Morley the atheist.

The commission to evangelise was given not in a world without any religion, but where there were many; where the Buddha had taught 550 years previously and where Plato had taught 400 years previously; where the major Upanishads had all been long written and where the Bhagavad Gita had been written well over a hundred years earlier. It must be preached not in spite of the fact that the

Âlvârs, the Âchârias and the Mâratha saints have sung movingly, but because of the fact that they have. Such a world is worth saving.

The How.

The task of the evangelist is to proclaim the Christian message to men of other Faiths. In view of the task given, it is therefore curious that the suggestion should be made that we should ignore these Faiths to which these men belong. Those who make this suggestion usually take their stand on the saying of the late Mr. C. F. Andrews, who spent most of his life in India, to the effect that he did not preach to Hindus but to men. How many Hindus know their Hinduism, it is asked; so why not forget the fact that they are heirs to 3,000 years of Hinduism and just treat them as men, apart from all religious and philosophical predispositions and presuppositions?

With deference to the memory of a great and good man, it may be said that he was not coining a *bon-mot* but committing a *faux pas*, and a wide one at that. People do not have to read systematic treatises to imbibing their ideas. John Whale quotes a very appropriate parody:

Jesus loves me, this I know;

For my mother told me so.

Men get their beliefs in a thousand different ways. Besides, while many Hindus may not read Sankara and Râmânûja, many read the Bhagavad Gita and know the Purânic stories. Many Buddhists may not read the Pitakas, but they know the Jâtaka stories and often listen to the chanting of the Pirith at various ceremonies. These people, therefore, have lived in the midst of Hindu or Buddhist beliefs and worship and in the general environment created by these religions. To think that all this has not influenced their beliefs and presuppositions is scarcely realistic. They mould their will and shape their personality. To think that we can detach a man from his beliefs and presuppositions is to think that we can detach him from his own personality.

Neither is it realistic to minimise the part played by classical writers and systems on people's beliefs. No doubt in every context every man fashions his own brand of religion. Classical writings are always studied only by a few; and perhaps were meant only for a few. But their main teachings seep down into the religious and intellectual heritage of

racess and communities. They may get modified and adapted in many different ways, but they have a habit of persistence and a gift or essential endurance. Classical systems in practice manage to live on not in the books which are not read, but in the people who usually do not read them.

It may of course happen that persons living in a Hindu context may be persons of no-Faith. But a no-Faith is usually the reverse of a Faith and is influenced by that Faith. Non-Faith in the Hindu context is usually Hindu non - Faith. A Hindu gives up his Faith and falls back on astrology (which is the epistemology of Karma) to guide his life. When Gautama Buddha rejected the Faith of Hinduism, it was its reverse, its non-faith, that he adopted. Buddhism (Primitive Buddhism) is unintelligible without Hinduism.

An eminent writer has recently told us that God is "previous" to us in the person to whom we preach. We cannot by any means imagine that God's care for people is less than ours; but we have seen that it is impossible to detach a man from his ideas and beliefs and treat him as altogether separate. If the "previousness of God" means that in spite of all a man's preconceptions and imaginations, God still wants to save him, it is true beyond a shadow of doubt. But if the "previousness of God" means that these preconceptions and imaginations are the "clouds of glory" that God has trailed in His wake, it is scarcely acceptable.

The task of the Christian evangelist is referred to in the New Testament by the word *keryssein*, which means "to proclaim" or announce. But a proclamation on certain subjects and in certain contexts cannot be an instantaneous act; it has to involve a process. We see that the proclamation of the New Testament evangelists themselves did involve this process. They had to do what is meant by the word used, I believe, in most languages to translate *keryssein*: they had to preach; and preaching involves convincing.

Nowadays we are asked to enter into a Dialogue. Perhaps preaching sounds too dogmatic, self-confident and intollerant. But the aim and method of Dialogue are the same as those of preaching. Preaching may look like a monologue, but is essentially a Dialogue. The listeners may not answer back, but if they are to be convinced, their unspoken objections must be inferred and answered.

A Dialogue is very different from a Conversation. The classical examples of Dialogues are to be found in the writings of Plato; those of Conversation in Boswell's "Life of Johnson". There is no set purpose in Conversation, and there are no set subjects. Johnson may hold the centre of the stage, may hold strong opinions on particular subjects and may want to put them across. But the Conversation does not take place so that Johnson may put his opinions across. It starts incidentally from one subject and flits unpredictably to quite a variety of subjects, on which nobody may have definite opinions. In fact, we are told that Johnson often uttered various introductory phrases so that he might in the meanwhile decide which side of the question he should take. But in Plato, through page after page, by means of questions and answers, Socrates is building up his argument.

Dialogues even on the same subject vary according to persons and according to the times. Those living in a later age make use of a greater knowledge than those of an earlier age. Therefore, in the Dialogue now involved in presenting the gospel, the knowledge of other Faiths opened up in recent years will be of great help. In fact the Christian evangelists who helped in opening them up did so because they believed that such knowledge would be helpful. The basic pattern of a Dialogue remains the same; but at every stage a knowledge of the other person's background is of great help.

In a Dialogue one starts with an agreement. In his speeches to the Jews, St. Paul starts with God's covenant with Israel and His promise of a Messiah; in his speech to the Athenians he starts with the common religious quest of man. When Paulinus in ancient Britain preached before King Edwin and his chiefs, he evidently started with the common human concern about future life. Our knowledge of the religious context of the other

party in the Dialogue will teach us where exactly the agreement should be based; but it always has to be a quest common to both parties.

But to stop with that initial agreement is to eliminate dialogue and live in the illusion that there are no disagreements. Disagreements do exist; and hence the need for Dialogue. Disagreements must be faced, and the greater the knowledge of other Faiths, the greater the knowledge of what these Disagreements really are. Our Disagreement with the position of Islam differs from our Disagreement with a Hindu Advaitin; and our Disagreement with an Advaitin from that with a Hindu Theist. We may find that our agreements with a Hindu Theist or a Moslem will be the basis of our Disagreement with the Buddhist.

But to stop with Disagreements is to lose Faith in the possibility of Evangelism. The step from the stage of Disagreement to that of ultimate agreement is the most important step in a Dialogue and the most important act in Evangelism; it is to convince the man with views so different from ours that God's offer is being made to him also. Since all men belong to God, and the commission to evangelise is to evangelise all men, that step must be taken. But the step from Disagreements to an ultimate Agreement must in each case arise out of the particular Disagreements we have faced in that case, and therefore cannot be the same in all cases. Sometimes it is an argument that takes the Evangelist to the final stage; sometimes it is his character and sincerity; sometimes it is an unexpected event or opportunity. But if the evangelist is himself convinced about the truth and the urgency of his message, he will find God working with him and lifting him to the ultimate stage; for it is He who finally bringeth men unto Himself.

Bishop SABAPATHY KULANDRAN





A LETTER FROM THE OTHER HEMISPHERE

From a two-days missionary journey in the jungle of S. Mexico. Preparation for the night in the open air.

*Yashokinte-la (Mexico)
19th January, 1964*

My Brethern,

Yashokinte-la, from where I write to you now, is a valley full of greenery on the verge of the jungle in South Mexico. An interesting training has been going on here for years, for those who plan to work on mission, translating the Gospel into languages and dialects in which it is unknown, and such are still, in our 20th century, over 1500. I first heard of this effort in Mexico — of the Wicliffs Bible Translators — and I decided to see it closely. It took me totally 28 hours by car through very high plateaus and tropical zones, and another 40 by the little aeroplane of the mission, in order to reach there...

The programme and the whole atmosphere of the "camp" are very interesting. To be exact, it is not a "camp" as we normally mean it. It is a little village with houses like those of the Indians, (made of thin trunks, mud and straw) where they live in small groups in the valley. The purpose of this is to offer a transitory period of adaptation to those who intend to work among primitive tribes, with the help of experienced missionaries and other company.

The adaptation is gradual. During the first stage, which lasts for 6 weeks, they are trained for their difficult life under primitive condi-

tions: path finding in the jungle, use of jungle paths or canoe trips on rivers, development of initiative, overcoming the fear of the unknown, learning to have a calm trust in the protection of God. They are also trained in various crafts, such as carpentry, mechanics, use of local materials, cooking. Medical course on tropical diseases; course on primitive civilisations and a more general spiritual training are also included in the programme of the first stage.

In the second stage, the trainees go to another valley which lies at a distance of 8 hours on foot they where settle down in pairs or in families on virgin land. Here they build their shelters alone and have to arrange for the means of their subsistence. They have various opportunities of being trained in problems of survival and, at the same time, of missionary work in the small native settlements, which are scattered over the big valley. They live for six more weeks under these conditions. I hope to be able to tell you more, and show you more details, when we shall meet again. For example, the night we spent in the jungle in special hammocks, or our visit to a small village in order to see their way of life and find out the native name for certain objects.

This work is of great interest to us, and

from more than one point of view. It is an opportunity to see how others are being prepared for missionary work. We can study their mentality and experience, we can see God working in the souls of men, how He calls them to certain pioneering missions, how He makes use of them. Seeing the whole life of people, here, is a valuable experience. I should like to note in particular the deep impression left by my acquaintance of newly-founded families. This steady resolution, the calm confidence in God's providence for future as well as the present difficulties. I remembered some families back home, with their typical hesitation and bourgeois character and I felt a pain, a strange pain...

I hope to stay here two more weeks (if my tooth, which picked this moment to give trouble, lets me do so). Next week I shall conduct a Bible study and I shall give two talks about the Orthodox Church and its missionary activity in Byzantine times. Unfortunately I have no notes with me and I must, therefore, speak from memory and in English. I rely on your prayers, which I can feel accompanying me on this exploratory trip. By the end of the



The house of a family of campers.

week, God willing, I shall visit the Lacandons, a tribe that has just accepted the Gospel. They live in the depths of the jungle, one and a half day's walk from here. I do hope that if, in a few years time someone is asked to talk on the missionary activity of the Orthodox Church, he will not have to resort again to Byzantine missions...

Our task within the spiritual fermentation and search of our days is indeed boundless. "The lamp is under the bushel" and most people have forgotten it. We need intensive, insistent work, if we are to respond to the call of our times. Work which should daily start from within ourselves, so that the Lord may use us as His collaborators. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain". "For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ". "Let each man take care how he builds upon it" (1. Cor. 3, 10-11).

My dear Brethren, please do not forget to ask the Holy Spirit every day — and even many times a day — to ripen His fruits within the hearts of all of us: LOVE, JOY PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, GENTLENESS, SELF - CONTROL, so that we may "lead a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called".

May the Lord cover us with His grace.

A. Y.



The little Mexicans receive the missionary group with wonder and expectation.

ORTHODOX ECUMENISM AND EXTERNAL MISSION

Δ

D. The principle of ecumenism in our era (last). "Tout nationalisme religieux est essentiellement et réellement une hérésie sur l'Eglise" (1).

The great contemporary theologians of the Russian diaspora maintain that the role of the two divine persons, who have been sent by the Father, is not the same, notwithstanding the fact that both the Son and the Holy Spirit are fulfilling the same task upon earth: that of creating the Church within which salvation and the union with God are forged. The Church is the work of both the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Orthodox ecclesiology, being based on both Christology and Pneumatology has a double foundation. Following this, the Orthodox Church, although not being of this world, exists both within and for the world.

This means that the Orthodox ecclesiology does not stop with the divine incarnation of the nativity cave but goes on and finds its consummation in the "upper room" of Pentecost and even further to the cave of the Patmian revelation. This made the Fathers of the Church not to be satisfied with the mere formulation of the divine dogmas, during the holy Synods, but also to enact the holy rules for the governing of the earthly life of the Church.

It can be, therefore, concluded from the above, as well as from what has been stated in previous articles, that the Orthodox Church, following faithfully the biblical, patristic and the ecclesiastical tradition in general and the dogmas of Chalcedon in particular, teaches not only the paths of mystical exaltation to the Holy Spirit, but also the practical, missionary methods for the deification, pacification and sanctification of "the whole world". And, together with this teaching, she was always called, and especially in our era, to the realization of the divine plan upon earth.

Of course, Orthodoxy does not particularly stress the earthly character of the militant Church. Although she does not underestimate the theology of earthly realities, she prefers silence. She does not find any pleasure in numbers, statistics or external impressions. She considers these as rather conventional and she is only interested in the unity of the tongues of Pentecost, in the unity of the gifts of the Spirit.

This has led some of our contemporary non-Orthodox theologians to mistaken and superficial criticisms. They speak of a "liturgical Orthodoxy" or of a "supertemporal mysticism" which is alien to the missionary character of the primitive Church, to the meaning of our times and of history. If the Orthodox Church does not include among her members someone like Teilhard du Chardin, they say, she is bound to be heading for the sunset of her life and mission.

It is not for us to answer these ill-considered accusations, because this would fall outside the scope of this article. We only note that such thoughts are not surprising at all, coming from people who consider the Church, more or less, as a Society or Congregation, or ignore the sublime Orthodox ecclesiology on the mystical Body of Christ².

However, the critics can be somewhat excused by their observation that, despite the precious treasure of Orthodox Tradition and the immaculate and unblemished Orthodox teachings, there exists a "tragic division" within the bosom of the Church, as to the super-nationalism and universality of Orthodoxy.

But nationalism is a natural evil rooted as a parasite in the fallen human nature and was never absent from any Church; from the Churches of the Byzantine dominion, the Monophysite Churches, the Pan-Slavic messianism, the Gallicism of Bossuet, the German

1. A. Schmemmann, "La Primauté de Pierre dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe" p. 148, ed. Delachaux-Niestlé.

2. See important study by Fr. G. Florovsky, "Le corps du Christ vivant" in "La Sainte Eglise Universelle" ed. Delachaux et Niestlé, Paris 1948.

nationalism of the Protestant rulers, down to the Latinism of the present Curia. Nationalism, therefore, is the tragedy of every Christian Church and it was because of this that it has been so heavily attacked by the Gospel and the genuine tradition of the undivided Church.

This forces the present Orthodox missionaries, who are struggling to plant new Orthodox Churches in Africa and Asia, to lay the foundations of the missionary witness on the cornerstone of Orthodox ecumenism. Especially in our times that the anguish is greater than the agony of Babel. Nowadays we do not simply have a confusion of tongues. We have a confusion of spirits, which is much more serious. Let us, therefore, examine the reasons which support the ecumenism of external mission in our astronautic age.

First of all, the principle of ecumenism is based on the tradition of our Church. The principles of "unus Christianus, nullus Christianus" and of the "Pentecostal collectivity" are well known to Orthodox tradition, which, in consequence, condemns on one hand the Protestant individualism and, on the other, the Roman Catholic absolutism³.

She is personalistic and at the same time social. She accepts the domain of the life of the individual and the personal relation of it with each person of the Holy Trinity, but also the incorporation of the person in the Christian community, within which it achieves its moral and spiritual perfection. The individual life is based on the sacrament of confession and of faith, while the collective life in expressed in the "social" sacrament of baptism and the eucharist.

Therefore, the Orthodox Church in giving supremacy to the internal catholicity⁴ (catholicité du dedans) does not reject the geographical one, which is a manifestation of the former, ruling out at the same time both the "super-historic" tendency of the Western Church and the "super-eschatological" one of the various ecclesiastical off-shoots of the East.

By according precedence to the "status patriae", the future city, she does not cease

to be interested also in the "status vitae" and the course of the invisible war on earth. In view of this, Orthodoxy accepts both a vertical and a horizontal-catholicity which is capable of correcting the existing shortcomings among the autocephalus Churches. The Orthodox are thoroughly conscious of the fact that the term "catholic" was first used in the East as early as the time of Aristotle and that it assumed a particular significance through St. Ignatius the Theophoros and St. Polycarpus of Smyrna. And, of course, St. Maximus the Confessor or Saint Mark the Noble alone could express the catholicity of the Church.

Even a simple hermit in the depth of the desert could express the unity of the collective ecclesiastical conscience, provided he is pure of heart with a steady life of spiritual exercise. The Church is catholic because her Founder is catholic. It is this which has led Father Florovsky to the conclusion that the "catholicisation" of the Church should not start from an organised collective action but mainly from a renaissance of the catholic spirit which will then find itself ways of external manifestation⁵.

The first concern of "Porephtendes", therefore, is to help in the training of people in catholic thought first and then in ecumenical action. To help the Church, the arc of tradition, to transmit the power of truth to the whole congregation of those, who have been baptised in His Name. In other words, it is not enough to profess that the Orthodox tradition is continuous, that it is the tradition of truth "omnia quae sint veritatis"⁶, that it is not a kind of archaeology or even a sacred archaeology, but that it is the memory of the Church or still better the sacred memory of the conscience of Orthodoxy. We must demonstrate it to those outside the Church.

The first effort of the Church militant consists in the evangelism of the good tidings. Orthodox evangelism is a kind of judgment of the world. For, between Orthodoxy and the world there exists a creative contrast. Orthodoxy is "in this world" the herald of the future world. It is her duty to preach the new life revealed in the person of Christ. To preach it through the word and the sacraments and the life of faith, enacted in love.

Orthodoxy knows that the "white horse" is the "word of God"⁷, which should run through the entire world, and struggles through mission

3. *We ought to admit that the 2nd Vatican Council, contrary to the 1st one, in 1870, under the vivifying spell of the two great Popes John XIIIth and Paul VIth is fighting the beautiful good battle of making the Church more democratic.*

4. *This has been expressed most successfully by Karl Barth, who says: "the Church is not multitudinis but confessionata".*

5. G. Florovsky: *op. cit.* p. 34.

6. Irenaeus: *Against Heresies*, III, 4, 1.

7. *Apoc.* 19, 13.

to introduce people into the "house of God" and to initiate them in the new life in Christ. Orthodoxy is, therefore, a missionary body whose field of mission is all the world. But the aim of this mission is not simply to transmit a few ideas and beliefs to people, nor to impose upon them a prescribed discipline and a rule of life; but to lead them to the new reality in Christ, to incorporate them through faith and repentance in the Mystical Body of Christ by means of the new birth "through water and Spirit".

Furthermore, the ecumenism of external mission is dictated by historical, social, economic and political reasons. If the Orthodox Church is the "one, catholic" Church she should direct her ecumenical conscience to all international problems.

The great claim of this century was the abolition of colonialism. The countries of mission, having been awakened by the possessive influence of the various European colonial powers, discover Orthodox ecumenism and are stunned by the clean record of catholic Orthodoxy. Because racialism and sectarianism are mere playthings in front of the charm of communist internationalism. They can see that they can resist the constant infiltration of Marxist internationalism with Orthodox ecumenism.

The countries of mission need, therefore, ecumenical missionaries and not national spies. Let us never forget that the present Chinese drama is due, to a large extent, to the terrible disputes between Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries and their nationalistic tendencies. In the one hand they were holding the Cross of Jesus and the gospel and in the other the flag of the nation and the opium of lawless economic interests.

The words of professor K. Pannikcap, a great author and ambassador of India in Paris⁸ are full of significance, in this connection: "From 1850 to 1914, the great period of missionary activity", writes the Indian thinker, "the European missionaries presented the Christian religion as a special contribution of Europe. This identification of Christianity with European despotism did great injustice to both Christianity and Europe. The Indians reached the point of considering Christianity as the religion of imperialism; it is only today that this misunderstanding is beginning to dissolve.

Should the principle of ecumenism be applied to missionary activity, the Orthodox Church would become automatically a factor of inter-

national peace and goodwill among nations. If every Orthodox would become conscious and then fact that he is not "Greek of Jew", Russian or Ugandan, but primarily Orthodox and then member of a nation, he would contribute automatically to creation of good relations among nations and to ensuring world peace, for which the Orthodox Church is especially praying.

In this field one should recognise the great contribution of the Roman Catholic Church through the world pacifist organisation "Pax Christi". Unfortunately, in Orthodox countries, the problem of peace has become an object of exclusive exploitation by communist propaganda.

Apart from these serious political reasons, to which we should add the Arab movement and the recent successes of Islam and, in general, the fermentations that take place today in Asia and the Middle East, there are also economic and technical reasons. There is for example the tendency towards economic integration, or towards a universal civilisation brought about through the rapid development of technical civilisation⁹. These reasons compel Orthodox mission to lay its foundations on the rock of the mystery of Orthodox ecumenism.

The principle of ecumenism will also contribute to the projection of the Christian teaching as unified and indivisible and to the avoidance of the present scandal of division, which has disastrous effects upon the souls of the neophytes.

Furthermore, the spirit of ecumenism will lead the missionaries themselves to the discovery of the path of love of hearts and of the unity of the Churches. An external mission would have as its sole aim the conversion of the pagans and which would neglect the demonstration of the Orthodox faith and life to non-Orthodox Christians, would be one-sided and deficient. The great Father Florovsky states that the main mission of the Church within the world is to attract not only those who ignore her, but also these who have cut themselves off and to incorporate them in an organic and living unity in Jesus Christ¹⁰.

Chrysostom was the first to associate the mission to the pagans with the work of bringing back to the fold the supererogatory heretics. Being faithful to the thought that Jesus did not say only "go ye" but also "come ye to me", he is equally interested in the mission to Phoenicia and the return of the Asian sects

8. In magazine "Nea Estia": tom. 65, p. 708, Athens, July 1959.

9. Cf. S. Bulgakoff: "L' Orthodoxie", p. 132, Paris, 1958.

10. G. Florovsky: op. cit., p. 24.

to the mother Church.

One really marvels at the daring methods of the holy Father, unbelievable even for our era, which he employed in order to achieve a dialogue with the Arians. "And seeing that the Scythic group had been caught in the Arian net, he counter-manoeuvred and discovered a ford. For, having put forward priests and deacons and preachers speaking their own language he also gave them a church of their own and through such measures he won back many of those in error"¹¹. And further down: "And he himself was spending a considerable time there conversing through an interpreter, who knew both languages, and he was preparing for action those who said they knew them. This he was doing within the town capturing back many of those who had been deceived"¹².

It is because of this tradition that the Orthodox Church, considering external mission as inseparably connected with the ecumenic dialogue, approved of its connection with the World Council of Churches, where "Porefthendes" also should for many reasons acquire an official standing. Isolationism in this case also is disastrous.

But even among themselves the Orthodox missionaries will see that they can accomplish a really great and creative work, if they are inspired by such ideals. The creation of "Syndesmos" and "Porefthendes" which was considered impossible, until quite recently, is now a blessed reality¹³. The pan-Orthodox consciousness is, therefore, awakening, especially among the youth¹⁴. This presages many and special blessings of the Trinity to the congregation of catholic Orthodoxy.

A new section or branch of "Syndesmos" might for example be established; an organ of social welfare and support to the less wealthy Orthodox Churches which would face the

urgent problems of Orthodoxy of such a nature. It is known that within the Orthodox family other Churches are relatively well off, while others, e.g. that of Jerusalem and Uganda, are lacking even the most rudimentary means of existence and action. Something similar to the "Logias" of St. Paul might, therefore, be organised. These had an ecumenic character since they were carried out not only in Philippi but also in Antioch and Rome for the needs of the brethren in Jerusalem. Father Bulgakoff sees in these "Logias" a way of expressing the ecumenic unity of all the Churches throughout the world¹⁵.

Perhaps some would object that all these are utopian, as they were saying the same thing about "Porefthendes" without expecting the impression and the shock created by the appearance of a pan-Orthodox organisation¹⁶.

"Porefthendes" should ignore these reactions and follow faithfully the traces of Saint Chrysostom, who showed his interest in missionaries not only "comforting them with words and supporting them with advice" but "providing abundantly for your needs, so that you would lack nothing"¹⁷. Elsewhere also this great Father mentions that he gave instructions, so that all the needs of the missionaries might be supplied "either in clothes or in shoes or in foodstuffs"¹⁸.

And now, after so many centuries, how shameful it is to know that a Greek Orthodox missionary in Uganda, was forced to cancel his missionary trips last Easter because of the lack of the absolutely essential financial means, and that from the time that he left for the countries of mission he lost even his stipends.

From all the above we can draw the following conclusions:

(i) Both the Old and the New Testament support unanimously the principle of ecumenism as the characteristic par excellence of the mission to the gentiles.

11. Theod. E. I., book 5, chapter L, P.G., vol. 82, col. 1257.

12. Op. cit.

13. Unity among the Orthodox is particularly important in our days, in view of the fact that various hostile protestant branches are now being united, in order to face their problems in common. Orthodox unity would among other things prove wrong the recent false accusations against Byzantine and Russian theocracy. See: M. Le Cuillou: "Mission et Unité", vol. I, p. 141, éd. du Cerf, Paris, 1960.

14. Fr. E. Stylios: "Mission as an ideal of contemporary youth" in "Porefthendes", no 8, 1960.

15. S. Bulgakoff: op. cit. p. 126.

16. See "Eglise Vivante" devoted to Orthodox missions, No 6, vol. 12, Nov-Dec. 1960.

17. Chrysostom, Migne P.G., tom. 52, col. 678.

18. Chrysostom, Migne, P.G., tom. 52, col. 677, Cf. Mgr. C. Lagier: "L' Orient Chretien", p.215, Paris, 1935, where, in a chapter devoted to Chrysostom's missions, it is stated: "Il concentrait des ressources budgétaires. Les industriels d' Antioche, en particulier, lui envoyaient des sommes importantes, avec lesquelles il entretenait les établissements missionnaires".

(ii) The unanimous opinion of the Fathers¹⁹ following faithfully the biblical course recognises, in this connection, that the element of ecumenism constitutes the differentiating characteristic between Christianity and the gentiles.

(iii) In general the ecclesiastical tradition and the teaching of the Orthodox Church, faithfully keeping through the centuries the truth revealed by the Lord, the preaching of the Apostles and of the Fathers, and applying the doctrines proclaimed by the Holy Ecumenical Councils, always preached Orthodox ecumenism condemning nationalism and racialism as a heresy²⁰.

Let the Orthodox missionaries not forget the "orbis terrarum" of St. Ambrosius²¹ and that "chorus Christi jam totus mundus est"²². Thus the vision of St. Polycarp, who few moments before his martyrdom saw Jesus Christ as a shepherd "of the catholic Church through the ecumene", will become a reality.

Professor A. Schmemann, condemning the zionistic conscience and knowing that the Church was catholic even with the twelve disciples of the Pentecostal morning writes that a local Church cannot survive without having consciousness of the Church which extends "dans tout l'univers" and at the same time lives "comme dans une seule maison"²³.

Let it not be forgotten that "the woman clothed with the sun"²⁴ is wearing on her head a crown with twelve stars, as many as the tribes of Israel and the disciples of the upper room, who symbolise the ecumene. Let us struggle that the "mustard seed" of external mission may become "the greatest among herbs", "a tree", so that "all the birds of the air may come and lodge in the branches thereof"²⁵. With the gifts of grace, which we

have received only for mission, let us work for this "sweet thing and name" which is called Orthodoxy and which has been preserved until our days only through mission, as the fire through the hearth.

Let us make our own the words of Prophet Isaiah "the place is narrow for me; make me space that I may inhabit", so that the right type of mission is carried out "with noble offspring and many children" "as a fertile bird", having "twelve gates" for the "twelve tribes of the children of Israel" spreading from "east... to the north, to the south and to the west"²⁶. Orthodox mission must be as "the great and white rock" of Ermas, "higher than the mountains" "that it might contain the whole world"²⁷. Above peoples, nations, races, external mission will seal with the seal of the Lamb "all the nations that live under the sun"²⁸.

Under the guidance of the witness centre of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, "Syndesmos" and "Porefthendes" should, therefore, follow the example of the Church of Antioch²⁹ in developing an ecumenical missionary activity. Let us pray that within its bosom "missionaries to the nations" may be found, who, as representatives of their two hundred million Orthodox brethren, "will turn the world upside down"³⁰ and will give back to our catholic Orthodoxy "its first great wings".

Let us close this series of articles with the beautiful phrase of the staretz of Patmos, Father Amphilochios: "the various Orthodox Churches are one Orthodoxy, as a shaft of rays within Christ the sun. But if Christ the sun is to shine, Orthodoxy must be felt through her missions as "as house of prayer among the nations"³¹.

.. Archim. NECTARIOS HATJIMICHALIS

19. If, as we have seen above, the Fathers in the midst of a multitude of unfavourable conditions have been most vigorous heralds of Christian ecumenism, what should we do, living in an era of social, political, economic and military integration?

20. Constantinople Council.

21. Migne P.L. tom. 15, col. 1369.

22. Migne P.L. tom. 37, col. 1953.

23. A. Schmemann, op. cit., p. 143.

24. Apoc. 12, 1.

25. Matt. 13, 31-32.

26. Apoc. 21, 12-13.

27. Ermas Prov. 9, 21.

28. Ermas, 9, 17.

29. According to Prof. G. Conidaris, it was this Church which "carried out an ecumenical mission in the name of the Risen Christ. *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 126.

30. Acts 17, 6.

31. Mark 11, 17.

MISSION NEWS

In the two opposite Continents of Africa and Asia the great drama of the future is being played to-day. The attention of all men is turned, with an inexplicable tension towards those people who just now are springing up as national entities in the sphere of universal history. The news comes to us, multiform and surprises us with its intensity. The everyday pulsation is determined there by the various new political, financial and social currents which give direction to the development of those new states. The ways which will be followed are yet difficult to discern. Nobody can foresee them at this moment. But even more obscure is the course which will be opened for the african and asiatic soul to follow in the future.

The existing missions in those regions try to use all means so that some light may be shed in order that the only "way, truth and life" will be followed. Their example, as it appears to us, may perhaps be a concrete order to a number of us to help those people who are making their first steps.

★ **THE WIRELESS.** In February, 1963, at Addis Ababa, the Voice of the Gospel by radio was established. This ambitious programme belongs to and is directed by the Lutheran World Federation in co-operation with other Churches. The two transmitters of 100.000 watts send forth religious, educational and civilizing programmes for more than 16 hours a day. Thus, (since 15 months), the Voice of the Gospel can be heard in the most distant villages of Africa,

the Middle East, and Asia. There is a hope, however, that this voice will soon be transmitted exclusively for Africa in eight different languages.

One may think that the Voice of the Gospel through the Wireless is a limited organization which attempts to do its work as so many others with similar goals. The most important aspect of this programme is that it is in continuous contact and co-operation with all the local Churches of Africa, so as to be able to know if the daily programmes correspond to the needs and expectation of the new believers. To-day, seven distant, provincial studios are in continuous co-operation. And there are nine more to be established so that some of the needs which are continually increasing may be satisfied. Many of the programmes are prepared in the provincial communities in their own languages and dialects, they are recorded and then sent to Addis Ababa from where they are heard in distant regions. You can imagine the emotion and enthusiasm of those ignorant African in vast areas, to hear a programme in their own particular dialect. The information assures us that there are only a few villages which do not have at least one wireless. The disposition of the great nations for propaganda has led to this unimagined "appearance" of radio-transistors. Since 1955 the number of the radios has been doubled.

Here are some astonishing figures which are the fruit of to-day's propaganda. Moscow devotes 2.000 hours a week in external programmes.

The Voice of America	800 hours
Peking	750 "
B.B.C. of Great Britain	600 "
Egypt	500 "
W. Germany	500 "

The Wireless is, perhaps, the only way and the only means for entertaining and educating half the population of the earth which is still illiterate.

The Voice of the Gospel, through the wireless, tries to influence this medium and transmit the evangelistic message in the heart of every family, in the heart of even the most distant villages.

★ **THE TELEVISION.** Television is considered to-day one of the most powerful means of communication. Especially for the uneducated population to whom it is difficult to broadcast difficult meanings and ideas, by the oral or written speech, whereas the vision and the dialogue of television may become the most essential interpreter of difficult meanings. The importance of the theatre and the effectiveness of the movies is also recognised in the education of the masses. Television tries to combine all those possibilities, that it itself possesses. The mission's spirit tries to influence this modern approach and source of communication. As an example, we mention Uganda and Japan. Although the number of people who to-day listen to it is very limited, especially among the educated citizens of the cities, however, it happens to have viewers, in several centres, restaurants, bars etc., where everybody can watch the Television. It is considered as certain,

however, that very soon, there will be a public apparatus of television even in the smallest village of Uganda. The Missions of Uganda, have already started to use this new way of evangelization.

In Japan, too, the christian programmes of television are considered as quite fruitful. Japan's population is, today, amounting to 90 million, and of those people, only 4½ million are christians. In Japan, there are 14½ million television apparati in use, so that for every six or seven persons there corresponds one viewer.

Let it be noted that Japan is considered as the most materialistic nation of Asia. And the symbol of materialism, television, is used, by the missionary stations for the spreading of the evangelistic message of salvation.

★ **THE TAPE RECORDER.** Another unusual organization is the Gospel Recording Incorporated, which was founded soon after the last war and its work is the spreading of the Gospel by the tape recorded. This organization has recorded up to the present the wonderful narratives of the Gospel, the miracles etc., in more than 2.750 different languages and

dialects. In the photograph, the small children of a Maasai tribe listen, after their Sunday School, to a moving narration of the Gospel, in their own language, which is heard from a battery tape recorder.

★ 700 million persons, over 15 years old or the 2/5 of the population of the earth are not able to read or write.

★ Only 10% of the African population, is literate.

★ The 2/3 of the Indians, or 458 million persons are unable to read.

★ The 85% of the population of Pakistan, are illiterate. To all those people, television and wireless, have perhaps something to say, by transmitting the voice of the Gospel from the missionary stations to the ends of those vast areas.

★ PUBLICATIONS.

According to statistics, the next five years 350 millions new readers will be added to the multitude of the literate people of the world.

But what are all those people going to read?

★ We are informed that In-

dia is extremely thirsty for literature of every kind. Books, magazines and written matter generally are in an astonishing demand. Who will take care to satisfy this thirst?

★ Russia takes care to play her role well. A lot countries, but especially India, are ever-flowing with russian written material for propagation.

In 175 languages Russia presents coloured, well-published magazines, newspapers and books, which are continually sent to countries which thirst for reading matter. It has been reckoned that Russia spends more than 42.000 million a year for this purpose.

★ Fortunately, there are some persons who are awake. The General Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in his report for the 1963, said that their Society had published 2.977.556 copies of the Bible. "You have to think, what it means," he added, "we only achieved 2,4% of the whole universal need". Well, who will take care for the rest 97,6%?

★ "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?..."

G. P.



A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ORGAN OF THE INTER-ORTHODOX MISSIONARY CENTRE 'POREFTHENDES'

Registered Office: 6 Vissarionos St. Athens 135. Tel. 628 192

Editor: Arch. Anastasios G. Yannoulatos

Subscription price: Greek or English issue \$ 1.00 per year. Open subscriptions for those who wish to support the effort. All cheques must be addressed to Miss Argyro Kontogeorgi - 8 Vissarionos St. Signed articles are the responsibility of their authors only. Reproduction is permitted, provided acknowledgment is being made.

Printed in Greece by «PATMOS», Sarri 10, Athens (113). Tel. 535.901