

Πορευθέντες

μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Ματθ. κη. 19)

"GO YE therefore, and teach all nations"

NUMBER 10

APRIL-JUNE

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, ...and unto the uttermost part of the earth". Act. 1,8.



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"Proeuchentes...
In collaboration with
the Movements of the
International
Organisation of
Orthodox Youth."
"SYNDESMOS."

Action
Chretienne
des Etudiants
Russes
FRANCE

Christian
Union
of Working
Youth
GREECE

Greek
Orthodox
Youth
of Korea
KOREA

Mouvement
de Jeunesse
Orthodoxe
LIBAN-SYRIE

Orthodox
Student
Association
FINLAND

Orthodox
Youth
Association
FINLAND

Orthodox
Student
Association
GREECE

Orthodox
Youth
Association
GR, BRITAIN

Orthodox
Christian
Unions
GREECE

Orthodox
Youth
Group
GERMANY

Student
Christian
Union
GREECE

Syndesmos of
Greek women
Theologians
GREECE

Tokyo
Orthodox
Young
Believers
Association
JAPAN

Union
of Graduates
of Apostoliki
Diakonia
GREECE

A CENTRE FOR WORSHIP AND MISSION

Uganda and its Orthodox inhabitants have at last their first stone-built Church. This Church is the fulfilment of a lifetime's longing of thousands of Orthodox Africans who «in the courtyards of the Lord» will perform their Orthodox worship and especially the Holy Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, which Father Reuben Spartas, the fervent missionary, translated into their language. The Church was inaugurated in great solemnity on Sunday 12th of March, by the Metropolitan of East Africa Mgr. Nicolaos assisted by the Greek Archimandrite Chrysostomos Papasarakantopoulos, Father Reuben Spartas and seven other African priests. The service was attended by the King (Kabaka) of Buganda Mutesa the 2nd, the British Commissioner, Kiapazinga (the elected King of Busoga), the Prince brother of Kabaka, the Prime minister of Buganda, the President of the Greek Community at Nairobi and hundreds of Orthodox both Greek and African.

In his sermon the Metropolitan thanked the King who granted the land for building the Church and who interrupted his holidays in order to be present at the inauguration and prayed for him and the prosperity of his people. He also announced that preparations would soon start for the building of the big Cathedral of St. Sophia, on the neighbouring hill of Luby, this too being a present of the King to the Orthodox Church.

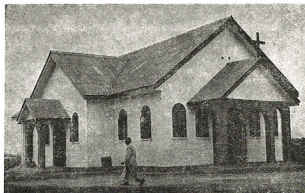
Let us hope and pray that this Church may be a centre of worship and missionary radiation in the whole Africa.

FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD

On 21st May 1961, Mr. Theodoros Nankyamas was ordained a deacon by the Metropolitan of Irinoupolis (East Africa) and on Pentecost Sunday he became a priest.

Mr. Nankyamas has obtained his degree from the Theological School of the University of Athens, has subsequently studied at Oxford and visited many towns in Europe and the Middle East. He returned back to Uganda in July.

The ordination of this African Orthodox priest is a milestone and another blessing of God for the young Church of Uganda. All Orthodox pray for him fervently so that God may give him strength to work with all his spiritual power and godly zeal in the stricken African Continent, for the glory of Christ.



ORTHODOX MISSIONARY NEWS

A MOVING OFFER

By the end of May, a collection box was brought to our offices with the following unsigned letter.

"Let the name of God be blessed because he has given me the opportunity of offering these small savings for foreign missions. I do not know to what these savings come up; but I do know that every coin in it is the result of a sacrifice no matter how small. What is more, every time a coin was dropped in, a prayer was said for this important cause, which has not yet received the proper attention. Let us hope that All Merciful God will take care of it, so that the day of Pentecost may be revived and the work of the Apostles may be continued."

What great faith, love and sacrifice these coins contain!

A HOPEFUL INSTITUTE

The Orthodox world gladly received the news of the establishment of an Institute of Afro-Asian Studies in Thessaloniki. This establishment, which is an affiliate body of the Theological School of the University of Thessaloniki, will maintain a home for Orthodox students from Asia and Africa who will be studying theology or other sciences; will also provide some missionary training for Greek students, through special lecture courses. It is anticipated that the Institute will commence functioning on 1st October 1961.

Various comments in favour of this decision of the University of Thessaloniki appeared in several Orthodox publications, as well as in many Greek newspapers, while the London "Times" described it as a bold novelty.

Ardent is the wish, that this Institute may contribute to a better foundation and organisation of Orthodox missionary work which has recently started with such good prospects in the Orthodox Church and among Orthodox youth, in particular.

LORD'S "GO YE..." AND THE THEOLOGY

This article is the main part of the sermon of the *professor of the Theological School of Halki, Father Chrysostomos Constantinides (now Metropolitan of Myra)* delivered in the Patriarchal Church of Constantinople during the Patriarchal and Synodic Holy Liturgy on St. Andrew's day (30-11-60). It was kindly offered by the reverend speaker to be published here with the hope that it may form a precious basis at the discussions which have commenced in connection with the Orthodox Theology of Mission. (For the full text of the sermon see «Apostle Andreas», an Official Publication of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Constantinople, 7, 14, 21-12-60).

Christianity is a religion on perpetual march. The Church has been at work for the spreading of the Gospel ever since the first day of Pentecost. Her development was fantastic. The East as well as the West did their work. This Ecumenical Throne more than any other province of the East, fulfilled its missionary responsibility when for long centuries was called to transmit the light and truth and grace and civilization to the undeveloped peoples of the frozen North and African South, of the remote West and the Far East. The West, in its turn, firmly established a whole system of missions which in spite of its excesses and its deviations had and still has its meaning and its worth.

But the work does not stop at such enthusiastic realizations. There is the other side as well.

In spite of intensive action for twenty centuries, there are still millions of people who are waiting to hear the voice of the Gospel. A rough estimate on the African Continent only, gives the following figures: 21 millions only are Christians, 60 millions are all the other Monotheists. And the rest? 150 millions of natives remain without religion and they believe in nothing but in the superstitions of the magicians of their tribes.

What is happening then? Churches and Denominations strong till lately, see now their systems falling. They lose ground continuously.

And what about Theology? It is, of course, in full bloom in all its branches. The Doctrines, the Bible, Apologetics, Polemics, History, Metaphysics, the Liturgy, Praxis, Law, inter-Christian relations, the Texts of the Fathers, all in full development. But of what importance are all these in face of the agony of the coloured continents, in face of the cry of the jungle? In front of the earnest waiting of the pale millions of the Far East which are literally crushed under the Red steam-roller or are exterminated by their mass problems and mainly by the corruption caused by their spiritual famine?

It is generally admitted today that Christianity needs a new kind of Theology, the Theology of mission. This Theology will be new not in the sense that it will declare from now onwards a new Christ, a new faith, new Doctrines. Of course not. It will be new in the way of approaching, with a new look, new perspectives, new tactics, the masses of people in order to bring to them Christ, the Christ they ignore, the Christ they have not heard of, the Christ who is being falsely accused.

New will, therefore, be the rhythm of the Missionary Theology of the Church. New its spirit. New its characters. But what will they be like?

Brethren, he who speaks from this holy pulpit, thinks that Christianity in approaching the millions of the people who stand outside, the millions of black, yellow or bronze people must acquire a Theology which will duly consider certain new points, the following:

First, the Theology of Mission must acquire a deve-

loped anthropology adapted to the desire and thirst of the less developed people. It must preach, in other words, a teaching on man, which will be optimistic and strengthening for the individual, which will put forward the sovereignty of the former native slave, which will emphasize his being, his self-confidence, his self-control, the worth of his ego, the value of his life.

The usual «average man» to whom Religion is mostly addressed, wants to be reassured in the idea of his personality because he has had enough of systems and men who exploited his being.

Second, it must develop a self-sufficient Ecclesiology for its new members. The Church is a doctrine, a divine institution, a society of the just, the fulfilment of the grace of God. The native believes in all these but he also sees his Church as a human organization and he wants Her to be an indigenous organization, national and native, with Her native coloured Bishop, with Her native priest, with Her local music and worship, with Her beloved customs and usages. An Ecclesiology which will not be in any way near these things will certainly not appeal to the coloured man.

Third, it must formulate an absolutely optimistic Eschatology. The role of Eschatology is very important to the soul of uncivilised people. They have undergone and are still under the crushing and decaying influence of various beliefs and sorcery which paint the gloomiest picture of the other life, which according to them, is an unhappy, a repulsive, an infernal life. Christianity, therefore, should present the other life from the most pleasant side of it. If hell is an unavoidable reality for the devil and his instruments, so there is Paradise blessed of the Father in the Highest, and this is joy, happiness, glory, and the blissful sight of God. And the tired coloured man wants to see and live, and feel this happy life of the world beyond.

Fourth, Within the theology of Mission there should be formulated and established an Ethics, a Psychology and a Sociology which would be more adjusted to the needs of the missionary milieu. I make myself clear with the following example: Think for a moment how the case-law of the Roman-Catholic Church has developed and taken a complicated form with tabulated rules and provisions for each case and with the huge mechanism of the ecclesiastical justice which is directed from the Centre, where hundreds perhaps of committees and councils regulate ex cathedra the life of the Latin (Roman-Catholic). Try to put into practice this complicated system on the soul of the African or Asian native who lived and was brought up in simple, most simple, principles of moral and social co-existence. He has his life, his psychology, his social system; and all these are very venerable to him. If only the things that are basically wrong will be changed, Christianity will have succeeded in its work. Radical changes, psychological revolutions, social upheavals, keep off the native masses. The holy Cyril of Alexandria, during the 5th cen-

tury, with his forty-year pastorship in the African land has given the best examples of respect and often adoption by the Church of the way of life of those to whom She addressed herself. The archaeological spade every day unearths examples of the spirit of adaptability which one of the greatest Fathers of our Church has displayed.

Fifth, The Theology of Mission must acquire internal unity so that Christianity will appear united to those people to whom it is addressed. The scandal of heresies and antagonisms annoys and incites the native masses. «Leave your differences, the young Churches of Africa and Asia say to the missionaries, leave them back in your old Europe. Forget about your divisions in your new world and come to us as heralds of the undivided Christ...» Indeed, why should we separate the natives into Latins and Lutherans, into Calvinists and Presbyterians, into Methodists and Quakers and so on? They do not want systems and heresies, they want Christ the Saviour, the Redeemer. This is where Theology should be careful if it wishes to see Mission and Church successful.

But let us come to some more practical points of the Theology of Mission.

Sixth, the Church in Her Missionary Theology must acquire simplicity of ideas. Wherever the question of imposition and penetration was posed, there appeared the subject of the simplicity of ideas. Did you ever think why some religious systems succeed easier among the peoples today than Christianity? Or why the missionary work of the Protestant world yields in many cases more than the Roman Catholic one though this second one is often better and more systematically organized, at any rate, the most monolithic one? The answer is the simpler the preaching is, the less metaphysical, with the least scholasticism and dogmatic complications, the easier it appeals. The African or the Asian with difficulty follows the Christian European in his thought and his meditation which are usually dry and abstract. The noted failure of present day missionary activity of Christianity does not come from the antagonistic forces but from the natives' dictum that «Christianity is not the religion for their Continent». And this is because they cannot understand our ideas, our metaphysical and dry Theology.

Seventh, the Church in approaching those people must be free from any personal or other interests. People are tired of seeing the so-called historical Churches appearing as protecting Churches of the people with the spirit of the ecclesiastical colonialism having in mind to conquer or impose their bulky ecclesiastical and theological dictatorship. Today, the flags of freedom and independence, of equality and justice are hoisted up all over the Globe. The Theology of the Church must be a Theology of freedom, saving and making every man equal; a Theology having as its motto what St. Paul said: «There is no Judean of Greek, slave or free, male or female» (Galat. 3, 28).

Eighth, Something else is needed. The complete disavowal of all the methods of contact with the others, that have been tried and failed. Schools, alms-giving, bribing,

social work, and eventually enslavement of consciences and buying of souls, proselytism, recruitment of orphans and destitutes and so on and so forth, are actions and systems that have been complete failures. The native sees with horror the door of a hospital or of an orphanage. He prefers to die in his hut or in the streets than to live in the dubious atmosphere of a suitable for the case establishment. Therefore, something must also change in the system of our immediate contact with the native man. Let only the ideas, which Christianity preaches on love, on charity, on good, remain. Let them be freed from practical exploitation, and let the ideas as well as the establishments be no means, sly means, but sacred aims which would not simply bring the others near to us, near to our interests, but near Christ.

And the ninth and last case. The Church must also be adjusted externally to the needs of missionary work. The unadaptable black cassock and hard felt-hat of the Orthodox missionary under the burning sun of Uganda or Congo are equally unsuitable as the stiff collar of the Protestant pastor or the heavy attire and the white belt and tonsure of the Latin priest or the starched linen headgear of the Roman-Catholic Sisters of Mercy. The Latin «Dominus vobiscum» sounds pleasantly when heard in a Gothic Cathedral but it is awful when heard in a straw-hut of Central Africa or under the pagodas of China. If the African is used to worship God in often crazy dances, it is unwise and useless to wish to penetrate into his soul with Bach's and Schubert's polyphony or the octophonic Byzantine Music. «In drum and dance». Yes! But we shall be sure that the Holy Trinity is really and sincerely worshiped by our young brothers in faith. And we shall be in accordance with St. Paul's saying: «I have become everything to everybody so that I might in any way save some» (1st Cor. 9, 22).

Brethren, it is time we conclude this sermon. I just thought of the cry of pain which was uttered with bitterness by an Indian representative and spiritual leader at last year's meeting of the World Council of Churches in Rhodes. «You will come, he said, to India next year for the 3rd General Meeting. Come to the 400 millions Indians who are not Christians. Come to the country of contrasts and contradictions. And you are Christians. Leave your systems and methods and become, simple Christians who will not hesitate to go into the hut of the Indian and eat his tasteless rice and his boiled vegetables. Live simply, preach simply, worship God simply, discuss about your differences simply, project the simple Christ simply, very simply, if you want the Indians to realize that indeed «Christ is the Light of the World».

Brethren, this is where our prayer should be directed, our Orthodox prayer, on this great day of our Thone.

God calls the Orthodox Church, too, to that eternal «Go ye and teach all nations...» Let Theology be busy in drawing the new missionary line of policy; and the Church in Her responsibility of preaching the Gospel. And the Churches in their new course of rebuilding their unity, so that in unity of spirit and action they may preach Christ the unseparated and undivided.

CHRYSOStOMOS CONSTANTINIDES

Metropolitan of Myra

UGANDA

B

The spreading of Christianity in Uganda is directly connected with the name of the explorer Stanley.

Stanley reached Uganda for the first time in 1875. That was during the reign of Kabaka Mutesa I, a leader with many administrative abilities and prudence. Mutesa I, had since long ago lost his faith in the idols and had accepted Islam. So, after several discussions with Stanley, he decided that his country should accept Christianity. This decision, of course, was not completely free from material interest because at that time Uganda was at war and Mutesa hoped in the weapons and power of the whites. In any case, after this decision of the king, Stanley left for England, most probably in order to prepare the despatch of missionaries. In 1876 he returned to Uganda and in June 1877 the first Anglican missionaries arrived on the scene.

They were received in a grand way in the Palace where they stayed henceforward as personal guests of the king. Classes in catechism were immediately started in the Palace where only the royal family and the Court were attending; later, however, such classes were started outside the Palace, as well, for the people. Thus, in spite of the not very pure motives that led to the introduction of Christianity, the new religion started gradually to become the faith and life of Baganda.

Everything was getting on all right until two years later (1879) French Catholic missionaries arrived. That marked the beginning of dissension and confusion on dogmatic matters which resulted in the king's refusing to become Christian.

In spite of all this, though, he did not cease to recommend to the various chiefs to accept the new religion. Of course, things became even worse when British colonial administrators arrived—this time completely uninvited—.

The Africans then, suspected that with religion as an excuse, three forces disputed their country: The Arabs, France and England. The presence of English military and political administrators created an atmosphere of distrust for Protestantism which the Africans connected with the English, while on the contrary, the absence of such French officials helped the final domination,

at least in numbers, of Catholicism.

In general we can distinguish four periods in the development of the Christian religion in Uganda.

During the first period missionaries act and work easily in full agreement with Kabaka.

During the second period Kabaka loses his faith in missionaries for reasons already mentioned before, a fact that makes their task very difficult because the people being afraid of displeasing the King, stopped showing willingness and confidence.

A short period followed after the death of Kabaka Mutesa during which a true search for Christ is shown on behalf of the Africans.

This short period is followed by the period of persecutions. As it happened everywhere, in Uganda, too, the tree of the Church was watered with much blood. When in 1884 Kabaka Mwanga, the successor of Mutesa I, came on the throne it seemed at first that he favoured Christianity as much as Islam. It is the time of sincere search which we mentioned. But two years later (1886) he suddenly turned against both religions and especially against Christianity. He declared terrible persecutions and about 100 Africans, Catholics and Protestants, had the death of a martyr.

This figure becomes more significant if we take into consideration that the total of Christians was something like 200. After this testimony of blood, the spreading of Christianity assumed an incomparably quicker rate than before. While from 1877, that missionary activity started to the time of the persecutions (1886) only 200 Africans had been baptized, during the next 7 years (1886-1893) 12,000 were baptized by Catholics alone¹. The leader of these first African martyrs, Charles Lwanga, was declared later (1937) protector of the African youth.

As we mentioned before, the undisguised colonial policy of England helped indirectly the domination of Catholics. The very cautious attitude of the French missionaries towards the various political factions also contributed considerably to this. In order to remain faithful to this principle of theirs, they did not hesitate to take themselves to exile twice; the first time for three years (1880-

-1883) and the second for two (1888-1890)².

The Church has developed a worthwhile activity both in education and social welfare.

She maintains more than 100 philanthropic institutions, hospitals, centres for mothers etc. She also publishes a considerable number of magazines.

An investigation was carried out recently with the purpose of studying thoroughly the reasons of the slow expansion of Christianity. The conclusions of this investigation have as follows: Negative points: the troubled political climate, the communist propaganda, the defective preparation of missionaries for the social life, the small number of University educated missionaries, the insufficient missionary personnel, and last but not most important, the rivalry and war among the various denominations. There are, of course, the positive points too, as the vitality of clergy and the loyalty of missionaries in the past and contemporary political crises.

ORTHODOXY IN UGANDA

In 1929 a group of Africans quit the Anglican Church and decided to establish «a Church for all rightly thinking Africans, for those who want to be masters of their homes and not considered as children for ever»³.

At first sight, there is nothing curious about it. Such schisms and formations of similar groups often occurred simply reflecting the displeasure of Africans for the too European type of Christian communities. There was nothing special about the name of this group either «Orthodox African Church», because many of those groups chose the name «Orthodox» having no connection

1. The Catholics today constitute 33 % of the native population. 574 priests (394 white and 180 native) work there. From the administrative point of view, the Church is divided into an Archdiocese, and five dioceses. There are also monastic orders for natives and whites five for men (Pères Blancs, Pères de Mill Hill, Pères de Verone, Pères de l'Instruction Chrétienne and the Bonno Koroli) and four for women (Sœurs de Marie Réparatrice, Bannabikira Sœurs africaines de Marie Réparatrice and Sœurs Blanches).

2. Jean Bruls : Une génération spontanée. L'orthodoxie en Uganda, «Eglise Vivante», tome XII, Nov. Dec. No 6.

1. T. Despont : Afrique terre chrétienne ? op. cit.

THE MISSIONS OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH^(*)

B'

John Veniaminov (1797-1879): the apostle of Alaska and of the Siberian East

Where Macarius failed, another great Russian missionary of the nineteenth century, John Veniaminov, succeeded.

The story of this humble priest of Irkutsk (Siberia), who became Metropolitan of Moscow after fifty years as a missionary, is a true epic. Nothing seemed particularly to mark him out for missionary work except perhaps the keen interest in religious education which he shared with Gurij from earlier days. As a husband and father he unhesitatingly refused when he was asked to go to the Aleutian Islands to help the inhabitants who had been baptized but left without a shepherd. But a few days later, when a traveller told him the story of the Aleutians' zeal for their church, he changed his mind and set off on the perilous voyage with his whole family (1823).

When he arrived after fourteen months on the way, he found not only no church but not even a roof to shelter his children. His first task was to build them with his own hands. When fifteen years later he returned to Russia to present a detailed missionary strategy to the Holy Synod, he was already a famous man. The Metropolitan Philaret said of him: "This man has an apostolic quality about him." His scientific, linguistic, and geographical works (a grammar of the Aleutian language, a geography of the island of Unalaska) received the highest praise. After having explored and evangelized the Aleutian Isles one by one, John Veniaminov brought the light of Christ to the shores of Alaska, and succeeded in converting

the warlike Kolosh tribe. Like Macarius, he baptized only after a long period of preparation, and expressly forbade the godparents to reward their godchildren. But these first fifteen years were only a prelude. When he became a widower, he was consecrated bishop (with the name of Innocent) and placed at the head of the mission to America. At a time when the majority of Bishops confined their activities to directing the affairs of their bishoprics without stirring from their episcopal palaces, Veniaminov was continually travelling: by boat or sledge he covered dozens, if not hundreds, of thousands of kilometers. Unlike Macarius, he was not content to dig deep, but leaving a strong missionary organization behind him, he moved his episcopal see from Sitka in Alaska to Ayan on the Siberian coast, from Ayan to Yakutsk in the middle of the tundra, and finally, when Russia annexed the province of Amur, he settled in a town which he helped to found: Blagoveshchensk ("Good News Town"). None of these tribes of the Siberian East was out of reach of his activity: Korjak, Chukotsh, Oljutar, Jakut, Tungus, Orek, Giljak, to cite only the chief. Everywhere he tried to use the indigenous language. "At the age of sixty-three we find him in Japan, at sixty five again in Kamchatka, at seventy inside the province of Amur, preaching as of old, always making new plans"¹. He was going to start a mission in Manchuria when the death of Philaret of Moscow called him home to succeed him (1868).

This nomination to one of the highest posts in the Church takes on a symbolic character. If Macarius had restored purity to missions, Innocent Veniaminov showed by his example and achievements that missions were no private matter but of the very essence of the Church and consequent-

(*) From the article "The Orthodox Church and Mission", published in the "Student World" No 1-2, 1960 and reproduced here by kind permission of the editors.

1. *The History of the Episcopal Church in Japan* (New York, London, 1938), quoted by J. Glazik.

with Orthodoxy whatsoever.

This group, however, was not like the other ones. It had something special. Its leader was the well-known Reuben Mukasa Spartas. The story of this ardent man and the marvelous way in which he was initiated in Orthodoxy and how after many adventures and especially after fervent prayer, he came into contact with the Patriarchate of Alexandria and was ordained priest together with his co-worker father Obdiou Kabanta^(*), is well known to the readers of "Poreuthentes".

The "Orthodox African Church" has today 56 communities and the number of believers is about 20,000. She belongs to the jurisdiction of Patriarchate of Alexandria. In February 1960 one more priest and five deacons were ordained who by now are priests as well. For a year now a Greek Orthodox archimandrite works in Kampala. In June of this year, Mr. Theodoros Nankymas, from Uganda, graduate of the Theological School of Athens University was ordained priest (archimandrite).

The Church, however, is suffering from lack of sufficient spiritual nourishment that is unavoidable in view of the shortage of priests. This shortage is all the more obvious when

one considers the great distances that the priests have to cover in order to answer the needs of believers. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the "Orthodox African Church" has her seat in Uganda but includes Kenya and Tanganyika as well.

Today, our African brothers tired of the colonial regime which unconsciously they connect with Catholicism and Protestantism, turn their eyes hopefully to Orthodoxy and particularly to Greece.

The time of Orthodoxy has tolled in Africa. If the Orthodox world betrays these hopes today, perhaps tomorrow will be too late.

M. DRAMITINOU

4. See Theodore Nankyma "Orthodoxy in E. Africa" "Poreuthentes" No. 1.

ly the duty of all Christians. His age (seventy-one) his infirmities (he had become blind), the limitations of his authority also, made it impossible for him to reorganize the Russian Church, which was fairly stagnant, on the missionary pattern. Yet to the end of his days he did not cease from serving the missionary ideal. On January 25, 1870, the Orthodox Missionary Society was at last founded. Henceforth in all churches on the Sunday of Orthodoxy (the first Sunday in Lent) collections were to be made for the support of missions.

Nicholas Kassatkin, the apostle of Japan (1836-1912)

In 1861 the famous historian and archaeologist, Bishop Porphyrius Uspensky, could write that the Orthodox Church "brought no child into eternal life outside its own frontiers". By a curious coincidence, it was in that very year that he who was to give the lie to this affirmation set sail for Japan: Nicholas Kassatkin, "the outstanding Christian missionary of the nineteenth century", in the words of G. Tucker¹.

Father Nicolas had gone as chaplain to the Russian Consulate at Hakodate without any definite missionary intentions. Only his Christian conscience prevented him from remaining passive in the heart of a pagan country. He had before his eyes the example of Bishop Innocent, who came to see him in Japan and incited him to begin to study Chinese and Japanese. At this period Christianity was still a forbidden religion. Father Nicolas succeeded none the less in converting a Shintoist priest, Sawabe, an implacable enemy of foreigners, Sakai, a doctor, and a third Japanese. With the help of these three he set to work immediately on the translation of the Scriptures and of the liturgical books. In 1871, Father Nicolas, whose community now numbered twelve baptized Christians and twenty-five catechumens, returned to Russia and persuaded the Holy Synod to organize officially an Orthodox mission. Two years later Father Nicolas was laying the first foundations in Tokyo of the Orthodox Cathedral of the Resurrection, which was to become (and still is) the most beautiful Christian building in Japan; was inaugurating a seminary for the training of an indigenous clergy and a school for catechists, and was entrusting a committee of nine members with the translation of works on Orthodoxy into Japanese.

These diverse enterprises undertaken by Father Nicolas at the very inception of the mission show the breadth of his vision. Inspired by Stephen of Perm, Nicolas sought from the very beginning to create a local church, Orthodox in its faith, Japanese in its spirit; like Macarius Glukharev he wanted to create a church modelled on the apostolic communities. And it was with the energy and realism of a Veniaminov that he propagated the gospel of Christ. From 1874 onwards

he collected together every year local synods of the representatives of the Japanese communities. In 1875 the two first to be baptized, Sawabe and Sakai, were ordained to the priesthood. Let the figures speak for themselves now; they are eloquent enough. In 1878, seven years after the opening of the mission, the Japanese Church numbered twelve priests, of whom eight were indigenous twenty-five catechists, and fifty-one assistant missionaries, all of them Japanese. Twenty-five years later the number of baptized Christians had risen to 27,000 that of Japanese priests to thirty (plus seven deacons), and eighty-nine theological works had been translated. And all this had been achieved by Father Nicolas, helped by only four missionaries (including the future patriarch of Russia, Sergius Stragorodsky) with derisory financial resources. The Catholic and Protestant missions to Japan had at their disposal respectively twenty-six and fifteen times as much money as the Orthodox mission. The Archbishop Nicolas devoted his own resources to the upkeep of the poor and of the clergy. His food was that of an ascetic; his cassock was patched in many places. It was the same with the clergy: their poor appearance prevented them entering the houses of the rich, so the Orthodox were recruited almost entirely from among poor labourers. On the other hand, the "indigenous" character of the Church was woven into the smallest details of ecclesiastical life: "A Westerner is more than a little astonished at having to take off his shoes to enter a Japanese Orthodox Church; the Japanese always take their shoes off on entering a house; how could they do otherwise when they enter the House of God? And it is not a question of the adoption by Christians of a pagan custom; they don't take off their shoes in a Buddhist sanctuary, so the act possesses a Christian value of its own, that of a family intimacy with God in the Church."²

In 1904 the Russo-Japanese war broke out. Archbishop Nicolas, in spite of being a subject of the Russian emperor, did not desert his post; better still, he enjoined his flock, in a pastoral letter, to fulfil their national duty and to pray in all the churches for their country's victory: "We Christians have also another country... which is the Church, and in which the children of the Heavenly Father really form a family. This is why I do not leave you, brothers and sisters, and I remain in your family as though in my own."

Archbishop Nicolas died in 1912, venerated as a saint by the Japanese Orthodox. At this period the Church numbered 33,000 faithful distributed between 266 communities, thirty-five priests, twenty-two deacons, 106 catechists and eighty-two seminarians—all Japanese.

1. J. MEYENDORFF, "L'Eglise orthodoxe du Japon", in *Le Messager Orthodoxe*, 3, 1958, pp. 30-23.

The missionary success of Archbishop Nicholas testifies to the inward power of the Orthodox Christian message. Its work may be considered as a perfect example of what an Orthodox mission can and should be. For this very reason it takes the place of an Orthodox theology of mission. Its importance is universal.

Other missionary efforts

Our historical account of the Russian Orthodox missions is by no means exhaustive. Even among the greatest there are many names still unmentioned: the blessed Theodoret (seventeenth century), St. John Maximovich, Bishop of Tobolsk (eighteenth century), Bishop Nil Isakovich (nineteenth century), the author of a book on Buddhism and hero of Leskov's story, *On the Edges of the World*.

The range of the Japanese mission somewhat eclipsed the success of the Chinese and Korean missions in the twentieth century. After the Boxer Rising, in the course of which all the premises of the Orthodox mission were destroyed and more than 200 Orthodox Chinese martyred, the mission made an excellent start under the leadership of Bishop Innocent (Figurovsky): the number of Chinese Orthodox grew from 636 in 1906 to 5,035 in 1914. In the single year 1913, 1,223 baptisms were administered. At the same period, the Korean mission, directed by Bishop Paul (Ivanovsky) who translated all the liturgical texts into Korean, experienced similar success. In 1912 the number of Orthodox Koreans rose to 3,515. In the single year 1911 there were 1,127 baptisms.

At the end of the nineteenth century Kazan, with its Ecclesiastical Academy, had become a great missionary centre. The Academy has trained not only a great number of missionaries, but also a remarkable pleiad of scholars: Sablukov, the translator of the Koran, Bobrovnikov, the specialist in Buddhist questions, and finally Ilminsky whose activity deserves a special mention. Ilminsky conceived and realized a scheme for the evangelization of Muslims of the Russian Empire by means of the school alone. He organized a network of Tartar schools in which all the subjects, including the catechism, were taught in the language of the native inhabitants. Similarly he insisted that the Bible and the liturgy should be translated into the Tartar dialect and not into the traditional Arabic of Islam. "We believe that the evangelical word of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, having become incarnate, so to speak, in the living tongue of the Tartars, and through it having associated itself most sincerely with their deepest thought and religious consciousness, would produce the Christian revival of this tribe." Ilminsky's efforts bore their fruit: for the second time a breach was pierced in the impenetrable wall of Islam.

The situation today

The revolution and the communist regime have deprived the Russian Church of any possibility of missionary activity. The Academy of Kazan was closed in 1919 and has not yet reopened. The Church still does not enjoy liberty of "religious propaganda": it must be content to help those who come to it.

In the emigration, missionary work was pursued by the Metropolitan Melitij (Zaborovsky) in Manchuria and in China with sure success. But China's becoming Communist has put an irredeemable end to the Russian Mission in the Far East.

At the present time the Church of China, presided over by two indigenous bishops, is an autonomous church depending in the last resort upon the Moscow patriarchate. The last Russian missionaries were recalled to the USSR in 1950.

The Church of Japan is similarly autonomous. The energetic Bishop Irenaeus Bekish who is at the head of it is the only Russian, but his successor will probably be a Japanese. A little Orthodox community has survived in Korea; it is also presided over by an indigenous priest.

Strictly speaking the Orthodox Church has no longer any organized Orthodox mission. But a reawakening of the missionary conscience is beginning to be seen in the Church of Greece, the only Orthodox Church of any numerical importance this side of the iron curtain¹. It is a paradoxical event which reawakened Greek consciences to the urgency of missionary activity: the spontaneous formation, without the help of any missionary, of an indigenous Orthodox Church in Uganda in the heart of Africa, composed principally of former Anglicans and numbering now nearly 20,000 members!

We have recently learned that the Prime Minister of Ghana, Dr. Nkrumah, has had his son baptized into Orthodoxy. Almost everywhere is a vast mission-field open to the Orthodox. Deeply anchored in tradition, less "European" than the Catholic and Protestant Churches, liberated from any link with former colonial powers, the Greek Church and the Church of Alexandria ought to be able to take up the torch dropped by the Russian Church. But in order to fulfil the task awaiting them, the new Orthodox missionaries, whether Greek, American, or Arab, should use the lessons of Russian Orthodox missionary experience, at their best: a complete openness to indigenous cultures, even the most rudimentary; the incarnation of the Word of God in the language and customs of the country in the image of the humiliation of Christ; witness through the word (school), through prayer (monastery), through beauty (liturgy) and through example, in evangelical simplicity and poverty.

1. Cf. the bulletin *Go ye...* published in Athens by the Secretariat of the Committee for Missions set up by Synodesmos.

Week of study of Roman

Catholic Mission - Vienna

22-26 May 1961.

The argument of the Doctor of Sinology and missionary, Father Bernard Willeke, in his speech during the week of study on Roman Catholic mission in Vienna, that the Catholic Church has at present surpassed in missionary activity and results any other period in the history of the Church is not a rhetoric expression. The following official data are enough to prove the truth of his statement: In 1883 in Asia there were 9,000,000 Roman Catholics; by 1956 according to census figures they had increased by 256 % to 32,000,000. In Oceania the corresponding figures are 629 000 for 1883 and 3,000,000 for 1956 an increase of 382 %. The African figures are 2,100,000 for 1912 and 21,700,000 for 1957 corresponding to a percentage growth of 933 %.

These noted results are the fruit of the internal renaissance of the



Vienna and the Afro-Asian Institute of the same city. Those who participated amounted to 800, the majority of whom were priests the rest being nuns and 15-20 laymen. Out of this imposing number of participants, however, only a small part were actual members, i.e. scientifically occupied with mission, the rest being either missionaries or people interested in missions.

The Week was opened at 8 p.m. on the 22nd of May, in the amphitheatre of a Convent with the welcome of participants by the President of the International Institute of Missionary Research Dr. George Freu (a big industrialist and entomologist) and with an introduction on the programme of the Week by the Professor of Missions in the University of

Religion and Christian Faith

A Course for missionaries and pastors was held at the *Ecumenical Institute of Bossey* from 1-15 June. 63 missionaries and pastors (mainly Protestants) working in 23 countries, took part. The programme included daily study of the Bible, lectures and discussion as well as prayers.

The subjects of discussions were: «Islam as living contemporary religious faith», «God's word and men's religions», «Ways of contact with the contemporary Hinduism», «The Mission of the Church in the Chinese society», «Christian Mission and responsibility in contemporary Buddhist Ceylon», «Missionary responsibility in Korea», «The problem of evangelization and religious life in today's Christendom».

Worthwhile views were contributed by all speakers about the way of contact and communication of the Christian missionaries with the non-Christians people. The need of love and compassion towards the non-Christians (a missionary as the Good Samaritan) the sharing of life

NEWS FROM THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT OF THE NON-ORTHODOX

Roman Catholic Church on one hand and of the intensive effort She has made in the field of missions, on the other.

A small manifestation of this multifiform effort is the organisation, every two years, of weeks of study of the problems of Catholic missionary work, by the International Institute of Missionary Research and by the Missionary Institute of the University of Münster. Most of the participants come from the German speaking countries of Western Germany, Austria, and Switzerland and their main occupation is the science of mission. The aim of these meetings is, on one hand the renewal of contacts between those working on the theoretical problems of mission and the acquaintance of new scientists and, on the other the exchange of opinions and views on current missionary problems.

The meetings of the last «Week» were held in Vienna from 22nd to 26th of last May on the subject of the «relation between Pastoral theology in Christian countries and foreign missions». Other contributing bodies apart from the mentioned Institutes, were the Missionary Institute of Papal Missionary Work of

Münster Mr. Thomas Ohm.

Some of subjects discussed: «the missionary orientation of non-missionary clergy», «Mission and Liturgy», «Collections for Mission», «The social duty of Christians towards the underdeveloped countries», «Socialism and Marxism in the missionary countries», «The western type of pastoral theology from an African and Asian point of view», «The co-operation of laymen in mission», «The mystical body of Christ and Mission».

The way of the work was rather simple: After each address or introduction discussion followed in the presence of the entire audience, without its being divided into separate groups. This way together with the limited amount of time did not permit a full discussion of the problems which were touched, a fact which constituted the main disadvantage of the conference.

The Missionary week closed with a solemn celebration of the Holy Liturgy in the Church of the Lazarists with the Bishop of Salzburg officiating.

and thought, of customs and habits of those people (according to the example of the Lord's Incarnation), the special meaning of the Orthodox Theology and Liturgy for the peoples of Asia and Africa etc. were the main points stressed. It was also said that Christianity is not only faced with the problem of christianizing the non-christian people (main mission) but also with the problem of re-evangelizing the so called «christian» states of Europe and America. The whole world is a field for mission and evangelism.

Among those who took part in the Course for missionaries there were some with longtime's work in missionary countries. A special impression was created by the information and the slides shown by a missionary of N. Guinea who had been working among the Papuas the most primitive of human beings, for 24 years.

At the end of the Course a particular satisfaction was expressed for the Bible study which was conducted by an Orthodox representative as well as the wish for hearing more on the subject of the nature of the Church in future meetings.

THE MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCHES OF THE EAST IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN ASIA

(IN THE MIDDLE AGES)



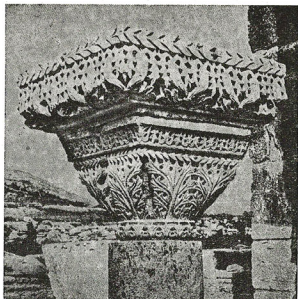
It is well-known that Christianity from the early centuries spread all over the Roman Empire and consequently all over the nearer half of Asia. But most people still ignore the pages of legendary story that followed immediately after these centuries for the spreading of Christianity into the vast highlands of Central Asia and into the plains of the Far East. A brief study of this subject is necessary so that the missionary fervour which enflamed the Church of the East and led Her to the most difficult and bold penetration, could be better understood.

A. ORTHODOX

The Director of the National Library in Athens E. Fotiades based on the opinion of the French Historian Alfred Rambaud writes: «The number of Churches which existed in the 6th century among the barbarians, from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, was astonishing. The number of Christians along the Indian Coast and islands increased from one day to the next. Later, Byzantine missionaries fearlessly went forth among the Tartars and tamed these bloodthirsty warriors. As a matter of fact, they came into India, China, and the Christian religion was spread from Jerusalem to China.»¹

Perhaps this statement will seem to certain people exaggerated; it is, though, only a vague picture of reality.

From the very early years we have information that there were Christians in the Bactrian Country.² (N. Afghanistan - South Russian Turkestan). A result of the commercial relations of the



Byzantine Empire with India and China was the spreading of the Christian faith, if nothing else, all along the main channels of communication.³ When the old roads through the plains and highlands of Central Asia were shut to the *Byzantine merchants*, because of the continuous clashes with the Persian people, the Byzantines were obliged to venture along other devious routes in order to keep their relations with the Far East. For avoiding the Persian land there was only a sea route via the Red Sea, the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean, or by land via Trebizond, Cyrus Valley, Caspian Sea, Oxos Valley and through Samar kand into Turkestan.⁴

In order to secure control of these roads, it was necessary for many peoples and smaller tribes to be included in the sphere of the Byzantine influence. That is why we see a general interest of the Byzantine Empire in christianizing the people who lived north of the Persian Empire between the Black and Caspian Seas in the Oxos Valley and on the Tarim plateau.

The Iberians (Georgians) and the Armenians had already come to Christianity, at the time of Constantine the Great.⁵ In the 6th century, at the time of Justine I (522), the king of the

1. See E. Fotiades «Greek Unity», Athens, 1950, p. 229.
2. See Eusebius «Evangelical Preparation» IV, X Migne, O.P.G. vol. XXI. 1. 376. In 478, Kawad, the Persian Emperor, found Christians among Huns of Bactria (Professor John Foster, The Triumphs and failures of the Church of the East in «The student world», Geneva, 1960, No 1-2 p. 53). Various information from the middle of the 6th century indicates that there were Byzantine prisoners among the Turks and that according to an angel's order, a Nestorian bishop was sent in order to baptize many of them and teach the art of writing (Mingana, The Early Spread of Christianity in India, Manchester University Press, 1926, l. 9).

3. For the commercial intercourse of Byzantium see Charles Worth, Trades, Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire, Cambridge, 1924, l. 76. According to the information of Kosmas the Indikopleustes, there were Christians in Ceylon (Professor D. Zakynthinos, Activité apostolique et politique étrangère à Byzance, in «La Revue du Caire» 9th year, No 92, July 1946).

4. D. Zakynthinos op. cit. p. 188.

5. According to Theodorotos, the Iberians were «guided to the truth» by a woman prisoner who healed the sick and also made the plans for a church. The Iberians believe in Christ and ask for priests. The woman prisoner tells them to go to the then ruling Constantine who sent them as bishop a virtuous preacher of the knowledge of God. (See Byzantine Missions in magazine «ZOR» Athens vol. 1954, p. 90 - Sozomenos II, 7, 8, 9, and N. Ellinonmemon vol. 17 p. 36, «Narration about Iberians, how they came to know God»).

Lazians Tzathios came from the east shores of the Black Sea to Constantinople, saw the flourishing Christian civilization, asked to be baptized, and married a Greek woman. When he went back, the new religion spread over very quickly.⁶

A little later on, at the time of Justinian, the Avasgians (south of the Lazian country) became Christians. As Evagrius the Scholastic writes, «Justinian having built a Church of our Lady for the Avasgians, provided them with priests so that they might be taught correctly the Christian doctrines». Then, Christianity extended into the interior Caucasus and on to various Unnic tribes.⁷

The intercourse of these tribes with people living in Mongolia, China and Turkestan on the one hand, and the commercial transactions of the Byzantines on the other, resulted in the appearance of Christian nuclei in various parts of Central Asia. The Christian communities of Tarim, about which we have acquired information from the ruins of Turfan as well as from the local war history of the 13th century, no doubt owed their roots to missionaries who had followed the merchants and the caravans of silk on the two roads, the northern and southern.⁸ «In the 13th century Christian Alans from the Caucasus, formed part of the armed forces which upheld the Mongolian rule in China.⁹» A characteristic of this contact of the Byzantines with the Mongolian tribes is the fact that the Byzantine princess Maria Paleologus married the Mongolian prince Avaka bringing with her Christian civilization.¹¹

Sometimes christian merchants, sometimes

princesses, sometimes prisoners¹² or sometimes the migration of peoples for one or another reason, brought the Gospel to Mongolia and China, through Upper Asia, from the very first centuries of the Middle Ages.

* * *

The Christians of Syria and Persia, though, contributed more than the Byzantines to the spreading of Christianity into Asia. From very early times the «Church of the East» as they called the Syrian-speaking Christians, with the radiation of the two big theological centres of Edessa and of Nissivis, in spite of the continuous persecutions,¹³ had sent forth the Christian message up to Turkestan and Afghanistan. In 334 Merv (S. Turkestan) already had a bishop. During the 5th and 6th century it was still an episcopal see, and from the 6th or 7th until the 11th century it was the headquarters of a metropolitan.¹⁴

Ray, Nishapur (N.A. Iran) Herat, Afghanistan are mentioned as having Metropolitan Sees in the year 424.¹⁵ After the break in the Syrian Church from the nestorian and monophysite heresies, those who remained faithful to the decisions of the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) the *Melchites*, as they were called because of their relation with Byzantium,¹⁶ carried on missionary activities all over Asia.¹⁷ To this, apparently contributed the persecutions of the Persians and Nestorians as well. So, we find them later on in Tasbkent, Samarkand in the present Russian Turkestan, in the Turkish races of the Caspian Sea, in Sogdiane, Khorasan, Transoxiane, and in Khwāredzm.¹⁸

From the middle of the 13th century and during the first half of the 14th, after the Mongolian conquest, following the road of the steppes, Ortho-

6. Prokopios «Persian Wars» 11, 15, 27, 22. From 680 two bishops of Lazike appear, Theodoros of Petra and Ioannis of Fasis, who took part in the 6th Ecumenical Council. Up to the 13th century, the Lazians had their own Metropolitan See. Later, they were subjected under the Metropolitan See of Trebizond, and the Metropolitan of Trebizond had till late the title of «First in honour and exarch of all Lazike».

7. Evagrius the Scholastic op. cit. 1. 2740.

8. Prokopios «On created things» III, 6. At the time of Alexios Comnenos the Metropolis of Alania was united with the Diocese of Soteropolis, at the borders of Avasia and Alania under the title «Melitene». The title of the Metropolitan of Melitene is mentioned as late as 1590.

9. E. Tisserant, *L'Eglise Nestorienne*, in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Paris 1931. Tome VI, 1. 209. In the ruins of Turfan, near inscriptions with the extracts of the liturgical language of the Nestorian Church (Syrian) were found some more relics of Christian handwriting in Sogdian and Turkish (E. Sachau, *Litteratur Bruchstücke aus Chinesisch-Turkistan*, in *Sitzungsberichte der KGL Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1906, p. 964-973). In the middle of the 12th century, north of Takla Macan, the Shiites clashed in their advance with various tribes, mostly Christian governed by a Christian governor of Aksu tributary to a Christian prince, the Nudumkhan. At the beginning of the 8th century it is mentioned that prince Kashgar was a Christian with the Greek name of Sergios (E. Tisserant, op. cit.).

10. K. S. Latourette, *A history of the expansion of Christianity*, Tome 2, «The Thousand Years of Uncertainty» London, 1938, p. 260.

11. Byzantine Missions, Magazine «ZOR», Athens, 1954, p. 163.

12. The Franciscan Guillaume Rubruc emissary of Louis, mentions (1294) that he met in Karakorum (Mongolia) Christians exiled or prisoners from the West as well as other Orthodox - Gregorians, Armenians, Russians - in complete religious abandonment because the Nestorians of Mongolia whom Rubruc pitied for their ignorance and inclination to drink, refused to let them in church unless they would be baptized again (Professor G. Richard *Les Missions chez les Mongols aux XIII et XIV siècles*, in *Histoire Universelle des Missions Catholiques*, Paris, 1956 Vol. 1st, 1. 180.)

13. The Persian priests disliked and looked down upon the Christians as foreign agents especially since the time that the Roman Empire, their great opponent, recognised Christianity as its official religion.

14. Latourette op. cit. p. 273.

15. E. Tisserant op. cit. p. 207. In the 6th, 10th and 11th century Herat is also mentioned as a Metropolitan See. Latourette op. cit. p. 273.

16. Janin: *Melchites*, in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. X, 1. 515. Melchites, from the Syrian malka = king, emperor.

17. Latourette op. cit. p. 267.

18. P. Catrice, *Les missions Orthodoxes*, in *Histoire universelle des missions Catholiques*, vol. 4th, Paris 1958, 1. 250.

dox Christianity spread through Upper Asia and reached Mongolia and China.¹⁹

B. NESTORIANS

The most important part in the spreading of Christianity in Central Asia was played by the Nestorian Church.²⁰ In the year 635, Persian missionaries reached China. For this astonishing entry of Christianity into the Tang Empire we get quite substantial information from the memorial stone which was found in Ch'ang-an (the ancient Si-ngan-fou) Capital of China in 1625.²¹

According to the inscription on the stone, «In Persia, there was a bishop named A-lo-pen. He conveyed the true scriptures... rode through hardship and danger and in 635 arrived at Si-ngan-fou. The Emperor received him as a guest in the palace. The scriptures were translated for the imperial library, and their doctrines were examined by the Emperor himself. Knowing that it was right and true, he commanded its propagation».²² Then (in 638) the Emperor T' ai-Tsoung gave orders to build a Christian monastery in the Capital. The 21 monks would be sustained by the Crown. The next Emperor, Kao-Tsoung (650-683) continued granting more. He ordered the building of Christian churches in each administrative district and gave to A-lo-pen the title of guard of the «Great Teaching» for the whole Empire. The Christian religion was spread quickly. Ten dioceses were established and monasteries were built at many places.²³ Nearly all the Emperors of that dynasty displayed a great favour towards Christianity.²⁴

19. J. Dauviller in Catrice op. cit. p. 250.

20. This church went into schism after the 3rd Ecumenical Council (431). Foster thinks that the main reason for this schismatic departure was the impatience of the Persian Christians to show that they were independent from the Byzantine Church. «Here autonomy was not only desirable, but had become a matter of life and death» (op. cit. p. 51). There is no doubt that this was indeed an important reason, let us not forget, though that the Nestorian heresy (Two distinct personalities in Christ) was bred in the ground of the Syrian Church with Theodore Mopsuestias as its main former.

21. This granite stone, 2,36 m. high, 0,86 m. wide, and 0,25 m. thick, was erected in 781 in the cloister of a Christian monastery of Si-ngan-fou. Its long inscription includes: 1) Dogmatic exposition, quite vague, 2) History of the expansion of Christianity from 635 to 780, 3) Praise «Encomium» to Gi-Seou who gave the stone, 4) Praise to Emperors who are mentioned in the historical part and 5) Chronicle of the erection of the stone (P. Y. Saeki, *The Nestorian monument in China*, London, 1916). For relevant bibliography see La-tourette, op. cit. p. 277 footnote 69 and Tisserant op. cit. p. 201.

22. Foster op. cit. p. 52.

23. R. Tisserant op. cit. p. 203, and Foster op. cit. p. 54.

24. Su-Chung (756-762) built the monasteries in Ling-Fu and in four other places. T'ai-Tsung also honoured the monks Christian and Buddhist, and on the day of his birthday he used to send incense and food. The Emperor Tse-Chung (780-805) bestowed upon the Persian Ye-Seou the highest rank. In spite of being a white priest, he obtained the title of Mandarin, of the first rank with gold and red robe as insignia. He was appointed military governor for the north part of

The scores of names of clergymen and monks that are carved on the sides of the stone show the great development of Christianity in 9th century China.

The Nestorian priests in order to have more influence in the imperial milieu tried to secure important posts in Government. Their linguistic knowledge helped them in such an effort. By the middle of the 8th century many of them were used as interpreters with the various mercenary troops. The prestige of their origin and the Emperors' favour helped them enormously in their task. The opposition, however, which they had from the Taoists and Buddhists was great. Nevertheless, Christian missionaries succeeded in adapting themselves to the spiritual climate of China and many of them proved excellent experts in Chinese philosophy. But it seems they did not manage to establish a native ecclesiastical leadership so that a self-sufficient Chinese Church could be formed. The magnitude of the consequences of this terrible omission was revealed sometime later. In 845, by incitement of Taoists (the followers of the ancient Chinese religion) Vou-Tsoung proclaimed a persecution of all foreign religions. As an immediate result both Christian and Buddhist monasteries were closed down.²⁵ The anarchy that followed from the year 878 onwards for 80 years in the Chinese Empire completed the disintegration. The Christian communities became isolated²⁶ from the Christian centres of Central Asia, were left without bishops and finally declined. In the 13th century, during the times of the Mongolian dynasty, Christianity, after a period of complete obscurity comes again into the limelight.

Nestorian activity was not limited to China only; it extended nearly all over *CENTRAL ASIA*.

From the 6th century the Nestorians directed their action towards the Huns of Bactria.²⁷ About 781 Timotheus the Nestorian Catholicos (= Patriarch) writes (from Persian Ctesiphon which has now become Arab-ruled Baghdad) that the king of the Turks had become a Christian and that he Timotheus had appointed a Metropolitan for them. He also mentions he was prepar-

the Empire and supervisor of the research work in the imperial Court. He is the benefactor of the four Nestorian monasteries in the Capital in one of which the stone of Si-ngan-fou, was erected. (R. Tisserant, op. cit. p. 204).

25. H. Cordier, *Histoire générale de la Chine*, vol. I, Paris 1920. 1. 512.

26. After the Arabian conquest, the commerce of Persia and China, through the mainlands, came to the hands of the Arabian Muslims. Sea voyages were difficult because of the uncertainty in the seas of the Far East and so any communication of the Christian world with China, nearly stopped.

27. In 530 the language of these Huns was transcribed by using Syrian letters; an influence that can be realised in the Sogdian dialect, the Migurian and through this one to the dialects of Mongolia and Manchu. Foster op. cit. p. 52.

ing to appoint a Metropolitan for the Thibetians.²⁸

Many Christian communities developed among the Turkish tribes. From the middle of the 8th century Christian Migurians served with the Chinese troops as mercenaries.²⁹ In 1007 the Keraites who lived in N. Mongolia were baptized en masse. The Metropolitan of Merv, Abdiso estimated their number at 200000. At about the same time or a little later, during the 12th century, the Onguts, a people living north of Pekin, in what is now Shensi on the big curve of the Yellow River, in the passes between China and Mongolia, became Christians.³⁰

The 13th century presented a unique opportunity for the expansion of Christianity. Asia was united under Mongolian rule. In 1241 (under Chengiz Khan) the Mongolians swept over all peoples of Asia and threatened Europe. In the courts



of their princes the Christians played a vital part. Many of them were private secretaries and ministers. Yuyuk-Khan was so favourably disposed towards the Christians that in his camp there were Bishops, priests and monks. Two of his ministers, Qadakh and Cinqai, were Christians. Later, in 1248, he himself was baptized by the Nestorian bishop Malachia.³¹ The youngest son of Chengiz Khan married a princess of the Christian Kingdom of Keraites, who according to the Syrian texts, had a true faith, as St. Helen. Her three children occupied for many years the most important posts in the Mongolian Empire. Mangou became Great Khan from 1251 till 1260. Koubilai was at first governor of China, under Mangou, and then his successor as Great Khan (1260-1294). Hulaku, too, was governor of Persia under his brother. All three of them showed great favour to the Christians. Mangu-Khan had as prime minister a Christian

from the Kingdom of Ongutj called Bolgay. He also gave as a present to the Nestorian Catholicos a golden seal that allowed him to give to his Christians documents which they could use as passports.³²

Another blessing for the expansion of Christianity in the Mongolian Empire followed soon. On the 2nd November, 1317, the virtuous Mongolian monk Mark, from the Christian Kingdom of Ongutj, was ordained in Seleucia as Catholicos of the Nestorians. He remained on the throne for 36 years under the name of Yabballaha.³³

At the same time, Kublai-Khan showed a keen interest in the spreading of Christianity in his vast Empire.³⁴ According to Marco Polo, who lived in China from 1271 to 1288, this Khan had said to his uncle and to his father: 'you see, that the Christians in these parts are so ignorant that they do nothing and have no power'. He also gave them a letter for the Pope (Gregory X), as apparently it was recommended to him, in which he wrote: pray you send me a hundred men skilled in your religion and so I shall be baptized, and when I shall be baptized, all my barons and great men will be baptized. And then, their subjects will receive baptism, and so there will be more Christians here than in your parts.³⁵ This text shows clearly the intentions of the Mongolian leaders of that time towards Christianity. After conquering Asia, they looked for a religion which would replace the traditional Animism and would develop their State. Three such religions existed in their vast Empire. Islam in the West. Buddhism in the East and Christianity spread nearly everywhere. The soil, therefore was very fertile at the time for the implanting of Christianity. But the opportunity was missed and the responsibility for this, most probably, weighs upon the Christians of the West. At this critical moment the Crusaders extinguished the torch of the Church of Constantinople (1204) and weakened the Byzantine State which, because of its place and prestige, its political talent and its Greek adaptability, had all the potentialities to propagate Christianity into the Mongolian world as it did with the Slavs a few centuries before. At the same time, the Roman Church showed an unpardonable sluggishness in answering the appeal of the Mongolian leaders. In reply to Kublai-Khan's message, the Pope sent, in 1271, instead of 100, two Dominican monks who incidentally never reached China.

32. Foster op. cit. p. 57.

33. P. Benjann, *Histoire de Mar Yabballaha, de trois autres, patriarches, d'un prêtre et de deux laïques nestoriens*, Paris, 1895, in Tisserant, op. cit. p. 213-216.

34. In 1289 he established a special service the Ch'ong-fu-seu, with the purpose of looking after the Christian worship in the whole Empire. (Tisserant, op. cit. p. 212).

35. Bruce, Christianity in China, in Church Times, 5, May, 1946. Richard op. cit. p. 187.

28. Latourette, op. cit. p. 274 end 277.

29. P. Y. Saeki op. cit. p. 231.

30. R. Tisserant op. cit. p. 209.

31. R. Tisserant op. cit. p. 211.

When they met in Armenia the ravages of war, they were afraid to go on.³⁶ At last in July 1294, after 15 years, a Franciscan monk, John Montecorfinio reached, by way of the sea, Khan-baliq, the present Peking, the seat of Kublai-Khan. But, Kublai-Khan had died in February of the same year.³⁷

«Too late, too limited, the Franciscan mission which came afterwards suffered from one further weakness which again has often marked missions from the West. Instead of coming as a mission of help to Christians already in the field, they came to compete, and, if they could, supplant».³⁸

As we have already seen, there were in the Middle Ages flourishing Christian communities in Turkestan (where the majority of the various tribes had come to Christianity and had Christian princes as leaders) Afghanistan, Thibet, China, Mongolia, Manzuria, Java, Sumatra and perhaps in Japan.³⁹ The forcible Islamization of Asia under Tamerlane's heel and the persecution that broke out in China with the coming into power of the Mings (1368) blotted out the Christian centres of Asia and the Far East for many years to come.

CONCLUSION

This historical review of the missionary activities of the Churches of the East during the Middle Ages leads us to certain conclusions of vital interest for our times.

1. *The feeling of responsibility for the spreading of the Gospel that weighs upon every Christian community appears to be very strong in the Byzantine Church as well as among the isolated Melchites and the schismatic Nestorians urging them to spread Christianity «until the end of the earth».*

Many points of the New Testament have been misunderstood at times by various Christian groups. But the last words of Our Lord: «You will be my witnesses... and until the end of the earth» (Acts 1, 8) clear as they were indeed, left no margin for any misunderstanding or negligence.

It is, therefore, a sad originality which we see

in some Orthodox communities which consider these words as a kind of annex to the Gospel: An originality which implies a departure from the ancient praxis and conscience of the Church and consequently from Orthodoxy itself. Because, contrary to the ecumenical conscience, it cultivates a narrowly local conscience.

2. *These missionary activities do not take place only under normal circumstances; they are continued at times of persecutions and in spite of internal problems, in spite of isolation and the small numbers (Melchites), in spite of the terrible difficulties involved in moving around by the means of that time in the steppes and mountain ranges of Central Asia.*

Therefore, the existence of internal difficulties and problems does not justify the omission of our duty to external missions. Some other commandments of Christ often appear to certain people to be impossible too. But this does not atone for their transgression. The «Go ye and teach all nations» is a very clear commandment for every ecclesiastical community; more so, for the ones that keep the treasure of faith inviolate.

3. *It is not only priests that bring forth the Gospel. It is merchants, prisoners, princesses and simple women who first bring it to remote places. Every Christian, therefore, can and should contribute to the realization of this duty of our Church.*

4. In nearly every country and in the big cities of Asia we find Christian communities in the Middle Ages consisting mostly of merchants,⁴⁰ and immigrants. An excellent opportunity, indeed, of lighting in a natural way the Christian flame in those places, as it happened in the early centuries in many parts along the Mediterranean. The «lamp» has now been placed under the bushel of the «closed» community whose sole interest lies in keeping its customs alive. The Church did not try to strengthen these nuclei, to utilize her advanced posts. So, the light of Christian faith could not survive; it blew out at the first strong gust of the wind.

This same thing is repeated in our days among many Greek communities in Africa. They try to keep Orthodoxy alive for themselves, they do not give it to the masses of the people among whom they live. Before it is too late, let these calamities of Asia be a lesson to us for Africa.

5. *It is not enough to create some big or small Christian nucleus here and there. It is necessary to be in constant communication with one another and in close contact with the centre. And, then,*

36. Foster op. cit. p. 58.

37. M. Bruce op. cit.

38. Foster, op. cit. p. 60. John Montecorfinio started his activity in the Christian Kingdom of Onguts. Prince George embroiled Catholicism and prince John built a Catholic Church in the capital Olon Shume. But at the end of 1298, the death of prince George as well as the strong opposition of the Nestorians obliged Montecorfinio to go back to Peking where he had a worthwhile activity among the non-Christians (Richard op. cit. p. 187).

39. Cartice, op. cit. p. 248. Latourette op. cit. p. 280. E. Tisserant p. 218, Where the dioceses of Samarkand (Russian Turkestan) etc. are mentioned. A mosque in Bukhara (Russian Turkestan) is an ancient Nestorian church; there are many such cases in Central Asia. (Cartice op. cit. p. 249).

40. Latourette op. cit. p. 285.

to plant roots deeper and deeper into the heart of people. This was the weak point of the missionary activity of the Churches of the East in the Middle Ages. The various missionaries did not manage to establish a native ecclesiastical hierarchy. Did they not want it? Did they not try as much as they should or did they not manage it because of external opposition? On the basis of available data we cannot say anything for sure. The fact is that this lack cost dearly.

A slogan of fundamental importance for every missionary effort: *«Establish as soon as possible a suitable native leadership worthy of taking over the administration and the development of the Christian Church in the environment of its nation with continuous help from the centre».*

6. It appears that the basic tactics of the Nestorians consisted of gaining influence in the Imperial Courts (Chinese and Mongolian). But it seems that instead of making full use of the newly acquired favour for a more extensive activity within the popular masses, they contented themselves with simply preserving it.

The link with political authorities can only be used as a bridge for a closer approach of the elite as well as the plain people; not as an end in itself. Alas to him that wants to build a house on a bridge! The first tremor, the first political upheaval, will blow it down.

7. Surely, the alteration of the Christian message that occurred with the Nestorian heresy (distinction between the human and divine personality of Christ) prevented the Chinese people from conceiving, from the very beginning, the fact that Christian religion was not a religion of some wise man who had divine inspiration (of the type of Confucius) but it was the revelation of the Word of God. At first sight it may seem that the idea of an admirable model, of a teacher of the highest morality, would help the traditional Chinese thought in conceiving Christianity. And it did help, but only to conceive it wrongly; to confuse it with

something already known. It did not strike the people as something radically new.

Changes occurring during the propagation of the Gospel, either conscious from wrong convictions, as in the case of Nestorians, or unconscious from lack of knowledge, create only temporary and ephemeral successes. *What is needed, is correct, deep and thorough knowledge of the Gospel, on behalf of those who undertake to spread it.* There are some roads which, though apparently leading more easily to a high point, never lead right up to the top of the mountain.

8. Many opportunities were given to Christianity to conquer Asia very early. But internal strife and delays at critical moments not only prevented its expansion but gave a chance for the growth of various parasites. It is worth noticing that again foreign religions were imposed (Buddhism in China, Islam in Central Asia). And when one of these religions that offer a worthwhile substitute of Christian truths is spread among a people, then that people falls into a dangerous lethargy for many centuries. And, of course, any future missionary activity, especially after previous failures, appears to be much more difficult. We, in our times, should pay great attention to this last point. *There is danger of repeating such a sad story in the Africa of today.*

The battle for the penetration of Christianity into Asia had alternative phases of successes and failures. Today, we cannot be satisfied with the situation. Let us not forget, though, that what we see now is also a phase. The history of the world does not seem to be coming to an end in our century.

The future will again present opportunities. The question is whether in the meantime we shall have absorbed the lessons of the past, whether we read history with peace of mind, with humility, and a true intention to hear through the facts the voice of God speaking for the present.

ANASTASIOS YANNOULATOS
Deacon

Πορευθίνες

μαρτυρῶντες πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Mat. 28:19)

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MISSIONARY CLASSES

Every Friday 5.30-7 p. m. classes were held in the Students Christian Association hall (3, Soufliou St.) from January to May.

Some of the subjects were: General acquaintance with Africa. The religious problem in Africa. Political fermentations and developments concerning missions during 1960. Social organization and economic life of Central and East Africa. First acquaintance with Islam.—The missionary duty as it is emphasized in the Triodion.—The Church of Malabar and Her activity (by the Indian priest Father Philippos).—History, Civilization of Korea.—Religions and Orthodoxy in the Far East (by the Korean student Alexander Tsang).—Problems and organization of mission in Moslem countries.—Many of these lectures were illustrated with coloured slides.

* * *

A special course for learning the Luganda language was held. The lessons were issued and the first grammar booklet of the same language was recently published in Greece.

* *

Special groups were constituted for the members of the missionary course: a) Group for translations, b) Technical group for typing and duplicating, c) Group for studying the missionary problems, d) Group of contact with the African students, e) Group for the preparation of evening meetings and speeches with the purpose of cultivating missionary conscience among the young people.

* * *

Two special series are going to be published in small duplicated leaflets: **SERIES A:** Summary of studies published in foreign missionary magazines and books regarding problems of our time (they will be sent to the members of the missionary course sometime in the summer) **SE-**

RIES B: Narration and stories from present and past missions (their purpose is the cultivation of missionary spirit among the children in camps and youth associations).

CONTACT WITH THE CHURCH OF UGANDA

Money, parcels with icons, books, presents for children, vestments etc. were sent.

Brotherly contact with students from Uganda and Kenya studying in Athens, Thessaloniki and Patmos. Care for their problems and needs.

INFORMATIONAL WORK

Missionary evening meetings were organized by the members of the particular group: a) for boys of Sunday Schools of Athens and Piraeus, b) for University students, c) for working young people. All these meetings were very successful.

Four lectures on Mission were given in various centres of Athens and Piraeus and one in Patras a result of which was the continuous increase of co-workers.

Efforts were made for the creation of such groups in other big cities of Greece as well.

The daily press, besides the ecclesiastical magazines, published many articles on Mission (Athens «Kathimerini» about The Church of Korea. Thessaloniki «Ellinikos Vorras». Patras «Peloponnesos» etc.).

CONTACT WITH ECCLESIASTICAL AND UNIVERSITY PERSONALITIES

The report of the activities during the two years 1959-1960, which was sent to the Archdiocese of Athens, was the cause for the decision of the Holy Synod to establish in the Apostoliki Diakonia a special department for external mission. A first conference was held in the Apostoliki Diakonia with an introduction on the subject by the General Secretary of our committee.

Personal contact and discussion on specific problems of Mission were held with persons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Church of Greece as well as with professors of Athens and Thessaloniki Universities.

IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF PRAYER

Each of the above efforts was accompanied with fervent prayer. All those who participate in the Missionary work have appointed a certain time for prayer for missionary subjects.

On the first Sunday of each month those who live in Athens participate in a special Liturgy. During the Triodion an evening Liturgy was celebrated in the University Church for the members of the Missionary Course. Evening prayers and hymns to Virgin Mary (Akathist) were also said followed by a short sermon on the missionary duty of the Church.

Under the initiative of the members of the Missionary Course circles studying missionary subjects from the Holy Bible were held repeatedly.

In this atmosphere of fervent prayer for the mercy and grace of God the meagre light of our missionary work is continuously strengthening.

«Lord, the work is yours. Let the Holy Spirit direct the little boat of our Committee to constant progress. Protect us from the danger of egoism, wordiness, frivolity that often make cracks on the various big or small boats of Christian work and allow the waves of evil to sink them.

we long to serve with humility, zeal and modest determination this great effort of Your Church.

Give us Your guidance in order to see Your will every day. And also give us Your Grace in order to succeed in it. Amen.»