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THE MISSIONARY WORK OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE IN EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIOS*

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The Church of Constantinople became a missionary centre in the East immediately after its evolution into an important ecclesiastical centre, since A.D. 330. She kept performing that work based upon some principles characterizing its very existence.

The saints Cyril and Methodios, the IXth century A.D. apostles to the Slavs, embodied in themselves these principles, but they gave a new impetus to the whole missionary activity of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

They functioned within the European continent and bore fruit through their lives, work, writings, and heritage to the coming generations. The spiritual contribution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to European civilisation is particularly evident through the activities of the two brother saints.

I. BYZANTIUM

1. *Missionary Work of the Ecumenical Patriarchate up to the IXth Century A.D.*

The history of the Church and particularly the history of missions describe the way through which the Church accomplished her evangelistic task to those outside.

The New Testament remains the main source to the present, where we come across the motives, the purpose, the subject, the bearers, the object, the content, the extent, the method, the results etc. of the evangelistic preaching.

The post-apostolic Church will follow the example of the apostles and their times, but she will not fail to take into due consideration the problems arising out of new situations—something quite significant for the Church in the future and every epoch.

The persecutions against the Church of the first three centuries—externally a negative phenomenon for the expansion of Christianity—failed to accomplish their purpose, since the expansion of Christianity and its organization were accomplished.

The apostolic fathers, the apologists, the anti-heretical writers, the alexandrian and antiochian theologians dealt, alongside their other interests, with matters pertaining to the missionary work of the Church as well.

During the first centuries in the history of Christianity the Church alone was responsible for the evangelistic task.

The apostles, with their associates and successors, clergymen, evangelists, teachers, lay persons, saints, soldiers, merchants, captives, etc., offered their services on behalf of the Church.

The recognition of Christianity on the part of the Roman empire coincided with the foundation of Constantinople and its recognition as the new capital of the empire (330), and the growth in preeminence of honour of the Church of Constantinople.

Thus, with the accession of Constantine the Great (324–337) and the end of persecutions against Christianity, a new era began in Church-State relations which were shaped in a particular way in Byzantium.

Church and State were then accepted as two parallel and interrelated hierarchies, respectively having at the top the Patriarch and the Emperor, both belonging to a single unity, serving the one Lord for the establishment of His kingdom on earth and the well-being of their members.

The principle of cooperation was put into practice. The king, a layman himself, was the protector of the Church and had had some priestly functions. The unique position of the Emperor included the field of evangelism as well.

* This essay represents my contribution to the Conference on the *European Dimension of the Work of Cyril and Methodios*, Bari Italy, 12–16 May 1984.

Henceforth the Church will not deal alone with the evangelistic activity, but she will be supported by the State in this task.

The principal motive and the main purpose of the Roman byzantine missionary activity remained the salvation of souls and the expansion of Christianity. Parallel to that, the moulding of habits and customs in the light of Christianity, the social rebirth, the growth of the new life in Christ, and the expansion of Christian byzantine civilisation followed.

Apart from providing solutions to the problems arising from the decline of heathenism, an effort was then made by the Church for the systematisation of the catechism and for a detailed study of Christ's revelation and the salvation offered by Him.

Later on when the Church was organised, she had to face new missionary problems. During this period a study of the methods used in missions from nation to nation was undertaken, and a new method of missionary preaching was formed. The attitude of missionaries towards the customs and traditions of other nations was carefully studied.¹ Thus missionary activities were conducted both by Church and State. The particular work, however, was served by clergy, monks and lay persons, merchants, princesses, diplomats, soldiers and even captives. Initiatives in that realm were taken not only by the aforesaid institutions but by several inspired personalities as well.²

From the time of Constantine the Great onwards the missionary activity centered in Constantinople included the areas both within and beyond the borders of the Roman byzantine empire. Geographically it included the regions from the Caspian Sea to the Black and the Adriatic Seas, and south Arabia, north Africa, Ethiopia and Nubia.

Generally speaking, the nations which accepted Christianity were either Jews or heathen. They were in particular, Dacians, Goths, Huns, Iberians, Armenians, Lazs, Slavs, Arabs, Ethiopians, Nubians, Vandals, Berbers, etc.

From the point of view of time the evangelism which began in the IVth century was a continuous process, although external presuppositions sometimes forced the missionaries to a temporary deceleration or a final halt. The period from the IVth to the VIth century reaching its peak in the VIth century under Justinian the Great (527-565), constitutes an epoch of great success. Usually, the center for the departure of the missionaries was Constantinople. Other local Church centers served the same purpose as secondary centers, being related to or under the ecumenical Patriarchate.

Then, Church organisation of the missionary

areas followed with the establishment of a local clergy and hierarchy and the foundation of church-buildings and other places of worship as well.

During this evangelistic work orthodox missionaries applied the apostolic principle of using the local languages. So from the very beginning they aimed at the translation into the local languages of the Holy Bible, the liturgical texts and texts related to the organisation of the local Churches. Their efforts did not stop there, but they also turned their attention to the educational, the social, the literary, and the artistic, fields.

2. *Missionary Work of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the IXth Century. Cyril-Constantine and Methodios.*

The second and golden period for missionary activity from Byzantium included the IXth and Xth centuries, i.e. the era of the Macedonian dynasty.

Although in the past missionary work conducted from Byzantium covered the different geographical areas within the Roman byzantine empire, later, due to external reasons, this work was confined only to the northern parts of the empire, that is, to the vast areas including the Balkans, Poland, Lithuania and Russia, from the Adriatic, the Mediterranean and the Black Seas to the northern borders of the empire, mainly within the continent of Europe. The target of the evangelistic message was the Slavic world.

The Slavs appeared for the first time in history in the second half of the 1st century A.D., living east of the Germans, in the area of the Vistula river. Later, in the period from the IIIrd to the IXth century they moved to the vast European region from the Don river to the Alps and from the Baltic to the Adriatic Seas. They can be divided into three groups, the eastern, the western and the southern Slavs. Eastern Slavs were the Russians, western, the Chechs, the Moravians, the Slovaks and the Poles, and southern, the Serbians, the Croats, the Slovenes and the Bulgarians.

Generally speaking, Greeks served as missionaries to the eastern Slavs, while Italians and Germans evangelized the western Slavs. However, the two Greek brothers Cyril (Constantine) and Methodios are considered the apostles of all the Slavs.

The impetus for starting this work was given by Rostislav (847-870), the ruler of Moravia. Moravia was frequently under the pressure of the neighbouring nations, Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Apparently, moved by both religious and political reasons, Rostislav sent a delegation (862) to the Roman byzantine emperor Michael III (842-846) and asked him to send teachers and clergymen knowing the Slavic language, in order to teach his subjects the Christian faith. Upon this request, Michael III and the then ecumenical patriarch Photios I (858-867, 877-886) sent him the two brothers Constantine (Cyril) and Methodios.

Their parents (Leo and probably Maria) were of noble origin. Their father held the office of drunga-

1. Elias Voulgarakis, Σύντομος Ἱστορία τῆς Ἐπιστήμης τῆς Ἱεραποστολῆς, *Θεολογία* 40 (1969) 326-327.

2. Anastasios Yannoulatos (of Androusa), Βυζάντιον, Ἔργον Εὐαγγελισμοῦ, *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια* 4(1964)20.

rius, an army post under the general governor of Macedonia.

Methodios was probably born in the year 820, and after having been educated in Thessalonike was appointed the governor of "Sklavenia", that is, an area populated mostly by the Slavs. He then lived as a monk on Mount Olympos in Bithynia and became the abbot of the monastery of Polychronios. He was known to have a practical mind and the ability to learn foreign languages.

Constantine, the youngest of seven brothers, was born in 827. Having a thirst for knowledge and an outstanding ability to learn foreign languages, he first studied theology and after the death of his father, he moved to Constantinople in order to continue his studies in the university. Among his teachers were Leo the mathematician and Photios and he stayed with the logothetes of dromos, that is, the prime minister Theoktistos, a relative of his. He was eventually ordained a deacon and probably a priest and was appointed chartophylax and librarian of Hagia Sophia and professor of philosophy in the university of Constantinople, being known as the philosopher.

Constantine was sent as an ambassador to the Saracens (c.860) and, accompanied by his brother Methodios, as an ambassador-missionary among the Khazars. The two brothers passed through Crimea, taking from there the relics of St. Clement of Rome (88-97).

Constantine was also the director of the special center for Slavic Studies in Constantinople, specializing in the preparation of missionaries and teachers. There, with the assistance of this brother, he invented the Slavic alphabet, the so-called glagolitic, based on the Greek alphabet with the addition of certain other letters, into which they translated various ecclesiastical texts. Later on this alphabet was again changed according to the Greek megalogrammatos writing and was named cyrillic or cyrillician in his honour.

In the fall of 863, Constantine and Methodios together with other missionaries came to Moravia, and started their missionary work, using Slavonic as a liturgical language. Besides, the Byzantines were eager to introduce there the customs of their Church.

These were the times of Church tensions between East and West, pope Nicholas I(858-867) and patriarch Photios.

In the year 867 the two brothers accompanied by their fellow-workers left Moravia. They passed through Pannonia, where they spent six months, and Venice, where they defended themselves against accusations for using the Slavonic language. They then arrived in Rome (December 867), where Hadrian II was the pope (867-872). They brought along the relics of St. Clement of Rome, for which act they were officially received. The pope approved of their work, with the suggestion that the texts from the Apostle

and the Gospel during the liturgy should be first read in Latin and then in Slavonic.

While in Rome, Constantine got sick and sensing his death he became a monk and was named Cyril. He passed away in Rome in 869, 42 years of age and was buried in the church of St. Clement. From then on the whole responsibility of the apostolic work among the Slavs fell on the shoulders of his brother Methodios.

The pope, upon the request of the ruler of Slovenia (Pannonia) Kocel, ordained Methodios a bishop, with the title of Archbishop of Sirmium. Archbishop Methodios was installed in the capital of Slovenia, and proceeded with ordaining a great number of his disciples, Slovenes, Croatians, Serbs and Moravians, to the priesthood, one of them being Gorasd. Slovenia, politically and ecclesiastically, was under the administration of the German State and the Archbishop of Salzburg of Bavaria. His stay there caused a conflict of jurisdictions. The German bishops who arrested Methodios tried him, deposed him and finally imprisoned him (November 870).

After two years of imprisonment pope John VIII (872-882) intervened and set Methodios free (873), who came to Moravia, where Svetopulk the nephew of Rostislav was the head of State. A new golden period started for the Church of Moravia, as Methodios visited the various places of his evangelistic activity, and especially Bohemia, Saxony, Silesia and south Poland.

Svetopulk, under the pressure of his priests, Wiching and the Italian John, presented this time his accusations against Methodios to pope John VIII on the use of church Slavonic, whereupon Methodios went to Rome in 879 and was restated to his position by the pope. In 881 he visited Constantinople, where he was received with great honour by the emperor Basil I the Macedonian (867-886) and the patriarch and then returned to Moravia having passed through Bulgaria.

Back in Moravia he translated almost the whole of the Bible into Slavonic, and did the same with several patristic texts and the Nomocanon.

After his death, the Latin-German ecclesiastical party came into power in Moravia. Wiching was appointed his successor. Church Slavonic was substituted by Latin and he Filioque clause was added into the Symbol of faith. The eastern practices were changed into Latin ones. A persecution started against Methodios' disciples who fled to different neighbouring countries, where they fruitfully continued their evangelistic activities.

The above short biographical sketch of the two saints Cyril and Methodios reveals some aspects of their missionary endeavours. But what were the principles pertaining to such endeavours, which they took from the general missionary strategy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate?

In the first place we must note the principle of spiritual formation and education.

The two brothers belonged to a family and social circle, which could easily offer them the possibility for a good education.

Methodios, who possessed a practical mind, was good at languages and had a thorough knowledge of the Holy Bible, of the canonical and liturgical texts and of the writings of the Fathers. Whilst some high church and state positions were offered to him, instead he preferred the monastic life with the practice of its strict ideals.

Constantine-Cyril, on the other hand, who had the best education possible of his time, had a leaning towards knowledge in general, languages, and philosophy. He had flexibility and diplomatic tact. He was an intellectual, a good teacher, and a man who believed in dialogue. He was a fervent disciple of Christ, devoted to His Church, with an inclination towards monastic ideals.

Bishop Anastasios Yannoulatos of Androusa presents their qualifications in the following way: a) an extensive education... b) an experience of society... c) a strong esoteric life.³ Evangelos D. Theodorou, of Athens, considers them as prototypes of missionaries, known for their outstanding education, their excellent spiritual potentialities and their lasting spiritual dynamism.⁴

Another characteristic principle of the two missionary saints was the spirit of humbleness and self-denial.

Various examples from their daily lives show that their whole existence was a continuous bearing of the Cross and a self-denial, aiming at the application on earth of the will of God and the promotion of His saving work.

Constantine-Cyril had a bright future awaiting him as chartophylax of the patriarchate, professor at the university and diplomat, but he accepted a call to abandon all and offer himself to the missionary task, which was quite unknown at the time.

In a dialogue with the emperor Michael III (842-867), his biographer points out his fragile health. "Philosopher, I am well aware of your poor health, but you have to go there, because no one else could undertake this task". The philosopher replied: "Notwithstanding my ill health and weakness, I will gladly go there".⁵

Together with his brother Methodios, he suffered, until his death in Rome (869), the trials of the missionary task.

According to his biographer, Methodios had been

repeatedly accused, persecuted, and suffered a great deal from his persecutors and the strong and prominent people of his environment and his time, but he never faltered at the sight of danger and did his duty to the end.

Thirdly the two brothers-missionaries applied the apostolic principle of using the local language in their missionary work. The application of this principle, especially in the mission in Moravia, has had a great undertone for the christianization of the Slavs, and their entry into Christian civilisation through Byzantium, and consequently for Europe.

They first invented the Slavonic alphabet and the Slavic script. They then worked for the formation of a theological and in general an academic terminology in Slavic, through which the Slavs were able to express their thoughts and feelings. According to Antonios-Emilios Tachiaos, "their contribution rests mainly upon this point, not only in relation simply to Moravia, but to the whole Slavic world as well" a contribution the fruits of which still exist.⁶

Originally the use of Slavonic applied to the oral evangelistic preaching. Vlasios J. Pheidas in an article which appeared in 1966 states that the Ecumenical Patriarchate, through Photios I moved to a reorganisation of missions, within which missionary preaching was accordingly defined. In the IXth century, Byzantine missionary preaching included three basic parts, that is, a summary of the sacred history, from creation to the salvation of humanity through Jesus Christ, a concise dogmatic teaching of the Church based on the symbol of faith and a brief history of the Ecumenical Councils.. The Apostles to the Slavs, Cyril (Constantine) and Methodios... used the unique type of missionary preaching of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in parallel to the independent dialogues which Byzantine missions were able to use according to the particular local cases."⁷

They personally or through their associates worked for the translation into Slavonic of the Holy Bible and the liturgical and other texts out of the Greek ecclesiastical literature. No written work of Constantine-Cyril seems to have survived.

1) The translation of the *Nomocanon* of John Scholastikos, 2) a part of an extant homily, which bears the title: *Admonition to the Ruler*, probably to Rostislav, and 3) the *Law for the Trial of Men*, are attributed to Methodios.⁸

Another important principle was the formation of a circle of disciples and associates.

This work started early in Constantinople. By then they prepared workers for the missionary activi-

3. Idem, Κύριλλος καὶ Μεθόδιος: Δείκται Πορείας. Ἀθήναι, 1966, σ. 6-9, ἀνάτυπον: Ἐκκλησία 43 (1966) ἀρ. 16-17.

4. Evangelos D. Theodorou, Ἡ Δεοντολογία τῆς Ὁρθόδοξης Ἐξωτερικῆς Ἱεραποστολῆς κατὰ τοὺς Ἁγίους Κύριλλον καὶ Μεθόδιον, Ἐκκλησία 43 (1966) 401.

5. John E. Anastasiou, transl., Βίος Κωνσταντίνου-Κυρίλλου, XIV, Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης (ΕΕΘΣΠΘ) 12 (1967) 141.

6. Antonios - Emilios Tachiaos, Ἱστορία τῶν Σλαβικῶν Ὁρθόδοξων Ἐκκλησιῶν, Θεσσαλονίκη, 1970, σ. 27.

7. Vlasios J. Pheidas, Τὸ Κήρυγμα τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Ἱεραποστολῆς καὶ οἱ Ἀπόστολοι τῶν Σλάβων Κωνσταντίνος (Κύριλλος) καὶ Μεθόδιος Ἐκκλησία 43 (1966) 491 - 498.

8. Antonios-Emilios Tachiaos, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 - 26.

ty in Moravia and elsewhere, who followed them to Moravia.

In the biographies of Constantine-Cyril and Methodios and of their disciple Clement, we often come across names of their disciples.

When Constantine (Cyril), accompanied by his brother Methodios, arrived in Moravia, Rostislav "entrusted him the students whom he collected for education".

The ruler of Pannonia Kocel entrusted him "with fifty students".

The presence of Constantine's (Cyril) disciples in Rome, where the former died, has already been mentioned. With the permission of the pope several of them were ordained as subdeacons, deacons and presbyters.⁹

On his way to Constantinople Methodios was accompanied by two disciples, a deacon and a priest. Two of his disciples-priests who served as scribes assisted him in the translation of the Holy Bible.

Mention is often made of his best disciples, some of whom were, Gorasd, Clement, Nahum, Angelarios, Sabbas and Laurentios. On his death the number of his clergy disciples reached the 200.¹⁰

After the death of Methodios, the ecclesiastical work accomplished by the two brothers in Moravia and its vicinity came to a halt. It remained, however, in the form of other expressions in literature, the arts, the social domain, the law and later archaeology. The disciples who fled to other Slavic countries continued their work successfully there.

3. Missionary Work of the Ecumenical Patriarchate up to the XVth Century

The Disciples of the Two Brothers Cyril and Methodios

Svetopulk, who brought back to Moravia the German clergy, left at the hand of the latter the disciples of the two brothers. These suffered many tribulations. Some of them were sold as slaves in Venice. Emperor Basil I the Macedonian (867-886) who personally showed his concern for them, paid for their freedom and brought them to Constantinople. Others were imprisoned and then exiled to the region of the Danube river. Many who were not able to endure the sufferings died there, while some others fled to Bulgaria.¹¹ Later some of them returned to Moravia and worked there and in Bohemia, moving as far as Poland.

But the nucleus out of the best of the disciples moved to Bulgaria, where they were received by the ruler Boris-Michael. His successor Symeon, suppor-

ted the same cause. Those who fled to Bulgaria were divided into different groups. The first group having Clement, who was ordained bishop of Belitsa as their head, served in the area of Ochrid (school of Ochrid) while the second, led by Nahum, worked through the school of Pliska.

Church life and letters in Slavonic flourished, which was evident in Poland, the Balkans and Russia.

Bohemia-Poland

St. Methodios worked in Bohemia, where he baptised its ruler Vorzivoi (c. 871 or after 870). His disciples followed his example. In the Xth century pagan princes opposed Christianity in Bohemia, but the new faith stood well on its feet, around 1000 A.D. Upon the request of the Church of Rome the use of Slavonic was abolished, books written in this language were burned, and eventually this Church became a part of Roman Catholicism.

Christianity probably reached Poland through Moravia and Bohemia, through the missionary activity of the disciples of Cyril and Methodios. In all probability the new faith had the appearance of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. But around the Xth century and due to the efforts of the political rulers and the Latin clergy the western rite substituted the eastern liturgical customs.

The later history of Orthodoxy in Poland is related to the existing contacts of friendly or hostile character with the neighbouring countries of Russia and Lithuania.

The same thing could be said on the spreading of Christianity among the Czechs and the Slovenes.

Hungary

The Magyars, of Tatar origin, lived in the vast areas between Caucasus and the Carpathian mountains north of the Black Sea. In their early history they came into contact with the apostles to the Slavs twice, the first time, in the land of the Khazars, in 860, when the two brothers met with a band of fierce Magyar fighters, the second time in 881, when an unknown Magyar ruler was the host to Methodios.¹²

In the IXth century the Magyars came and settled in Pannonia and Moravia. They came to know Christianity through their contacts with Byzantium. During the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (913-959) Magyar rulers arrived in Constantinople, where they received the holy Baptism (950). On their return they were accompanied by Ierotheos, who was

12. John E. Anastasiou, transl., Βίος Κωνσταντίνου - Κυρίλλου VIII. ΕΕΘΣΠΘ 12(1967)128-129.

Idem, transl., Βίος Μεθοδίου XVI. ΕΕΘΣΠΘ 12(1967) 159-160. Feriz Berki, Δύο Έπεισόδια του Βίου των Άγιων Κυρίλλου και Μεθοδίου, Σχετιζόμενα με την Προϊστορίαν των Ουγγρων, in John E. Anastasiou, ed., Κυρίλλω και Μεθοδίου Τόμος Έόρτιος επί τη Χίλιοστῆ και Έκατοστῆ Έπετηρίδι. Ι(Θεσσαλονίκη, 1966) 243-248.

9. John E. Anastasiou, transl., *op. cil.*, XV, 77, ΕΕΘΣΠΘ 12(1967) 142, 143, 146.

10. *Idem*, ed., Βίος Κλήμεντος Άχρίδος, II, 7. XII, 35. VI, 23. ΕΕΘΣΠΘ 12(1967)163, 174, 169-170.

11. *Idem*, lb., XII, 35. XIV, 42. ΕΕΘΣΠΘ 12(1967) 174,176.

ordained bishop of Turkia (Hungary) by the ecumenical patriarch Theophylactos (931–956). Ierotheos made great efforts for the growth and organization of the Christian Church, establishing Greco-Slavic monasteries, which continued their existence till the XIIIth century.

The Magyars were defeated by the armies of the German emperor Otto I (955). Since then, and especially under their king Stephen (995–1038), the Church of Hungary entered the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church.

Serbia

Missionaries were sent to Serbia twice: a) Under Heraklios (610–641) from Rome, and hence this region, which remained within the boundaries of Illyricum, was ecclesiastically connected with Rome. But due to the tribulations and wars this first effort failed;

b) Under Basil I the Macedonian (867–886) from Constantinople, because Eastern Illyricum was annexed, in the VIIIth century, to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The missionaries who went there worked for the baptism and church organisation of the Serbs. Their activities were strengthened by the help of Cyril and Methodios, and of their disciples Clement and Nahum. Churches and monasteries were built. Letters were flourishing. Parallel to evangelism went the work of civilising the people.

Serbs accepted Orthodoxy, while in Croatia and Slovenia Roman Catholicism became the norm.

In the IXth century, when the Serbs accepted Christianity, the Archbishoprics of Split and Bar were under the pope, while the Archbishoprics of Dyrrachium and Ochrid accepted the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Serbia was periodically under the influence of Rome, Bulgaria and Byzantium.

The greatest church figure in the Church of Serbia, who brought together ecclesiastically and spiritually the Serbian people and the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its traditions, is St. Sabbas (1173–1235).

Being a member of the ruling family of Nemanjas, he became a monk on Mount Athos and assisted in the foundation of the monastery of Khilandar (1199). From there he went to Nicaea, the then seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The ecumenical patriarch Manuel I Sarantenos (1215–1222) founded the independent Archbishopric of Serbia, naming Sabbas its first Archbishop.

Back in Serbia the new Archbishop organized his new Church according to the traditions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He introduced the Orthodox spirit to his people. He continuously kept in contact with the spirit of Orthodox monasticism, through the monastery of Khilandar and other monasteries which were founded by him in Serbia.

Through his translations of ecclesiastical texts from the Greek, he offered a great service not only to his Church, but to the other Slavic Churches, and especially the Russian.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarians, who moved from Central Asia, settled in eastern Europe in the region between the rivers Don and Volga. In that area, where some well-organized bishoprics under the Ecumenical Patriarchate already existed, they probably had their first contacts with Christianity.

Later, under their ruler Asparuch, they crossed the Danube river and settled in the region known today as Bulgaria. They easily subdued the Slavic races, but they themselves were subjected to the Slavic influence.

Christianity was gradually gaining ground among them through the byzantine captives (lay and clergy), the rapprochement of Bulgaria to Byzantium on the political and commercial levels and the infiltration of byzantine civilization.

Their ruler Boris-Michael (852–88) was the man who introduced his nation into Christianity. One could search for the motives behind this decision, in Boris-Michael's wish to bring the Bulgarian nation within the orbit of the civilized nations surrounding them, or in reasons arising out of his personal faith, based on his knowledge of Christianity through his sister, already a Christian, or through the presence and example of Christian captives, one of whom painted him the icon of the last judgment.

An important role for the entrance of Boris into Christianity was played by patriarch Photios I (858–867, 877–886) who sent a member of his clergy to a place on the border between the two states in Thrace, where Boris was baptized (863/964) having as God-father emperor Michael III (842–867) and taking the Christian name of Michael. Immediately after his return, Boris ordered the baptism of all the Bulgarians. In order to strengthen the new faith of Bulgaria patriarch Photios sent there teachers and chergymen.

Well known is Boris-Michael's temporary turning to Rome and Rome's interference in the affairs of the Church of Bulgaria, which caused the conflict between pope Nicholas I and the patriarch of Constantinople Photios I. Boris-Michael finally rejoined the Church of Constantinople, from which he had received his baptism.

We have already spoken about the positive contribution of the disciples of Cyril and Methodios to Bulgaria, who through the Slavic translations and their activity worked for the application of the custom and the rites of the Church of Constantinople and Orthodoxy in that region.

In the XIVth century Hesychasm appeared on Mount Athos, and through Gregory Sinaita, who came to Bulgaria, and his disciples, influenced greatly

the whole life and ecclesiastical thought of the Church of Bulgaria. From there, Hesychasm covered both Russia and the Balkans.

Russia

Many nations, as we have already noted, such as the Goths, Sarmateans, Huns, Bulgarians, Khazars, Petzenegs, etc., passed through the vast areas north of the Black Sea, which in the present day are called Russia and are inhabited by the Russians. In passing, few words have already been said on the relations of Christianity from Byzantium to the nations living in the above region. Scandinavian Varangians, the so-called Rhos, ruled over the Slavs, who lived around Kiev, and gave their name to them (IXth century).

According to a description, given by St. Photios, the Rhos descended to Constantinople with a fleet of 200 ships, but the city was miraculously saved from their assailment. They soon got into contact with Christianity, knowing also about this faith through the Byzantines in the Crimea and the Varangians, who served as bodyguards to the emperors of Byzantium. The Varangians, who received their Baptism in Constantinople, had their own church building in Byzantium. On their return to Scandinavia (Sweden) the Rhos probably kept a recollection of the Byzantine church traditions.

St. Photios became interested in the Russians, and sent a bishop and clergymen to them, and we are informed about a miracle performed by Christian priests before the heathen population in the city of Kiev.

On the other hand, princess Olga, the widow of Igor, who came to Constantinople in 957, was baptized and named Eleni. Through her personal example Christianity officially entered Russia, but this had had no substantial effects. We have to wait until the time of prince Vladimir, grandson of Olga, who, by becoming Christian, introduced Christianity into Russia and declared it to be the state religion.

Vladimir seems to have made a comparison of Christianity with other living religions. But the fact remains that he already had a knowledge of Christianity. His entrance into the Christian religion is somehow related to his marriage with Anna Porphyrogete, the sister of the byzantine emperors.

In the year 988/989 Vladimir conquered Cherson and was baptized there. Then he married Anna, who was escorted by clergy and other officers from Constantinople. Vladimir proceeded from there to Kiev, where he baptized his subjects in the river Dnieper. From then on begins the first Kievan period of the Russian Orthodox Church (989-1240).

Byzantium offered Russia Christianity through this Baptism. The Greek hierarchy followed, and thus the Russians felt the influence of byzantine civilization. From the beginning the Russian Church was

organized as a Metropolis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Metropolitan bore the title "Metropolitan of Kiev and of all Russia". All the Metropolitans of that period were Greeks, elected and ordained in Byzantium. They were among the best of the byzantine hierarchy, and coming to Russia they brought along the best traditions of the Church of Constantinople.

The fruitful influence exerted by the Church of Constantinople covered other domains in the life of the Church of Russia. Internal mission grew rapidly. Monastic life, as it was practiced in the relative byzantine cities and in Mount Athos was introduced and installed in Russia.

Church literature consisted, in the beginning, of translations of Byzantine texts which appeared and rapidly flourished there.

Church worship followed the models of byzantine worship. Although they carried their own particular national trends, byzantine liturgy, ecclesiastical texts, hymnology, Church music and preaching were to be found within the confines of the Orthodox tradition. The same could be said of the fine arts, architecture, painting, etc. On the whole Christian life in Russia, which had some dark spots, presented the signs of a satisfactory improvement.

Rumania

Rumania included the areas beyond the Danube river, Dobruja, Walachia, Moldavia, Transylvania and Bessarabia. The Dacians, the first settlers of the region, were, as it seems, related to the Thracians and Illyrians, living south of the Danube. Today's Rumanians are the outcome of the mixing together of the Dacians with the Romans (through the Roman legions), alongside with the Greeks and other races as well.

On an early date Greek cities had been established along the shores of the Black Sea and there existed commercial, social, intellectual (academic) and religious contacts between Byzantium and other neighbouring regions.

Christianity spread to this area from the neighbouring Christian centres through the Roman soldiers, the merchants and the colonists. Christian Greek epigrams and other archaeological remains attesting to the early presence of Christianity there have been found in the ancient city of Tomis (Constantza) and its surroundings. These regions, according to the 28th canon of the council of Chalcedon (451), the texts related to the subsequent ecumenical councils and the catalogues of the bishops of the Church of Constantinople, were under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

We should also note the fact that Christianity in these areas came under the influence of the West and the Bulgarians, from whom the Rumanians borrowed the use of church Slavonic for worship.

II. POST-BYZANTINE PERIOD

1. *The Missionary Work of Constantinople up to the XXth Century.*

After the fall of Constantinople (1453) and the Balkans to the Ottoman Turks, a new period started for the Orthodox Churches of Constantinople, Bulgaria, Serbia and Rumania.

The main problem for the above Churches in those years was their survival. Consequently, any missionary activity on the part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to those outside of the Church was out of the question.

The saints Nicon Metanoieite (Xth century) and Cosmas the Aetolean (1714-1779) performed a 'domestic' missionary task by trying to bring back the Orthodox faithful to their Orthodox roots.

On the other hand, the Church of Russia, which remained the only Orthodox Church in an Orthodox State, continued her evangelistic work based on the ideals formerly applied by the mother Church of Constantinople.

This work was carried out by clergy, monks and laymen, assisted by the State. Missionary zeal reached its zenith in the XIXth century. This phenomenon could be explained if we take into consideration the personal efforts of some great missionaries, who through their example duly affected others and the official Church. Henceforth the Church will undertake the organisation of this whole missionary work, by establishing a special Missionary Commission (1870).

Evangelistic activity was conducted in the vast areas of the north and the east, in Siberia, China, Korea, Japan and Alaska. The Church of Russia was until the communist revolution practically engaged in evangelism in the areas towards the East. Subsequently, almost all communications between the Russian Church and the missionary fields ceased. Nevertheless, the newly formed Churches in China, Korea and Japan stood on their own, assuming their national and indigenous character and undertaking missionary work among the non-Christians.

2. *Twentieth Century Missions*

The emergence of the ecumenical movement, in which the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Orthodox Churches participate, in the XXth century, and the preliminaries to it during the XIXth century, are closely connected with missionary work. Mission is related to ecumenism, because it is one of the main reasons for the appearance and the growth of the said movement.

The various forms of cooperation in the missionary field within the Protestant world led to the organisation in 1920 of the International Missionary Council (IMC). Members to this council were local councils of Churches made out of missionary societies or new Churches. The very close relations of the IMC

to the ecumenical movement and later to the World Council of Churches (WCC) resulted in the integration of the IMC with the WCC in 1961.

Missionary zeal was particularly fostered in the theological schools connected with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, i.e. the schools of Halki (1844-1971), St. Sergius in Paris, France (1925), and Holy Cross, Brookline, Mass., USA (1937), through courses on missions and related subjects.

The subject of missions, internal and external, was on the agenda of the 1st congress on Orthodox theology, held in Athens (1936), where some papers were read.

In the IInd congress of Orthodox theology (Athens, 1976) one of the subjects for study was "Pastoral Work and Mission".

A special case of Orthodox missionary work in the present, is the appearance of Orthodoxy in Uganda in east Africa, including Tanzania and Kenya and in other parts of Africa, for which the Ecumenical Patriarchate shows a special affection, through the canonical mother Church of Alexandria.

Within the Orthodox Church of Greece, to which the dioceses of the New Lands of Greece are connected there are some projects related to missionary work.

Some recent developments in the field of Orthodox missions can also be seen in America, within the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, where in 1956 the Greek Orthodox Holy Cross Missionary Society was established in the Holy Cross Theological School, Brookline, Mass. in August 1958 and the Greek Orthodox Youth of America (GOYA) set up as a standing project a Missionary Study Committee which issued a news-sheet called *the Goyan Missionary*. For the first time in history an official report on foreign Orthodox missions was read at the biennial clergy-laity congress of the Archdiocese (1964). In 1966, the second such report was presented. In 1967 the Archdiocese introduced an annual national lenten offering card project to raise support for foreign missions. The following year (1968) the Archdiocese established a Foreign Missions Office, with the appointment of bishop Silas of Amphipolis (presently Metropolitan of New Jersey) as its head. All these activities of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America aim to offer assistance to the missionary Churches in Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania, Alaska, Korea, Mexico and south America.

We now come to *Syndesmos*, which is an international organisation of coordination between the movements of Orthodox youth, including such movements related to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. *Syndesmos* works with the blessings of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Its fourth general assembly, held in 1958, established an international missionary society with headquarters in Athens. Three years later (1961) the fifth general assembly of *Syndesmos* transformed the head-

quarters into a pan-Orthodox missionary centre with the title *Πορευθέντες* (Go Ye). Syndesmos has become a major centre of influence for Orthodox mission. Between 1959–1969, it published, a bulletin with the same title in Greek and English. Today the Apostolike Diakonia of the Church of Greece publishes, having as its editorial board the inter-Orthodox missionary centre “Porftnentes”, the periodical Πάντα τὰ Ἔθνη (*All the Nations*).

In the 1st pan-Orthodox conference of Rhodes (1961) foreign missions were on the agenda.

These is not much to be said on the cooperation of the Orthodox with the other Christian Churches in the domain of missions. The presence of the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries within the territories of the Orthodox Churches and their activities which finally brought about the estrangement of many Orthodox from their mother Churches and the establishment of local uniat or evangelical communities psychologically and ecclesiologically constitute a serious obstacle for cooperation in the field of missions. The Orthodox, having the Ecumenical Patriarchate as their protector, tried their best to confront these disruptive tendencies. In the Encyclical Letters of 1902–1904 the proselytizing efforts exerted by the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches and the need for protecting the Orthodox from these tendencies were mentioned. The same was repeated in the second Encyclical of 1920, Unto all the Churches of Christ, especially on the need to eliminate all tendencies of mutual distrust and friction among the Churches, resulting from the inclination of some Churches to proselytise members of Orthodox Churches.

In the early period of the ecumenical movement the Orthodox representatives did not fail to protest against proselytism. This led to the formation of a special commission of the WCC. Its report entitled “Christian Witness, Proselytism, and Religious Liberty” was presented to the IIIrd general assembly of the WCC in New Delhi, 1961. This document, in which proselytism is called a corruption of Christian witness, was favourably accepted by the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

A new document on the same subject, entitled “Joint Witness and Proselytism” was presented by the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC and accepted in 1971.

Orthodoxy’s experiences as a result of some Protestant missionary activities, made her miss the very important studies and work done in the field of evangelism by the IMC. But the efforts made by these two councils, which finally resulted in their merger, was of great interest for the Orthodox.

During the preliminary stage a joint committee between the two councils was appointed, which in the year 1956, proposed their future union. Archbishop Michael of America expressed to the 1957 meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC the reservations which Orthodoxy had on the proposed inte-

gration. After a year (1958) the Ecumenical Patriarchate prepared and sent a memorandum to the sister Orthodox Churches on the same subject. Later, Metropolitan, now Archbishop Iakovos of America, presented these reservations to a meeting of the IMC in Ghana (1957/1958).

After the final merger of the two councils, the Orthodox belonging to the member Churches of the WCC found themselves connected with the new Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC (formerly the IMC). We should note the creation of an office for Orthodox Studies and Relations, Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, the WCC, with the Rev. prof. Ion Bria (Orthodox Church of Rumania) as its secretary. This office, in cooperation with the local Orthodox Churches, has called several consultations on Orthodox missions and published several related studies.

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