

ORTHODOX MISSION METHODS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

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SUMMARY

After a barren period between about 1920 and 1970, in which there was little or no mission activity, the Orthodox Church has experienced a revival of interest in mission. This thesis is an examination of how Orthodox theology and worldviews have affected Orthodox mission methods, and account for some of the differences between Orthodox methods and those of Western Christians. A starting point for the study of the Orthodox theology of mission is the ikon of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, which shows the apostles gathered in the upper room with the world in their midst. Orthodox soteriology, which sees Christ as the conqueror of evil and death, rather than as the punisher of sin, has led Orthodox missionaries to have a more open approach to other cultures. A historical survey of ways in which the Orthodox Church grew in the past includes martyrdom, mission and statecraft, monastic mission, and in the 20th century, the missionary significance of the Orthodox diaspora. Even in the fallow period, however, there was mission in the sense that various groups of people were drawn to Orthodoxy, sometimes through the ministry of irregularly ordained bishops. The collapse of communist regimes in the Second World has created many new opportunities for orthodox mission, but has also brought problems of intra-Christian proselytism, nationalism and violence, and schism and stagnation in those places. As the Orthodox Church prepares to enter the 21st century, its worldview, which has been less influenced by the modernity of the West, may enable it to minister more effectively to people involved in postmodern reactions against modernity.

Key terms:

Orthodox mission; Eastern Orthodox missions; Russian Orthodox Church; Greek Orthodox Church; African Orthodox Church; Christian missions; mission methods; African Christianity; Russian missionaries; cultural imperialism; mission and culture; premodernity; modernity; postmodernity; modernity and mission; mission and colonialism

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ORTHODOX MISSION METHODS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Introduction

While the mission movement in Orthodox Christianity has lasted nearly twenty centuries, the self-conscious study of mission is much more recent. Missiology, or mission studies, has not usually been taught as a subject in Orthodox seminaries or academies. It is only since the rise in popularity of mission studies in the West that Orthodox scholars have begun to pay any attention to the subject. Two recent published monographs in English on this subject: *Eastern Orthodox mission theology today* by James Stamoolis (1986), and *Orthodox Alaska* by Michael Oleksa (1994), could be said to have been pioneering works in this field. Though Stamoolis is not himself Orthodox, his work has done much to stimulate Orthodox interest.

It would be impossible to do justice to the broad sweep of such a movement in a single monograph. I shall therefore try to paint a broad picture of the movement as a whole, but will examine certain themes in more detail.

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Before one can even begin to discuss Orthodox mission methods, however, one has to acknowledge that there is a methodological problem. One should perhaps begin by defining one's terms, but to do so is, in a sense, foreign to the spirit of Orthodox mission. The term "mission" is a recent one, even in Western theology. The concept of mission as a "phenomenon", something that can be observed, discussed, studied, analysed, and dissected is itself a product of Western thinking, conditioned by the Enlightenment. Even in Western missiology, definition has been a problem. It is only since the sixteenth century that the term has been used (beginning with the Jesuits) for the spread of the Christian faith among people who had not previously known it. Since the 1950s the word "mission" has been used more frequently among Christians, and that it has been used in an increasingly broader sense (Bosch 1991:1). Bosch, in his magisterial work *Transforming mission* (1991) describes the origin and the expanding use of the term "mission" among Western Christians,

and goes on to observe that there is a crisis in Western mission. Having noted the difficulty (and ultimately the impossibility) of defining mission, Bosch (1991:9) sets out an interim definition, which is necessary in order to delineate the scope of his work.

Is it then possible to apply a term that arose in Western Christianity in the sixteenth century to the Orthodox Church? Many of the assumptions of Western theology, and the conditions in which they have been applied since that time, have been different from those of Orthodox Christians. Any application of the term to a time before the sixteenth century must be in some sense anachronistic. If one can speak of Orthodox mission at all, it will necessarily be different from the Western understanding of the term.

"Mission" is a term derived from Latin, and means "sending". It is perhaps significant that the Afrikaans terms for "mission" and "missiology" are "sending" and "sendingwetenskap" respectively. For the Orthodox Church, whose theology is based on Greek rather than Latin, the cognate term for "missionary" (used as an adjective) would be "apostolic". One of the marks of the Church in the Symbol of Faith¹ is that it is "apostolic", and, based purely on the etymology of the terms, one could perhaps translate "apostolic" as "missionary", and deduce from that that mission is one of the essential marks of the Church.

"Missionary", however, has a narrower connotation than "apostolic", and when one says that the Church is "apostolic" it means more than simply saying that the Church is "missionary"; it proclaims that the Church as a body continues "in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Ac 2:42). The apostles were sent into the world as the Father sent the Son into the world (Jn 17:18; 20:21). The Father sent the Son into the world "to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Lk 4:18).

¹ Known in the West as the "Nicene Creed"

The Son likewise sent his disciples to "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation" (Mk 16:16), and as they go they are to "make disciples of all nations (*ethne*), baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", teaching them to observe all Christ's commands (Mt 28:19). As an interim definition, therefore, one could say that Christian mission is the sending of the Church into the world, and what the Church is sent into the world to do. In the following chapters I shall try to flesh out this definition, and to describe the methods by which the Orthodox Church has sought to accomplish its mission in various times and places.

Sources

While I have included a great deal of historical material, this thesis is not a historical treatise. The primary focus is missiological and not historical. A historian who wants to make an original contribution to historical studies must make use of primary sources, and I have for the most part only had secondary sources available to me. South Africa is not an Orthodox country, and the Orthodox Church here is a largely immigrant community. Most of the primary source material is overseas, and would require a great deal of time and money to consult. I have therefore been dependent on secondary sources and the (sometimes conflicting) interpretations of others. Another problem with the sources available is that I have relied largely on source material in English. Most of the Orthodox literature in English has been published in the last twenty-five years, and most of it has also been published in the USA. Some of this material could be classed as primary source material in the sense that it consists of translations of the writings of monks and missionaries in Russia, Alaska and other places. But it has been selected and presented by Americans, with American interests in mind.

In addition to recently-published monographs in English by Oleksa (1992), Stamoolis (1986) and Veronis (1994), there have been some unpublished dissertations written from a missiological point of view, notably Barkey (1986 & 1990), and Reimer (1994). The last is particularly useful, as it is a missiological examination of early Russian monastic mission making use of primary source material.

The collapse of communist regimes in the Second World² in the last few

² The terms *First World*, *Second World* and *Third World* may seem anachronistic; they emerged during the Cold War, which has been

years has removed many restrictions from Orthodox mission in these countries. The changes there have been too recent for there to be many published monographs on the subject, and in many places the situation is still changing rapidly. There have been several journal articles, some of which are translations into English of articles published in Second-World countries. Most of these articles do not deal directly with mission, and so missiological information has to be inferred. Some of the articles are polemical, and are fragments of a debate, and in many cases the interlocutors in the debate are not available.

Another source I have used, which is difficult to cite, but has provided useful background information, is electronic discussions through Usenet newsgroups, Orthodox mailing lists, bulletin board conferences and personal e-mail. Some of the discussions and debates have provided background information about the attitudes taken by various Orthodox groups and jurisdictions.³ This can provide a framework for interpretation of published sources. I have sometimes been able to check points of fact or interpretation with others by this means.

There is also a problem, however. Most users of electronic communication are in North America, and even there they are an unrepresentative minority. Opinions, often vehemently expressed, can represent the views of a very small minority. Electronic messages are ephemeral, and people

over now for nearly 10 years. Initially the term *Third World* was coined to refer to the nations, mostly in Africa and Asia, that proclaimed their neutrality in the Cold War between the capitalist West and the communist East. But though the former "communist bloc" is no longer communist, it is still a product of its unique history, and that is expressed in the term *Second World*. The demarcation between them is not precise. One can say that most countries in western Europe, the USA and Canada, are First-World countries. Most countries in eastern Europe, including Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, are Second-World countries. Most countries in tropical Africa, the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent are Third-World countries, but many others cannot be so neatly categorised, such as South American countries or South-East Asia.

³ "Jurisdiction" is an abstract word, and normally used without an article - one does not normally speak of "a" jurisdiction. In North America, however, there has been a profusion of Orthodox bishops of different traditions - Russian, Greek, Antiochian, Bulgarian, Romanian etc., that it has become customary to speak of "jurisdictions" almost in the same sense that Western Christians speak of "denominations".

often use them for propaganda. Electronic networks provide communication without community. It is hard to determine the cultural assumptions or hidden agendas of those who post messages. In the case of the Second World, the proportion of the population using electronic communication is even smaller. My main informants have been Fr Maxim Obukhov, whose main concern is medical ethics, and Sergei Chapnin of the St Tikhon Brotherhood.

Although reliance on secondary sources and the interpretations of others may be a disadvantage from a historical point of view, it is not necessarily quite such a disadvantage from a missiological point of view. The selection of source material and the interpretation placed on it can tell us a great deal about the selectors' and interpreters' attitude towards mission.

Missionaries themselves have often provided historical source material. Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries who have gone from literate cultures to illiterate ones have often provided the first written descriptions of the history and culture of those they have gone to evangelise. They have also reduced languages to writing and provided the tools for the previously illiterate culture to make a written record of their own history and culture. At the same time, the Christian faith and literacy have themselves made great changes to those cultures. Missionaries have also studied the culture of the people to whom they have been sent in order to communicate the gospel more effectively. This cultural interaction, however, is a two-way process and until very recently there was very little attempt to study and describe the culture of the missionaries themselves. Comaroff & Comaroff (1991) have made such a study in the case of British Protestant missionaries among the Tswana in Southern Africa. I will deal with this in more detail in the body of the thesis.

I believe that historiography tells as much about the historian as about the subject the historian is writing on, and I should therefore say something about my own background, which will inevitably affect what I write. Much of my own theological training has been in Western theology, in institutions in South Africa and the UK. I was an Anglican for most of my life before being received into the Orthodox Church in 1987.

My first introduction to Orthodox theology was at a seminar in Bossey, Switzerland, in 1968. The seminar was on Orthodox theology for non-Orthodox theological students, and ended with participation in the Holy Week and Pascha services at the St Sergius Institute in Paris. Since then I have read several Orthodox books in English, and since joining the Orthodox Church have been a member of the Church of St Nicholas of Japan in Brixton, Johannesburg, which has a multi-ethnic congregation (Greek, Lebanese, Russian, Romanian, Bulgarian and South African converts to Orthodoxy) and uses mostly English in the Divine Liturgy, though with some Greek, Slavonic and Afrikaans. The parish uses music from both Byzantine and Russian traditions.

SOME THEMES IN THIS STUDY

I shall now list some of the themes that I will concentrate on in this study. Many of these themes are theological and cultural, and may at first glance seem tangential to a study of mission *methods*. The point here is to examine the way in which mission theology and world views affect mission methods, and vice versa. I have labelled this a *comparative study*, and should therefore state what it is that I intend to compare when I discuss these themes. One comparison will be between Orthodox mission methods in one place or period with those in another place or period. So I will, for example, compare methods in Ethiopia and Siberia, in Alaska and Kenya, in Japan and China. I will also make comparisons between Orthodox and non-Orthodox missions, and will discuss some of these comparisons in more detail under the particular themes listed below.

As I noted above, "mission" was originally a Western term, and because it carries with it certain Western assumptions, it cannot simply be applied to the Orthodox Church without qualification. There is a sense in which Orthodox mission must be defined in contrast to the Western understanding of the term. From the Orthodox point of view, it is a borrowed term, and so a comparative study is inevitable.

Before listing the particular themes, perhaps one other point should be noted. Though I will include both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches in this study, or as they are sometimes called, the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, I will, however, deal more fully with the "Chalcedonian" Orthodox Churches, and will refer to the non-Chalcedonian bodies more selectively.

Though they have been divided from each other over Christological questions since the sixth century, recent meetings of theologians representing the two groups have affirmed that they share the same Christology, and that the theological disagreements have largely been about terminology. In liturgy and worship, in theology and in ethos, these groups of churches have been closer to each other than either has been to Western Christendom, and this is generally true of their understanding of mission and their mission methods as well. In doing this, I do not intend to anticipate any possible future reunion. There has been some discussion of the possibility of reunion, and some obstacles have been removed, but there is still a long way to go.

1 Soteriology

Perhaps the single most important difference between the Orthodox Churches and those of the West, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, is that the Orthodox Church has not been influenced by Anselm of Canterbury, and its soteriology is therefore different from that of the West. The Orthodox Church has also been far less influenced by Augustine of Hippo, and so its anthropology is different from that of the West (Stamoolis 1986:9). To put it briefly, in Western theology there has been a tendency to see sin and evil primarily as something God punishes us for, while in Orthodoxy sin and evil are primarily something God rescues us from (Rodger 1989:28).

To put it so briefly, however, is to make a crude over-generalisation. In the West, for example, there have been several movements that have reacted against the so-called juridical view of the atonement. One such movement has been Wesleyan Methodism, which sees in the Orthodox notion of synergy something akin to its own understanding of the working of the grace of God. Another, and more recent, is Liberation Theology, with its emphasis on liberating people from various forms of political, social and economic oppression. Yet another is the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, which have had, as one of their concerns, the liberation of people from spiritual evil in the form of demonic oppression. In these and other movements (for the list I have given above is not exhaustive) there has been, to some extent, a rediscovery of some of the concerns of Orthodoxy. There has not, however, been a rediscovery of Orthodoxy. The rediscovery has generally taken place in the context of a reaction against certain trends in Western theology, and has therefore been dominated by that which it has been reacting against.

In Western, and especially Protestant soteriology, there is a tendency to divide salvation into two parts or processes: *justification* and *sanctification*. In Orthodoxy one may also distinguish two dimensions of salvation, but they are seen and understood differently. These two dimensions are *liberation* and *deification*. In much Orthodox-Protestant debate, the emphasis has been on the contrast between *justification* and *deification* in salvation. It is my contention that the root of the difference lies rather in contrast between justification and liberation. I will deal with this particularly in chapter 2.

2 Mission and modernity

Professor David Bosch, of the Missiology Department of the University of South Africa, has analysed the history of Christian mission in terms of Thomas Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts. In his *Transforming mission: paradigm shifts in theology of mission* he notes some of the effects of the Enlightenment on Protestant missionary theology and practice. He notes that the Enlightenment had a profound effect on Protestant mission, but that it did not really affect Roman Catholic mission until the Second Vatican Council (Bosch 1991:262).

Bosch (1991:190-213) does have a chapter on the missionary paradigm of the Eastern Church, but it does not really fit into his scheme. He has arranged his paradigms as following one another in chronological order, and the Orthodox one is sandwiched between the "primitive Christians" and the mediaeval Roman Catholic paradigm. He fails to deal with the effect of the Enlightenment on Orthodox mission. In one sense, Bosch was correct in this. Orthodox Christians did not go through the Renaissance and the Reformation. Their experience of the Enlightenment has therefore been very different from that of most Western Christians. Bosch has provided missiologists with some fascinating glimpses of previously unexplored territory, and his untimely death in 1992 has cut short the discussion with him of some of the questions he has raised. I hope to explore some of the territory he has shown us.

An important part of my thesis will therefore be concerned with examining the effect of this different experience on mission theology and practice. Many of the differences between Orthodox mission theology and practice and that of the West could be accounted for by the effect of the Enlightenment on Western mission. I will widen the scope of this, however, from the Enlightenment as such, and look at the effect of mod-

ernity on mission in East and West. The Enlightenment itself was a particular phase in the development of modernity. Scholasticism, the Renaissance and the Reformation, which preceded the Enlightenment, all played an important part in the development of modernity, and these too account for some of the differences between Orthodox mission and Western mission.

Where Western missionaries have evangelised premodern cultures in various parts of the world, they have often seen "civilisation" as a prerequisite for evangelisation (Sohmer 1994:174). They have, as it were, so contextualised their understanding of the gospel into an Enlightenment framework, that they have been unable to see it or present it in any other frame of reference (Comaroff 1989:674). In Africa this has led to the formation of thousands of African independent churches, many of which have reinterpreted the Christian faith they have received in terms of a premodern culture, and in doing so have become far more effective in mission. Much of the expansion of Christianity in Africa in the last three decades has been as a result of the missionary work of African independent churches, and in many places statistics have shown that they are growing far more rapidly than most other Christian groups (Hayes 1992b:ix-x). In some respects the mission theology and practice of African independent churches has come to resemble that of the Orthodox Church, and some African independent churches have been united with the Orthodox Church. I believe that the "Enlightenment paradigm" (or the lack of it) is a significant factor in this, and so I shall examine this in some detail, especially in Chapter 7.

3 Mission and Culture

Cross-cultural communication is often an important component of mission, and one where mission theology and mission methods interact. I have pointed out that missionaries from a modern culture have often thought that "civilisation" must precede "evangelisation" - in effect, they have sought to communicate their culture in order that they can communicate the gospel. So in my examination of mission methods, I shall be looking to see how they have been shaped by the cultural attitudes of the missionaries, and those of the people they have sought to evangelise.

Orthodox mission has had a different approach in some ways. It has not, or at least not to the same extent as Western Protestant missions, sought to replace the culture of those it evangelised. Many writers have made this point, especially in relation to Alaska, where the contrast

has been most marked. When the USA bought Alaska from Russia in the 1860s, Protestant missionaries were sent in to impose the dominant culture of the USA, and the difference between their approach and that of the Orthodox missionaries who had preceded them was obvious, at least in its effects. What is not so obvious, perhaps, is the theological root of the difference, and this is where I hope to make a comparative study. In many ways the Orthodox missionaries of the nineteenth century were children of their time. If there were notable differences between their mission methods and those of contemporary Protestant missionaries, there are also notable similarities in attitudes. Like the Protestant missionaries, they came from an urban culture that could be described as "urban" and "civilised". They spoke of tribal societies as "savage", and in many ways were convinced of the superiority of Russian culture. I believe that a comparative study dealing with the similarities as well as the differences can help us to understand the differences better.

In the twentieth century, too, there is a problem of mission and culture. Much of the revival of Orthodox mission in the late twentieth century, which I describe briefly in the next section, has taken place in the *Diaspora*, among Orthodox Christians living in the West, where they have been strongly influenced by the values of Western society. The way in which this culture and its values influences Orthodox mission also needs to be examined. In some ways it is a post-Christian culture, or even an anti-Christian culture. But, to the extent that it is reacting against Christian culture, it is reacting against *Western* Christian culture. This provides both an opportunity and a danger for Orthodox mission. The opportunity arises because Orthodoxy can offer a Christian alternative to a post-Christian world. The danger is that, living in that world, Orthodoxy can be so influenced by it that it can become salt that has lost its savour. Many refugees from Western Christianity (including me!) have made their way to Orthodoxy, bringing their own cultural baggage and concerns with them. There is a danger that this could lead to a conscious or unconscious westernising of Orthodoxy.

Many Orthodox of the *Diaspora* have been members of immigrant communities, and have sought to identify with the new society in which they have found themselves. In many Western societies, Orthodoxy seems "foreign", and its "differentness" has been seen by some as an embarrassment. So there has been a cultural adaptation to disguise this "differentness". Orthodox church buildings (temples) have been built like

Western ones - with pews, for example. Orthodox clergy have sometimes tended to dress like the clergy of Western denominations, and to use Western psychology in pastoral counselling, without examining the theological and cultural assumptions on which such counselling is based. This is cultural change and adaptation of a kind, but it is not so much for the purpose of mission as for camouflage. Yet what starts out as camouflage can end as absorption. Sometimes such changes have been resisted, even to the point of schism - an example is the adoption of the Gregorian calendar by some Orthodox Churches, which has caused several Old Calendrist factions to break away, and to denounce those using the Gregorian calendar as heretics.

4 Mission and ecumenism

For Western Christians, particularly Protestants, the "ecumenical movement" - the movement that has drawn Christians of different denominations together to seek a closer unity - is a child of mission. Ecumenical bodies such as the World Council of Churches (WCC) trace their origin to the International Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910. The Roman Catholic Church has never been a full member of the World Council of Churches, which it has tended to regard as a kind of Pan-Protestant body. Journalists have sometimes loosely referred to the Secretary-General of the WCC as the Protestant Pope. Some Orthodox Churches have been members of the WCC since its inception in 1948, and others, from the Second World, joined in 1961.

Bosch, in his discussion of mission paradigms, speaks of the "emerging ecumenical paradigm", and in his discussion of the "Eastern Church paradigm" he says that for the Orthodox Church unity has become the goal of mission (Bosch 1991:208). This, however, is only a small part of the picture. From a Protestant point of view, the Orthodox Church is seen as a "denomination", but such a conception is entirely foreign to Orthodox ecclesiology. In Orthodox ecclesiology, there is only one Church of Christ, and that is the Orthodox Church (Ware 1985:250). Orthodox participation in such bodies as the World Council of Churches is therefore problematic. Orthodox members of the WCC and its subsidiary organisations have at times threatened to withdraw, or have expressed dissent from or concern about the Protestant consensus, which they have felt undermines the basis of Orthodox participation (see, e.g. Veronis 1990:269). Some Orthodox Christians have denounced "ecumenism" as a heresy. Books written by Orthodox Christians and published by such

bodies as the World Council of Churches have a distinctly "ecumenical Protestant" flavour, and some Orthodox have regarded the "ecumenical movement" as a threat to Orthodoxy, which will lead to Orthodoxy becoming nothing more than "Eastern Rite Protestantism", providing some variety with its quaint and picturesque ceremonies (see Ware 1985:230).

The question of Orthodoxy and the ecumenical movement would require a study on its own, and I do not propose to deal with it exhaustively here. But it cannot be ignored, as it has influenced the Orthodox understanding of mission in several different ways. Some evangelical Protestants have seen ecumenism as an enemy of mission, diverting mission into a search for unity. And some Orthodox Christians have seen it in the same way, though for different reasons.

DIVISION OF WORK

I have dealt with the following topics in each of the chapters:

Chapter 1. Mission Eastern and Western. Different approaches to theology lead to different methods of mission. This chapter deals with the point of departure for the Orthodox understanding of mission, and some of the ways in which it differs from that of Western Christians.

Chapter 2. Soteriology and mission. One of the main differences between Orthodox and Western theology is the understanding of salvation. This chapter deals with some of the ways in which this has affected mission methods.

Chapter 3. Historical outline. A brief survey of twenty centuries of Orthodox mission to set the scene, and provide the chronological and geographical background. There is little detailed analysis of mission methods or themes, though some of those that will be dealt with in later chapters are noted when they occur.

Chapter 4. Recent examples of Orthodox mission. This chapter deals mainly with countries and regions where Orthodoxy was not present in any significant way before the 20th century, with the emphasis on Orthodox mission in tropical Africa, and the role of *episcopi vagantes*.

Chapter 5. Methods and models. Some of the most significant methods of mission at different times and in different places are compared and contrasted. These include martyrdom, mission as statecraft,

monastic mission, the methods of St Nicholas of Japan, teaching and preaching, and liturgy and worship.

Chapter 6. Contemporary issues in Orthodox mission. These include evangelism, proselytism and ecumenism; nationalism, violence and reconciliation; stagnation and schism.

Chapter 7. Paradigm shifts, world-views and culture. Examines Bosch's model of 6 mission paradigms for their applicability to Orthodoxy, with a brief look at Orthodox mission and culture, and Orthodox theology of religions.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

THE MANY FACES OF ORTHODOX MISSION TODAY

The fifty years between 1920 and 1970 probably marked the nadir of Orthodox mission. The First World War and the Russian Revolution combined to disrupt Orthodox mission almost entirely. The Russian Orthodox Church, which was the largest of the Orthodox Churches, and the only one really free to engage in active mission between the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, found itself prohibited by hostile state authorities from engaging in any kind of mission work, and indeed fighting for survival.

The same period, in the West, was one of global reflection on mission. The International Missionary Conferences at Jerusalem in 1928 and at Tambaram ten years later brought together Protestant missionaries from many different parts of the world, and from many different traditions. They were able to reflect on the previous hundred years of Protestant missions, and thought they could see the "big picture". And for them the Orthodox Churches were not part of that picture. The Russians were inaccessible, and the remainder of the Orthodox Churches, most of which were still emerging from the Turkish imperial yoke, had no recent missionary experience to draw on. Many Protestants concluded that the Orthodox Church was not a missionary church (Saayman 1984:91). The global reflection on mission among Western Protestants in this period also gave impetus to missiology or mission studies as an academic discipline. With the growth of the ecumenical movement (partly fuelled by

the global mission movement) Protestants and Roman Catholics studied each others' missions, at least to some extent. Neither of them paid much attention to Orthodox mission.⁴

In the 1960s, things began to change. In Greece, Anastasios Yannoulatos (now missionary bishop in Albania) began writing articles on the need for a revival of Orthodox mission and established the missionary journal *Porefthendes* in 1959, which was published in Greek and English (Voulgarakis et al. 1997:11). This was followed by the establishment of the Inter-Orthodox Mission Centre "Porefthendes" in 1961 as a result of a decision taken by the *Syndesmos* youth organisation. Also in 1961, the International Missionary Council united with the World Council of Churches, and became its Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, in which Orthodox representatives now began to take part.

In 1970 the Moscow Patriarchate granted autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America, and some of the North American missionary saints were canonised.⁵ One result of this was an increase in the number of Orthodox books published in English. Orthodox theology became increasingly accessible to the English-speaking world. Orthodox theology also proved attractive to many Western Christians who found some of the debates of Western theologians rather sterile. Further impetus to the revival of Orthodox mission was given by the establishment of the Orthodox Chris-

4 The modern ecumenical movement is usually dated from the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910, which was attended by many Protestant missionary bodies. In the following decades, three streams of the ecumenical movement arose - the *International Missionary Council*, *Life and Order* and *Faith and Work*. The last two joined in 1948 to form the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the International Missionary Council merged with the WCC in 1961. Some Orthodox churches, particularly the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Alexandria, were involved in *Faith and Order* before the Second World War, and were founder members of the WCC. Others, especially those from the Second World, joined in 1961. Before 1961, however, the Orthodox churches had not participated in the International Missionary Council (see Cross & Livingstone 1983:443). The position of the Orthodox Churches was that before there could be an ecumenical approach to mission, there should be unity in faith and order.

5 It should be noted that the autocephaly of the OCA is not recognized by some other Orthodox jurisdictions, but that does not affect this particular argument.

tian Mission Center (OCMC) of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. By the 1980s the center was sending short-term mission teams to East and West Africa, and this helped to disseminate the growing mission interest among Orthodox parishes in North America.

Yet even in the winter of Orthodox mission, in the chaos and confusion and battle for survival of the 1920s and 1930s, new seeds were being planted by strange sowers. *Episcopi vagantes* like Joseph René Vilatte, who, having been consecrated a bishop by a Syrian Jacobite bishop in India, went around ordaining others and scattering new denominations like blackjacks.⁶ Some seed fell on fertile soil, and in the 1970s, 80s and 90s several of the groups he started, in East Africa, in West Africa, in Southern Africa and in the Philippines, sought to be united with the Orthodox Church. This can be seen as following the pattern of centripetal mission - not so much missionaries going out, but groups of people being drawn in.

In North America, Protestant and New Age groups began to be attracted to Orthodoxy in the 1980s, and several some of them united with Orthodox or quasi-Orthodox groups (see Gilquist 1989 & Lucas 1995).

In the Second World, where Christians had been persecuted for forty years and more, a thaw began in the 1970s. In the time of the persecutions, Christianity had been preserved, ironically enough, by the workers and peasants, the very classes that were supposed to benefit from the classless society. In the 1970s, however, there was something of a religious revival among the Soviet intelligentsia (see, e.g. Pazukhin 1995:passim). Some have claimed that this contributed to *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the 1980s.⁷ By 1988, the millennium of the conversion

⁶ *Episcopi vagantes* (Latin for "wandering bishops") were persons who had been "consecrated" bishop in an irregular or clandestine manner, or who, having been regularly consecrated, have been excommunicated by the church that consecrated them and were in communion with no recognised see (Cross & Livingstone 1983:465).

⁷ This point was made by Dr Alexei Makharov, the Charge d'Affairs at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Pretoria, and Vladimir Maximovich Korostelev, Public Relations Officer of the Russian Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in a private meeting with some leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. The meeting was held in July 1992 at the home of Dr Johan Heyns in Pretoria.

of Rus under prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988, the trickle had become a flood, and the rebaptism of Russia began. In 1990 the bishop of Smolensk reported that 300 people were being baptised every weekend at the cathedral there. The millennium celebrations led to the opening of churches and monasteries that had been closed for decades (Bourdeaux 1991:56-57). With the collapse of communist regimes in most Second World countries, a new era of religious toleration began.

Picking up the threads of mission was not easy, however. Church buildings that had been confiscated by the state were handed back to the Church, but they were often in poor repair, and the Christian community was in no position to restore them. With hundreds of people being baptised every week, with not enough catechists, priests and teachers, the church was having to do everything at once. Monasteries are being reopened, and in the towns and cities brotherhoods are forming, playing an active part in urban mission. At the same time Western imports, material and spiritual, are making their presence felt. The First World is seeking to impose its own values and culture on the Second World, as it has already done in the Third World. Some of those who see the dangers of this are tempted to counter it by withdrawing into the kind of xenophobic nationalism that has already caused the most devastating wars of the twentieth century (Dunlop 1995). The mission of Orthodoxy in that situation will probably be critical for the whole world in the next century.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

In many ways the world today is rapidly becoming like the one in which Christian mission began. The "new world order" that US President George Bush spoke about at the end of the Cold War, in which there is a unifying consensus on how the world is governed, and global communications making it easier than ever before for people to communicate across national, cultural and even linguistic barriers, begins to look a lot like the *pax Romana* in which the early Christian movement spread. There is a cultural and religious pluralism that provides a marketplace of ideas and beliefs, yet dominated by an increasingly unified set of sociopolitical assumptions.

Whether these trends will continue remains to be seen. There are five significant groups of Orthodox Christians in the world today, and they may respond in different ways. The global communications will help them, too, to learn more of each other.

1 The Second World

Two generations of persecution and isolation from Orthodox Christians elsewhere have given Orthodox Christians in these countries a very different experience to that of those living in other places. They now have new opportunities for mission, but also a heavy burden of reconstruction. They also live in countries that are reconstructing themselves after being dominated by a single political, economic and social ideology after several decades. This brings dangers as well as opportunities.

2 The Muslim-dominated World

In North Africa and the Near East there are millions of Orthodox Christians living as second-class citizens, especially in Egypt and Syria.

3 The Balkans

These are countries that were all, at one stage, under Turkish rule, but have been independent for some time. In them, Orthodoxy is closely linked with nationalism. Some were also under communist rule from the Second World War until the late 1980s. Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia-Montenegro and Romania all have significant numbers of Orthodox Christians.

4 The Diaspora

Orthodox Christians from the first three groups have emigrated, voluntarily or as refugees, to other parts of the world. Like many immigrants, they have often regarded their religion as part of their national culture, which they have sought to preserve in a new environment. Later generations, however, have felt a tension between the values and culture of the society they are born in, and those of their parents.

5 New Orthodox

In places like Africa, Alaska and Japan, many people have joined the Orthodox Church within the last century or so, and have done so not so much because it was part of their national or cultural heritage, but because of a decision they made. There are also many in Western countries who are doing this.

Each of these groups will respond in its own way, and the aim of this thesis is to look at some of these possible responses.

Stephen Hayes

1999-02-17

CHAPTER 1

Mission, Eastern and Western

Orthodox Christians have engaged in mission since the day of Pentecost in AD 33, when the Holy Spirit came down on 120 Christians gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem, and it was recorded that some 3000 people were added to the Church that day. Since then, the Orthodox Church has engaged in mission from the farthest East (in east Siberia) to the farthest West (Alaska) - though those two points faced each other across the Bering Strait. From the Arctic Circle to the equator, Orthodox mission has been found in all continents and in all kinds of climates.

If Orthodox mission can be said to have begun on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem over nineteen centuries ago, perhaps the best place to begin a study of Orthodox mission is with the ikon of the Descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. The ikon expresses the understanding of mission, and the theology of mission. It shows the apostles of Jesus gathered in the upper room, sitting in a semi-circle. There is an atmosphere of sober expectancy. "Stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). In the centre of the semicircle of the apostles is what looks like a window with a rounded top, vertical, though it also appears to be set in the middle of the floor, which one would normally expect to be horizontal. It seems as though the window is open onto a dark night, and in it, facing the viewer, is an old man, a king, clothed in white. He is looking into the upper room, but in such a position that he cannot see it, or anyone in it. He is looking directly at the viewer. This is Cosmos, the world (Ouspensky 1987:322, 323, 332). So the ikon depicts the mission of the church, or rather the church preparing for its mission. It is to go into all the world. And the world is at the centre, the focal point, of the ikon.

Many images, verbal as well as graphic, depict the church surrounded by the world. The world is sometimes hostile, sometimes needy. But it is always "out there" and the church is "in here". The church, we are told, must "reach out" to the poor, hungry, needy suffering world. But the

ikon reverses the perspectives and shows the world inside the upper room. The church does not reach out to the world, because the world is in the middle.

A children's novel by C.S. Lewis, *The last battle*, describes the last battle of the land of Narnia. The powers of evil have taken over the land, and claim to have the creator and ruler of the land, the lion Aslan, in a stable. Those who doubt their right to rule are invited to look in the stable, where they have tethered a donkey dressed in a moth-eaten lion skin. But soon it appears to the would-be rulers that something has gone wrong. Most of those sent into the stable do not come out. The only ones that do come out are the scoffers, who do not believe in Aslan, but when they emerge they are terrified out of their wits. Those who go in fearful, but not willing to betray the land to its oppressors, find that instead of the smelly stable in a forest at night, they are in a brightly lit open country.

"It seems then," said Tirian, smiling himself, "that the Stable seen from within and the Stable seen from without are two different places."

"Yes," said the Lord Digory, "Its inside is bigger than its outside."

"Yes," said Queen Lucy, "In our world too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world" (Lewis 1964:128).

And so it is with the ikon of Pentecost. The inside of the upper room is bigger than the outside. The disciples of Jesus withdrew into the upper room, and discovered that inside it was bigger than the whole universe. And so the old man, Cosmos, can mean many things. An older and sadder Adam, perhaps, worn out with his dominion over the creation, which itself has become worn out and ravaged by time and man. Cosmos can represent the world in darkness.

And there is the mission of the Church - reaching out by reaching in. Bringing good news to an old and weary earth.

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, and to understand mission it would be better to look at the ikon of Pentecost, and pray before it, than to try to describe it.



But there are words too, words that are sung, that go with the ikon of Pentecost - the set hymns, the *troparion* and *kontakion* of the day, and they too can give some insight into the approach to mission:

Troparion

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God
who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise
by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit
through them Thou didst draw the world into thy net
O Lover of Man, Glory to Thee!

Kontakion

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues
He divided the nations:
but when he distributed the tongues of fire
he called all to unity.
Therefore with one voice
we glorify the all-holy Spirit.

The theme of "the inside being bigger than the outside" perhaps needs to be extended a little further.

MISSIOLOGY, EASTERN AND WESTERN

While there has not, at least until very recently, been an Orthodox missiology, in the sense of a critical reflection on the Church's mission practice, there has always been a mission theology. And an important point in Orthodox mission theology is that mission is centred on the Divine Liturgy. This point has often been noted by Western missiologists in writing about Orthodox mission (see e.g. Bosch 1991:207). But what Western missiologists have often missed is the reversed perspectives of Orthodox ikonography.

In the Renaissance, Western art, including Western religious art, underwent a profound change. The emphasis was on realism, on depicting what one would have seen if one had been there. Western art took on an almost photographic quality, at least until the invention of photography in the nineteenth century. As Marshall McLuhan put it, "The viewer of Renaissance art is systematically placed outside the frame of experience. A piazza for everything and everything in its piazza" (McLuhan & Fiore 1967:53).

Thus the Westerner tends to understand the Liturgy as taking place in a particular building in a particular historical and geographical context. Mission begins when one leaves the building and goes out into the world. But in Orthodox mission theology the perspective is reversed: the

inside of the building is bigger than the outside. In a sense one could say that, like a Klein bottle, it has no interior. In a Klein bottle the inside is the outside and the outside is the inside. The bottle somehow manages to be inside itself. And it is in the Divine Liturgy that mission finds both its meaning and its fulfilment. A stable once held something that was bigger than the whole universe. The womb of Mary, the Theotokos, the Mother of God, is more spacious than the heavens.

In Western missiology imagery from the visual arts is quite commonly used in verbal description. People speak of *perspectives*, *aspects* and *viewpoints* to indicate the relationship between mental or physical phenomena and those who study them. If one looks at a fixed object or group of objects from different viewpoints, the angle of view and perspective changes. If one moves round an object in a circle, then one gradually sees different aspects of what one is looking at. If one moves closer to or further from the object, one sees it in different perspective. If one sees a group of objects, then as one moves closer, those nearer to the viewer appear larger in relation to those further away. In the Renaissance, perspective came to dominate Western art and Western thinking. Paintings showed people and buildings as they would appear to an individual observer. The individual "point of view" became important, both literally and metaphorically (McLuhan 1967:56). This period also shaped Western academic disciplines. So when I speak of "Orthodox missiology", I could also speak of "missiology in Orthodox perspective", and in the Western academic convention, this would immediately be understood. But to do so would be to distort Orthodox missiology, because, as in Orthodox ikonography, perspective is a distortion of reality. In ikons, "in contrast to the rules governing linear perspective, the sacred image is not constructed to satisfy a single viewer from a single fixed place. The syntax of the icon is based rather on a dynamic multiplicity of viewpoints, with its several implied observers set inside the represented world. The many points of view coexisting within self-contained icon space constitute a paradigm for plurality of vision" (Emerson 1990:115).

Bajis (1991:7) points out that Eastern Christianity is holistic. The terms "holistic" and "holism" were invented by Jan Christiaan Smuts, the South African political leader and philosopher, in 1926. They have come to signify generally the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In ancient times Orthodox Christians used a different, but

related word to signify this - *catholic, kat' holon*. The Church is one, holy, *catholic* and apostolic (Meyendorff 1983:7). This expresses what McLuhan calls "all-at-onceness", and the Orthodox "viewpoint" can be characterised by this "all-at-onceness", the need to see things "whole", and to see that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Hayes 1969:18).

Western missiologists have recently rediscovered the need to see mission as "holistic", and the term "holistic" is appearing more and more frequently in missiological writing (though it is seldom defined). This may open the way for greater communication between Orthodox and Western theologians and missiologists. But Orthodoxy must necessarily flout some Western academic conventions. Precisely because Orthodox theology is essentially holistic, it cannot be adequately described by the Western analytical academic method. Analysing various separate components using an inductive method can actually make it more difficult to see the whole as other than simply the sum of its parts. One cannot see the wood for the trees.

Western theology works by means of words, and that is fair enough, because the very term *theology* signifies verbal description. Theology is words about God. It is the articulation and verbalisation of Christian belief. For Western Christians, theology is "systematic" theology. The problem with this is that much Orthodox theology has not been articulated and verbalised in this way. Much Orthodox theology is implicit and assumed, rather than explicit and argued. Verbal theology on its own is exposed to the rebuke that Job received, "Who is this obscuring my designs with his empty-headed words?" (Job 38:2). For Orthodox Christians, theology is mystical (Lossky 1973:7). Theology, as the verbal, and often analytical expression of faith in God, does not convey the whole. Orthodox theology is also an experienced and enacted theology. It is expressed primarily in the Divine Liturgy, which is something experienced, something enacted, something done, "an action by which a group of people become something corporately which they had not been as a mere collection of individuals - a whole greater than the sum of its parts" (Schmemmann 1973:25). There is therefore a danger that Western theologians will approach the writings of Orthodox theologians with the Western assumption that the written word is a complete statement, detached from its liturgical, ecclesiastical and mystical context. Orthodox theology has nothing like the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas

Aquinas, or *Die kirchliche Dogmatik* of Karl Barth. So in Orthodox theology, while people sometimes do speak of mission in terms of "the liturgy after the liturgy", the people of God, the *laos*, being sent out into the world, that cannot be separated from the mission that takes place *within* the temple when the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. It is precisely *within* the liturgy that the whole world is being drawn into the fishermen's net.

For this very reason, trying to write a thesis on Orthodox mission is bound to be inadequate. The Orthodox theology of mission is better expressed in the ikon of the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost than in the written words of a thesis. The theology is found in the ikon itself, and not in the verbal description of the ikon. It is also found not in the ikon as a picture or work of art or illustration in a book. An ikon is not a mere "visual aid". It forms part of the liturgy of the Feast of Pentecost, and goes with the scripture readings and hymnography of the feast, and with the congregation gathered for the feast. And the feast itself is part of the greater cycle of feasts. The ikon of the Descent of the Spirit at Pentecost goes together with the ikon of the Holy Trinity, revealed at Pentecost. It also cannot be understood apart from the Ascension, which precedes it. Verbal description is but a part of Orthodox theology, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This is a qualification that I shall make throughout this thesis, and I shall refer to it again in the following chapters. This leads to two further points: Orthodox ecclesiology, and Orthodox anthropology.

Ecclesiology

Orthodox ecclesiology sees the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic. In the West, "catholic" tends to be understood as meaning "general" or "universal", whereas in Orthodox ecclesiology it is understood more as meaning "whole". In Roman Catholic ecclesiology "the church" tends to be seen as monolithic, as a single body throughout the world bound in unity through the Pope of Rome. The local church is part of the whole, it may be described as a certain part of the single monolith, but is not at all separate from it.⁸ In Congregational

⁸ Since Vatican II, Roman Catholic ecclesiology has been moving away from the "monolithic" view, which had been particularly prominent since the Council of Trent. Several Roman Catholic theologians, including Pope John Paul II, have become more sympathetic to the

ecclesiology "the church" is essentially the local church, and the "catholic" church is the sum of all the local churches - the whole is the sum of the parts. These two images of the church, as a monolith or as a pile of pebbles, are not the only ones in Western Christendom. There is the "connexional" ecclesiology of the Methodists, the "presbyterian" ecclesiology of many Reformed churches, and the "episcopal" ecclesiology of the Anglicans. There is also a tendency to see the term "church" as referring to a denomination or sect, so that one can speak of the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and so on, as if these were all parts or "branches" of the universal church. All of this is foreign to Orthodox ecclesiology. In Orthodox ecclesiology, and indeed in the New Testament, there is no conception of the church as a "denomination". The term "church" refers either to the local church, or to the universal church. The relationship between them is not seen either as part of a monolith (and therefore incomplete if separated from the whole), nor as a pebble in a pile of stones, independent, complete in itself, and self-sufficient. A more accurate image is that of holography, pictures created by laser technology, where if the picture is divided into two, one does not have two half pictures, but two whole pictures. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts, but the completeness of the whole resides in all the parts. One could almost say that the part encompasses the sum of the wholes. The local church, led by its bishop, is "catholic", that is, whole and complete, yet it is not independent, as in the congregational model, but interdependent with the other local churches.⁹

Orthodox view, and indeed insist that the Eastern-rite churches in union with Rome are not "Roman" Catholic.

⁹ In practice, this is not quite so neat and tidy. In some parts of the world, such as North America, the Orthodox Church has several "jurisdictions", where there may be several parishes in the same city or district under the jurisdiction of different bishops. This situation is regarded as "uncanonical", yet it persists, and many Orthodox Christians, especially in North America, speak of "jurisdiction" in much the same way as Western Christians speak of "denominations", and in a sociological sense the "jurisdictions" often function as denominations. This condition affects the mission of the Church, and I will be dealing with it in later chapters.

Anthropology

In Orthodox anthropology too, this holistic understanding is found. In Western philosophy, theology and politics, a distinction is often drawn between the *individual* and *society*. In liberalism, for example, the individual is seen as primary. The law and society should be structured in such a way as to protect the rights of the individual. Larger groupings, such as "society" or the state, are simply made up of collections of individuals. The whole is the sum of the parts. In fact in Western individualism the whole is sometimes seen as being less than the sum of its parts. There is a kind of nominalism, in which the collective bodies are seen as less real than the individuals that make them up. But there have also been philosophies and world views that have seen the individual as simply a part of a larger whole. Society, or the state, have been seen as primary. In totalitarian ideologies, such as fascism and communism, the welfare of the individual must be subordinated to the welfare of the whole. The larger group is primary, and the individual is simply apart of the whole.

In Orthodox anthropology, however, neither the individual nor society has much meaning on its own. Orthodox anthropology distinguishes strongly between the individual and the person. A person is more than an individual, a person is in relationship to other people (see Lossky 1973:121f). It is these relationships that make up society, as a larger whole. The "isolated individual" is incomplete. Eastern Christianity is communal: "it is not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). Eastern Christianity sees the Church and the person as a reflection of the relationship between the Persons of the Divine Trinity (Bajis 1991:6). As a Zulu proverb puts it: *Umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu* - a person is a person because of people.

Yannaras (1984:22) notes:

In everyday speech we tend to distort the meaning of the word "person". What we call "person" or "personal" designates rather more the individual. We have grown accustomed to regarding the terms "person" and "individual" as virtually synonymous, and we use the two indifferently to express the same thing. From one point of view, however, "person" and "individual" are opposite in meaning. The individual is the denial or neglect of the distinctiveness of the person, the attempt to define human existence using the objective properties of man's common nature, and quantitative comparisons and analogies.

Chiefly in the field of sociology and politics, the human being is frequently identified with the idea of numerical individuality. Sometimes this rationalistic process of leveling people out is considered progress, since it helps to make the organization of society more efficient. We neutralize the human being into a social unit, bearing the characteristics, the needs and desires, which are common to all. We try to achieve some rationalistic arrangement for the "rights of the individual" or an "objective" implementation of social justice which makes all individual beings alike and denies them personal distinctiveness.

This view of man in numerical, quantifiable terms is in many ways a characteristic of modern urban and civilised society. The very size of cities makes it easy for people to be anonymous, to disappear into the crowd, and to relate to people only in a functional way. In small towns and villages, and even more in rural tribal society, people may have multiple relationships to each other. I might know the name of the person who works at the check-out counter at the supermarket, not merely from a label attached to their clothing, but because I meet them in other settings and situations. A recent job advertisement in a newspaper called for a "Human Resources Superintendent" for an industrial company. The implication is that people have simply become another "resource" in the production process, and such dehumanising terminology is scarcely questioned (*Sunday Times* 1995-07-24).

In Orthodox anthropology, persons relate to one other in much the same way as local churches relate to the universal church. The person is not an individual, a numerical unit, the smallest unit or component of society, which cannot be further divided. The person, the *hypostasis* or *prosopon*, is the bearer of human nature, and thus in a sense represents the whole as well, without losing personal distinctiveness.

The truth of the personal *relationship* with God, which may be positive or antithetical but is nevertheless always an existential relationship, is the definition of man, is *mode of being*. Man is an existential fact of relationship and communion. He is a person, *prosopon*, which signifies, both etymologically and in practice, that he has his face (*ops*) towards (*pros*) someone or something: that he is opposite (in relation to or in connection with) someone or something. In every one of its personal hypostases, the created nature of man is "opposite" God: it exists as a reference and relation to God (Yannaras 1984:20-21).

When God gave the ten commandments to Moses, he did not hide his identity or that of his audience behind a string of impersonal passives, like our constitutions and statutes. The commandments do not say "Adultery is not to be committed", but "Thou shalt not commit adultery".

If you accept the ten commandments, you are not accepting one code of principles among many, you are not acquiescing in a general disapproval of murder; primarily you are committing yourself to a God who has a purpose and a judgment and who reveals that purpose to his people, part of which purpose is that you should not deny your neighbour's God-given permission to live. Accepting the ten commandments is an act of faith in the living God, not of approval of an ideal way of life. They are not man's idea of what God wants; they are God's own word, addressed to man, second person singular (Davies 1990:2).

When God spoke to Moses, he spoke not to Moses alone, but to the whole people of Israel. Moses, as a person, could nevertheless represent other persons. "The person is not an *individual*, a segment or subdivision of human nature as a whole. He represents not the relationship of the part to the whole, but the possibility of summing up the whole in a distinctiveness of relationship, in an act of self-transcendence" (Yannaras 1984:21).¹⁰

It is in the light of this that Orthodox ecclesiology must be understood. In the Divine Liturgy, the priest as a person represents the community to God and God to the community. The priest is the ikon of the community towards God, and the ikon of Christ to the community - not in the Western sense of being a "mediator", as something apart from both the community and God, but as a person who is a person because of people. In English, something of this is retained in the word "parson" that is sometimes used for the parish priest - a word that is etymologi-

¹⁰ It would be interesting to compare the views of Orthodox theologians like Yannaras with those of African philosophers like Kwame Gyekye and Kwasi Wiredu (Wiredu & Gyekye 1992), where Gyekye, in particular, puts forward a view he calls "moderate communitarianism" which sees the relations between person and community quite similarly to the views expressed by Yannaras. Unfortunately there is not space here to go into this in more detail.

cally related to "person". In Orthodox theology the bishop thus not only "leads" the local church, but represents it. "Where the bishop is, there the church is", said St Ignatius. In some African societies, this conception of one person as a representative of the community is also found - even to the extent that a single person is regarded as a community (Ogbonnaya 1993:120). There is a sense in which the king is the people. The king is the king because of the people.

When Christianity stopped being persecuted, Christians tried to transform human society into an image of the kingdom of God. The institution of the Roman emperor was to be transfigured, so that the emperor was to represent the people, to be the one person who stood for the people, the Tsar was to be the "little father". The extent to which this transformation was achieved is a matter of debate among theologians, and I shall discuss it more fully later on. The point here is that it is related to the Orthodox understanding of the human person.

This view of human nature, of Christian anthropology, is almost incomprehensible to many Western theologians. This can be seen, for example, in a tutorial letter sent out by the Faculty of Theology of the University of South Africa to students, instructing them to avoid the use of the word "man" to mean a human being of either sex, but to use it only to refer to male persons (Saayman 1995:2). This suggests that the concept expressed by the term "man" is missing from the consciousness of most Western theologians. Western theology has no need of a singular term for a human person that can also represent the plural, and therefore sees no harm or incongruity in censoring and suppressing that term. Such attempts to impose Western theological categories by such bodies as the World Council of Churches are seen by many Orthodox Christians as arrogant cultural imperialism, though those who participate in such ecumenical bodies are often too polite to say so, or express their criticism in guarded terms (see e.g. Veronis 1990:269). Others, however, use it to illustrate their understanding that "ecumenism" is a heresy, and a device for destroying Orthodoxy.¹¹

¹¹ In this thesis, except where I am quoting from texts written by others, I shall always use "man" in its inclusive sense, meaning a human person, male or female. When I intend to refer specifically to male human beings, I use the terms "males" or "male persons". It is one of the shortcomings of English that it has made the word "man" do double duty, to mean both a human person of either sex,

A human person, therefore, is not simply a part of a greater whole, nor a person in isolation apart from the whole, but contains within himself or herself the whole. A person is always a person in community, is a person because of people.

ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE IKON OF PENTECOST

After this excursus into theology, ecclesiology and anthropology, it is possible to return to the ikon of the Descent of the Spirit at Pentecost as an image of the theology of mission.¹² The apostles are shown sitting in a semi-circle, in a harmonious order with strict composition. The perspectives are reversed - those who are further away are shown as being the same size as those who are closer. Though there is a unity in the composition in form and rhythm, there is no uniformity. The movements and attitudes are different, thus showing the Church as one body with a multiplicity of members, drawn together by one Spirit, yet with diverse gifts (Ouspensky & Lossky 1989:208).

At the head of the semi-circle is an empty, unoccupied space, the place of the invisible head of the Church, Christ (Ouspensky and Lossky 1989:207).¹³ There are twelve apostles, six on each side. But the ikon is not historical: among the twelve are St Paul, who was not historically present on the day of Pentecost, and St Luke and St Mark, the

and also a male person. Other languages do not suffer from this defect. Greek, for example, has *anthropos* and *aner*, Zulu has *umuntu* and *indoda*, etc. Orthodox anthropology needs a term for a human person in community, who can both be representative of other (or all) human beings, and yet addressable in the second person singular, and in English "man" in its inclusive sense is the only word that can be used for this purpose. There is relatively less need for a single word to denote a specifically male person.

12 Or, more specifically, the ikon of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. There are two ikons of Pentecost, the Holy Trinity and the Descent of the Spirit.

13 Some ikons of the Descent of the Spirit show the Theotokos at the head, but Ouspensky notes that these are mostly late and not according to the best tradition. Though the Theotokos was undoubtedly present on the Day of Pentecost, the head of the semi-circle in the ikon should be unoccupied.

evangelists, who were not among the twelve, and they are holding the gospels that were not yet written (Ouspensky 1987:326). There is no sign of the ecstasy that accompanied the descent of the Spirit according to the account in Acts chapter 2; no one could suppose that the apostles in this ikon were drunk. The ecstasy is shown in the ikon of the Ascension, not that of Pentecost (Ouspensky 1987:334).

The ikon is open-ended, at both the top and the bottom, and the action is shown as taking place not inside, but outside the structure, as an indication that the meaning of what is happening is not limited by the place or the time. At the top is a symbolic depiction of heaven in the form of a semi-circle, from which rays descend on the apostles (Ouspensky 1987:322). At the bottom, the semicircle is open, to show that what is happening is not limited to the twelve - we continue those rows of the apostles (Ouspensky 1987:330). The twelve are a symbolic number, representing the church in its completeness. As the Holy Spirit unites them in one body, yet they are all distinct persons. The circle is not closed because all other members of the church, each person, is a part of the circle.

At the bottom centre is Cosmos, the world, surrounded by darkness. Cosmos too is a representative figure, though in a different way. Cosmos represents the multitude. Unlike the circle of the apostles, Cosmos lacks personal distinctiveness. The figure is crowned, a king. This perhaps represents man's God-given dominion over the nonhuman creation, and the figure of the man represents the world to God. But the crown is also a crown of sin, because man's dominion has corrupted the world. Cosmos wears a red robe, reddened with the blood of violence and sacrifice. He holds a cloth to receive the scrolls, the good news of the gospel proclaimed by the apostles. Cosmos is the world in darkness, waiting for liberation. Cosmos is the world in violence, waiting for peace.

As we look at the ikon as Christians, we have a dual solidarity. We are in unity with the circle of the apostles, because we are part of it, yet, unlike the apostles in the picture, Cosmos is looking directly at us, face to face. We look at Cosmos as we look at ourselves in a mirror, and see ourselves reflected there. That crown is our crown, that misused dominion is our misused dominion. Before we can preach the Good News to an old and weary world, we must first receive it ourselves. Cosmos represents the multitude, yet when I look at the ikon, Cosmos looks only at me, Cosmos reflects only me.

So there is a duality, a bipolarity, in our mission. We are part of the circle of the apostles, the Church filled with the Holy Spirit, the new humanity in Christ, called to unity. Yet we also reflect and are reflected by Cosmos, in need of redemption ourselves.

Because missiology is a "western" discipline, and "mission" itself is a word that originated among Western Christians, much of the verbalisation of Orthodox missiology has to be defined either in comparison or contrast to Western missiology. The ikon of the descent of the Spirit, therefore, is a starting place for the expression of Orthodox missiology in its own terms. One could, however, choose a number of other starting places, because Pentecost is but one of the cycle of feasts of the Church. Pentecost follows Ascension, Pascha and the Annunciation, and precedes the feast of the Transfiguration, and they too have much to say about the mission of the Church. Almost every ikon and every feast has something to say about the mission of the Church, and there is not space to describe all of them here. I shall only describe a few salient missiological features of some of the ikons and feasts.

On entering an Orthodox temple, one of the first things one sees is the ikonostasis, the stand holding the ikons. Depending on its size and the size of the building, it may be very elaborate or quite simple. At the centre are the royal doors, above which is an ikon of the last supper, and above that the ikon of Christ enthroned in glory, flanked by the Theotokos and St John the Forerunner, which forms the centre of the row known as the *deisis* (Ouspensky & Lossky 1989:63). At the lowest level, to the right of the doors, is an ikon of Christ as judge, and to the left, an ikon of the Theotokos holding the infant Christ. These represent the first and second comings of Christ, first as a child at Bethlehem, the second as judge at the end of the world. When the royal doors are open, the altar-table is visible. This represents the throne of God in heaven, where, between the first and second comings, the period described in the Bible as the "last days", Christ comes to us in the form of bread and wine. The throne represents the kingdom of heaven, which is future and yet made present as Christ comes to dwell among his people.

On the royal doors themselves are depicted the Annunciation, the first proclamation of the gospel, the good news of Christ, to the Theotokos. Below are the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, who wrote the good news. The door represents the entrance to the kingdom of God,

and so it shows the announcers of the kingdom and the Annunciation as the personification of the tidings they proclaim (Ouspensky & Lossky 1989:66). The feast of the Annunciation is called "the Good News" in both Greek and Slavonic (*Evangelismos* in Greek and *Blagoveshchenie* in Slavonic). The Theotokos is sometimes called the Gate of Heaven because it is through her that God makes his entrance among men in the person of Jesus (Dunlop 1989:21ff). The Annunciation, therefore, is both the message and the content of the message. It is both the news and the event that the angel announces - that the dwelling of God shall be among men. Orthodox Christians proclaim this news to each other with the greeting "Christ is in our midst", to which the response is "He is and ever shall be".

Evangelism, which is an essential dimension of mission, is the proclamation of this good news, and evangelisation is the spread and acceptance of this news among those to whom it is proclaimed. I shall deal with the content of the good news, and its proclamation, in more detail in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2

Soteriology and mission: deliver us from the evil one

My aim in this chapter is to set out the content of the gospel, or good news, of salvation that is proclaimed in Orthodox mission. What follows is not a systematic theological exposition of dogmatic theology, but rather an examination of how soteriology affects mission. Evangelism, the proclamation of the good news of salvation, is an important dimension of mission, and the content of what is proclaimed inevitably affects the methods of proclamation and methods of mission in general. This is also the point at which there is the most marked divergence between Orthodox and Western mission, and so in this chapter there are numerous comparisons between Orthodox and Western theology.

Convention sets the date of the schism between Eastern and Western Christianity at 1054, when the legates from the Pope of Rome laid a bull of excommunication on the altar-table of the Church of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople. Historians tend to hedge this date with qualifications, and point to the earlier Photian schism, or to the later Latin conquest of Constantinople during the crusades, or to the Council of Florence that sought to patch up the quarrel as equally or more significant causes of the continuing schism. After 1054 Eastern theologians stopped listening to Western theologians and vice versa. As Stamoolis (1986:9) puts it, following L.A. Zander, "The East was not influenced by Anselm: its soteriology is different from that of the West".

The schism of 1054 took place in the lifetime of Anselm of Canterbury, and he wrote his *Cur Deus homo?* a few years later. While the schism of 1054 appears to have been mainly about the Western addition of the *filioque clause to the Symbol of Faith*, and its attempt to impose that on the East (Runciman 1988:90-91), the heritage of Anselm is at least as significant in accounting for the differences in the style and method of mission following the eleventh century. Yet even this goes back a long way. At the root of the different understanding of soteriology is a dif-

ferent understanding of sin, and especially a different understanding of "original" sin. Again, as Stamoelis (1986:9) puts it, following L.A. Zander, "The East was not influenced by Augustine; its anthropology is different from that of the West".

Examination of the history shows a gradual drifting apart, rather than an abrupt break. There was rivalry between Eastern and Western missions among the Slavs in the eighth century, though this was at a time of tension caused by the Photian schism. But there was also cooperation in mission. The work of St Augustine of Canterbury's mission to Anglo-Saxon England, for example, was consolidated by one of his successors, Theodore of Tarsus, from the Eastern Church, who was responsible for much of the ordering and organisation of the nascent English Church (Mayr-Harting 1991:121f). Before 1054 there was cooperation as well as occasional competition; after 1054 cooperation was rare indeed.

SIN AND EVIL

A favourite verse of evangelical Protestants in evangelising is Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God". For the evangelical Protestants, the emphasis is on the "all". They tend to use the verse in support of the contention that there are no exceptions to the universality of sin; all men are sinners, therefore all men need to repent. For Orthodox Christians, however, the emphasis is on the glory of God. The verse is almost tautologous, because to "sin" means to fall short, to miss the mark. In the Protestant use, the verse is ripped out of its context, and interpreted in individualistic terms. Evangelical Protestants interpret "all" to mean "every single individual", though from the context it is clear that St Paul was comparing and contrasting Jews and Greeks - those who had the benefit of the Mosaic law and those who did not. For Orthodox Christians, this verse means primarily that we have all missed the mark, and the aim, the target that we have missed is the glory of God. And the very word "Orthodox" itself implies the remedy - instead of the curved path of the arrow veering from the target, or falling short of it, *Orthodoxy* is the straight (*orthos*) path to glory (*doxa*).

Man is created in the *image* and *likeness* of God, and the Greek fathers distinguished between these. The image of God in man is that of a unique person, free autonomous and creative - and this is a characteristic that we as human beings still possess. The image of God in man was not

destroyed in the Fall. The *likeness* of God has, however, been distorted or lost through sin - kindness, gentleness, generosity, patience, joy, peace, love (Oleksa 1993:355). This likeness of God was not a static condition in Adam and Eve - it was something they were to grow into. What sin has done is to reorient us in harmful and self-destructive directions. Sin has distorted, but not destroyed, the image of God in man. And because of the effects of sin, we cannot reach the likeness of God by our own efforts. God has revealed himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons, yet undivided. No individual can be "like God", because God is a communion of persons, and Orthodox teaching therefore asserts that salvation is personal but not individual. Salvation is the restoration of the likeness of God in man, becoming, by grace, by God's energy and power, like God. This process is called *theosis* or divinisation in Orthodox theology, and it is one that catechumens are invited to begin at baptism (Oleksa 1993:356).

In Western theology, especially since Anselm, the juridical understanding of the atonement had been based on the idea of sin and evil as being primarily something that God punishes us for (Rodger 1989:28). In the Orthodox view, however, sin and evil are primarily something that God *rescues us from*. Salvation begins with being released "from the bondage of the enemy". Salvation is in the first place a *liberation* from bondage (Hayes 1993:168).

"Original sin", in the Orthodox view, is therefore not a kind of genetic inheritance, something carried with us, that we are born with, inherited from our ancestors, as Western theology tends to assert (Cross & Livingstone 1983:1010). It is better to picture original sin as something external, something environmental, not something that we are born with, but rather that we are born *into* (Cronk 1982:45; Hopko 1983:30; Davies 1971:205-205). We are born into a world that has been stolen from God, and has become a prison. We are born into a world that lies in the power of the evil one. We are citizens of the kingdom of Satan by birth. We are among the goods that the strong man holds in his palace. We are born literally possessed by the strong man (Lk 11:21). In the exorcisms preceding baptism the devil is *dispossessed* of his ill-gotten gains.¹⁴

¹⁴ In English, this terminology can be confusing, as the term "possession" is often used to translate the Greek *demonizome*, meaning to "have a demon" or to "be demonized" (e.g. Matthew 4:24). The

One manifestation of this difference in understanding of "original sin" between the East and the West can be seen in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. According to this teaching, God miraculously intervened to remove the stain (*macula*) of original sin from Mary at the moment of her conception. Orthodox theologians have generally rejected this teaching - not because they believe that Mary was conceived sinfully, but because they do not believe in the *maculate* conception of the rest of us (Ouspensky 1987:338; Hopko 1984:42). For Orthodox Christians, original sin is not so much a "stain on the soul", as a condition of the world into which we are conceived and born. We are not conceived *maculate*, but we become *maculate* by our collaboration with the evil around us (Hopko 1983:30; 1984:43).

SALVATION

If sin is falling short of the glory of God, salvation is being redirected or reoriented towards the target, the glory of God, or the likeness of God. As Oleksa (1993:356) notes, catechumens are invited to begin this process at baptism. Before being baptised, the catechumen stands at the entrance to the church, facing east, bareheaded and unshod, and the priest breathes three times in his or her face, and makes the sign of the cross on the catechumen's forehead and breast, and then prays that the catechumen's delusions will be removed, that they will be filled with faith, hope and love, and will come to know the Holy Trinity, that they will walk in God's commandments and be pleasing to

exorcisms in baptism are not so much for the purpose of casting out an indwelling demon (though that is certainly part of it), in the sense in which Jesus cast unclean spirits out of people, but rather to dispossess a thief of stolen goods. Satan "possesses" us in the sense that we "possess" goods - a car, a house, clothes etc., and this is a universal human condition. The kind of "demonic possession" that afflicts some persons but not others is something different, and it would be better to refer to such persons as "demonised" rather than "possessed" (see Hayes 1993:169). It is also important to distinguish between possession and ownership. Possession, it is said, is nine-tenths of the law. But though Satan may possess us and the world, he does not own us. He does not possess us by right, but as a usurper.

him, that their name will be written in the book of life and that they will be joined to the flock of God's inheritance, that God's name will be glorified in them and that they will rejoice in the works of their hands and their generation so that they may praise, worship and glorify God all the days of their lives (Hapgood 1975:271). This is a prayer for restoration and reorientation, for salvation and wholeness. But it is immediately followed by four prayers of exorcism.

In the exorcisms the present condition of the catechumen is sharply contrasted with the future condition envisaged in the prayer described above. Before God can receive the catechumen into his heavenly kingdom, he or she must be delivered "from the bondage of the enemy" (Hapgood 1975:273). "Conversion" therefore, is not merely a mental activity, an exchange of one set of ideas for another, an acceptance of a new world-view or a new ideology. Conversion is "fleeing from 'this world' which has been stolen from God by the enemy and has become a prison" (Schmemmann 1974:20). The whole world lies in the power of the Evil One (I John 5:19).

Salvation as liberation

The English words "redemption" or "liberation" can be used to translate the Greek *apolutrosis*, which means a loosing, unbinding or setting free. *Apolutrosis* could refer to the setting free of a slave or prisoner. In the Orthodox understanding, there are two aspects of this liberation or freedom: the "freedom from" and the "freedom to". We are freed from bondage to sin, evil, the devil and death. We are freed to become what God intended us to be - free creatures created in his image and likeness. These freedoms are inseparable. "Liberation from demonic power is the beginning of man's restoration. Its fulfilment, however, is the heavenly kingdom into which man was received in Christ, so that ascension to heaven, communion with God and 'deification' have truly become man's unique destiny and vocation" (Schmemmann 1974:26). Because we are in bondage to the devil, evil and death, we cannot attain the life of God. But by his Death and Resurrection Christ has bound the strong man, set us free from sin and death, and opened the way to the heavenly kingdom. As St John of Damascus put it in his joyful Paschal hymn, sung by Orthodox Christians at the Paschal Vigil:

This is the day of Resurrection. Let us be illumined,
O people. Pascha, the Pascha of the Lord. For from
death to life and from earth to heaven has Christ our
God led us, as we sing the song of victory (The Paschal
service 1990:30).

By his Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Spirit Christ has raised our human nature to the heavenly places, and sent the indwelling power of God himself to enable us to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pe 1:4).¹⁵ We enter the heavenly kingdom by baptism.

In the first exorcism the priest says "The Lord layeth thee under ban, O Devil: He who came into the world and made his abode among men, that he might overthrow thy tyranny and deliver men; who also upon the tree didst triumph over the adverse powers, when the sun was darkened and the earth did quake... who also by death annihilated Death, and overthrew him who exercised the dominion of Death, that is thee, the Devil" (Hapgood 1975:272). In the exorcisms preceding baptism we are first prised free from the power of the Evil One, and then, facing the west, the direction of darkness, renounce his kingdom.¹⁶ This turning to the West and renunciation of the Satan is thus "an act of freedom, the first free act of the man liberated from enslavement to Satan" (Schmemmann 1974:27). We then turn (convert) to the East, and accept Christ as King and God (Hapgood 1975:274). This is very similar in form to a secular naturalisation ceremony in which one applies for citizenship of another country. One first renounces one's old citizenship, and then accepts the citizenship of the new country. So we renounce our former citizenship in the Kingdom of Satan, and accept new citizenship in the Kingdom of God. In the world there is a difference between citizenship by naturalisation and citizenship by birth. In baptism, however, we are born again by water and Spirit (John 3:5; Titus 3:5). We are not second-class citizens of the heavenly kingdom. "What you have come to is Mount Zion and the

15 I have capitalised "Death", "Resurrection", "Ascension" and "Descent of the Spirit" to indicate that I am referring not only to the work of Christ, but also to the ikons and the feasts that celebrate those events, in which the theological significance of the events is expressed in the life of the Church.

16 In most Western Protestant baptismal liturgies there are no exorcisms. The candidates may be asked to renounce the devil, as if they are able to do this of their own free will, before they have been set free by the power of God. The exorcisms are retained in the Roman Catholic baptism liturgy, and interesting to note that in Catholic charismatic circles the "liberation" model of the atonement is becoming central to the evangelistic proclamation.

city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem where the millions of angels have gathered for the festival, with the whole Church in which everyone is a 'first-born son' and a citizen of heaven" (Heb 12:22-23).¹⁷ The declaration of allegiance is completed by the recitation of the Symbol of Faith¹⁸, and the catechumens then bow down before the Holy Trinity.

The point here is that the candidate for baptism is not free to voluntarily renounce Satan until he or she has been prised from Satan's clutches by the exorcism. Liberation precedes renunciation and the declaration of allegiance. The people of Israel could only enter into the covenant with God at Sinai after they had been rescued from the clutches of Pharaoh at the Red Sea (Hayes 1992a:55).¹⁹

Then follows the blessing of the water for baptism. Schmemmann (1974:39) notes that water has a triple symbolism. Firstly, it is the symbol of life. Water is an essential element of life in the world, and so it has cosmic significance. Secondly, it is a symbol of destruction and death; it is the dark habitation of demonic powers. Thirdly, it is a symbol of purification, cleansing and renewal. And so the water is both exorcised and blessed. In the fallen world, matter is never neutral; if it is not used as a means of communion with God, it becomes the bearer and locus of the demonic (Schmemmann 1974:48). In the preface to the blessing of the water, the priest says "Thou didst hallow the streams of Jordan, sending down upon them from heaven thy Holy Spirit, and didst crush the heads of the dragons who lurked there" (Hapgood 1975:278). This is typical of the multi-level scriptural references in Orthodox

17 In the Old Testament, first-born males were especially dedicated to God and would have to die as remembrance of the deliverance from Pharaoh, and first-born sons had to be redeemed by a special sacrifice (Ex 13:11-16). But under the new covenant, daughters and the other sons are given equal status with the first-born son - all are equally holy, and equally redeemed.

18 The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed

19 In this sense one could say that Orthodox Christians believe that salvation is by "grace" rather than "works", but much of the Western debate on "grace versus works" has been irrelevant to Orthodox theology.

liturgy. It is a reference in the first place to the Theophany, the feast of the baptism of Christ, when the Holy Spirit descended (Lk 4:22). But the Theophany is seen as a fulfilment of the Exodus, announced in Isaiah 52:9-11:

Awake, awake! Clothe yourself in strength,
Arm of Yahweh.

Awake as in the past,
in times of generations long ago.
Did you not split Rahab in two,
and pierce the Dragon through?
Did you not dry up the sea,
the waters of the great Abyss,
to make the seabed a road
for the redeemed to cross?

Those whom Yahweh has ransomed return,
they come to Zion shouting for joy,
everlasting joy in their faces;
joy and gladness go with them,
sorrow and lament are ended.

Christians "experience matter as essentially *good*, yet on the other hand as the very vehicle of man's enslavement to death and sin, as the means by which Satan has stolen the world from God. Only in Christ and by His power can matter be *liberated* and become again the symbol of God's glory and presence, the sacrament of His action and communion with man" (Schmemmann 1974:49).

There is thus a link between our baptism and Christ's baptism in the Jordan. But there is also a significant difference. Our baptism is for the remission of sins (Ac 2:38), but Christ had no sins to be remitted. He went into the waters of the Jordan, at the lowest place on the surface of the earth, not to have his sins washed away, but to crush the heads of the dragons that lurked there, and to reclaim the world, and water in particular, for God. In a sense, he allowed himself to be fully immersed in the evil of this world, and threw down the gauntlet in a challenge to the powers of evil. His baptism was followed immediately by his temptation, in which Satan met him and responded to the challenge.

SALVATION AND EVANGELISM IN EAST AND WEST

I have noted that the difference between the Western and Orthodox understandings of sin was that Western theology tends to see sin primarily as something that God punishes us for, and that Orthodox theology tends to see sin primarily as something God rescues us from. I also noted that Protestant theology has tended to divide salvation into two dimensions or processes: justification and sanctification, while in Orthodoxy the dimensions were liberation and deification (see page 12). Where Orthodox and Protestants have discussed these matters, much of the discussion has tended to revolve around the contrast between *justification* and *deification* in salvation. This has led to much misunderstanding on both sides. In part it is a result of the difference in the *style* of doing theology, which I described in chapter 1 (see above page 27).

Western scholars who have been influenced by the Enlightenment thus tend to misrepresent Orthodox theology at this point. Bosch (1991:394) quotes such scholars as saying that the Orthodox understanding of salvation was a "pedagogical progression". Aulén (1970:13), however, points out that "the interpretation of the Christology of the period as 'a work of the Hellenistic spirit', intellectualistic and metaphysical in character, and of its doctrine of salvation as 'naturalistic', rests rather on the presuppositions of nineteenth-century theology than on an objective and unprejudiced analysis of the actual work of the Fathers."

For Protestants, in particular, the emphasis is on the word. Theologians have written about deification because it was the subject of argument and debate. But liberation (or redemption) was not debated or argued: for Orthodox Christians it was simply assumed.²⁰ It is found primarily in the liturgy and ikonography of the church rather than explicitly stated in works of dogmatic theology (Hayes 1992a:56).

²⁰ Staniloae (1980:102) notes that Orthodox theology generally gives the terms "redemption" and "reconciliation" a wider meaning than that understood by Catholics and Protestants. Catholic theology, in particular, has tended to interpret "redemption" in relation to the concept of "satisfaction", and so for this and other reasons the Orthodox Church prefers the term "salvation", which is more comprehensive.

Protestant theologians who read books about Orthodox theology without participating in Orthodox worship can therefore easily miss the point entirely. The experiential and enacted theology of Orthodoxy does not seem to them like theology at all, because it is not "systematic".

Schmemmann (1974:21), writing about the exorcisms preceding baptism, notes this:

It is not our purpose to outline, even superficially, the Orthodox teaching concerning the Devil. In fact the Church has never formulated it systematically, in the form of a clear and concise "doctrine." What is of paramount importance, however, is that the Church has always had the experience of the demonic, has always, in plain words, *known the devil*. If this direct knowledge has not resulted in a neat and orderly doctrine, it is because of the difficulty, if not impossibility, rationally to define the irrational. And the demonic and, more generally, *evil* are precisely the reality of the irrational.

Like Schmemmann, I do not intend to systematically formulate the Orthodox teaching concerning the devil. But if liberation from the power of the devil is an essential part of the Orthodox understanding of salvation, then it is also an essential part of the Orthodox understanding of mission and evangelism, and will, or ought to, influence Orthodox mission methods. I believe that it also illustrates some of the differences that can be discerned between Orthodox and Protestant mission methods.

Bosch (1991:411ff) lists eighteen different understandings or definitions of evangelism that have been common in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Most of the debates, however, have been about evangelism as an activity. Evangelism is the proclamation of the *evangelion*, the good news, the gospel. But there has been very little discussion about what actually constitutes this *evangelion*. What is the content of the proclamation? What is the news, and why is it good? (Hayes 1992a:50).

I would therefore like to examine two presentations of the gospel, which I believe can help to point up the differences between the understanding of the content of the gospel as justification, and the understanding of the content of the gospel as liberation.

The first example comes from a course that has been used to train many Protestant church members in evangelism. The course, called *Evangelism Explosion*, suggests various methods of presenting the gospel, methods of training people to present the gospel with confidence, and it provides

an outline of the content of the gospel that is to be presented, with several examples of how the outline can be expanded. These points, and the order in which they are presented, therefore reveal the theology behind this particular presentation of the gospel (Hayes 1992a:50).

After an introduction, the presentation of the gospel itself begins with two questions:

1. Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you *know for certain* that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?
2. Suppose that you were to die tonight, and stand before God and he were to say to you, "Why should I let you into my heaven?" what would you say?

Most people who have some knowledge of the Christian church would answer that they were not sure that they would go to heaven, and that they would say to God that they had tried to be good, to be kind, that they hadn't done anyone any harm or words to that effect (Hayes 1992a:50).

The gospel is then presented according to the following outline (Kennedy 1977:16):

A. Grace

1. Heaven is a free gift
2. It is not earned or deserved

B. Man

1. Is a sinner
2. Cannot save himself

C. God

1. Is merciful - therefore doesn't want to punish us
2. Is just - therefore must punish sin

D. Christ

1. Who he is - the infinite God-Man
2. What he did - paid for our sins and purchased a place in heaven which he offers as a gift

E. Faith

1. What it is *not* - mere intellectual assent nor temporal faith
2. What it *is* - trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation

There follow two more questions:

"Does this make sense to you?" and

"Would you like to receive the gift of eternal life?"

If the answer to both is yes, the evangelist leads the person in a prayer of commitment, and follows up by talking about the Bible, prayer, worship, fellowship and witness (Kennedy 1977:17).

This, with some variations, is fairly characteristic of the content of the gospel proclaimed by Protestant evangelicals, whether in small group witnessing as I have described it here, or in mass evangelism campaigns. In the form in which I have described it it was developed in the Coral Ridge Presbyterian church in a wealthy seaside resort suburb in Florida, USA. It obviously assumes a good deal of familiarity with Protestant Christian vocabulary, and was effective with nominal or lapsed Christians in the neighbourhood. Other churches heard of it and began using it, and the method of training eventually spread to other countries. It worked among white middle class suburbanites in the USA, but it is not bound to one particular class or culture. I myself have seen it working among working-class black South Africans (Hayes 1992a:51).

The content presents the idea of the atonement that has dominated Western theology since the eleventh century when Anselm of Canterbury wrote his *Cur Deus homo?* God is just and therefore must punish sin, and so sinners cannot enter his presence (Rodger 1989:35). We are all sinners, and so we are excluded from the presence of God. Christ as man took the punishment in our place, and so through faith in him we can enter heaven. This is the juridical theory of the atonement with the emphasis on justification (Aulén 1970:1-2; Hayes 1992a:51). For Orthodox theology it is unacceptable for several reasons. Firstly, it separates two attributes of God, his justice and his mercy, and sets them in opposition to each other (Kalomiros 1980:106). Secondly, it ignores the ontological basis of sin, which therefore creates the false dilemma of "punishment or satisfaction" (Rodger 1989:36). Thirdly, it is simplistic, in that it tends to reduce the mystery of salvation to one dimension. As Lossky (1985:100-101) notes, however, the juridical aspect of redemption is but one of many such images used in the scriptures, and the juridical expression of Christ's saving work is an image or simile, as are the other images of salvation.

Aulén notes the contrast between the ideas of Abelard and Anselm, which became known in Western theology as the "subjective" and "objective" views of the atonement. In the "subjective" view the atonement was

seen primarily as a change taking place in human beings, while in the "objective" view it was God's attitude that changed (Aulén 1970:2).

Aulén (1970:39) points out that even in the West this view of the atonement was not always dominant, and sets out the earlier view, which he calls the "classic" or "dramatic" view of the atonement, which is similar in some respects to that still found in Orthodox theology (Hayes 1992a:52).²¹ Aulén, however, does not go far enough, because he fails to show adequately that the shortcomings of Anselm's approach arise from the different understanding of sin that developed in the West, and in particular from the ontological separation of sin and death (Rodger 1989:41).

One of the main differences underlying these approaches is the difference in the understanding of sin and evil that I described earlier. The juridical theory of the atonement sees evil primarily as something that God punishes us for. Salvation consists in Christ taking the punishment in our place - the vicarious satisfaction theory, which is one of the fundamentals from which the Fundamentalists get their name (Cross & Livingstone 1983:542; Herbert 1957:18). Anselm regards the death of Adam and of all subsequent men as a punitive measure on God's part. The notion of punishment implies that he who punished also had the option of not punishing. In other words, "death was not the 'automatic' result of the first transgression, an ontological consequence, but was based exclusively on divine prerogative and therefore is, properly speaking, a result of a juridical or external order" (Rodger 1989:28). But in Genesis God did not tell Adam and Eve that if they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would kill them, but that on the day they ate of it, they would die. God did not prevent man's fall into corruption, but neither did he inflict it in a punitive sense (Rodger 1989:29). This is illustrated in the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32). The father did not "punish" his son by

²¹ I sometimes refer to the "classic" view in what follows. In doing so I refer to the aspect of redemption understood as liberation from the evil one, as found in both Orthodox theology, and in some of the Western revivals of it that Aulén refers to. It should be noted, however, that in the Orthodox view what Aulén describes is still a partial understanding of salvation.

making him starve and look after pigs. His "punishment" was a natural consequence of his own behaviour. Even Nicholas Cabasilas, the fourteenth-century Orthodox writer, in whom some have seen an Anselmian interpretation of the atonement, observes that God permitted death and pain after the fall "not so much to inflict a penalty on the guilty but rather to supply a remedy for him who had fallen into sickness" (Cabasilas 1970:58).

If we go back to Genesis 3, to the story of the Fall, of Adam, Eve, God and the snake, we can see more differences. What was the "original sin"? For the proponents of the juridical view of the atonement, it was *disobedience*. Sin, after all, is transgression of the law. God issued a law - "eat this, don't eat that". Adam and Eve disobeyed this law (Hayes 1992a:52). Orthodox theologians would not deny that disobedience is a fundamental element in sin (Hopko 1983:31; Pomazansky 1994:155-156). Yannaras (1984:35), however, points out that

The Orthodox tradition has refused to confine the whole of man's relationship with God within a juridical, legal framework; it has refused to see sin as the individual transgression of a given, impersonal code of behavior which simply produces psychological guilt. The God of the Church as known and proclaimed by Orthodox experience and tradition has never had anything to do with the God of the Roman juridical tradition, the God of Anselm and Abelard; he has never been thought of as a vengeful God who rules by fear, meting out punishments and torments for men.

Some theologians who accept the juridical view of the atonement might object that the "guilt" produced by sin is not subjective psychological guilt, but objective forensic guilt. This, however, would simply strengthen the "juridical, legal framework" that Yannaras rejects.

Those who prefer the Orthodox view therefore see it differently. If someone comes to my house, and I say "Make yourself at home. Help yourself to anything you find in the fridge, but please don't eat the pears" I am not legislating. If my guest eats the pears, I will be offended, but not because the guest has been "disobedient". Taking what is not given is not disobedience, it is *theft* (Hayes 1992a:52).

The world is made by God. Man (male and female) is put in charge of the earth, to care for it, tend it, and enjoy its fruit. Enjoyment of the gift expresses the relationship with the giver. The relationship is one of eucharist, communion and fellowship. But one cannot give thanks for what is not given (Schmemmann 1973:16). If a thief steals a radio,

and then sees the rightful owner approaching, the thief will not go up to the owner to give thanks for the radio, but would be more likely to hide in the bushes until the owner had passed. The relationship of eucharist, thanksgiving, has been broken (Hayes 1992a:52).

But the fruit that was not given is the image of the world seen as being desirable in itself, apart from God. "The world is a fallen world because it has fallen away from the awareness that God is all in all. The accumulation of this disregard for God is the original sin that blights the world ... When we see the world as an end in itself, everything becomes itself a value and consequently loses all value, because only in God is found the meaning (value) of everything" (Schmemmann 1973: 16-17). When God gave man (male and female) dominion over the earth, the dominion was not given to any group or subsection of humankind. If, however, we do see the world in this way, our goal becomes to gain as much of the earth's resources as we can for ourselves. The earth is not to be cared for, but exploited, worn out and raped. If others have better fields or richer orchards than ours, we will try to dispossess them. Injustice, oppression and war are the natural consequences (Hayes 1992a:53). One of the results of the fall, therefore, is competition and acquisitiveness. Instead of seeing the world as God's property, on loan, accepted in trust and with thanksgiving, we see it as up for grabs. We were given dominion, but we have abdicated, and the snake takes over (see Wink 1986:34).

How, then, would a "liberationist" presentation of the gospel differ from the juridical one? I suggest that it might look something like this (Hayes 1992a:53):

A. The world

1. God made it and put man in charge
2. Man tried to grab it and evil entered

B. Sin and evil

1. Evil has gained a hold on us that we cannot break
2. The world is now enemy-occupied territory

C. God

1. Sent his son Jesus to break the hold of Satan and give us new life through his death and resurrection
2. Has established a liberated zone in the midst of the enemy-occupied territory

D. The church

1. Is called to be the liberated zone of the kingdom of God
2. Is entered through renouncing our citizenship of the kingdom of Satan, and being "naturalised" as citizens of the kingdom of God by a new birth in water and the Spirit

E. The end

1. Though the decisive battle has been won, the world is still in the power of the evil one, and so the struggle against injustice and oppression must continue.
2. Ultimately evil will be completely defeated.

I have removed the "juridical" element here for the sake of brevity and contrast. The "classic" or "liberation" model does not deny the juridical element, however, though it interprets it differently (see e.g. Caird 1973:152-157). This presentation of the gospel is also, from the Orthodox point of view, partial and incomplete. It stresses the "freedom from" aspect of salvation. Redemption, or liberation, is not salvation, it is only part of salvation, the beginning of salvation. Once we have been freed from the power of the devil, sin and death, we are free to "work out" our salvation by becoming like God, by theosis.

How does this presentation of the gospel differ from the juridical model I presented earlier? The juridical model leads to a gap between creation and redemption, and thus to a strict distinction between the "vertical" relationship between human beings and God, and the "horizontal" relationships between human beings among themselves and with the non-human creation (see Bosch 1991:394). The connection between creation and redemption is far clearer in the "classic" model than in the juridical model. The presentation of the gospel in the classic model begins with the world. In the juridical model it begins with heaven, and the world is not even mentioned except possibly in the follow-up to commitment, when a warning may be given against worldly entanglements (Hayes 1992a:54).

The juridical model also assumes a gap between God's justice and his mercy. But it is precisely because he is merciful that God acts to overcome the injustice of our captivity by the evil one. Salvation is not a matter of God's mercy somehow overruling or "tricking" his justice, but God's mercy and justice together removing injustice and evil (Kalomiros 1995:107).

The juridical model, especially as it has developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, presupposes an Enlightenment world-view, where both sin and salvation are seen as individual (see Maimela 1990:46). In the liberation model, there is a solidarity of both sin and salvation (Caird 1956:90-91). In the juridical model, one can indeed see evangelism and liberation as having nothing to do with each other. In the liberation model, creation and redemption are not separated, and liberation is at the heart of the good news (Hayes 1992a:54).

There is also the eschatological dimension. There is the tension between building the kingdom now, and seeing that the kingdom is not yet. Any act of liberation now is partial and incomplete (Caird 1956:80-81). The liberated zone exists in the midst of the enemy-occupied territory, and the enemy's power has been broken, not destroyed. Any act of human liberation can be an image of the kingdom, but it is so very easy to betray the revolution. Today's liberator can easily become tomorrow's oppressor (Hayes 1992a:54).

In the liberation model, if the content of the gospel is essentially the good news of liberation, it becomes impossible to separate evangelism from justice and liberation. It also becomes easier to see what evangelism is, and what it is not.

If we consider the picture of the warlord, fully armed, guarding his stronghold (Lk 11:14-23), we can see castle as the world, the warlord as Satan, and ourselves as prisoners. The strong man is vigilant, keeping watch against anyone who might come against him, fully-armed, to overthrow him. The last thing he suspects is that one of the prisoners will overthrow him, but that is what happens. The strong man is bound, the main gates are open, and there is nothing to stop people from leaving the prison. The first few freed captives are asked to tell the news to others - "The chief warder is tied up, the gates are open, you are free." There are three possible responses to this news. One is to believe it, and to get up and go to freedom. Another is to disbelieve

it, and do nothing, for fear of the power of the chief warder, who though bound can still utter threats. The third possible response is to believe the news, but not to see it as good. In any prison, there are those who oppress their fellow-prisoners, and who gain privileges from the warders, and power over their fellows. For them the news is the cause of fear, not hope. Will the other prisoners not seek their revenge now? This attitude is illustrated in that of the unforgiving debtor (Mt 18:25-35) and in that of the servant who beats the servants under him (Mt 24:49). These are the image of the human oppressors. They too need liberation, but they cannot be truly free until they have repented of their behaviour as oppressors (Hayes 1992a:54).

If the good news, the *evangelion*, is presented in this way, it should not evoke the response, "Don't try to ram your religion down my throat" (Hayes 1992a:54).

My thesis in this chapter, therefore, is that the split between evangelism and liberation can be traced to an understanding of sin and evil and redemption that developed in Western theology. It can be traced back to Augustine of Hippo. Aulén (1970:39, 83) maintains that it can be traced back even further to Tertullian. After the split between East and West in the eleventh century, the Western emphasis on the juridical aspect of the atonement became more pronounced, and the devil dropped out of the picture. Maimela (1990:44) links the rise of the juridical view of the atonement to the change in the church's status from being a persecuted minority missionary movement to a state church. Anselm of Canterbury wrote after the split, and his work has therefore had almost no influence on Eastern theology. The juridical view of the atonement therefore came to dominate Western soteriology, and became the content of most Protestant evangelism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Among Western Christians, those who saw the need for justice or liberation did not see this as having anything to do with evangelism, and they neglected evangelism. Those who saw the need for evangelism tended to neglect social responsibility, or even to see it as a dangerous distraction from the "real" task (Hayes 1992a:54-55).

In the Protestant missionary movement of the nineteenth century the juridical view of the atonement dominated the evangelistic dimension of mission. The devil was not absent from their preaching, but his role was somewhat different. Reformed missionaries among the Ewe of Ghana, for example, understood Ewe religion as belonging to the devil. The devil

confronted them through heathen religion in general and through fetish priests in particular. Non-Christians were described as "belonging to the devil" (Meyer 1992:105). For the Protestant missionaries, the devil personified the evil of this world, of which the heathen religion, in their eyes, formed a part. In the theology they presented, the devil performed an integrating role in explaining the evil in the world (Meyer 1992:105). When the catechumens came to be baptised, the missionaries examined them, and found that the converts were dissatisfied with their former religion, which had been ineffective in delivering them from evil, and which they had now come to see as part of the evil. The missionaries were somewhat dissatisfied, because the catechumens seemed "more occupied and driven by fear of the devil than by the anguish of conscience over their own sin" (Meyer 1992:107). The latter feature was, of course, an essential aspect of the Anselmian view of the atonement - with salvation being seen primarily as the justification of the sinner in the eyes of a just God. The missionaries therefore evaluated the effectiveness of their message by the extent to which a sense of *guilt for sin* was inculcated into the catechumens. The Ewe Christians, on the other hand, interpreted salvation primarily as being liberated from the power of evil by a loving God.

In the twentieth century there has been a revival of interest in what Aulén called the "classic" view of the atonement among some Western Christians, sparked off, at least in part, by Aulén himself. Some evangelicals, especially in Pentecostal and charismatic circles, have rediscovered the devil. There has been an increased concern with demon "possession" and similar phenomena, but this has been interpreted mainly in Enlightenment terms, except among the African independent churches. When people speak of demon possession, they usually think of an individual who is infested. I believe that such a view is not consistent with the biblical witness. As I have noted above, such individual infestation is better described as demonisation, rather than demon possession (Hayes 1992a:55).

In the liberation view of the atonement, every human being born on earth is possessed by Satan, in the sense that Satan is the ruler of this world, and the inhabitants of the world are citizens of his kingdom by birth. We are possessed in the true sense, in that we are prisoners, slaves, chattels of Satan. Liberation and redemption have to do with being freed from slavery. When the warlord is bound and his goods are

plundered, the slaves go free. "The world from which the human being has received his life, and which will determine this life, is a prison. The Church did not have to wait for Kafka or Sartre to know it. But the Church also knows that the gates of this hell have been broken and that another Power has entered the world and claimed it for its true Owner. And that claim is not upon souls alone, but on the totality of life, on the whole world" (Schmemmann 1973:70).

In the West there are signs of a recovery of the "classic" or "liberation" view of the atonement. I should also, at this point, put an important qualification on the point I have argued up till now in this chapter, and that is that the "classic" view of the atonement has never been entirely lost in the West. In the Roman baptismal liturgy, for example, the exorcisms have been retained. In this sense, the Western liturgy speaks of the same understanding of salvation as the Eastern. Then as the juridical view of the atonement took a stronger hold, dogmatic theology and liturgical theology moved farther apart, and the idea of the atonement as "satisfaction" became stronger. In Anglicanism and Protestantism, radical liturgical reforms tended to remove even this vestige of balance. The exorcisms before baptism disappeared entirely, though the Anglicans retained the renunciation of Satan.

Wesleyan Methodism, which followed an Arminian theology, had some echoes of the "classic" view of the atonement, especially in some of Charles Wesley's hymns.²² The recovery may also be seen in the "power encounter" view of evangelism, though even there it tends to be interpreted primarily in individualistic Enlightenment terms. Even when people do become aware of Satan, it is usually in a peripheral way. For example, there have been occasional reports in the press about people asking the police to crack down on "Satanism". One wonders if these were

22 For example the hymn *And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood*, Methodist Hymn Book No 371. This contains the verse "Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night; Thine eye diffused a quickening ray - I woke, the dungeon flamed with light; my chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed Thee". There is an echo here of the Orthodox ikon of the Descent into Hell, showing Christ releasing Adam and Eve from captivity, with chains, locks and bolts falling into the abyss.

the same police who tried to cast a spell on Anglican bishop Desmond Tutu by putting hexed nails in his driveway. Calling on the police to suppress Satanism in such circumstances would truly be a case of calling on Beelzebul to cast out Beelzebul. In the liberation view of the atonement, we will not look for Satan among the Satanists, but in parliament, in the police and army headquarters, in the board rooms of the big companies and in the offices of powerful trade unions, and yes, even in church headquarters. Caird (1956:84), Van den Heuvel (1965) and others have pointed out that structural evil can be explained best in terms of demonic activity (Hayes 1992a:56).

The difference between the "classic" and the juridical views of salvation leads to a further contrast between the Orthodox and Western understandings of salvation. Western theologians themselves have often engaged in controversy over such matters as "faith" versus "works". Western Christians sometimes ask where Orthodox theology stands on such questions, and sometimes go even further, and seek to determine for themselves where Orthodoxy stands. Protestants, for example, are often suspicious of the Orthodox teaching on *ascesis* or *podvig* - spiritual struggle and discipline. Their suspicions arise from interpreting this struggle in a Western frame of reference - where salvation is seen as being saved from the just punishment of an offended God. In such a framework, asceticism can be seen as an attempt to "please" God, and to somehow appease him and thus escape from the punishment due to sin. I hope that I have shown above that this is the wrong framework. It is only in the juridical framework that justification is seen as the most important element of salvation, and it is only when justification is seen as the most important element of salvation that one can begin to argue about whether one is justified by "faith" or by "works".

Some Protestants have gone further, and sought to distinguish between imputed and imparted righteousness. Even if salvation is seen to be by grace rather than works, because the Roman Catholic Church regards grace as infused or imparted rather than imputed, it is still regarded as putting its trust in human righteousness rather than God's sovereign mercy. For Orthodox Christians such questions are simply irrelevant.

I have pointed out that I believe that the question of soteriology is one of the biggest roots of the division between East and West, and it is one that most significantly affects mission. Anselm's soteriology developed in the West after the schism had taken place, and therefore

was not on the agenda in discussions about healing the schism. Though it was well established in the West by the time of the Council of Florence in 1439, it received very little attention at that meeting. At this point I would like to put forward a hypothesis, and to suggest that this could be a fruitful topic for historical research. My hypothesis is that Anselm's soteriology took root so rapidly because of the schism. If Eastern and Western Christians had not been divided from each other, and had been in better communication, Eastern theology could have provided the counterbalance to Anselm's one-sided interpretation of the atonement. The division, of course, was not simply the result of the formal schism, but also because of the difference in language, and different cultures and political systems that had developed. But the formal schism exacerbated these differences, so that the Orthodox East was largely unaware of Anselm's soteriology.

In some recent Orthodox writing about this the theme of the triumph of Christ over sin and death has been muted. This has perhaps led some Western theologians to put a contrast, and claim that the Orthodox put death in the foreground instead of sin, but this is not true. Orthodox theology does not make this separation (Agourides 1969:198,200).

A further point is that Anselm's soteriology was a form of contextualisation. "While earlier Latin writers, like Tertullian, had equated satisfaction with penance for sin, Anselm disengages the two terms and invests satisfaction with a new meaning in order to prove the necessity of the *Deus-homo*. This new meaning probably owes something to the private law of his time, where one could make satisfaction with a person he had wronged by restoring to him something over and above what was initially taken" (Rodger 1989:33). Anselm was probably influenced by the Western mediaeval concepts of "honour" and "satisfaction", and interpreted the Fall as an injury to God's honour. In Anselm's day, these concepts had different connotations to those they had in the patristic period, and they also had different connotations to those they have today, which is perhaps why some Western theologians are searching for a new soteriology to replace that of Anselm. Rodger (1989:41) has pointed out some of the shortcomings of Aulén's efforts in this regard.

Another Western theologian, G.B. Caird, has reinterpreted the juridical view of the atonement in a way that seeks to bring it into harmony with the "classic" view. One of the problems with the juridical view, as it has developed since the time of Anselm, is that it ignores the role

of Satan as the "third force" (Russell 1988:133). In the "classic" view, Satan is the usurper who has stolen the world from God, and Christ by his death and resurrection has won the decisive victory against Satan's kingdom, thereby opening the way for the liberation of his oppressed subjects. In the juridical view, the role of Satan is, in part, played by God himself. It is from God that we need to be rescued. Orthodox theologians have rejected this: Lossky (1985:102) quotes St Gregory Nazianzus (one of only three saints to whom the Orthodox Church gives the title of "theologian") as saying that it is not the Father who has held us captive, and that the Father, having refused the sacrifice of Abraham's son Isaac, would not demand the sacrifice of his own Son on those terms. The juridical view creates a division between God's mercy and his justice.

Caird (1973:154) notes that in the biblical tradition Satan regularly appears in heaven and has every right to be there. The Hebrew word *satan* means "adversary" and can be used of a man who brings an accusation against another in a law court. The Greek word *diavolos*, from which the English *devil* is derived, has the same meaning. In Job 1:6 one of the angels of the heavenly court is called "the satan" because he holds the post of prosecutor in the law court of God. When not actually prosecuting in court, he spends his time roaming the earth collecting evidence. Like many ambitious earthly public prosecutors, Satan appears to believe that his chances of promotion depend on the number of convictions he secures, and so he puts temptation in men's way when the necessary evidence for a conviction is lacking.

Satan appears again as accuser in the visions of Zechariah, where the high priest Joshua is on trial (Zech 3:1-5). The high priest represents the people of Israel before God, and in this case Joshua with his filthy garments represents the moral and religious condition of Jerusalem (Caird 1973:154). Satan has a good case, but God intervenes and has Joshua clothed in clean robes. Satan comes into conflict with God, "because, martinet that he is for the full rigour of the law, he is totally blind to the other side of God's character. Retribution is not God's last word on human sin" (Caird 1973:154).

In the New Testament and rabbinic writings Satan retains his legal duties as prosecutor, with Michael as counsel for the defence (1 Pe 5:8, Jude 9). Michael is the great prince who has charge of the people of God (Dan 10:21, 12:1). Caird interprets Revelation 12:7-12, the account of

Satan being thrown out of heaven by Michael, as taking place when Christ died on the cross. "Michael is not... the field officer who does the actual fighting, but the staff officer in the heavenly control room, who is able to remove Satan's flag from the heavenly map because the real victory has been won on Calvary" (Caird 1973:154). Though John depicts the battle between Michael and Satan in military terms, it was essentially a legal battle between opposing counsel, which resulted in one of them being disbarred. It is the culmination of a legal battle that began on earth, in which Satan, through his earthly minions led by Judas Iscariot (John 13:2), accuses Jesus and demands the death penalty. In the local magistrates court, before Annas and Caiaphas, Jesus is found guilty, and sent to the supreme court, before Pilate, who, though he declares Jesus innocent, nevertheless sentences him to death. Before the Appellate Division, however, the court of final appeal, Satan loses his case, because Jesus, like Joshua his namesake, is a representative figure, standing trial on behalf of those he represents. Satan not only loses his case, he loses his job, and is thrown out of court by Michael. "Satan's legal functions account for his presence in heaven, but they also help us to understand some of his other activities. Because of his narrow, one-sided devotion to law he misunderstands and misrepresents God. It is primarily for this reason that he is called **the deceiver of the whole world**. The archenemy of God is a parody of God's own truth. He deceives by telling lies about God" (Caird 1973:155-156).

The trial of Joshua in Zechariah 3 can be understood typologically. In the *Epistle to the Hebrews* Jesus is described as the great high priest. Like Joshua, he was wearing filthy clothes representing the sins of the people. Unlike Joshua, they were not his own sins. One could say that he had put on the filthy robes when he was baptised in the Jordan, immersing himself in the evil of the world at its lowest point. His acquittal in the court of final appeal has important consequences. Not only the verdict, but the sentence was reversed. When the appeal was heard, the sentence had already been carried out - Jesus had been executed. God reverses the sentence by raising Jesus from the dead. This must have the effect of reversing all human judgments about Jesus, and this is indeed the theme of Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost. He was speaking to those who, less than two months earlier, had consented to, and even demanded, the death of Jesus (Mt 27:22; Ac 2:23-24). God raised this Jesus from the dead, and this same Jesus "whom you crucified" God has

made both Lord and Messiah (Ac 2:32,36). The crowd are convinced, and ask what they can do. Peter responds "Repent and be baptised, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins". Repentance (*metania*) means changing one's mind, and they had to reverse their judgement on Jesus, no longer seeing him as a criminal and a blasphemer, but as Lord and Messiah. Peter notes that "the promise is to you and to your children" (Ac 2:39). As God has reversed men's verdict and sentence on Jesus, so the verdict and sentence they had pronounced upon themselves and their children "His blood be on us and on our children" (Mt 27:25) can be reversed.

Because Satan, the prosecutor, has been thrown out of heaven, because "the accuser of our brethren has been cast down" (Rev 12:10), "there is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus". By identifying themselves with him in baptism, those who repent have clothed themselves in the clean garment of Christ (Gal 3:27). This can take place after the Spirit has descended, because the Spirit comes to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgement, because the ruler of this world has been judged (Jn 16:8-11). "Now is the judgement of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out, and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:31). Jesus was lifted up from the world on the cross, and in his ascension too lifted our human nature to the heavenly places.

I have put forward this view, based on Caird, as a *theologoumenon* to suggest a way in which the juridical view of the atonement can be reintegrated with the classic view. One of the main problems with Anselm's view is that it represents God's mercy and God's justice as being in conflict. As Caird points out, Satan is the prosecutor who is a martinet for God's justice, and loses sight of God's mercy, and so tells lies about God. But Satan also behaves like a human prosecutor who believes that it is better that the innocent should suffer than that the guilty should escape. He believes that every prosecution must result in a conviction. He sees God as a judge who is too soft on criminals, and believes that he could do a better job as judge than God himself. In his pride and arrogance he wants to take over the judge's job, thereby bringing judgement upon himself (1 Tim 3:6). In relentlessly prosecuting the only truly innocent victim, Satan has overreached himself, and is fired. He is thrown out of court by the archangel Michael, who acts as a kind of court orderly, a heavenly bouncer.

The real victory of Michael may be a forensic one, the victory of an advocate whose case is wholly dependent on the record of his client; but it takes open war to clinch it. Satan is stripped of his rights, but not of his power to do appalling harm. He is thus made the symbol for different aspects of the problem of evil. For sin has two different kinds of consequence: it estranges man both from God and his fellows, but it also sets in motion a chain reaction of damage, which continues to operate independently of its original author. God's amnesty may end man's rebellion, but it does not automatically make good, or even halt, the damage that rebellion has caused... The Cross is God's cure for sin, both for its guilt and for its power. It is his declarative act of acquittal, grounded in Christ's self-identification with sinful men, and needing for its completion only that they should accept in faith what he had offered in love. But it also shows how the power of evil may be absorbed by innocent suffering and neutralized by forgiving love. If the world is to hear and accept God's amnesty, there must be witnesses; and if evil is to burn itself out to the bitter end, their testimony must be the testimony of suffering (Caird 1973:157).

So Satan is thrown down to earth in great rage, knowing that his time is short (Rev 12:12). His thoughts are of revenge. Outside the court, he plans to take his revenge by causing anyone associated with the acquitted prisoner to suffer. The primary target of his attacks is the Church - by slanderous attacks from without, by false teaching designed to destroy the Church's faith and corrupt it from within, by stirring up state persecution (Caird 1973:159).

In the book of Revelation (Apocalypse) John described two women, one in clothed in heavenly, the other in earthly finery. The first escapes into the desert (Rev 12:14), and it is only from the vantage point of the desert that John can see the seductive falsity of the city symbolised by the second in its true colours (Caird 1973:159). And, centuries later, it was in the desert where those who had fled from persecution stayed to develop the ascetic struggle, the life of *podvig*, away from the seductions of the city, and so developed the Christian monastic movement.

There is undoubtedly an element of juridical and forensic language in the New Testament. Since the time of Anselm, that element has dominated the Western understanding of the theology of salvation, to the almost entire exclusion of the "classic" view. Perhaps Caird offers a way of

reintegrating them in a way that overcomes the Orthodox objection to Aulén's understanding of the "classic" view, which maintains an ontological distinction between sin and death.

In the centuries following Anselm, the devil became a peripheral figure in the Western understanding of the theology of redemption, but remained a powerful figure in folklore. Some of the characteristics of Satan were shifted on to God himself. In the Orthodox understanding, Satan is both the accuser and the enemy. Salvation begins with deliverance from the power of the enemy, and that is death, and he who had the power of death, that is, the devil.

In Western theology, however, the central feature of Satan as the enemy and the accuser was shifted onto God himself. The New Testament does give the picture of hostility or enmity between man and God, which called for reconciliation (Eph 2:11-22), and reconciliation is therefore a part of salvation. But St Paul did not say "reconcile yourselves to God", as if God were the enemy. He said "be reconciled", because God takes the initiative in reconciliation. God did not feel like an enemy, but we did. God never feels like an enemy (Agourides 1969:193-194).

In the court of heaven, God came to be seen as both prosecutor and judge, and in the thirteenth century the Western church set up the Inquisition, which was a kind of earthly image of the changed understanding of the heavenly court. The purpose of the Inquisition was to hunt out and punish heretics, and it was originally set up by the secular power, the Emperor Frederick II, but was claimed for the church by the Roman pope Gregory IX (Cross & Livingstone 1983:706). In the past heresies had plagued the Church, but when someone persisted in teaching opinions that were contrary to the teaching of the Church, that is, heretical or heterodox ones, the usual punishment was excommunication. The bishops, as guardians of the faith, had courts for this purpose. But the Inquisition was something new. It actively sought out heretics, and it was in charge of mendicant orders (Franciscans and Dominicans) rather than the bishops. Within a short time torture was allowed to force the accused to confess, and they were handed over to the secular power for punishment, which in practice meant death.

At about the same time there was another change - the gradual identification of sorcery with heresy. This arose in part because of the association of witchcraft with the idea of a conscious and deliberate pact with the devil (Russell 1988:118), and also because, by attributing

powers to the devil that the devil did not, in the official teaching, possess, at least some of those accused of witchcraft could be regarded as heretics as well. Thus witchcraft also came to be seen as a matter to be dealt with by the Inquisition. At the end of the fifteenth century this was systematised in a book called the *Malleus maleficarum* (The hammer of witches). Among other things, this book prescribed that informers who gave false information about alleged witches should not be punished. "Here perhaps was the first lack of wisdom; here anxiety to defeat the Devil began to grow greater than anxiety to serve God. The secular governments of centuries earlier had been wiser; they had penalised the talk as much as the act. The new effort did not do so. It encouraged the talk against the act" (Williams 1959:142). Anonymous and false accusation was encouraged, and so the stage was set for the Great Witch Hunt of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which thousands of accused witches in Western Europe perished. There was little distinction in this between the Roman and the Reformed churches - on hardly any other point were they in such hot agreement (Williams 1959:176-177).

The most significant point in all this, and, apparently, the one most overlooked at the time, is that accusation, and especially false accusation, is the most characteristic action of the devil himself. From the point of view of Christian theology, nothing could be more satanic (in the most literal sense), than the Great Witch Hunt itself.

The idea of a pact with the devil also caused "the transformation in Christian minds of heretics, Jews and Muslims into conscious minions of the Prince of Darkness. Total misunderstanding of the religion of others led Christians to make the most improbable assumptions" (Russell 1988:118). There is a sense in which Christians have always regarded the worship of pagan deities as the worship of demons - if "the world is in the power of the Evil One" (1 Jn 5:19), then human religion, like everything else, is also in that power. Human religion has been bent and twisted and corrupted by Satan to his own evil purposes. The trial of Jesus, as described in the gospels, illustrates this. Jesus was tried by the Jews, representing the best of human religion, and by the Romans, whose legal system represented the best of human justice, and neither proved adequate. Both were manipulated by Satan to achieve the desired effect. The exorcisms preceding baptism also assume this. The kingdom of Satan that is renounced by the candidates for baptism includes the renunciation of false religion, of everything that has been corrupted by

the Evil One, and so the former life of candidates for baptism, which includes their religious life, is described as "delusion" (Haggood 1975:271). But there is also another side to this. If human religion is corrupt, it is a corruption of something originally good. The devil cannot create, he can only pervert. There is thus an ambiguity in the Christian approach to other religions. In conversion, there is renunciation, but also fulfilment of whatever is good. Religion, like the law, can also be a pedagogue to lead people to Christ - an example of this is when the Aleuts of Alaska sought baptism because they had been encouraged by their shamans to do so (Mousalimas 1991:157).

In the Great Witch Hunt, however, this ambiguity disappeared. When Western theology ascribed the vengeful punishing activity of Satan to God himself, it was only a matter of time before that activity was reflected in the Inquisition and its Protestant equivalents. European society itself became demonised, as the title of one of the books on the topic, *Europe's inner demons*, suggests (Cohn 1975).

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment produced, among other things, a reaction and revulsion against the witch hunting that immediately preceded it. Many of the nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries from Western Europe and North America therefore believed that witchcraft was a delusion, and that the best way to avoid the evils of witch hunts was to get people to abandon belief in the powers of witches. The devil was the inspirer of pagan religion, and also the tempter of Christians, but was not the inspirer of witches, except to the extent that all pagan religion was seen as a form of witchcraft, and therefore likewise not to be taken seriously.

The different theologies of the atonement in East and West were thus linked to a different understanding of the basic content of the Christian gospel. If evangelism is proclamation of the gospel, and also an important dimension of mission, one might therefore expect missionaries of East and West to adopt different mission methods. I shall examine this in more detail in later chapters.

Before doing so, however, it is necessary to look briefly at the history of Orthodox mission, in a descriptive sense.

CHAPTER 3

Historical survey of Orthodox mission

In this and the following chapter I shall give a broad historical survey of mission in the Orthodox Church, noting some of the themes that I shall be dealing with in greater detail in later chapters.

BEGINNINGS

The founding documents of the Christian Church are the books of the New Testament, and these documents were both shaped by, and determined the shape of, the continuing Christian community. In *The Acts of the Apostles* the early growth of this community is described. As Schmemmann (1977:7) notes, "The unbeliever may doubt their historicity. But even he must admit that at no time have Christians failed to believe in this divine origin of the Church, and unless this belief is kept in mind it is virtually impossible to understand the whole subsequent development of her history."

The mission of the first Christians was primarily to the Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost was to those who had, but seven weeks before, handed Jesus over to the Roman authorities to be crucified, thus rejecting his Messiahship (Acts 2:36). Israel could still repent and turn to her Saviour (Schmemmann 1977:8). When St Peter said, "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.." (Acts 2:38), he was not enunciating an eternal doctrine of "believers' baptism" that must be preceded by "repentance". The sin that was to be repented of was quite specific - they had handed over the Messiah to be crucified. And repentance, in this context, means more than just sorrow for sin. Metanoia is a radical change of mind. Those who had handed Jesus over to be crucified must change their minds about him - who he is and what he is. "God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). It is this that cut them to the heart. It is

this that led three thousand to be baptised that day. Whether or not St Peter actually used the words attributed to him here, the faith and self-understanding of the Christian Church is both reflected in and shaped by this account.

From the start there was both continuity and discontinuity with what had gone before. The Christian community continued in Jewish worship for a while, but even after it had separated, its own worship bore the indelible stamp of what had gone before. The Christian community also described itself by the same term that had been used in the Old Testament scriptures to describe the assembly or congregation of Israel, the *ekklesia*, the chosen company of God's people whom God summons to his service (Schmemmann 1977:10). Yet also, right from the start, it is baptism rather than circumcision that marks entry into the new Israel, and not into the community only, but into the new life of the kingdom of God, by a new birth (Schmemmann 1977:11). The newness is also found with Christians meeting on a new day, the day after the Sabbath. "In this conscious departure from the earlier emphasis of the week, the Church bears witness to the fact that her own life, as it flows onward in this world, is a foretaste of that eternal day which dawned on the morning of the first victory over death" (Schmemmann 1977:12).

In the *Acts of the Apostles* and other books of the New Testament is also reflected the realisation that the Church's mission is not to the Jews only, but that it is indeed pan-human. The documents reflect disagreements and some struggles to understand the implications of this, but also, being written after the event, they have the benefit of hindsight, and reflect the conclusions reached by the majority party. There is evidence that some followers of Jesus remained a sect within Judaism, and that some of these were later known as Ebionites (Cross & Livingstone 1983:438).

For the Jews, there was an awareness of being the chosen people, the people of God, brought out of slavery in Egypt, distinguished from the nations (Hebrew *goyim*, Greek *ethne*, Latin *gentiles*). In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament (which was the "Authorised Version" of the Church) this was clear in such passages as Deuteronomy 32:8-9:

When the Most High divided the nations (*ethne*), when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. And his people Jacob became the portion of the Lord, Israel was the line of his inheritance.

There is a suggestion here that Israel had a hot line to the Most High, while the gentiles (nations) had to make do with angelic intermediaries. This could be seen as reflecting a theology of religions in which the various religions of the nations are seen as part of the will of God, and that the gods of the nations are understood as the "angels of God". The Masoretic Hebrew text differs at this point from the Septuagint, however, and the "angels of God" becomes "sons of Israel". Recent discoveries of ancient Hebrew manuscripts have, however, confirmed the Septuagint version, and recent English translations have followed this version, which uses "sons of God" (*bene elohim*) instead of "sons of Israel".

Psalm 81 (LXX) describes God standing in the assembly of the gods (sons of the Most High), accusing them of partiality, and of favouring the rich against the poor, and threatening their downfall. The Psalm ends with a prayer, "Arise God, and judge the earth, since all the nations belong to you".²³

This prayer appears to find its answer in St John's gospel, where there is almost an exact parallelism:

Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (Jn 12:31-32).

Compare this to the last two verses of Psalm 81/82:

I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like any prince." Arise, O God, and judge the earth; for to thee belong all the nations.

The downfall of the ruler or prince (archon) of this world means that God in Christ draws all men to himself, since all nations, and not only the biological descendants of Jacob, belong to God equally. The time for angelic intermediaries has passed, and they are now no longer an aid but a hindrance to the true knowledge of God.

²³ Psalm 81/82 has a much wider theological significance, which I will deal with later. At this point I am simply following the thread of the relationship between Israel and the nations, Jews and Gentiles.

I have stressed this example from St John's Gospel, because it seems to illustrate the Christian interpretation of the changed relationship between Jews and Gentiles in the light of the death and resurrection of Christ, but there are numerous other examples one could give from the New Testament - Peter's vision of the clean and unclean animals in Acts 10, the description of the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 and numerous assertions in the letters of St Paul. By the end of the first century it was certainly part of the self-understanding of the Church that its mission was a pan-human one: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Ac 1:8).

As Christians came to see themselves as the new Israel of God, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles was broken down. Those outside the new Israel, those who had not heard or responded to the good news, were no longer "the nations", but came to be called "pagans". "Pagani were civilians who had not enlisted through baptism as soldiers of Christ against the powers of Satan. By its word for non-believers, Christian slang bore witness to the heavenly battle which coloured Christians' view of life" (Fox 1987:31).²⁴

PRE-NICENE MISSION

The *Acts of the Apostles* begins with a statement from Jesus that his apostles will be his witnesses in "Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Ac 1:8) and describes the spread of the Christian faith within Jerusalem, and then after the persecution that followed the death of Stephen to Judea and Samaria, and later to Antioch, and from there to Cyprus and what is today Turkey and Greece, and then to Rome.

As far as mission methods are concerned, details are given of St Paul's methods, and those of St Philip when he preached to the Ethiopian eunuch.

²⁴ Fox (1987:30) points out that, in addition to meaning "civilian" as opposed to "military", *paganus* can mean a country-dweller as opposed to a city-dweller, and that since the sixteenth century the origin of the early Christians' usage as been disputed, but argues that the former meaning is likelier.

In the post-apostolic age, the active mission methods of the apostles do not seem to have been followed to the same extent. Christianity still spread when there were persecutions, and those who were persecuted were scattered to new places, both within and beyond the borders of the empire. War, too, caused Christianity to spread - invaders came into contact with Christians when they settled within the territory of the Roman Empire, and soldiers who came to fight and prisoners of war who were carried off to places such as Persia took the Christian faith with them. Traders and travellers were another means by which Christianity spread. But there is little evidence of "formal" mission (Fox 1987:280ff).

In this period Christians generally kept a low profile. There were no mass meetings or public preaching to pagan crowds. Most of the time Christianity spread informally through individuals, and the only public witness was martyrdom in the sporadic outbreaks of persecution (Fox 1987:315). I will examine martyrdom in more detail in chapter 5. In the third century the length of the catechumenate did not lend itself to mass evangelism. Far from seeking to attract large numbers of new members, the Church was concerned to screen those who were coming in (Fox 1987:317).

The Empire and Christianity

In its first 250 years, Christianity, which spread mainly within the Roman Empire, had an uneasy relationship with the state. Christians rejected the imperial cult, which was regarded as part of the social cement that held the empire together, and when the imperial authorities became zealous and tried to impose the cult by force, as happened from time to time, Christians were persecuted.

When Constantine became emperor in 312, shortly after the persecution of Diocletian, Christianity was officially tolerated for the first time. After the First Council of Nicaea (325) Christianity could be proclaimed openly, and enjoyed the favour of the empire, and by the end of the century it had become the official religion of the empire. The conversion of Constantine resulted in one of the profoundest changes that the Christian Church had ever experienced, but Schmemmann (1977:62-63) notes that the evaluations of this change have been diametrically opposed. For Eastern Christians, Constantine's conversion marked the victory of light

over darkness that crowned the heroic feats of the martyrs. For Western Christians, however, the Constantinian era marks the beginning of an enslavement of the Church by the State. In both East and West, it also brought about a change in mission methods.

Frend (1993:9) distinguishes four main types of mission between the reigns of Constantine and Justinian (312-565):

- (1) Missions prompted by the emperor, in which religious and political ends were intertwined
- (2) Missions organised under episcopal control with the aim of pacifying unruly inhabitants in or on the borders of their dioceses
- (3) Proselytism by individuals - often those who were captives among the barbarians
- (4) The conversion of individuals and communities by monks and ascetics.

According to Frend the last was the most effective, and I will describe it more fully below in when dealing with Africa, and discuss it in more detail in later chapters.

Eusebius of Caesarea, who had considerable influence over Constantine, regarded the emperor as an ikon of Christ's rule over the world, and the emperor therefore saw himself as the "bishop of those outside the Church". Constantius, his successor, saw himself as the emperor of all Christian people (Frend 1993:10f).

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA²⁵

Until the sixteenth century Christians in Africa generally developed their own patterns of mission, which sometimes influenced the church in

²⁵ Some of the material in this section on the history of Christianity in Africa was originally written for a study guide for a missiology course at the University of South Africa (Hayes 1992b). Part of the material originally written then was excised from the published version of the study guide, but I have adapted and incorporated it here.

other places.²⁶ There have been Christian churches in Africa since the first century, and until the seventh century the African church was very influential in the Christian church as a whole. The influence of the African church was not always a good one; some of the African disputes over doctrine and discipline left a legacy of bitterness and schism, which has lasted to the present. But African Christians were also pioneers of some of the methods of mission that were used for centuries in Europe and elsewhere. The church in North East Africa, led by the Patriarch of Alexandria, belonged to the Eastern or "Greek" tradition, while in North Western Africa the Western or "Latin" tradition was dominant, and the church there looked to Rome for leadership (and indeed in many ways gave leadership to Rome).

The universal symbol of the Orthodox Christian faith, the so-called Nicene Creed, was drawn up in response to theological debates that had their origin in Africa (Atiya 1968:41ff). In AD 451 the Council of Chalcedon defined the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ, but many African Christians did not agree, and this led to a schism that has only very recently begun to be healed.²⁷ African theologians such as Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine, who lived in North West Africa, strongly influenced the subsequent shape of Western theology, though they had less influence in the East.

26 In this section I shall refer to "Africa" in its modern sense of the African continent. In the time of the Roman Empire "Africa" referred to a Roman province located roughly in the position of modern Tunisia. If one uses the term in that sense, it would not include Egypt and Libya, or modern Algeria (known in ancient times as Numidia). In the same way, "Asia" was a province that was a part of modern Turkey. Unless otherwise qualified, I will generally use the terms in the modern sense of the continents, and in speaking of "Africa" in the Roman sense I will refer to North-West Africa, known to modern geographers as the Maghrib.

27 The Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, at a consultation at Chambesy, Switzerland, in September 1990, agreed that they "clearly understood that both families [of churches] have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic Tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways. It is this common faith and continuous loyalty to the Apostolic Tradition that should be the basis of our unity and communion."

Church and mission in Egypt

According to tradition, the first missionary to Egypt was St Mark the Evangelist, who planted the church in Alexandria. He is said to have appointed Ananias as its bishop, and then travelled to Pentapolis and Rome, and on his return to have been martyred in AD 68, by being dragged around with a rope around his neck until his head was pulled from his body. After the schism that followed the Council of Chalcedon in 451, his body was kept in a Chalcedonian (Byzantine) church and his head in a non-Chalcedonian (Coptic) church until his body was stolen by Venetian merchants in the ninth century (el Masri 1987a:4-5). The fifth-century schism has had a profound effect on subsequent mission in Africa, and the fate of the relics of its first apostle therefore provides a fitting commentary.

Until the end of the second century, however, little is known of the history of the church in Egypt beyond the names of its bishops and even though the Byzantine and Coptic Orthodox agree on the names, the dates they have recorded are different (cf. Labadarios 1988:90; el Masri 1987b:429). There is evidence that Christian Gnosticism was also present in Egypt in this period, as the discovery of the Nag Hammadi papyri in 1945 makes clear (Pagels 1981:xi). Though Jesus was a central figure for both Orthodox Christianity and Christian Gnosticism, the resemblances end there. The gulf between them is far wider than that between Christianity and Judaism or Christianity and Islam. Orthodox Christians and Christian gnostics regarded each other as heretics (Pagels 1981:xxxviii), and even with the discovery of gnostic writings in Egypt, their relations in that part of the world are far from clear. But the Orthodox Christian world-view did shape the understanding of, and approach to mission. Pagels (1981:174) expresses it thus:

Orthodox Christians were concerned - far more than gnostics - with their relationships with other people. If gnostics insisted that humanity's original experience of evil involved internal emotional distress, the orthodox dissented. Recalling the story of Adam and Eve, they explained that humanity discovered evil in human violation of the natural order, itself essentially "good." The orthodox interpreted evil (*kakia*) primarily in terms of violence against others (thus giving the moral connotation of the term). They revised the Mosaic code, which prohibits physical violation of others - murder, stealing, adultery - in terms of Jesus' prohibitions against even mental and emotional violence - anger, lust, hatred.

Agreeing that human suffering derives from human guilt, orthodox Christians affirmed the natural order. Earth's plains, deserts, seas, mountains, stars and trees form an appropriate home for humanity. As part of that "good" creation, the orthodox recognised the processes of human biology: they tended to trust and affirm sexuality (at least in marriage), procreation and human development. The orthodox Christian saw Christ not as one who leads souls out of this world into enlightenment, but as "fullness of God" come down into human experience - into bodily experience - to sacralize it.

The gnostic approach was by its very nature elitist, and disinclined to mission. The Orthodox Christian world-view, as it developed in distinction from Gnosticism, could not but be missionary.

Apart from the lists of patriarchs, however, little more is heard of the history of the church in Egypt before the end of the second century. In the third and fourth centuries, however, the Egyptian church was one of the most influential churches. The bishops of Alexandria, Antioch and Rome were regarded as the senior bishops in the church, and by the fourth century they were being called "patriarchs".

At that time Egypt was a very mixed society. The native Egyptians, who later became known as Copts, had seen their country under the rule of a succession of conquerors since the time of Alexander the Great.²⁸ The Ptolemies, Greek-speaking successors of Alexander's empire, ruled Egypt until they themselves were subjected to Roman rule. In the cities of the Nile delta, including Alexandria, the Hellenic element was predominant, and this included the Hellenised Jews, for whom the Old Testament scrip-

²⁸ Nowadays people often speak of the "Coptic" church, and so many people tend to think that the word "Copt" is a religious term. In fact the Copts are a people. When the Greeks, under Alexander the Great, conquered Egypt, they called the natives "Egypti". When the Arabs conquered Egypt ten centuries later they took over the term, which became "qubt", and it has now been westernised as "Copt". The Copts are therefore native Egyptians in much the same way as the "Red Indians" are native Americans, and the "Coptic Church" is simply the Egyptian Church. The ancient Greeks called the non-Negro native inhabitants of Africa "Libyans", while the Arabs called them "Berbers". The Copts belong to this ethnic group (see Page 1978:8).

tures had been translated into Greek as the Septuagint version. The Christian church may well have first begun to spread among the Jews (see Pearson 1986:150). To begin with, Greek was the language used by the church, as it was in most parts of the Roman empire, but by the fourth century at least three native Egyptian dialects are known to have had translations of the scriptures. Antony of Egypt, the well-known pioneer of monasticism who was born about AD 250, is said to have heard the gospels read in church as a young man, and as he knew no Greek, a translation may have existed as early as the third century, though spontaneous interpretation into the vernacular as the scriptures were being read in Greek cannot be ruled out (Groves 1948:39).

Through the famous catechetical school in Alexandria, Egyptian Christians tried to present the Christian faith not only to members of the church, but also to pagans who had been nurtured in Greek philosophy, so that this in itself was a missionary activity (Groves 1948:37). This catechetical school was the earliest important institution of theological learning in Christian antiquity (Atiya 1968:33ff). Pantaenus was head of the school in the time of Patriarch Demetrius I (AD 188-230), twelfth patriarch and contemporary of Origen, who sent him as a missionary to India (Atiya 1968:34).

Heraclas followed Demetrius as Patriarch of Alexandria, and when he increased the number of bishops from 3 to 20 he was given the title Pope, and became the first prelate in Christendom to bear that title (Atiya 1968:38). Egypt was one of the first places where the Christian faith spread beyond the common Hellenistic culture of the Mediterranean area and took root among the native, nonGreek-speaking population (Latourette 1953:91).

At the beginning of the third century Christians in Egypt were severely persecuted. Many were killed, imprisoned, mutilated or sent into exile. The dispersion caused by this persecution led to further missionary opportunities, and Egyptian Christians preached the gospel in Libya and elsewhere. At the beginning of the fourth century there were about 100 bishops in Egypt and neighbouring territories (Groves 1948:38).

The role of monks

The monastic movement that arose in the late third and early fourth century was one of the most powerful means of evangelism. "They fought demons, cured diseases, brought relief to the poor and oppressed, chased away extortionate tax-collectors and acted in a curious yet extremely effective way as the channels whereby popular grievance reached the ears of the emperor" (Frend 1993:15).

The beginnings of the monastic movement are obscure. It appears that during the persecutions of the third century some Egyptian Christians fled to the desert, living in caves and crude shelters. One of these was the pope of Alexandria himself, Dionysius (el Masri 1987a:47). When persecution abated, some remained to pray, seeing themselves as following the example of Moses, Elijah and Jesus himself. One of the first of these is reputed to have been St Paul the Hermit, who fled during the Decian persecution (249-251). At first he intended to stay in the desert only until the persecution had died down, but eventually remained in the desert for the rest of his long life (el Masri 1987a:48; Cross & Livingstone 1983:1053).

Others followed their example, and soon there were colonies of hermits in the Egyptian desert. One young man, Antony, who had inherited property from his parents, was moved by hearing the story of the rich young man (Mt 19:17ff) to sell his possessions and live a life of poverty in the desert. He and his sister both embraced the monastic life, and St Antony became famous as one who had brought a sense of order and purpose to the lives of many of the Christian desert dwellers. At that time many of them practised a somewhat extravagant and bizarre asceticism, and Antony's disciplined life was in marked contrast to their excesses. He attracted other hermits who formed a loose-knit community, though he himself lived mainly in solitude. Antony is said to have visited Alexandria twice in his life. The first time was during the persecution of Diocletian, when he and some of his followers sought martyrdom, but the government officials thought they were too ragged and disreputable to be worthy of notice. The second visit was when Antony went to support his friend and biographer Athanasius during the Arian controversy (Gonzalez 1984:140-141).

St Anthony is also said to have buried St Paul the Hermit using the cloak given to him by St Athanasius as a shroud. When he found that Paul had died, he lacked a tool to dig a grave in the stony desert soil, and according to one of the legends of the saints he was helped to do so by

two lions. El Masri (1987a:56) notes that "one of the wonders connected with the saints is their power over wild beasts, a power similar to that which Adam had before his fall." This is a recurring theme, especially in the lives of monastic saints, and I shall return to it in a later chapter.

Another of the monastic pioneers was St Pachomius (c290-346) who introduced a form of communal life that included working and wearing a kind of monastic uniform. Pachomius was said to have been a soldier before he became a Christian, and perhaps his communities had some reflection of military order and discipline in them. Monasticism thus took two forms - the eremitical and the coenobitic. Both Antony and Pachomius were native Egyptians. Their cultural background was Coptic, not Greek (Hayes 1992b:7). There were also several black monks who came from lands to the south of Egypt. One of the best-known of them was St Moses the Black, who was a slave. He escaped from slavery, and became a gangster until his conversion.

The monastic movement, therefore, was distinctly African, though it soon spread to other parts of the church. Athanasius, the Patriarch of Alexandria, was exiled several times during the theological controversies of the fourth century. First at Treves (Trier) in Gaul, and later in Rome and Constantinople. He thus introduced the monastic communal rule of the Egyptian deserts to Europe. Others took it to Syria and Mesopotamia (Atiya 1968:52-53).

As a result of the interest aroused, people from Europe and Asia were drawn to see the new African movement for themselves. One such visitor was St John Cassian of Gaul, whose books on the Egyptian monastic ideal were widely read in Europe. St Basil the Great, the founder of Greek monasticism, was another such visitor, as was St John Chrysostom, who later became Patriarch of Constantinople (Hayes 1992b:7). By the end of the fourth century monasticism had spread to almost every part of the Christian world, and for the next ten centuries at least most of the effective Christian missionaries were monks. In later chapters, therefore, I shall discuss monastic missionaries in more detail.

Even at this point, however, it might be worth noting that my own enterprise in writing about missionary methods is very different from that of most monks, and even of monastic missionaries. The primary aim of a monk was to become a better Christian, and in this what one is is

more important than what one *does*. Many writings of early monks have come down to us, but they wrote virtually nothing on missionary methods. The concern with *techniques* is that of a later, technological age. Though monks were usually the foremost missionaries in the Orthodox Church, they did not generally become monks *in order* to be missionaries. They became monks in order to be better Christians, because they saw the monastic life as the best way to live the Christian life. But this was at the centre of their mission methods. The best way to proclaim the gospel was to live a Christ-centred life. As a later monk, St Seraphim of Sarov, once said, "Acquire inner peace, and thousands around you will find their salvation" (Veronis 1994:34)

After the Great Schism of 1054, monks in the West became specialised, and there were missionary orders living under a rule. But these orders, though they were regarded as "religious", were not considered, strictly speaking, to be "monastic".

In the Orthodox Church, there are no religious "orders". Monasteries follow the same kind of rule, developed from the original rule of St Pachomius by St Basil the Great, St Theodore the Studite and others. Though male and female monasteries are separate, the rule, the dress and the kind of monastic life are the same. There are four stages in the monastic life: Novice, Rassophore, Little Schema (or Stavrophore) and Great Schema. The rassophore is tonsured, but does not take monastic vows (Cusa sa:14f).

The use of the vernacular

Another characteristic of Egyptian Christianity that, like monasticism, was to have a great influence on the missionary methods of Eastern Christianity was the use of vernacular languages. Since the conquests of Alexander the Great, Egypt had had a Hellenistic ruling class. When Egypt was conquered by the Roman Empire, Greek remained the language of commerce and trade, and this was so throughout the eastern Roman Empire. The universality of Greek greatly facilitated the spread of the Christian faith in that part of the world, and the language used by most of the early Christian communities in the eastern Mediterranean was Greek. Nevertheless even the earliest records of the church in Egypt show that vernacular languages were used. Scriptures were translated, and the liturgy celebrated, in the local Egyptian dialects (Groves 1948:39).

Church and mission in Nubia

The missionaries who planted the church in what is today called Ethiopia may have been of Egyptian origin, though they were residents of Tyre in Syria.²⁹ There will be more about them in the next section, on the church in Ethiopia. But for a century after the church had been planted in Ethiopia, there had still been no effective Christian mission to the territory in between, called Nubia.

In the persecutions of the third century many Christians fled to the deserts, and some remained there as hermits and ascetics. Some of the monks and hermits living around Aswan were in contact with the Nubians and Blemmyes. Some individuals from these groups converted, and some became monks, but there was no mass conversion of the Nubians until the sixth century (Vantini 1981:36).

The earliest recorded missions took place during the reign of the emperor Justinian (527-565). By that time the controversy that followed the Council of Chalcedon had caused the church in Egypt to be deeply divided, and so rival missions were sent to Nubia - a "Chalcedonian" one supported by the emperor, and a "non-Chalcedonian" one supported by the empress Theodora (Groves 1948:49). After the death of Justinian, Longinus was sent to organise the church in Nubia, but his ministry there was interrupted by his involvement in the controversy between the "monophysites" and the "dyophysites", which led to the establishment of rival popes and patriarchs of Alexandria (Vantini 1981:45).

At the time of the initial evangelisation of Nubia, there were three Nubian kingdoms, Nobatia in the north, Makouria in the middle, and Alwa in the south. Nobatia and Alwa adopted the non-Chalcedonian form of Christianity, while Makouria was initially converted to Byzantine Orthodoxy. Nobatia and Makouria later formed one Nubian state dominated by Makouria, with its capital at Dongola (Shenk 1993:137).

29 In the period we are discussing the Greek word *Ethiopia*, which means "land of the blacks" was applied to all countries south of Egypt, including the present-day Sudan, and countries to both east and west (Vantini 1981:34). Groves (1948:47) mentions a stele (monumental stone) at the first cataract on the Nile, which marked the border in 2000 BC. Much of what was then called "Ethiopia" is therefore now within the boundaries of modern Egypt.

Muslims invaded Nubia in 641-642, and again ten years later, but did not conquer it at that time, as there was then an organised Christian kingdom there (Fage 1986:152). Christian kings ruled in Nubia until about the fourteenth century, but after then it was ruled by Muslims, and the church declined. Vantini (1981:206f) suggests as reasons for the decline the lack of any local institutions for training the clergy, so that most, if not all, the clergy may have been of foreign origin. This led to a lack of teaching among the laity. The use of Greek and Coptic as liturgical languages, rather than the local vernaculars, and the theological disputes between "monophysites" and "dyophysites" are also cited as reasons for the disappearance of the Nubian church by 1500. The intermarriage of Arab nomads with Nubian families and the prevailing system of inheritance meant that the children born of Arab-Nubian parents became Muslims and inherited the family property.

Church and mission in north-west Africa

In North-West Africa, now also known to geographers as the Maghrib (the West), Christianity had a very different development from that in Egypt. As in Egypt, there were three main cultural and social groups. The indigenous people were the Berbers. Then there were the people of Punic (Phoenician) culture - descendants of Syrian and Lebanese traders who had established colonies there, the best-known of which was Carthage. The ruling class was formed of those of Graeco-Roman culture. The Romans had conquered Carthage quite early on in their rise to power (Groves 1948:65).

In the North-East, the Egyptian church was influential in its own right, and had its own pope, but in the North-West, the Roman province of Africa proper, the church fell under the pope of Rome. In Egypt, the language of the church was Greek, and several other local languages were used as well. In Africa (the Roman province, not the continent) the language of the church was Latin. Its services were in Latin and its literature was in Latin. In the early years, most Christians in the Roman Empire used Greek in the Liturgy, and Italy and Africa were no exceptions. In the Roman province of Africa, however, Latin was introduced in place of Greek even before it began to be used in the Liturgy in Rome itself. Sometimes sermons and Bible readings were translated into Punic, but as far as we know Berber was not used. The Christian faith did not really spread much beyond the Graeco-Roman element of the population. As a result, the North-West African church vanished some time after the

Muslim Arab invasions of the seventh century. In Egypt, the church that was planted in the first century still continues today, and has several million members. The Ethiopian Church, planted in the fourth century, also continues. But the church of North-West Africa disappeared as though it had never been.

Political changes in North-West Africa affected the life of the church, and there are five distinct periods worth noting, all of which may be distinguished by which foreign power happened to be ruling the region at the time. These are: (1) the period before Constantine, when Christianity was persecuted; (2) the Constantinian period, when Christianity was at first tolerated, and later encouraged; (3) the Vandal period, in which Arianism dominated and Catholicism was persecuted; (4) the Byzantine period, in which Catholicism flourished and Arianism was persecuted; (5) the Arab period, in which Christianity withered.

The first period was the time before the emperor Constantine made Christianity a legal religion, when Christianity was first established. North West Africa was the source of much of the corn and olive oil used in Italy, and because of this trade it seems likely that Christianity spread to this region from Rome, although there is no firm evidence of this. What is certain is that the church in the Maghrib was closely linked with the Church of Rome.

In 180 some Christians from a village called Scilli suffered persecution, and the story of this is the earliest documentary evidence of the church in North Africa (Botha 1986:25). There are several other accounts of the persecution of African Christians, and in the fourth century there was a split in the church over the question of how to treat those who had lapsed during the persecutions. Some advocated receiving the lapsed Christians back into fellowship, while others insisted on a stricter line. The strict party, who became known as Donatists after one of their leaders, maintained that a priest who had been ordained by a bishop who had lapsed under persecution was no true priest, and that those who had been baptised by such a priest needed to be baptised again, and that such a priest could not celebrate a valid Eucharist. The Donatists insisted upon the Church being holy and they believed themselves to be a mystical union of the righteous, inspired by the Holy Spirit and governed by worthy clergy (Botha 1986:26).

During the reign of the emperor Constantine, in the early fourth century, the Christian church was first tolerated, and then favoured. Persecution of Christians ceased, but the disputes over the behaviour of Christians did not cease. Soon Catholics and Donatists were persecuting each other. The Roman state authorities generally supported the Catholic party against the Donatists and in 347 tried to suppress the Donatists by force (Abun-Nasr 1971:40-41).

In the fifth century North West Africa was conquered by the Vandals, a Germanic tribe who had left their home in Eastern Europe in 406, and in 429 crossed the Straits of Gibraltar from Spain to Africa. Their leader, king Gaiseric, was a convert from Catholicism to Arianism, and most of the Vandals were Arians (Abun-Nasr 1971:45). However much the Catholics and Donatists may have differed on the question of church discipline, theologically they were much closer to each other than either was to the Vandals. Vandal rule lasted a little over 100 years, in which churches were confiscated from Catholics and given to Arians, and Arianism was favoured by the rulers.

In the sixth century the Roman empire made a comeback under the emperor Justinian. The centre of the empire had moved decisively to the eastern capital, Constantinople, and so most Western historians now refer to this as the "Byzantine" empire. It is worth remembering, however, that this is a distinctly Western perspective. Right up until Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the "Byzantines" regarded themselves as Romans (and the rulers of Italy, whom they frequently fought, they termed "Franks").³⁰

The Roman general Belisarius reconquered much of North West Africa, and once again the Catholic church attained a position of dominance, the Donatists were suppressed, and the Arians and the Vandal influence were rooted out.

³⁰ In the Ottoman Empire, all Christians were known as the "Rum millet" (Roman nation), and to this day when Christians in Syria and Egypt speak of the "Roman Church" they do not mean the church that is in communion with the pope of Rome, but that which is in communion with the patriarch of Constantinople.

In the Byzantine period, which again lasted a little more than 100 years, the first significant attempts were made to evangelise the nomadic Berber tribes of the interior mountains and the desert. These attempts, however, were more a matter of imperial policy than of missionary conviction on the part of the church in the Maghrib. Treaties were made with tribes on the frontiers of the empire, and the treaties included an acceptance of the Christian faith (Botha 1986:28). In other parts of the empire missionary monks were found who could plant churches among such tribes, but the church in North-West Africa had been divided for three hundred years or more. The Christians there, it seems, used up all their energy in fighting each other. They had no energy to spare for evangelism.

The fifth period is the period of Arab rule. In the seventh century Muslim Arabs poured out of the Arabian peninsula, and rapidly conquered Egypt and Syria from the Byzantine empire. Within a century they had conquered the whole of the North African coast, from the Red Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Christians were sold into slavery and faced discrimination in public life. They were forced to pay heavier taxes, and to wear distinctive clothes. Wherever there was a Christian church, a mosque was built nearby, and as the churches fell into ruin, the mosques flourished. In Egypt, where Christianity had taken firm root among the native population, and had become indigenous, none of this succeeded in finally uprooting the church, as the presence of millions of Coptic Christians in Egypt today attests. Though they still face discrimination, and sometimes outright persecution, they have maintained their faith for fourteen centuries.

In North West Africa it was very different. The church that had stood firm against persecution from pagan Rome collapsed under the onslaught of the Muslim Arabs. In the West, Christianity had only really taken root among the Romanised section of the population. Under Arab rule, those who could afford it emigrated to Spain or Italy. Those who could not remained, and eventually accepted Islam. The Berbers, most of whom had resisted all attempts at Christianisation, soon became Muslims. There were no African delegates at the councils of Nicaea (787) or Constantinople (869). In 837 the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch sent a mission of five bishops to try to breathe some life into the embers of the North African Church, with little success. During the pontificate of pope Gregory VII of Rome there were only two bishops left, and he had to

send a third to enable the dwindling African church to meet the canonical requirement of having three bishops to consecrate another one (Botha 1986:31). By the end of the eleventh century the church in the Maghrib was extinct.

From a missiological point of view, the example of the church in North Africa is largely negative. In places such as Egypt and Ethiopia, the church succeeded in becoming indigenous. In North West Africa it failed, and the price of that failure was the death of the church. To some extent the Donatists can be seen as something approaching an indigenous church, but even they seem to have used Latin in their liturgy, and to have done very little to evangelise beyond the coastal belt.

Church historians have given many possible reasons for the disappearance of the church in North West Africa, including those mentioned above. Other possible reasons are that there was never a strong monastic tradition in North West Africa, and that the local church structure of the bishop leading an urban church was unsuitable for the nomadic Berbers of the mountains and the desert. The church was undoubtedly weakened by its quarrels and divisions, with various factions using politically powerful sympathisers to strengthen their own position. African church historians have pointed out that theologians like Tertullian and Cyprian taught that the unity of the church depends on the Holy Spirit and not on some kind of mechanical or institutional arrangement. These theologians, with Augustine, have been particularly influential in the *theological* development of Western Christianity, but on the whole the early church in North West Africa is not a good example of mission (Hayes 1992b:18).

Church and mission in Ethiopia

Like the history of the church in North West Africa, the history of the Ethiopian Church can be divided into several periods. Unlike North West Africa, however, Ethiopia did not suffer long periods of foreign conquest. Even European colonialism affected it for only a short time in the 1930s and 1940s, when fascist Italy invaded the kingdom, at that time called Abyssinia. It was liberated a few years later with the help of South African troops .

Christianity was established in the Axumite kingdom of Ethiopia by the Syrian merchants Frumentius and Aedesius in the fourth century. They arrived as refugees, and became important officials in the royal court. There were already Christians living in the kingdom, foreign merchants

who had settled in Ethiopia. Frumentius and Aedesius organised this group into the nucleus of a church. When the king died, the queen asked them to become regents. When the new king was old enough, they returned to their homes - Aedesius went back to Tyre, but Frumentius went to Alexandria, where he asked the patriarch Athanasius (who is well known in connection with his controversy with Arius over the divinity of Christ) for help and support for the Christians of Ethiopia. Athanasius then consecrated Frumentius as bishop of Ethiopia (Kaplan 1984:15).

On his return Frumentius embarked on a campaign of evangelisation throughout the kingdom. The progress of Christianity in Ethiopia was different from that in the Roman Empire. In the latter, Christianity had begun among the lower classes, and only after a couple of centuries did it reach members of the imperial family, and finally the emperor himself. In Ethiopia, the first converts were from the upper classes, and they together with the foreign traders formed a Christian minority in the capital. Christianity was mainly influential along the main trading routes (Kaplan 1984:16).

The situation changed little until the end of the fifth century, when two groups of Syrian missionaries arrived: the *Sadqan* and the Nine Saints. They started monasteries in different parts of the country, and are said to have completed the work of translating the Bible and other theological works into the local language of Ge'ez. Because the Christian faith first took root among the ruling classes, there was no official persecution of Christians in Ethiopia (Kaplan 1984:17). Non-Chalcedonian Christians from the Byzantine Empire emigrated to Ethiopia from Egypt and Syria in the 5th and 6th centuries bringing priests, books and church articles with them (Atiya 1991:996).

The rise of Islam in the seventh century cut the Ethiopian church off from the rest of the Christian world. Since the time of Frumentius, all the bishops of the Church of Ethiopia had been sent by the Patriarch of Alexandria (of whom there were now two, a Chalcedonian and a non-Chalcedonian, since the majority of Egyptian Christians did not accept the conclusions of the Council of Chalcedon in 451). The Ethiopians, like most of the Egyptian Christians, did not accept the Council of Chalcedon. The Church in Ethiopia had only one bishop at a time with the power of ordaining other clergy, and he was always sent from Alexandria. When Egypt was invaded and conquered by Muslim Arabs, therefore, the

appointment of the archbishop of Ethiopia (called the *Abuna*) became a political tool. When there were political tensions between the Muslim rulers of Egypt and the Christian rulers of Ethiopia, the life of the church was therefore directly affected.

In the ninth century the church in Ethiopia expanded southwards with the political expansion of the kingdom under king Degna Jan, who encouraged the sending of priests as missionaries to the Shāwa and Amhara regions. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, the church and the kingdom went through difficult times. No bishop was sent from Egypt for a century and a half, and so no new clergy were ordained. People in the south rebelled against Ethiopian rule, and Christians were persecuted. At the end of this period Muslim missionaries had been active in the area, which introduced a new factor.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a new dynasty, the Zagwe, took over, with a new capital. They were regarded as usurpers by the older Axumites and by many of the clergy, and embarked on an ambitious church-building programme to try to establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the church, and to draw attention to their capital. The churches of Lalibāla, cut from solid rock, were meant to represent the holy city of Zion in the new capital. The new Zagwe dynasty was weakened by infighting, however, and was finally overthrown by an Amharan leader, Yekunno Amlak. One of his descendants, Amdä Seyon, who reigned from 1314-1344, is generally recognised as the founder of the modern Ethiopian state, and in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Ethiopian kingdom reached its heyday.

Ethiopia reached its greatest power and influence under the mediaeval Solomonic dynasty founded by Yekunno Amlak. The church at that time was also, under the protection of the kingdom, most active in mission and expansion.

Ethiopia is the most mountainous country in Africa, which helps to explain why it was not conquered by its Muslim neighbours. But its geography also helps to explain why it never expanded to the surrounding lowlands. Within the mountainous region, the high mountains were separated by deep river valleys which marked the provincial boundaries. This made travel within the kingdom difficult, and also meant that a strong central government was more often the exception than the rule. The church might have been a unifying factor, but it was weakened by some of

the peculiar characteristics of Ethiopian Christianity. One was the fact that the chief and only bishop was an Egyptian. As such, he would be aware that a vigorous missionary policy on the part of the Ethiopian Church could cause unpleasant repercussions on the Egyptian Church under Muslim rule. Because it took a long time to get a new bishop from Egypt, the Ethiopian Church suffered from a chronic shortage of clergy. Young children were often ordained as priests and deacons to try to ensure that there would be at least some clergy between bishops. The ordained ministry therefore tended to become hereditary in certain families, and the clergy were often poorly trained.

Though monasticism originated in Egypt, and the Ethiopian Church continued to get its chief bishops from Egypt until the 1950s, Ethiopia's first missionaries and its first monks came from Syria. Until the thirteenth century monasticism was confined to the northern province of Tigre. The leaders of monasteries were usually members of noble families who either did not want to go into politics, or who had been ousted from political careers. Some monasteries supported the kings, while others played a role analogous to that of the prophets of ancient Israel, and criticised the kings.

The king, they argued, was first and foremost a Christian and hence subject to the same laws as any believer. His claim to own all the land in the kingdom could not be accepted since the land belonged to God. The admittance of new monks to the monasteries was not subject to his control even when those monks happened to be members of his own family. The determination of the proper date to celebrate a holiday was an ecclesiastical decision over which the king had no jurisdiction; and perhaps most importantly, the king, like any other Christian, was limited to one wife (Kaplan 1984:36-37).

By this time Muslim principalities had been established on the African shore of the Gulf of Aden, and in Nubia, which lay between Ethiopia and Egypt.

In the fourteenth century Muslim rulers began putting great pressure on Ethiopia, and in the wars that lasted nearly two hundred years the size and influence of the Christian kingdom was greatly reduced. In the time of the emperor Lebna Dengel (1508-1540) a Somali Muslim, Ahmed ibn Mohammed Gran invaded parts of Ethiopia, plundering and destroying churches, including the cathedral at Axum. Lebna Dengel sought aid from the Portuguese, who had defeated the Egyptian navy in 1509, thus becoming

the dominant power in the Indian Ocean (Groves 1948:134). They arrived at the beginning of the reign of Galawdewos (1540-1559), Lebna Dengel's successor (Groves 1948:110f). The Portuguese sought to westernise the Ethiopian Church, and at one point the Roman pope consecrated a patriarch for Ethiopia, with two suffragan bishops, one of whom sought to use military force to bring the Ethiopians into submission to Rome. This was repeated several times without much success until the emperor Malak Sagad III ordered obedience to Rome. The new Portuguese Patriarch, Alphonso Mendez, excommunicated the *abuna*, and began a tour of the country, which led to revolts. These only died down after the expulsion of the Roman patriarch and the restoration of the Coptic one (Atiya 1968:154ff).

Emissaries from Rome continued in their efforts to convert the Ethiopian Church for the next two centuries, though with little success. In the nineteenth century, however, they turned their attention to the pagan Galla, where they gained several converts and established churches. In the nineteenth century, too, Western Protestant missionaries entered the country (Atiya 1968:156).

Ethiopian Christians like to trace their Judaeo-Christian heritage back to the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon (1 Ki 10:1-10), and many believe that she brought the ark of the covenant back to Ethiopia with her. The dynasty founded by king Yekunno Amlak was believed to be a restoration of the old Solomonic dynasty. Whatever the truth of the legends, the fact is that there has been a strong Jewish influence in Ethiopia. The Falasha people have held to the Jewish faith, and several of them have emigrated to Israel with the assistance of the Israeli government. The Ethiopians practise male circumcision, eat kosher food, and observe the Sabbath (Atiya 1968:158), so there is certainly evidence for a Jewish influence on the Ethiopian Church. In doctrine, the Ethiopian Church differs little from the Coptic Church, with which it remains in full communion, even though it became autocephalous (appointed its own archbishop) in the 1950s. This unity of doctrine may, at least in part, be attributed to the fact that from the fourth century until the twentieth century the *abuna* (archbishop) was an Egyptian.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA

Christianity began in Western Asia, and the *Acts of the Apostles* describes its spread from Jerusalem to Antioch, and from thence to what is now called Asia Minor. It also spread eastwards, to Persia and India. There are traditions that the apostle Thomas himself evangelised India as far as Punjab, and possibly further south (Tisserant 1957:2ff). Many of the historical records of the Indian Church were burnt at the instigation of Portuguese missionaries applying the principles of the Counter-Reformation in Europe following the Synod of Diamper in 1599 (Tisserant 1957:65).

MISSIONS TO THE SLAVS

The mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius to the Slavs is perhaps the best-known of Orthodox missionary enterprises. Most Orthodox Christians today are to be found among the Slavic peoples, and they regard the brothers Cyril and Methodius as the founders of their religion and culture. Their mission is also significant in marking a noticeable difference between Eastern and Western methods of mission; it took place at a time of rising tension between East and West.

The Slavs entered the Roman empire as part of the "barbarian invasions" of the fifth and sixth centuries. Until the end of the sixth century the Roman empire had managed to keep the Slavs beyond the Danube, but in the seventh century the Slavs broke away from the Avar empire, and many of them settled in the Balkans, as far south as the northern parts of modern Greece. These Slavs were gradually absorbed into the empire, and many became Christian. In the seventh century the Turkic Bulgars invaded the Balkans, and conquered many of the Slavic peoples living there, and they in turn became Slavified but the Bulgarian state that developed was very close to Constantinople (Schmemmann 1977:255).

Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius were sent to Moravia in 862 by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople at the invitation of Prince Rostislav of Moravia, who said that his people wanted to be Christians, but had no one to teach them the Christian faith in their own language. The Frankish missionaries insisted on using Latin (Veronis 1994:44). As part of their preparation Cyril had worked on translation of the scriptures and liturgical texts into Slavonic, and his work became the foundation for the development of Old Church Slavonic as a liturgical language. In Moravia they clashed with German, and in particular, Frankish mis-

sionaries, and one of the points of disagreement was their use of the vernacular. The two brothers visited Rome, and sought approval for their mission from the pope. Cyril³¹ died there, shortly after becoming a monk, and Methodius returned to his mission with the approval of the Roman pope, and eventually had permission for the use of the vernacular though after Methodius's death it was again forbidden, and his disciples continued their work in Bulgaria rather than Moravia (Stamoolis 1986:21).

Bulgaria

Eventually the western Slavs became part of the Latin West, rather than the Greek East, and it was in Bulgaria that the work of translation begun by Cyril and Methodius really began to bear fruit. Bulgaria had been part of the empire, but it became independent under the Bulgar khans, who united the Slavic tribes they ruled. Many of the Slavs were already Christian, but Boris, whose reign began in 852, sought to use Christianity as an instrument of state policy. Though their Slavic subjects were mostly Christian, the Bulgarian ruling class were pagan, and Boris wavered between Byzantine and Roman Christianity (Schmemmann 1977:260). The matter was settled by a military campaign in which the empire defeated the Bulgars, and Boris was baptised on the battlefield with the emperor for his godfather, but this led to a rebellion among his bodyguard (Schmemmann 1977:260).

The rebellion was suppressed, but it was clear that there were two different policies. The aim of the Byzantines was to incorporate Bulgaria fully into the empire; Boris, however, intended to build an independent Bulgarian empire, using Constantinople as a model, and for this he wanted an autocephalous church. When Constantinople was unwilling to grant this, Boris turned to Rome, which was then estranged from Constantinople as a result of the Photian schism, and there was a brief period of Latinisation. Boris found the incipient ultramontanistism of Rome

31 Cyril was his monastic name - his baptismal name was Constantine.

even more inimical to his aims and turned back to Byzantium, and by this time the Byzantine empire was willing to make a tactical compromise, and to recognise some form of autonomy for the Bulgarian Church (Schmemmann 1977:261).

One result of these political manoeuvrings was that they created the space for the development of an indigenous Slavic Christianity. The disciples of Cyril and Methodius quietly continued their work, especially in western Bulgaria, away from the intrigues of the capital. Boris himself regarded Christianity as far more than a political tool, and eventually abdicated the throne, and retired to a monastery (Schmemmann 1977:262f). In the tenth century Byzantine power increased, and the empire conquered and reabsorbed the Bulgarian empire, and the Bulgarian empire and church lost their independence for a while, but that goes beyond the history of mission.

The planting of the Serbian Church

The Serbs first encountered Christianity in the seventh century, and in the ninth century the Christianity established as a result of the work of Cyril and Methodius and their disciples reached Serbia from Pannonia and Bulgaria. At the beginning of the twelfth century Constantinople was under Latin rule, and the monk Sava of Serbia went to Nicaea, the temporary capital of the empire, and was made archbishop of the Serbian Church. From the Byzantine point of view this was important to prevent the Serbian Church from falling into the Latin orbit (Schmemmann 1977:268).

Sava returned to Serbia and reorganised the church there, and crowned his brother Stephen king, and St Sava is thus regarded as the father of both Serbian Orthodoxy and Serbian statehood (Schmemmann 1977:268).

The establishment of Russian Orthodoxy

There are many parallels between the establishment of Orthodox Christianity in Bulgaria in the ninth century and in Russia a century later. The Dnieper river was one of the trade routes between the Baltic and the Black Sea and Constantinople, and the Slavic tribes had been conquered by Scandinavian traders, the Rus. Though there were some Christians among the Slavs, their rulers were predominantly pagan, until Prince

Vladimir of Kiev accepted Christianity in 988, and made Christianity the state religion. Historians are uncertain about whether Bulgarian or Byzantine Orthodoxy was the greater influence on the Russian Church in its early years, known as the Kievan period (Schmemmann 1977:294).

After 250 years, Russia was conquered by the Mongol Tatars in 1240, and the centre of political authority moved north. Novgorod in the north-west was the only part of Russia that remained independent of Tatar rule, and functioned as an independent city-state. While the Tatars ruled indirectly, their manner of rule was authoritarian and autocratic. The princes of Russia continued to rule their territories, but as vassals of the Tatar khans, to whom they had to pay tax and tribute (Kochan 1978:24). While the head of the Russian Church was still known as the Metropolitan of Kiev, in effect the seat of the metropolitan moved to the north, and was eventually established in Moscow (Schmemmann 1977:303).

A revival of Orthodoxy in northern Russia began under St Sergius of Radonezh (1320-1392). The hesychast revival in the Byzantine Empire, centred on Mount Athos, reached Russia, and led to the establishment of many monasteries in northern Russia.

A contemporary of St Sergius of Radonezh was St Stephen of Perm (1340-1396). He grew up as the son of a priest in a Muscovite settlement in north-west Siberia, and learned the language and customs of the native Zyrian people in the area in his youth. By 1365 he had entered a monastery in the distant town of Rostov, where he studied Greek, and so was able to read the original text of the scriptures, and also studied the lives and mission methods of SS Cyril and Methodius. In 1378 he was ordained priest and returned to Perm and began a mission among the Zyrians, for whom he developed a written language with its own alphabet. He resisted attempts on the part of some church officials to get him to function as an agent of the state and promote Slavic culture. His humble demeanour impressed the Zyrians who had been used to Russians who were greedy traders, interested only in furs. His preaching, however, was more bold and confrontational, and led to a confrontation with a pagan medicine man named Pam. Stephen proposed a divine trial of fire and water, in which they would both pass through a burning hut and jump into

an icy river. Pam accepted at first, and then withdrew, whereupon the Zyrians accepted baptism, but wanted to kill Pam when he refused. St Stephen rejected the death sentence. His main method of evangelism, however, was less confrontational, and was through the Divine Liturgy.

St Stephen was one of the pioneer missionaries in the time of Mongol dominance, and his methods were followed by many missionaries in the 19th century. But there most other monastic missionaries of his time, and for several centuries afterwards, followed a "colonial" model, establishing monasteries as outposts of Russian culture, and promoting Christianisation as part of Russification. In their search for solitude they settled in remote parts of northern Russia, establishing small monastic outposts. They would teach and baptise the neighbouring people, mostly Finnish nomads, who would then settle in the vicinity of the monastery, take up agriculture, and learn to speak Russian (Smirnoff 1986:2).

After having been ruled by the Tatars for 2 centuries, the Russians began the conquest of their erstwhile conquerors, and the period of Russian colonialism began in 1552 with the conquest of the kingdom of Kazan, and 145 years later, in 1697, Russian rule had reached the furthest boundary of north-east Asia. This brought into the Russian state a vast and varied population of many religions and languages. The Finnish and some of the Mongolian tribes practised shamanism, and others of the Mongolians were Buddhists. Some of the Tatars too practised shamanism, while many of those in the towns had become Muslims (Smirnoff 1986:6). There was little systematic mission in this period. Most of the Russian clergy in Siberia were chaplains to the troops or to administrators, and were ill-equipped for mission or for learning the local languages. Mission efforts were sporadic, and dependent on the interest of individual priests and bishops, and their efforts were often not followed up by their successors. Such of the people who were baptised were uninstructed, as the services were in Slavonic, which they did not understand (Smirnoff 1986:9ff).

Eventually many of those who had been baptised began to fall away, and in 1828 the Holy Synod issued an appeal for missionaries to help arrest this trend. One of those who responded was Macarius Gloukharev (1792-1847). He revived the methods of St Stephen of Perm by studying the local languages, and translating the Divine Liturgy and parts of the Bible. Because of the situation in which many of those who had been

hastily baptised with little instruction in the past were falling away, he only baptised those who had received thorough instruction (Smirnoff 1986:17-18). He also used the method used by many Western missionaries in the same period - that of settling converts in Christian villages. But many of the Western missionaries who adopted such methods - a long period of instruction and establishment of Christian villages - also kept aloof from their flocks, sometimes not even drinking from the same cup, or allowing them into their houses. Macarius, who was a monk influenced by the hesychast revival of St Paisius Velichkovsky, adopted the opposite approach. Instead of employing his converts as servants, he acted as a servant, sweeping and cleaning their homes (Stamoolis 1986:30).

The vernacular principle of St Stephen of Perm was further extended by Nikolai Ilminski (1821-1891). Many of the Tatar Christians were becoming Muslims, and Ilminski, a linguist, at first tried translating literature into the literary version of the language used by the Muslim teachers. But he discovered that it had many words borrowed from Persian and Arabic that were not understood by the common people, and so he started producing literature in the common language (Smirnoff 1986:30ff).

OTHER BALKAN CHURCHES

There are three non-Slavic churches in the Balkans - the churches of Greece, Albania and Romania.

The Church of Greece

The Church of Greece is one of the younger Orthodox Churches, though, as we know from the New Testament, it had been evangelised in the first century. At that time Greece was already part of the Roman Empire, and from the 8th century it was part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, where it remained until Greece won its political independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1829. Four years later the Church of Greece received ecclesiastical independence (Stavrou 1988:187). The Bavarian Monarchy which ruled Greece set up a Holy Synod on the Russian model, and closed nearly two-thirds of the monasteries that had been open under Ottoman rule. The new Greece was a secular state. Nonetheless, the Church survived as an institution with an important role in national life. Even today 97% of the population are members of the Orthodox Church of Greece.

After the Second World War Greece was the only Orthodox country (i.e. a country in which most of the citizens were members of the Orthodox Church) that was free to engage in mission and evangelism, a situation that persisted until 1990. It was in Greece that the modern revival of Orthodox mission began, with the establishment of *Apostoliki Diakonia* and its missionary arm, *Porefthendes* in the early 1960s. I have described this elsewhere, but it should be noted here that as a result of this many clergy and laity from the Church of Greece have been active in mission service abroad.

The Church of Albania

Christianity spread among the people of Albania in the first century. Until the 8th century it was under Rome, but it was then transferred to Constantinople. After the schism of 1054 the Ghegs in the north were Roman Catholics and the Tosks in the South were Orthodox. After the Ottoman conquest in the 14th century Islam also took root, and by the 19th century only half the population was still Christian. In part this may have been because of the use of the Greek language. The Patriarchate of Alexandria discouraged the use of Albanian in services and schools. The growth of Albanian nationalism in the 19th century led to an increase in the use of the language (Ramet 1988:149-150).

Albania gained its independence in 1912, but spent most of the First World War under foreign occupation. After the war attempts to set up an autocephalous Albanian Church continued, and its autocephaly was finally recognised by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1937. After the Second World War, however, the communist government of Enver Hoxha placed increasingly heavy restrictions on the Church, until in 1967 it decided to ban religion altogether, and repealed the statutes guaranteeing freedom of worship. All churches, mosques and monasteries were closed and confiscated. In 1975 all the surviving Orthodox bishops and most of the priests were in prison, and the Albanian government proudly proclaimed itself the world's first atheist state (Ramet 1988:157).

After the fall of the Hoxha regime, Bishop Anastasios Yannoulatos, the foremost Orthodox missiologist of the 20th century, was sent to Albania at the beginning of 1991 by the Ecumenical Patriarch as Patriarchal Exarch to revive the Church of Albania. In June 1992 he became Archbishop of Tirana and all Albania. With the help of Greek, African and American missionaries he opened a seminary in Tirana and ordained

many young clergy (Voulgarakis et al. 1997:20). Two of the American priests serving there have served as short-term missionaries in East Africa, and received mission training at the Protestant Fuller School of World Mission in California. A Kenyan priest has also been teaching at the seminary. In 1995 Archbishop Anastasios told the International Orthodox Mission conference, meeting in Brookline, USA, that while there were more than 200 Roman Catholic missionaries and 450 Protestant foreign missionaries seeking to establish their respective faiths, and the Muslims were being helped by several hundred from outside Albania, the Orthodox Church had only 15 foreign missionaries (Yannoulatos 1995:14).

The Church of Romania

The Church of Romania is less significant for Orthodox mission than the other Balkan churches. It suffered less under communism, and was able to maintain a flourishing monastic life. It had more priests, parishes, churches and monasteries than the Russian Orthodox Church, though the Orthodox population was smaller (Ramet 1988).

ORTHODOX MISSIONS IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN ASIA

In Northern Asia, Orthodox mission was mainly the work of the Russian Orthodox Church, spreading eastwards across Siberia with the expansion of the Russian Empire. This eventually brought the Russian Orthodox Church into contact with other Asian countries, such as China, Korea and Japan, and in each of these countries mission was undertaken in the 19th century or earlier, but was approached in very different ways.

In India, apart from the ancient church in the southern part of the sub-continent, there has been a small mission in Calcutta. In Indonesia and the Philippines there has been centripetal mission, with local people on those places seeking to join the Orthodox Church.

Orthodox missions in China

In the late seventeenth century, as the Russian Empire expanded eastwards in Siberia towards the Pacific Ocean, it came into increasing contact with China. At the same time the Manchus conquered China, and replaced the Ming dynasty in 1644 with their own Ch'ing dynasty. In 1685 they conquered Albazin, and took a number of Cossacks and Orthodox Albazinians captive, together with their priest, Fr Maxim Leontiev. Many of the Albazinians entered the imperial service. As a non-Chinese dynasty, the Manchus welcomed foreigners into the imperial honour guard,

and by treating the captives generously, they opened a useful diplomatic channel to Russia, while at the same time making it appear to the local Chinese that Russia was a vassal state. Father Maxim was granted an old Buddhist temple to convert into a church (HTM 1991:13-15).

Fr Leontiev died in 1712, after serving his flock for 27 years, and the Albazinians petitioned for a new priest to be sent to them. Tsar Peter I ordered the Metropolitan of Tobolsk to send one, and Archimandrite Hilarion Lezhaisky, accompanied by a priest, deacon and several other ministers arrived in Peking (Beijing). Father Hilarion himself died only two years later, and it was proposed (in Russia) that a bishop be sent, which would enhance the status of the diplomatic mission, and Fr Innocent Kulchitsky was raised to the episcopate. The Chinese were not ready to admit a bishop, however, and Bishop Innocent engaged in mission in Eastern Siberia instead, where he became bishop of Irkutsk on Lake Baikal.

During the rest of the eighteenth century, there was a series of missions to Peking (Beijing), but they were regarded by both the Russian and Chinese governments as little more than adjuncts to the diplomatic missions, and chaplains to the descendants of the original group of captives and other Orthodox Christians living in the Chinese capital. By 1860 there were still fewer than 200 Orthodox Christians, and this number did not grow significantly until after 1900 (HTM 1991:16,37).

After 1858, when China was weakened by wars with several Western powers, the Treaties of Tientsin and Peking granted foreign nations diplomatic residence in China, and opened up Chinese ports for foreign trade. One result of this was that the Russian church and diplomatic missions were at last separated, and under Archimandrite Gury Karpov, head of the mission from 1858-1864 the preaching of the gospel expanded beyond Peking (HTM 1991:18f). The first Chinese priest, Fr Mitrophan, was ordained in 1880 by Bishop Nikolai Kasatkin in Japan. At that time, however, Christians were generally unpopular in China, owing to their association with foreign imperialism. The expansionist Western powers and Japan used gunboat diplomacy to divide China into "spheres of influence". The French and German Roman Catholic missionaries, in particular, were used to further the political interests of their home countries (HTM 1991:23-24). The arrogance of these missionaries led to a violent anti-Christian reaction, which culminated in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. The "spirit boxers" practised traditional Chinese martial arts,

and tortured Chinese Christians to force them to renounce their faith. In its early stages, the Boxer movement was primarily aimed at Chinese Christians; later it was generally opposed to anything seen as foreign, including the Manchu dynasty itself, and besieged the foreign legations in Peking as well as destroying mission property of the various Christian bodies. Fr Mitrophan and his family were killed, along with many other Chinese Christians (HTM 1991:31-32). The Orthodox had a greater loss in proportion to their numbers than either Roman Catholics or Protestants (Stamoolis 1986:42).

After 1900 the Chinese mission was led by bishop Innocent Figurovsky, who among other things had to minister to 80 000 Orthodox living in Manchuria, many of whom were working on the railway line (Stamoolis 1986:42). Two hundred and twenty-two Orthodox Christians had been killed in the Boxer Rebellion, and after that there was a rapid expansion. Male and female monasteries were established, and churches were established in several provinces. There were several schools and a theological seminary in Peking (Beijing). By 1915 there were 5 587 baptised Chinese Christians, of whom 583 had been baptised that year (HTM 1991:37).

After the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917, the main source of mission funds was cut off, and there was also a large influx of Russian refugees, particularly in Manchuria. After the communist revolution in China itself there was a Chinese bishop, and the church in China became autonomous in 1957 (Stamoolis 1986:42). But most churches were closed after the Great Cultural Revolution in 1966-67, and today the only known functioning Orthodox church in China is in Harbin in Manchuria.

"The mission began not in the deliberate evangelic designs of churchmen, but as it were a random spark kindled by the clash of two expanding empires, had flickered dimly for a century and a half, always near to being quenched, before beginning to burn steadily, yet burst finally into a blaze of over two hundred holy martyrs, whose love for Christ was stronger than death" (HTM 1991:39).

Orthodox mission in Japan

In 1861 the Russian priest Nikolai Kasatkin went to Japan as a consular chaplain. He learnt the Japanese language, and gave Russian lessons to Japanese people, some of whom became Orthodox, and as evangelists started the Orthodox Church in Japan (Cary 1976:377). I will deal with this in more detail in later chapters.

ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA

In America, Orthodox missionaries from Russia had planted a church in Alaska by the beginning of the 19th century. They were preceded by Russian traders and fur trappers, the *promyshlenniki*, who visited and settled in Alaska in the second half of the 18th century. As most of them were Orthodox Christians, they held prayers in which some of the local people joined (Meerson 1998:116).

The traders were consolidated into a single chartered company at the end of the 18th century, and as part of a charter missionaries were sent in the form of a group of monks from Valaam monastery. Within a few months they had baptised several thousand people (Oleksa 1987:13). I shall deal with this in more detail in a later chapter. There followed various setbacks, and the missionary party was reduced to one, the monk Herman, who withdrew to an island because of the oppressive character of the Russian American Company's management.

A fresh start was made in 1824 with the arrival of the priest Ivan Veniaminov, a native of Irkutsk in Siberia. After his wife died he became a bishop, taking the monastic name of Innocent, and established the church in the area. Eventually he became Metropolitan of Moscow, and founded the Orthodox Missionary Society, and is known to American Orthodox Christians today as St Innocent of Alaska. When Alaska was sold to the United States in 1867 he recommended that the seat of the bishop be moved from Alaska to San Francisco, and that the church should appoint an English-speaking bishop (Meerson 1988:117).

In the second half of the 18th century immigrants from traditionally Orthodox lands in Eastern Europe and the Near East caused it to be spread throughout North America. A former Roman Catholic priest, Fr Nicholas Bjerring, was sent to New York as a missionary. Most of the Russian bishops and priests sent to the English-speaking parts of the United States, however, found it difficult to cope with the different culture. They regarded it as a temporary assignment only and there were problems with the Orthodox diaspora, which I will discuss more fully in a later chapter (Meerson 1988:118).

After the Russian Revolution, funds dried up, and communication with the Moscow Patriarchate was disrupted. The home churches of many of the immigrants, perhaps fearing for the pastoral care of their flocks, sent their own bishops and priests, and American Orthodoxy split into a dozen

or more overlapping ethnic jurisdictions, with their bishops and priests answerable to the church in the home country (Meerson 1988:122). The largest of these were the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, which cared for immigrants from Greece, Cyprus and Turkey; the Orthodox Church of America (formed from the original Russian mission and granted autocephaly by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1970), and the Antiochian Archdiocese, which cared for immigrants from Syria and Lebanon. These and several other smaller bodies have formed the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA) which has made it possible for the different Orthodox groups in North America to cooperate in mission.

ORTHODOXY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Orthodoxy did not reach sub-Saharan Africa in any significant way until the 19th century, and mainly did so in the form of Greek and Lebanese traders and immigrants. Where they were present in significant numbers they started churches.

In the 20th century various independent church groups in East Africa became linked with the African Orthodox Church, one of the groups that traced its episcopal succession through the *episcopus vagans* Joseph René Vilatte. Though not recognised as canonically Orthodox by Orthodox bishops, they regarded themselves as Orthodox, and after the Second World War gradually began drawing nearer to, and eventually uniting with, canonical Orthodox churches. I will deal with this more fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Some recent examples of Orthodox mission

ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

As we approach the end of the twentieth century, it is possible to look back and see something of the changing patterns. It is too soon to assess which of the many trends will ultimately be the most effective, and it is possible to note some of the main features, and to try to examine a few of them in more detail.

When the century began, the most notable Orthodox missions were in East Asia. In Japan, Bishop Nikolai Kasatkin (now known to Orthodox Christians as St Nicholas of Japan) was overseeing the Japanese mission, while in China the Orthodox Church experienced rapid growth following the martyrdom of Chinese Christians during the Boxer rebellion. The Japanese mission survived the Russo-Japanese war of 1905, but slowed down after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

In the West, mission in Alaska had slowed down, following the sale of that territory to the United States, and the enforced Anglicisation of the Alaskans that followed. In the eastern USA, however, massive immigration from Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe and the Near East was altering the character and centre of gravity of American Orthodoxy. The bishop of the Russian mission moved his headquarters from Alaska to San Francisco, and eventually to New York.

In Africa, Orthodox mission had barely started at the beginning of the twentieth century. A few immigrant Greek communities were scattered around the continent, and there were some isolated traders from Greece, and other Eastern Mediterranean countries who may have been Orthodox, but were effectively cut off from the church. But Orthodoxy was effectively confined to Egypt.

In the Orthodox heartland of the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean and Russia, the political convulsions of the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution that followed it marked great changes. In Russia, the Bolshevik Revolution put an abrupt end to most of the mission work

of the Russian Orthodox Church, which was not only the largest of the Orthodox Churches, but also the only one that had been in a position to engage in mission since the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth century. All mission work was strictly prohibited by the new Russian regime, and the Russian Church was faced with a struggle for survival.

The Ottoman Empire disintegrated after the First World War, and was replaced by a new lean Turkey, which, as a secular state, should have provided greater opportunities for mission. Instead, the Greek-Turkish War of 1921-22 resulted in a state of hostility, and the exchange of populations, by which Greeks living in Turkey were resettled in Greece, and Turks living in Greece were resettled in Turkey, meant that the number of Orthodox Christians in Turkey was drastically reduced, and Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians were looked on with hostility by Greeks and Turks alike though sometimes used by the Turkish authorities to embarrass the Greeks (Jacob 1970:60). It was not until the late 1950s that a new vision for mission began to be actively promoted in Greece with the publication of the *Porefthendes* newsletter.

Balkan nationalism was a hindrance to mission. The countries that had recently lived in the shadow of the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian Empires were trying to cope with tensions between nation and state. The problems of national identity, statehood and boundary disputes between the states as well as ethnic tensions within made new or newly revived states like Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Romania and others little able to cope with the idea of mission. Those tensions were to last throughout the century, and the end is still not in sight. In many of those countries, Orthodox Christians were either an insecure minority or an insecure majority trying to maintain their position. For many in such a position, mission was perceived as a threat.

The Bolshevik Revolution also had serious effects in America. The Russian mission in America had lost contact with the Patriarch in Moscow, who had said that in the civil war that followed the revolution, those dioceses that found themselves cut off should do whatever was necessary to keep the church going. This led to the formation of a synod of Russian bishops in exile, which was initially based in Yugoslavia. The Americans were divided over whether to throw in their lot with the synod, which later became known as the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia (ROCOR) or the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA). Eventually

three groups emerged in America, one affiliated to the Synod, one trying to maintain some contact with Moscow, while the third decided to try to ride out the storm on its own, and later became the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). In the confusion, none of these was able to give adequate pastoral care to the Orthodox living in America, who increasingly looked towards the churches in their nations of origin for support. So clergy and bishops were sent from Bulgaria, Albania, Syria, Greece and other countries to care for their emigrant flocks. This too was not conducive to mission, as Orthodoxy in America developed into a series of overlapping "jurisdictions" which eventually took on the characteristics of Protestant denominations, except that the differences between them were explained in terms of ethnic origin rather than theology.

For about fifty years in the middle of the century, therefore - from roughly 1920-1970 - Orthodox mission seemed to be conspicuous by its absence. It was flourishing in some places at the beginning of the century. It was flourishing in other places at the end of the century. But there was a very noticeable gap in the middle. It was this gap that led some outside the Orthodox Church (and even some within) to conclude that the Orthodox Church was not a missionary Church.

In spite of appearances, however, Orthodox mission was not dead. As a germinating seed is hidden, and its activity does not appear on the surface, so the seeds of new Orthodox mission were planted, and germinated, and sprouted, until in many places they began to flourish towards the end of the century.

EPISCOPI VAGANTES AND ORTHODOX MISSION

One of the strange ways in which seeds of Orthodoxy were planted was through wandering bishops, known as *episcopi vagantes*. Anson (1964) has traced the careers of many of these in his book *Bishops at large*. From the 1860s onwards there have been a number of ecclesiastical eccentrics who have been convinced that almost the sole characteristic of the church is the existence of a bishop with "valid" apostolic succession through the laying on of hands.

The *episcopi vagantes*, having procured what they regarded as valid episcopal consecration by one means or another, clothed themselves in elaborate vestments and even more elaborate titles, and wandered around offering episcopal consecration to all comers. After the Roman Pope Leo XIII pronounced Anglican orders invalid in 1896, several Anglican clergy

had themselves secretly reordained by *episcopi vagantes* to be satisfied, at least in their own minds, that the sacraments they administered were valid (Anson 1964:84f). The activities of the *episcopi vagantes* resulted in the proliferation of numerous small denominations and sects, some of which were later united with the Orthodox Church.

The wandering bishop whose activities have had most effect on the Orthodox Church was Joseph René Vilatte, a lapsed Catholic, who was born in Paris in 1854, and emigrated to Canada where he acted as a rural catechist (Anson 1964:92). He attended a seminary for a while, but drifted towards Calvinism, and became a free-lance Presbyterian missionary at Green Bay, Wisconsin among Belgian immigrants. There he linked up with the Anglicans, but when the question of ordination arose, he preferred to travel to Switzerland to be ordained by the Old Catholics.

After more quarrels with the Episcopalians and Old Catholics, Vilatte next sought the protection of the Russian Orthodox archbishop in San Francisco, but then heard of a group in Ceylon and South India that had broken away from the Catholic Church in protest against Rome's severing of their connection with Portugal. The leader of this group, a Brahmin named Antonio Francisco-Xavier Alvarez, who had been consecrated bishop of the Independent Catholic Church of Ceylon, Goa and India, and styled himself Mar Julius I, was willing to consecrate Vilatte as bishop. Alvarez sought, and is said to have obtained, the permission of the Syrian Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch to do this, and raised Vilatte to the episcopate in May 1892, as Mar Timotheus, Archbishop of the Old Catholic Churches of America (Anson 1964:105f). On returning to America, however, Vilatte soon abandoned the Belgians for a group of dissident Poles, who, unhappy with the Irish and Italian bishops of the American Catholic hierarchy, sought to form an independent Polish Church. After consecrating a bishop for them, Vilatte crossed the Atlantic to Wales, where he visited the monastery of the Ancient British Church, and offered to ordain all the monks.

He then travelled to Italy and France, where he performed more ordinations, and after returning to America launched a new body, the American Catholic Church, in 1915. He then lived in retirement, from which he emerged to consecrate George Alexander McGuire as the first Patriarch of the African Orthodox Church in 1921. He returned to France and to the Roman Catholic Church, and lived in a cottage in the grounds of a monastery, where he secretly raised one of the Cistercian novices to the

episcopate before he died in 1929. Anson, himself a Roman Catholic, remarked that "when recalling the kaleidoscopic career of this utterly unstable Frenchman, it is well to remember that 'the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea, and enclosed fish of every kind at once'. Peter the Fisherman *did* manage to get this very odd fish entangled in the meshes of his net before he died, and that is something for which we can be thankful" (Anson 1964:128). What is perhaps even more worth recalling is that, for all his eccentricity, Vilatte himself managed to cast a net into the sea, which enclosed fish of many different kinds, and it is only now possible to see of what kinds some of them were.

The African Orthodox Church

The African Orthodox Church (AOC), whose first patriarch was consecrated by Vilatte, was the offspring of the Pan-African movement, one of the leading figures of which was Marcus Garvey, the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), based in the USA. Some of the clergy associated with the movement conceived the idea of forming a single black church, and one of the main proponents of this view was an Anglican priest, George Alexander McGuire, who sought affiliation with the Orthodox Church as a black ethnic jurisdiction.

McGuire was born in Antigua in 1866, of an Anglican father and a Moravian mother, and was trained in theology in the Virgin Islands (then part of the Danish West Indies). He served in the Moravian ministry for a while, and then emigrated to the USA, where he became an Episcopalian (Anglican). He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1897, and served in several parts of the USA, including Arkansas. There he was convinced that if the church was to grow among black Americans, it needed black leadership, and McGuire developed this as the notion of an autonomous black church (Platt 1989:474).

McGuire returned to Antigua in 1913, but went back to the USA after the First World War, where he became involved in the UNIA. This reinforced his view of the need for black autonomy in the political, social and economic arenas - and also in the church. He was elected as the chaplain-general of the UNIA, and conceived the idea of a universal black church that would unite all black people everywhere. He started a black congregation in New York City independent of the Episcopal Church,

which effectively severed his connection with that body. This became the nucleus of an Independent Episcopal movement composed of black parishes that used the Episcopal liturgy, but functioned independently under McGuire (Platt 1989:475).

In 1921 a group of these churches elected McGuire as their bishop, while a wider group, representing autonomous black parishes in the USA, Canada and Cuba confirmed the election, and constituted themselves the first General Synod of the African Orthodox Church (Platt 1989:476).

After his election, McGuire sought consecration to the historic episcopate within the apostolic succession of bishops. He approached the Russian Orthodox bishop in the USA, but at that time, immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Orthodox Church in America was in a difficult position. The Russian bishop was also concerned about the ethnic exclusiveness that McGuire seemed to want. George McGuire was eventually ordained bishop by Joseph René Vilatte (Anson 1964:105ff). In 1935 the Syrian Jacobite Patriarchate of Antioch declared Vilatte's episcopal orders null and void.

Philippines

One of the places where bodies in the Vilatte succession were active was the Philippines. Bishop Aftimos (Alopen Jacob), alias Harold James Donovan, another bishop in the Vilatte succession, spent three years in the Philippines in the early 1980s, and established two churches and six chapels, and ordained five priests. There were about 5000 members of the Orthodox Catholic Church there when Bishop Aftimos returned to America, leaving the flock in the Philippines to fend for itself. There were also two bishops consecrated by Bishop Aftimos, both married, who were concerned that the church in the Philippines should be canonically Orthodox. One of the priests, the Revd. Philip Castro, then wrote to various Orthodox bodies around the world, to see if any could be found that would take this flock under its wing.³²

32 Letters, Fr Philip Castro to Stephen Hayes, 14 Nov 1989, 22 Jan 1990

Eventually the group linked up with Archbishop Dionysios of New Zealand under the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and Philip Castro was ordained as Hieromonk Philemon Castro.

There were other groups also concerned about the establishment of Orthodoxy in the Philippines. There was a Greek community in Manila, and a prominent Orthodox family, the Adamsons, had founded a university in Manila, which was later, however, taken over by the Roman Catholic Church. A Filipino Roman Catholic priest, Fr Vincentius, from the island of Masbate, decided to convert to Orthodoxy while on a visit to the USA. Many of his parishioners also converted, as did four nuns, who ran a day care centre on Masbate. Fr Vincentius visited Manila for a monthly celebration of the Divine Liturgy before Philip Castro was ordained (Couchell 1994:18).

ORTHODOX MISSION IN AFRICA

The Orthodox Church in Africa falls under the jurisdiction of the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, and its history goes back to the first century. The tradition of the patriarchate is that it was established by St Mark in AD 62. I have given a brief outline of some of the early history of Orthodox mission in Africa in Chapter 3, and now want to look at more recent developments.

In the fifth century, following the Council of Chalcedon, there was a split in the Church of Alexandria, and since then there have been two rival popes in Alexandria, the Coptic and the Byzantine. The Byzantine Patriarchate remained in communion with the other patriarchates of Rome, Constantinople and Antioch, while the Coptic patriarchate did not. The schism affected mission. Ethiopia, which had been evangelised in the fourth century, was affiliated with the Coptic Patriarchate, while two rival missions were sent to Nubia. The Arab conquest of Egypt in the seventh century put an end to any further mission efforts for centuries to come. Both the Byzantine and Coptic Patriarchates were engaged in a struggle for survival.

Below the Tropic of Cancer, Christian influence only began to be felt when Western Christians (who were by then separated from the Orthodox, and divided among themselves into Roman Catholic and Protestant groups), began sailing round the sea coasts of Africa. Their main interest was Asian trade, and Africa remained incidental to their concerns until the plantation economy of the Americas made the trans-Atlantic trade in

African slaves lucrative. Christian missions from those countries gradually fostered an aversion to the slave trade, and sought to introduce "legitimate commerce", but national rivalries led to the "scramble for Africa" and the parcelling out of most of sub-Saharan Africa among the European powers by the end of the nineteenth century.

Immigrant Greek communities

Among those from Europe who settled in Africa were traders from Orthodox countries, mainly from Greece. The churches in their countries of origin initially showed little interest in their emigrant flock. The immigrant communities, however, formed themselves into "koinotites", which sought to meet the needs of the immigrants, cultural, educational, recreational and religious (Doumanis 1992:60).³³ Clergy were sent to minister to these communities, initially by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, which was responsible for the Orthodox Christians who were beyond any other Orthodox jurisdiction. Eventually, however, all such communities in Africa were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

Southern Africa

In 1908 such a priest, Father Nicodemus Sarikas, was sent to the community in Johannesburg, in the recently-conquered British colony of the Transvaal. Fr Nicodemus, however, was also interested in mission beyond the confines of the Greek community, and in this his views were at variance with those of the community, which expected him to function purely as a chaplain to the immigrants. After a few years, Fr Nicodemus left, and settled in what is now Tanzania.

A few years earlier another development took place in the South African Republic. An evangelist of the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican), J.M. Khanyane Napo, broke away to form his own church, which was called the African Church (Sundkler 1961:39).³⁴ A few years later, in 1892, a similar group, led by Mangena M. Mokone broke

³³ I will deal with the effects of the *koinotites* on mission in more detail in chapter 5.

³⁴ Sundkler calls it the Africa Church, but in its constitution it is called the African Church.

away from the Wesleyan Church, and called itself the Ethiopian Church. The Ethiopian Church later split into several groups, some of which were interested in episcopacy, and formed links with the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the USA, or with the (Anglican) Church of the Province of South Africa as the Order of Ethiopia.

In the 1920s one of the clergy of the African Church, Daniel William Alexander, made contact with the African Orthodox Church, which had recently been formed in the USA, and eventually was ordained a bishop of that church.

Daniel William Alexander

Daniel William Alexander, though he himself was never a member of a canonical Orthodox Church, played such a significant role in the spread of Orthodoxy in Africa that something needs to be told of his life history.

He was born in Port Elizabeth on 23 December 1882. His father was a Creole from Martinique in the West Indies (and therefore a French subject), and his mother was an African. He was therefore, in South African terms, "coloured".³⁵ He was brought up as a Roman Catholic, and educated at the Marist Brothers College in Port Elizabeth. After leaving school he went to Johannesburg, where he joined the Anglican Church, and became a minister in that church.

³⁵ The term "creole" is remarkably difficult to define, and means different things in different places. In Alaska it means the children of mixed Russian and Aleut or Eskimo parentage. In South America it means people of Spanish ancestry born in South America, in Louisiana it means someone of French ancestry born in the USA. In some places it means people of mixed African and European ancestry who speak a language that has developed from a mixture of African and European languages. It is difficult to determine what it means in the case of Alexander.

There is also some confusion about his parentage. In a letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs written in 1924, he said both his parents were natives of Martinique in the West Indies (SAB NTS 1455 111/214). Elsewhere he seems to have said or implied that his mother was African.

In 1920 he left and joined the African Church of Khanyane Napo, which he later regretted, because of the continual bickering between Khanyane Napo and the other leaders of the African Church. He was a marriage officer for the Orange Free State of the African Church, and moved to Kimberley to be closer to the people there, and he fell under Bishop Joseph Choou.

He was summoned to Johannesburg 4-5 times a year for special conferences called about litigation between Bishop Khanyane Napo and Bishop Phalatse of the African Church. One effect of this was that the African Church's government recognition for railway concessions was suspended, and so Alexander could not attend every conference.

Eventually a group of clergy and laity met at Beaconsfield, Kimberley, on 15 September 1924, and passed a resolution to form the African Orthodox Church with Alexander as its head, authorising him to supervise the church, ordain fit persons for ministry, negotiate with appropriate government departments about recognition for the purposes of marriage officers' licences and railway concessions, and to seek affiliation with the African Orthodox Church in America.³⁶

Alexander immediately set about organising the new denomination with considerable energy and efficiency. He wrote to the Secretary for Native Affairs in Pretoria, applying for recognition. The recognition was refused, and the Secretary for Native Affairs noted that Alexander had already been a member of three different denominations, and said that this was a sign of instability, also noting that Alexander had been expelled from the African Church for failing to attend conferences.

Alexander responded by saying his parents were Roman Catholics, and that he was a member of the Roman Catholic Church because his parents were, and as a minor he had to follow their wishes. He left the Anglican Church with "no crime against me". Of the African Church he said, "I am sorry that I ever joined the African Church, it was the mistake of my life". Because of the litigation between Revds J.M. Kanyane and H.

³⁶ Resolution passed at conference at Beaconsfield. SAB NTS 1455
111/214.

Phalatse, which had begun in 1920, he was called to conferences 4-5 times a year in Johannesburg and Pretoria, and he could not attend all of them. This burden was too much, and they decided to form the African Orthodox Church.³⁷

This correspondence marked the beginning of a 17-year struggle for recognition of the African Orthodox Church in South Africa. At the beginning, the suspicions of the bureaucratic mind were perhaps justified. The Department of Native Affairs in Pretoria received numerous letters from the leaders of African Independent Churches applying for registration, and many of them failed to complete and return the application form. Others, after writing two or three letters eventually gave up.³⁸ Alexander was much more persistent.

Those present at the founding meeting of the African Orthodox Church in Beaconsfield were mainly coloured, and asserted that they represented 420 members. Alexander was equally active in organising and extending the new denomination, and acting on his mandate to link up with the African Orthodox Church in America. At first he styled himself "Vicar General", but even before his consecration as bishop in America, he was calling himself Archbishop. He travelled to America in 1927 on a French passport, which caused more headaches for the bureaucratic mind. According to his own account, he first approached the magistrate in Kimberley, whom he says told him that since his father was from Martinique, he was a French subject, and should therefore apply for a passport at the French consulate in Johannesburg (thereby incidentally saving the magistrate a lot of paper work and correspondence with Pretoria). This was to cause much agitated correspondence between bureaucrats in London, New York, Entebbe and Pretoria in the years to come.

37 Letter, Alexander to Secretary for Native Affairs; SAB NTS 1455 111/214

38 For example, the third (and last) letter on file from the Revd Isaiah Motaung of the Ethiopian Holy Orthodox Church of SA in Sophiatown noted that "the congregation is giving me no rest and driving me behind" because of his failure to obtain a positive response to his appeals for recognition (SAB NTS 1464 426/214).

Daniel William Alexander was nevertheless consecrated bishop by Patriarch McGuire of the African Orthodox Church on 11 September 1927, in Boston, Massachusetts (Anson 1964:267). This was regarded with some alarm by the authorities of the British Empire (of which South Africa and Uganda were then part), and the British Consul General in New York interpreted it as part of McGuire's "scheme to cause dissension, together with the Marcus Garvey association, among negroes of the British Empire".³⁹

Alexander returned to South Africa via England, and soon was contacted by Reuben Spartas of Uganda. The African Orthodox Church also amalgamated with the Native Catholic Episcopal Church, which inspired Alexander to make a new application for government recognition in October 1929. The new application made no mention of the AOC being a "coloured" body, as the first one had, and it seems that by this stage it had a predominantly African membership.⁴⁰ The leader of the Native Catholic Episcopal Church, also known as the African United Church, Joel Davids, became Vicar-Apostolic of the AOC in the Transvaal (Natsoulas 1981:99).

Alexander visited Uganda in 1931-32, where he ordained Reuben Spartas and Obadiah Basajjitalo as priests to establish the African Orthodox Church there. In 1935-1936 he visited Kenya with a similar purpose. I will deal with his activities in Uganda and Kenya in more detail in the next section. After he left Uganda, the Ugandans approached the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, and between his two journeys to East Africa Alexander also approached the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Johannesburg, Isidore, asking for an introduction to the priest at Moshi, Tanganyika (Fr Nicodemus Sarikas) and the Patriarch of Jerusalem. He said that these contacts would enrich the interfaith merger he was seeking with the Greek Orthodox Church (Githieya 1992:158).

³⁹ Letter No 295, British Consul General, New York, to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London. SAB NTS 1455 111/214.

⁴⁰ Form of Application by Native Churches, completed by Alexander 22 Oct 1929. SAB NTS 1455 111/214.

Though such mergers took place in Kenya and Uganda, for some reason nothing came of the attempts in South Africa during Alexander's lifetime. The African Orthodox Church continued to grow and extend itself. It finally achieved government recognition in October 1941, after Alexander had pestered not only the Secretary for Native Affairs, but members of Parliament as well. After the Second World War there was a schism in Natal, when the Revd S.P. Manzini broke away to form the African Christian Orthodox Church, which claimed many members in Natal and Zululand.⁴¹ Many of these, however, were reclaimed after Manzini was convicted of fraud and performing marriages without being a licensed marriage officer.⁴²

Government recognition gave certain advantages, such as railway concessions, appointment of church ministers as government marriage officers, and the legal authority to buy wine for communion (before 1962 blacks in South Africa were prohibited from buying "white" liquor). This was one factor that led other groups, such as some from the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion, to join the African Orthodox Church.

The 1958 Synod report, a substantial printed document, gives a picture of a group that is stable, relatively well-organised and growing in various parts of South Africa. Daniel William Alexander was 75 years old, and could perhaps look back with some satisfaction at what had been achieved in the preceding 34 years of labour. His wife, Elizabeth, had also worked hard, and is honoured in the report as the co-organiser of the church. Unfortunately she died shortly before the report went to press, and perhaps this was a foretaste of what was to come. The ending of Alexander's story was a sad one.

In 1960 he invited the Patriarch of the African Orthodox Church in the USA, James I, with another bishop, Richard Grant, to come to South Africa to consecrate two additional bishops, Ice Walter Mbina and Surgeon Lennon Simeon Motsepe. Motsepe had been a leader in the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion before it amalgamated with the AOC. It

41 Letter, Revd. S.P. Manzini to Secretary of Native Affairs. SAB NTS 1485 1340/214.

42 Report of 34th Synod of the AOC, 1958. SAB BAO 7263 P120/4/58.

was the first time any of the Americans had visited South Africa, and it was perhaps not a good time to visit, shortly after the Sharpeville massacre and the proclamation of a State of Emergency. Nevertheless the new bishops were consecrated on Sunday 26 June 1960, Africa Freedom Day, the anniversary of the Freedom Charter, in the Anglican Church of All Saints, Beaconsfield, Kimberley.⁴³

Afterwards, however, things went wrong. Alexander accompanied the Americans on a tour of South Africa, but left them in East London to return to his home in Kimberley. Shortly thereafter the Patriarch of the AOC suspended Alexander from his duties, appointed Surgeon Motsepe as "Administrator Pro-Tem" of the South and Central African Province of the AOC, and, taking a leaf from the National Party government's book, promulgated a set of "Emergency Regulations" for the governing of the church. They called at the Department of Bantu Administration and Development in Pretoria, and persuaded them to cancel Alexander's marriage officers' licence. Those who cooperated with the Americans, perhaps in the hope of some short-term advantage, soon found that the American desire to take over had no limits, and were in turn disillusioned. On 30 September 1961 an ecclesiastical court, meeting in New York, declared Daniel William Alexander deposed. Within a short time the AOC in South Africa was in disarray, and it split into several factions, some temporarily allied with the Americans, while others wanted nothing more to do with them.

Alexander commented, sadly rather than vindictively, that the Americans were jealous because the AOC in South Africa had prospered and showed more life and vitality than the American branch, and that the Americans therefore wanted to claim the credit.⁴⁴

As a postscript, it might be added that one branch of the AOC in South Africa, led by Simon Mhlonyane, joined the Coptic Orthodox Church in 1993. Another branch, led by Simon Thamaga, has asked to be united with the Greek Orthodox diocese of Johannesburg, perhaps achieving what Alexander sought 60 years earlier.

⁴³ Certificate of Consecration of Ice Walter Mbina. SAB BAO 7263 P 120/4/58.

⁴⁴ Various documents. SAB BAO 7263 P 120/4/58.

Uganda and Kenya

In 1931 Bishop Alexander travelled to Uganda at the invitation of Reuben Sseseya Mukasa (later known as Fr Reuben Spartas, and in 1973 he was consecrated as Bishop Christopherous of Nilopolis) and Obadiah Basajjikitale, two former Anglicans whose reading had led them to seek to join the Orthodox Church. They had discovered the address of Patriarch McGuire in an American publication, the *Negro World*, and Spartas wrote to him in 1924 (Welbourn 1961:79). There was no reply until 1927, when McGuire suggested they approach the newly-consecrated Bishop Alexander. Alexander spent nine months in Uganda, from October 1931 to July 1932 teaching and baptising and ordained Mukasa and Basajjikitale before returning to South Africa (Zoe 1964:377). Among those he baptised was the daughter of a Greek living in Kampala, who said that the service used was unfamiliar. He encouraged the priests to make contact with the Patriarchate of Alexandria, and later in 1932 Fr Nicodemus Sarikas visited Uganda from Tanzania.

Alexander's visit to Uganda, like his visit to America, aroused the suspicions of the colonial authorities. Uganda was then a British Protectorate, and Kenya was a colony. The Uganda CID kept tabs on Alexander and sent reports to his superiors, at least one of which found its way into the files of the Secretary of Native Affairs in Pretoria. The government secretary of Uganda wrote to the South African authorities asking about his background, and informing them of his movements.⁴⁵ Alexander returned to South Africa through Kenya, travelling on the train from Kampala to Mombasa. In Mombasa he spoke to a postal clerk, James Beuttah, who came from the Central Province, and he asked Alexander what denomination he belonged to, because the Gikuyu (Kikuyu) people did not want to join foreign missions with colonial connections.⁴⁶ Beuttah informed Jomo Kenyatta, the future president of Kenya who was in then in England, of this meeting, and persuaded Alexander to return to Nairobi.⁴⁷

45 SAB NTS 1455 111/214

46 The newer spelling is *Gikuyu*, but many documents have the older spelling *Kikuyu*.

47 Interview, Fr Eleftherios, 1995-11-16.

In 1929 the Kikuyu of the Central Province of Kenya had formed two educational associations in protest against a missionary ban on female circumcision. Education in Kenya at that time was almost entirely under the control of foreign missions. The missions, led by John Arthur of the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) announced that their African "agents" (who were mainly teachers) must sign a written declaration denouncing circumcision and membership of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), a body opposed to colonial rule (Natsoulas 1988:220).⁴⁸

Those who did not know how to write were asked to put their fingerprint (*kirore*) on the document, and those who signed the document became known as the *Agikuyu Kirore*, while those who refused to sign were known as *Agikuyu Karing'a* - the "pure" or "true" Kikuyu. The imposition of the "kirore" led to a mass exodus from the mission churches, and teachers who had signed the *kirore* were not accepted at many of the out-station schools (Githieya 1992:141-142). Those who opposed the *kirore* also took to singing a satirical song called *Muthirigu*, which praised the leaders of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), especially Jomo Kenyatta (who was then in London) and denounced the *kirore*. When a missionary was murdered in 1930, the *Muthirigu* was banned by the government and this deepened the rift (Githieya 1992:146ff).

The *kirore* and *Muthirigu* crisis led to the formation of the Kikuyu Karing'a Educational Association (KKEA), and the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA), which sought to establish schools outside the control of foreign missions. Up till then all the schools in Kenya had been church schools, and so these bodies, having started schools, looked for a church. Bishop Alexander seemed to offer a solution, and the president of KISA wrote to Alexander, asking him to return to Kenya (Githieya 1992:156). Alexander replied, and also wrote to the Orthodox

⁴⁸ It is perhaps worth noting that one of the strongest objections to the Mau Mau guerrilla movement on the part of the Western missions and the colonial government was that involved "oathing", and this was regarded as one of the most heinous features of their activities. More than 20 years before, however, the Protestant missions, at the instigation of Arthur, had already established their own oathing ceremonies (see also Githieya 1992:141).

Archbishop of Johannesburg Isidore, asking for a letter of introduction to the Orthodox priest at Moshi, Tanganyika, and expressing an interest in a merger with the Greek Orthodox Church in South Africa. He claimed that the independent groups in East Africa had 14000 members and controlled 42 schools. Archbishop Isidore suggested that Alexander visit the Patriarch of Alexandria (Githieya 1992:158f).

Alexander returned to East Africa in November 1935. He founded a seminary at Gituamba, where he trained eight students, seven sponsored by the KISA and one by the KKEA (Githieya 1992:160). He originally proposed a training period of 14 years, but because of the urgency of the need for clergy, it was reduced to 18 months. The training consisted of classroom work and practical work in the villages, where the students preached and led Sunday services under supervision (Githieya 1992:161ff).

At the end of the training there was a dispute over the ordination of the candidates. The KISA objected to the ordination of Gathuna on moral grounds, saying he was an unsuitable candidate. Alexander, on the other hand, was more interested in ordaining the candidates who had performed well in training (Githieya 1992:166).

In the end Alexander ordained two priests, Arthur Gatungu Gathuna and Philip Kiande Wamugu, and two deacons, Daudi Maina Kiragu and Harrison Gacukia Kiranga. He then returned to South Africa, but was unable to visit East Africa again because of the Second World War, and later the apartheid policy of the South African government. There was a strong perception among Africans in Kenya that the white rulers did not want them to know about Orthodoxy, since it was not associated with the colonial powers.⁴⁹

The newly-ordained clergy could not agree on how the church was to be organised. The two priests wanted to follow Alexander and form a branch of Alexander's African Orthodox Church in East Africa, while the deacons and others wanted to form a purely local body, which they called the African Independent Pentecostal Church (AIPC). Thus two different

⁴⁹ Interview, Fr Eleftherios Ndwaru, 1995-11-16

denominations came into being (Githieya 1992:169). There was also later a split between Arthur Gathuna and Philip Kiande Wamagu, with the latter eventually registering his group as the Independent African Orthodox Church in 1965. In 1968 he was asked to be the bishop of the AIPC, and most of his congregations merged with that group, though after his death in 1970, led by Peter Kinyua Wachira, they withdrew and rejoined Gathuna's African Orthodox Church, which by then was linked to the Patriarchate of Alexandria (Githieya 1992:171-172).

In the meantime, the contact between the African Orthodox Church in Uganda and the Patriarchate of Alexandria was continuing. The Second World War made non-military travel difficult, but in 1942 Metropolitan Nikolaos of Axum visited East Africa, and wrote a report for the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria about the situation of Orthodox Christians there. The report was eventually published in book form.⁵⁰

Fr Reuben Spartas and Fr Obadiah Basajjitalo of Uganda came to know of the Orthodox group in Kenya led by Gathuna through newspaper reports, and visited Kenya, and encouraged the Kenyans to join the Patriarchate of Alexandria.⁵¹ They wrote a joint letter to Pope Meletios of Alexandria. The patriarch replied positively, but died before anything further could be done. They then wrote again to Pope Christopherous II and applied to be received into the patriarchate as a canonical Orthodox Church.⁵² This was officially done in 1946.

In Uganda Fr Nicodemus Sarikas had taken two young men back to Tanganyika to teach them the Orthodox faith, and in 1939 sent them to Pope Christopherous in Alexandria for further study. They were ordained and sent back to Uganda, but one of them died soon after their return. The other, Fr Irenaeus Magimbi, continued teaching for many years (Zoe 1964:379). In 1945 Fr Spartas sent another group of four young men to Egypt. After studying in Greek high schools in Egypt they went on to study theology at the University of Athens. Among them was Theodore Nankyamas, who was Archbishop of Kampala until his death in 1996 (Zoe 1964:379).

50 Interview, Bp. Makarios of Riruta, 1995-11-08

51 Interview, Fr Eleftherios Ndwaru, 1995-11-16

52 Interview, Fr Eleftherios Ndwaru, 1995-11-16

In Kenya the Orthodox Church grew rapidly during and after the Second World War. From a single congregation in 1937, Gathuna's branch grew to about 20000 members in 1945. It had congregations throughout the Kiambu district, in the Rift Valley Province, and even in Arusha in Tanzania. Gathuna was an active evangelist, preaching in the market places, and recruiting members wherever he went. By 1945 it was also spreading to the Western Province among the Luhya people, which marked a spread beyond the Kikuyu ethnic group (Githieya 1992:172).

In the 1950s came a setback. The struggle against colonial rule intensified, and in 1952 the colonial authorities declared a state of emergency as a result of the activities of the Mau Mau guerrillas. The Orthodox Church was banned and its schools and temples were closed by the colonial regime. Many churches were burnt down by the armed forces, and the clergy put in concentration camps (Githieya 1992:181). During that period the Orthodox Church in Kenya was treated by the British colonial regime in the same fashion as the Bolsheviks treated the Russian Orthodox Church. Immediately after the Second World War the Orthodox Church had been growing rapidly, until it was banned in the 1950s. Orthodox Christians regarded the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions as collaborators with the regime, who sought to discredit and belittle the Orthodox Church, and conducted hostile propaganda against it.⁵³ Philip Kiande Wamugu was detained, and many members of his churches in the Nyeri district lapsed or joined the Presbyterian Church (Githieya 1992:171). Arthur Gathuna was likewise detained for eight years, from 1953 to 1961 (Githieya 1992:180).

A similar struggle against colonial rule in Cyprus was being led by Archbishop Makarios, who in March 1956 was exiled to the Seychelles. In April 1957 he was released, and returned via Kenya, where people were still engaged in the struggle against colonial rule. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the Orthodox cathedral in Nairobi, and preached against colonialism (Lemopoulos 1993:122). This was a tremendous encouragement to the leaders of the Kenya independence struggle, many of

⁵³ Interview, Fr Eleftherios, 1995-11-16

whom (with the Orthodox clergy) were still in prison at the time. It also caused consternation among the British authorities, and questions were asked in the British parliament about why Archbishop Makarios had been allowed to preach in Kenya.⁵⁴

A close friendship developed between Archbishop Makarios and Jomo Kenyatta, the future president of Kenya. Cyprus became independent in 1960, and Kenya in 1963, and in 1970 Archbishop Makarios, the first President of Cyprus, was invited to Kenya on a state visit by President Kenyatta of Kenya (Tillyrides 1986:12). Archbishop Makarios, as well as being President of Cyprus, was head of the autocephalous Church of Cyprus, and as such had no ecclesiastical jurisdiction in East Africa. But though he was visiting Kenya in his capacity of head of state, he also met church leaders, and visited Orthodox churches in various parts of Kenya.

Archbishop Makarios was struck by the poverty of the church and the people, and wrote to the Patriarchate of Alexandria offering to help. President Kenyatta provided a site for an Orthodox seminary at Riruta, on the outskirts of Nairobi, and Archbishop Makarios donated the money for the buildings. In 1971 he visited Kenya again to lay the foundation stone for the new seminary, though the patriarchate was not in a position to staff it and utilise it until 1982. At Kagira he baptised 5000 people, and at Nyeri he baptised 5000 more. These were both places where Bishop Alexander had been.⁵⁵

In 1958 the Patriarchate of Alexandria appointed a Metropolitan of Irinoupolis⁵⁶ to care for Orthodox Christians in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Metropolitan Nikolaos moved his headquarters from Dar es Salaam to Kampala, but visited the other countries from there (Zoe 1964:379). In 1960 Archimandrite Chrysostom Papasarantopoulos went to Kampala, where he worked for ten years before moving to Zaire to begin a new mission there (Lemopoulos 1993:67). Through correspondence he also

54 Interview, Bishop Makarios of Riruta, 1995-11-20

55 Interview, Bishop Makarios of Riruta, 1995-11-20

56 *Irinoupolis* is the Hellenised form of the name of Dar es Salaam (Haven of Peace), the chief port of Tanzania.

encouraged others to become involved in mission, among them the present Bishop Makarios of Riruta, Kenya. At that time the help of external missionaries in East Africa was greatly needed. After ten years of repression by the British colonial regime and the disingenuous propaganda of the Western missionaries who supported it, the Orthodox Church was in a parlous state (Zoe 1964:384-384).⁵⁷

Metropolitan Nikolaos was elected Patriarch in 1968, and his successor as Metropolitan was Nicodemus, who ordained several new priests. The seminary site was blessed during his time.

He was succeeded in 1972 by Metropolitan Frumentius, who died in March 1981. There was little development during his time, and in fact there were some reverses, as Bishop Gathuna (one of the original priests ordained by Daniel Alexander) was defrocked by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate. He nevertheless continued to act as a bishop, and went into schism. He and his group became affiliated to a schismatic Old Calendrist group in Greece.⁵⁸

The leader of the Old Calendrist group, Cyprian of Fili, then consecrated a Bishop Kigundu, who became the leader when Gathuna died in 1986. Kigundu, however, was himself defrocked by the Old Calendrists when they found that he had secretly married, contrary to the canons.

57 For the support of the Western missionaries for the colonial regime, see e.g. Anderson (1981:130-131). Some of the Western missionaries claimed that the Orthodoxy being preached by Fr Reuben Spartas was simply his own invention for the purpose of creating a new heresy, and they said that no white man has such a religion (Zoe 1964:385).

58 The Gregorian Calendar was introduced by the Roman Pope Gregory in 1582. It was adopted immediately by most Catholic countries, but Protestant and Orthodox countries were slow to adopt it. In Russia it was introduced by the Bolsheviks in 1918, but the Russian Orthodox Church continued to use the Julian Calendar. The Gregorian Calendar was introduced in Greece in the 1920s, and the Church of Greece adopted it too, as did the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Alexandria. There are thus "Old Calendar" and "New Calendar" Orthodox Churches, which remain in communion with one another. The Old Calendrists however, are those who have broken away from the New Calendar Churches, and maintain that the adoption of the new calendar is a mark of apostasy.

Most of the priests ordained by Gathuna and Kigundu after the schism have returned to the Orthodox Church. Some of them have been reordained.⁵⁹

For several years there was no Metropolitan, but Bishop Anastasios Yannoulatos was appointed acting Metropolitan.⁶⁰ The seminary in Nairobi opened in Bishop Anastasios's time, in 1982, and it began with 19 students (Tillyrides 1986:17). It was originally only for students from East Africa, but in 1995 it began taking students from other African countries as well, and there were 42 students from seven countries - Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Cameroun, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Madagascar. The aim is that the seminary should be a pan-African institution, and should foster a sense of unity in the Patriarchate. This decision has not been without its teething problems, however. The students from outside East Africa have suffered considerably from culture shock, and find the East African food difficult to cope with.

Tanzania

It is often said that Orthodox mission is centripetal rather than centrifugal, with people being attracted to Orthodoxy from the outside, rather than by the Orthodox Church sending missionaries out. The growth of Orthodoxy in Kenya and Uganda certainly seems to bear this out. It was largely the result of people in those countries seeking Orthodoxy, rather than Orthodox missionaries from elsewhere seeking them. The Orthodox Church in those countries may truly be said to be an African initiated church.⁶¹

59 Interview, Bishop Makarios of Riruta, Nov. 1995

60 He was not a full Metropolitan as he was not from the Patriarchate, but from another autocephalous church, the Church of Greece. He did not want to join the Patriarchate of Alexandria permanently, and retained his position as a professor of Athens University, and as director of Apostoliki Diakonia (the official mission department of the Church of Greece). In 1992 he was appointed Archbishop of Albania, to head the reconstruction of the church there.

61 Githieya (1992:12ff) classifies the AOC as an African Independent Church of the "Ethiopian" type, using Sundkler's categories. In Orthodox ecclesiology, however, "independent" would imply that the Church in those countries was autocephalous, choosing its own head. This is not the case, as the metropolitans of Irinoupolis and Kampala are approved by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of

In Tanzania the same pattern may be seen, but with some variations. As I noted earlier, Fr Nicodemus Sarikas went to Tanganyika from Johannesburg, partly because the Greek community in Johannesburg was not interested in mission. In East Africa he played an important role in enabling the African Orthodox Church in Uganda to become canonically Orthodox. There was a fairly large Greek community in the Arusha district of Tanganyika, but he was also engaged in evangelistic outreach among the local people, though with little lasting result, and in north-east Tanganyika the Orthodox community has diminished.

In North Western Tanganyika, however, the Orthodox Church has grown quite rapidly, and there is now a bishop at Bukoba, on the western shore of Lake Victoria. The Orthodox Church there was mainly the result of contact with the Church in Uganda.

In another part of Tanzania, just south of Lake Victoria a Greek employee in a factory was asked by a fellow employee what his religion was. After hearing about Orthodoxy, this young man, Paul Budala, wrote to the Orthodox Church in Uganda, and a priest from there, Fr Theodore Nankyamas (later Archbishop of Uganda) visited the places and baptised twenty people he had instructed (Zoe 1964:369).

Orthodoxy in East Africa - missiological reflection

It could be said that Lake Victoria is the centre of Orthodox Christianity in Africa, because most of the Orthodox Churches described in this section are from the area around its shores. In Tanzania, on the western shore, Orthodoxy spread from Uganda, but in Kenya and Uganda it arose almost independently.

Though Welbourn (1961) in his chapter on Reuben Spartas describes him in terms of a struggle against paternalism, that is not central to the establishment and growth of Orthodoxy in Uganda. That there was paternalism cannot be doubted, and it can be seen in the way in which Western church historians of East Africa have dealt with the Orthodox Church there. It also cannot be doubted that Spartas encountered such

Alexandria. It would therefore be better to speak of them as "African initiated churches".

paternalism personally (see, e.g. Welbourn 1961:84). But the main reason for the formation of the African Orthodox Church in Uganda must be sought elsewhere. And it is to be found in the libraries of the Anglican schools and colleges that missionaries founded in Uganda. Welbourn (1961:77) notes that Spartas considered ordination in the Anglican Church, but in his reading in the seminary at Mukono (where he worked in his holidays) he had discovered that Anglicanism was merely a branch of the true Church, and that the original church was the Orthodox Church.⁶² Others, too, mentioned this as their prime motivation for becoming Orthodox (Welbourn 1961:88). In part, Spartas may have been influenced in this by the Anglican-Catholic rivalry that was such a strong feature of Ugandan Christianity, with their overtones of British and French colonialism. It may have been that he saw Orthodoxy as having more historical continuity with the early church than the Anglicans did, and also as a relatively neutral third way.

If it were merely a matter of paternalism, Spartas and his colleagues might have had no more patience with the Orthodox Church than they did with the Anglicans. Their journey to Orthodoxy was a long one, lasting nearly 20 years. It was after reading about the African Orthodox Church in the USA in 1925 that Spartas first wrote to McGuire, and waited three years for a reply, which told him of Alexander's consecration as an AOC bishop (Welbourn 1961:81). Another three years passed before Alexander was able to visit Uganda, in 1931. When Alexander baptised the children of a Greek in Kampala, his Orthodoxy was questioned, and Spartas almost immediately made contact with Fr Nicodemus Sarikas in Tanganyika, and began to seek to establish a relationship with the Patriarchate of Alexandria. It seems that Alexander himself had become uncertain of his own Orthodoxy, because by the time of his visit to Kenya in 1935, Alexander sought contact with the Greek Orthodox bishop of Johannesburg (Githieya 1992:158).

⁶² The Orthodox Church rejects the "branch theory" of the church, which has been popular among many Anglicans. This is the theory that the Catholic Church has three branches, Anglican, Roman and Orthodox, all of which have episcopal apostolic succession.

After being contacted by Spartas, Patriarch Meletios wrote to the Anglican bishop Stuart in Uganda, who told him that Spartas's group were schismatics from the Anglican Church. In the 1920s and 1930s Anglican-Orthodox relations were probably closer than they have ever been before or since. This period was the heyday of the Anglo-Catholic movement within the Anglican Church. The Anglo-Catholics hoped to bring about reunion between Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Orthodox, and to that end stressed the closeness between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy. The Orthodox were therefore very hesitant about taking any action that might suggest that they were proselytising among Anglicans. Meletios's first approach was to see whether the schism could not be healed.

Spartas had no objection to reunion with the Anglicans, but his priority was reunion with Alexandria. In 1942 the new Patriarch, Christophorous II, convinced of Spartas's sincerity, asked the Metropolitan of Axum to investigate the matter (Welbourn 1961:90-91), and it was only in 1946 that the African Orthodox Church was united with the Patriarchate of Alexandria. A mere reaction against paternalism would not have enabled the African Orthodox to endure such a long wait.

In Uganda, therefore, the main attraction of Orthodoxy was the desire to be linked to the original church, and that desire was fostered by the reading of church history, particularly by Anglicans. Though it was the Anglo-Catholics who were most attracted to Orthodoxy, the Anglican missionaries in Uganda belonged to the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which did not have links to the Anglo-Catholic party, but rather to the low-church evangelical party. And it was the absence of candles, ritual and priestly vestments among the low-church Anglicans of Buganda that caused people like Obadiah Basajjitalo to incline towards Orthodoxy (Welbourn 1961:78).

In Kenya however, the origins of the Orthodox Church are to be found in a political protest movement against land alienation by colonists and cultural intrusion by missions, and expressed itself initially as a movement for independence in education. A chance meeting with Bishop Alexander when he was passing through on his return from Uganda led to his being invited to return by the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association. There was some resistance to the candidates from the other, and more radical, education association, Karing'a, being included in the seminary, and it was those who wanted to maintain the association with Orthodoxy. It could also be said to be fortuitous that the contrast

between the "true Kikuyu" (*Agikuyu karing'a*) and those regarded as sell-outs (*Agikuyu kirore*) also fitted well with the name of the church, for *karing'a* also happened to be the word for orthodox, and so those who saw themselves as true Kikuyus found themselves in what they came to regard as the true church. If it had not been for such coincidences, Orthodoxy might never have become established in Kenya. Unlike the Ugandans, the Kenyans were not searching for Orthodoxy. They discovered it by pure serendipity.

This is not to say that the leaders of the Orthodox movement in Uganda were apolitical - far from it. Spartas himself was jailed for his political activities and agitation for independence. But for those in Uganda Alexander's coming was the outcome of a desire for Orthodoxy that came about through reading. In Kenya the political element was dominant at first, though it led to just as strong an identification with Orthodoxy, which was strengthened by the hostility of the British colonial government and the mission churches. At the height of the Mau Mau period, this reached the point where the Greek community of Nairobi distanced themselves from the African Orthodox, but the preaching and support of Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus more than compensated. The rapid growth of the African Orthodox Church after Alexander's visit was much more than could be expected of a mere religious appendage to an educational association, and the active evangelism of people like Gathuna, preaching in the market places, did much to expand the church in the period before the Mau Mau emergency.

Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, Orthodoxy was for a long time confined to immigrants from Orthodox countries, mainly those of Greek descent. A young Zimbabwean, Raphael Ganda, went to Greece for an army officer's training course, where he studied from 1983 to 1992. There he learnt Greek, and also learnt about Orthodoxy through the services at the army bases. On his return to Zimbabwe, he began attending services at the Orthodox cathedral in Harare, and in September 1994 he and his family and some others were baptised. Three months later he was sent to the seminary in Nairobi. On completing his course, he plans to be a rural missionary, and is working on the translation of the Divine Liturgy and other ser-

vices into Shona.⁶³

In these instances, the methods of mission appear to resemble those of the pre-Nicene Church. From the fourth century onward, most Christian missionaries were monks, but in East Africa and Zimbabwe, monastic mission has not been much in evidence.

Congo (Kinshasa)

In Congo (formerly Zaire) and Madagascar there has been some evidence of "centrifugal" mission, and also of monastic mission. Archimandrite Chrysostom Papasarantopoulos, after working in Uganda for ten years, moved to Zaire in the early 1970s and began new mission work in the capital (Lemopoulos 1993:67). In Kolwezi another Archimandrite was evangelising, and in 1975 he was joined by a young man, Yannis Aslanidis, who in 1978 returned to Greece to become a monk on Mount Athos. He later returned to Zaire as Fr Cosmas Grigoriatis, and initiated an agricultural development programme, in which he succeeded in adapting and growing various kinds of crops that other agriculturists had failed to do. The farm is recognised as a model farm for the Shaba province (Lemopoulos 1993:69). Thus a monastery of Mount Athos was sending missionaries to Zaire, though the mission did not result in the founding of a monastery, but rather an agricultural development project.

Madagascar

In Madagascar the Greek community built a church in the capital, Antananarive, in 1953. In 1972, following political disturbances, the priest left, and the church was closed. In 1994 Archimandrite Nectarios Kellis of Australia went as a missionary priest to Madagascar as a result of reading about the situation there in a church publication from Greece. He has actively gone out evangelising, visiting towns and villages in various parts of the country, explaining the Orthodox Christian faith to anyone interested. Already a number of new congregations have been started in this way, and the services of the church are being translated into local languages.⁶⁴ The Orthodox Church in Madagascar was

⁶³ Interview, Raphael Ganda, November 1995

⁶⁴ Interview, Jean Christos Tsakanias, November 1995.

initially under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Zimbabwe, but in 1997 it was made into an archbishopric, with Fr Nectarios being consecrated as its first Metropolitan. By 1995 a local priest, trained by the then Archimandrite, had already been ordained, and a student was sent to the seminary in Nairobi.⁶⁵

West Africa

In West Africa, Orthodox mission shows as much variety as it does in East Africa and Central Africa. In both Ghana and Nigeria there were independent non-canonical Orthodox Churches calling themselves Orthodox. In Ghana there was an African Orthodox Church, which, like those of the same name in East and Southern Africa, traced its origin to the *episcopus vagans* Joseph René Vilatte.

Kwamin Ntsetse Bresi-Ando, alias Ebenezer Johnson Anderson, was a Ghanaian who had moved to Nigeria, where he became the leader of a break-away from the Methodist Church, and linked with a group based in Florida, USA, called the African Universal Church, led by Laura Adorarkofi. He moved back to Ghana, and planted the African Universal Church in the Fante region there. The movement spread to other areas of Ghana in the early 1930s, and promoted schemes to repatriate black Americans to Africa, and establish cooperative business and development ventures.⁶⁶

The hoped-for infusion of American know-how and capital did not take place, however, and Bresi-Ando decided to travel to America himself on a recruiting campaign. On the way, however, he visited John Churchill Sibley, the Metropolitan of the Orthodox Catholic Church in England, who had himself been consecrated by Vilatte's successor as leader of the Orthodox Catholic Church of America, Frederic Lloyd. Sibley raised Bresi-Ando to the episcopate on 6 March 1935 in London (Anson 1964:278).

On Bresi-Ando's return to West Africa, the economic hopes collapsed along with the companies on which they had been based. The church, which had formerly been based on a Methodist structure, became more Catholic,

⁶⁵ Personal correspondence with Metropolitan Nectarios of Madagascar

⁶⁶ Interview with Andrew Anderson, August 1995

and Bresi-Ando promoted the non-Chalcedonian teachings of the Syrian Jacobites. He spend most of the rest of his life in Nigeria, and the Ghana church dwindled over the years, from about 70 parishes at its height to fewer than 20 in the 1970s.⁶⁷

One of the strongholds of the Autonomous African Universal Church was in the town of Larteh, Ghana, where many members had formerly belonged to the Salvation Army. A group that had formerly belonged to the Salvation Army joined the African Orthodox Church, and, after reading Bishop Kallistos Ware's book "The Orthodox Church", began to have doubts about their canonical status. On hearing that a World Council of Churches meeting was being held in Accra, a group of three young members of the church travelled there to meet some of the Orthodox representatives. As a result of this meeting, one of them, Joseph Kwame Labi, travelled to the USA, where he attended St Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary. He was later ordained and served as a priest in Larteh.

In Nigeria there was a similar group, though with different origins, calling itself the "Greek Orthodox Church". It was started by another *episcopus vagans* from America, Abuna Abraim, who later sent a bishop to ordain priests and deacons. This group was fairly well-established when it made contact with the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Two of its leaders travelled to Alexandria, and the Metropolitan of Accra, Archbishop Irenaeus, travelled to Nigeria and baptised them in 1985. He ordained the leaders of the group.⁶⁸

The Metropolitan of Accra is actually based in Yaounde, Cameroun, and his archdiocese covers 22 countries in West Africa. When Archbishop Irenaeus became Metropolitan in 1976, he began extending Orthodoxy in Cameroun, which had previously been confined to the Greek community. The Greek community was dwindling through emigration, and many were moving to France, where their children were educated. There were people from the Toubouri people living on the Chad border, many of whom worked in unskilled jobs, such as farm labourers or gardeners, for members of the Greek community. One of these who was interested in Orthodoxy became a

67 Interview with Andrew Anderson, August 1995

68 Interview: Fr Bede Osuji, November 1995

catechist, and was ordained in 1981. Initially the Archbishop gave teaching and celebrated the Divine Liturgy in French, with Fr Justin translating, as the Archbishop did not understand Toubouri. Later some students who went to the university and knew French translated the Liturgy into the Toubouri language. The Archbishop would hold garden parties at his home 3-4 times a year, at which catechumens would be baptised. These feasts were customary in the African community on special occasions, and though most members of the Greek community were not directly involved in mission, they helped by providing food for these feasts.

By 1990, when Archbishop Irenaeus was transferred to Carthage, there were 8 parishes among the Toubouri-speaking people along the Chad border, and there is now a priest in Chad itself.⁶⁹

African mission - general observations and summary

While the Orthodox Church in Africa is fairly static outside the tropics, in tropical Africa there has been significant growth since the Second World War, when the Patriarchate of Alexandria first received the African Orthodox Church in Kenya and Uganda. For the next fifteen years the position of Orthodox Christians was precarious, as churches were closed by the colonial governments in those countries. The establishment of an Archbishopric in 1958, and the independence of Kenya and Uganda relieved these pressures.

Since 1980 there has been rapid growth, not only in Kenya and Uganda, but in Central and West Africa as well. This growth has been characterised by an amazing variety of mission activities and methods. In certain times and places, Christian mission is often noted for particular approaches that are characteristic of that time and place, and are rare or non-existent at other times. In Orthodox mission in tropical Africa, however, one may find just about every mission method and approach that has ever been tried anywhere.

⁶⁹ Interview, Archbishop Irenaeus, November 1995

Perhaps the commonest method is the pre-Nicene method of "gossiping the gospel". People hear about the Orthodox Church from friends, family, or colleagues at work, and their interest is aroused. Even this happens in a great many different ways: a Zimbabwean army officer undergoing training in Greece or a factory worker talking to an Orthodox colleague. In Kiboine, in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya, the local chief of the Nandi people encountered Orthodoxy among the Luahs in Western Kenya, who had in turn got it from Uganda. He became a church reader and catechist, and in that area the Orthodox Church is the predominant Christian group.⁷⁰ This is also reminiscent in some ways of the conversion of Prince Vladimir of Kiev in the tenth century, whose people followed him in becoming Christian.

Some have joined the Orthodox Church from other denominations. A Luo Anglican school teacher had a problem of pupils being bewitched in the high school where he taught. An Orthodox charismatic evangelist, Charles Omuroka, who is based at Kakamega in Western Kenya, came to the school and prayed for some of the pupils, who were healed.⁷¹ Such methods are usually associated with Pentecostal Protestant missionaries rather than with Orthodox missions.

In Konyabuguru, near Bukoba in Tanzania, a priest, Fr Sosthenes Kiyonga, came to the village in 1974 to teach the Orthodox faith. The people there had to walk 8 kilometres to fetch water. He prayed, and a spring appeared in the village, which has not dried up since then. This caused many, including pagans, Anglicans and Roman Catholics, to join the Orthodox Church.⁷² Such methods are usually associated with Celtic missionaries of the seventh century rather than with Africa in the twentieth century.

There have been several instances of people reading about the Orthodox Church in books, and then travelling, often for long distances at great expense, to try to find the church. This was the case with Reuben Spartas and those in Ghana as well. One Lutheran seminarian, having

70 Interview, Thomas Maritim, November 1995

71 Interview, Fr Charles Otieno, November 1995

72 Interview, Paul Kadoma, November 1995

learnt from the study of church history in the seminary that the Orthodox Church was the original one, decided to find the Orthodox Church and join it.⁷³ This could be described as "literature evangelism", except that most of the literature they read was not written with evangelism in mind.

A Kikuyu family moved to Labere, in a Turkana-speaking area of Kenya. One of the members of the family was attending the Orthodox seminary in Nairobi, and invited the seminary there to teach. The local Turkana-speaking people gathered under a tree to hear about the Orthodox faith. There was one blind man who could translate from English to Turkana. When the first group of people was baptised, Swahili and Kikuyu were used in the Liturgy, and the Bible readings were translated orally, as there was no Turkana Bible available then (1982). Since then the services have been translated.⁷⁴

This is similar to the "people-group" approach advocated by the Protestant missiologist Donald McGavran, though there is one major difference: the seminary consciously tries to be multinational and intertribal. When students go out on missions or to visit parishes, they go in groups comprising different nationalities or language-groups, and this is pointed out to the congregation. The church is not Luo or Kikuyu or Haya or Turkana or Greek, but is composed of people of all nationalities and cultures. McGavran's idea of planting churches for homogeneous people groups has therefore been modified. While in cases like this, evangelism may be aimed at a specific group, such as Turkana-speaking people, there is considerable emphasis on the idea of the church as an inclusive fellowship. One of the greatest obstacles to Orthodox mission in the last few centuries has been the ethnic insularity of Orthodox Christians themselves, and so a deliberate attempt is being made to counteract that.

The approach least in evidence is the one that has often been most prominent in Orthodox mission elsewhere - monastic mission. There are no Orthodox monasteries in tropical Africa. Yet several monks, male and

⁷³ Interview, Thomas Shuza, November 1995

⁷⁴ Interview, Bishop Makarios of Riruta, November 1995

female, have been sent by their monasteries to work in various parts of Africa and Madagascar.

The "classical" methods used by Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries are also to be found - educational and medical services. The beginnings of the Orthodox Church in Kenya are tied up with the Kikuyu Karing'a Educational Association, and in many places in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, clinics and dispensaries have been built. Community development programmes have also not been lacking. The agricultural development work in Zaire is an example, and in 1988 the Uganda Orthodox Church drew up an ambitious development programme for reconstruction and development after the devastating civil wars and upheavals of the last 25 years. Health services and schools are virtually non-existent, and the church was trying to play its part in rebuilding them. The implementation of the programmes has been patchy. Progress has been made in some places, while in others, nothing has happened. In such projects, assistance has often been given by the Churches of Finland, Greece and Cyprus, and by the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in the USA. Teams of short-term volunteers have travelled from those countries to help the local people in the building and equipping of clinics, dispensaries, schools and churches.

Another aspect of mission, mission as liberation, is, as I have pointed out, closely bound up with the history of the Orthodox Church in Kenya, and for many (including the British colonial rulers) the Orthodox Church was the church of *uhuru*.

Thus mission has been initiated by people of all kinds: an archbishop in northern Cameroun, a charismatic evangelist in western Kenya, a priest in north-western Tanzania, and many others, bishops, priests and laity in all kinds of places.

ORTHODOXY IN PORTUGAL

According to Bishop Jeremiasz of the Orthodox Church in Poland, there is a growing Orthodox Church in Portugal, with five bishops in Portugal and a sixth in Brazil.

The beginning of this was a vision by a Portuguese man named Gabriel, who had a vision of the Theotokos, in which she told him that he should join the Orthodox Church. He travelled to France, and joined a monastery of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. Some time later he had another vision, in which he was told to return to Portugal. He was

ordained a priest, and established an Orthodox community, which grew rapidly. Eventually there seemed to be the need for a bishop, and he approached several Orthodox Churches in various places, and eventually the Orthodox Church of Poland took the Portuguese Church under its wing.⁷⁵

ORTHODOXY IN INDONESIA

Father Daniel Byantoro was brought up as a Muslim in Indonesia, and as a high-school pupil read about Jesus in the Qu'ran. He wanted to learn more, and this eventually brought him into contact with Christians. He joined the Orthodox Church, and established an Orthodox community in Indonesia, which now falls under the recently-established Metropolitanate of Hong Kong.⁷⁶

ORTHODOXY IN NORTH AMERICA

After about 1970, the Orthodox Church began to grow significantly in North America. There are many factors that contributed to this growth, but at this point I will confine myself to three: the publication of Orthodox literature in English, the attraction of some evangelical Christians to Orthodoxy, and the establishment of monasticism in North America.

Orthodox literature in English

In 1970 the Orthodox Church in America was granted autocephaly by the Moscow Patriarch, thus resolving, to some extent, its anomalous position, which had persisted since the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The validity of this grant of autocephaly was disputed by some of the other Orthodox Churches, and the presence of numerous branches of the various Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe and the Near East, some of whose members in North America outnumber the OCA make the grant of autocephaly a moot point.

75 Interview with Bishop Jeremias of Wroclaw, August 1995

76 Interview with Fr Daniel Byantoro, August 1995

The grant of autocephaly did, however, have one important effect within the OCA itself. It ceased thinking of itself as a diaspora church, and came to regard itself as North American. This was not, of course, a new idea, or an unexpected effect. Those who wanted autocephaly had that in mind. But an important result of this was a large increase in the number of Orthodox books available in English. Since 1970 the St Vladimir's Seminary Press has published numerous works in English, which have been distributed throughout the English-speaking world. Some of the branches of other Orthodox Churches that were active in North America also began publishing more literature in English.

This had the effect of making the Orthodox better known among English-speaking people, not only in North America, but also in other parts of the world where English is understood. One particularly influential book in this respect was *For the life of the world*, by Fr Alexander Schmemmann, the Dean of St Vladimir's Seminary (Schmemmann 1973). In it he specifically addressed himself to some of the theological questions being debated in the Christian West, especially the dichotomy between "sacred" and "secular", or "spiritual" and "worldly" Christianity. Many books were published on these topics by Western theologians in the 1960s, and Schmemmann's book appealed to those who thought that the dichotomy was a false one, and were attracted to the more holistic outlook of Orthodox theology presented there.⁷⁷

Evangelical Christians move to Orthodoxy

Gillquist (1989) describes how a group of evangelical Protestant Christians, working with the evangelistic mission organisation Campus Crusade for Christ, came to realise that parachurch ministries were not enough for evangelism, and were based on an inadequate ecclesiology. While they were successful in persuading students to make "decisions for Christ", they saw that there had to be more to the Christian faith than that, and in order to be Christian one also had to be a member of the Church.

⁷⁷ In this paragraph I am speaking from my own personal experience, but discussions with others, both face to face or in correspondence, have convinced me that many others have had a similar experience. Schmemmann's book was first published by Herder and Herder in 1965, and by Darton, Longman and Todd in 1966, as *The world as sacrament*. The revised and expanded edition, with two additional chapters, was published under the title *For the life of the world* by St Vladimir's Seminary Press in 1973, and has been

The search for an ecclesiological basis for their mission led them to a study of church history, to find what happened to the New Testament Church (Gillquist 1989:24). From their beginnings in the early 1970s, they eventually formed the Evangelical Orthodox Church, which was received into the Antiochian Christian Archdiocese of North and South America in 1987 as the Antiochian Evangelical Orthodox Mission (AEOM), and became part of the mission wing of that Archdiocese (Gillquist 1989:166). In this their experience almost exactly paralleled that of the Ugandans led by Reuben Spartas some fifty years earlier.

As most of this group were former Protestants, and their leaders had also been active in evangelism, they brought a new activist mission vision to American Orthodoxy. They too published a great deal of Orthodox literature in English, but unlike the scholarly publications of the St Vladimir's Seminary Press, this group produced small booklets and glossy illustrated magazines, specifically designed to explain Orthodoxy to a Protestant audience, or at least an audience raised in a Protestant milieu. I will examine the effects of this in more detail in a later chapter.

Father Seraphim Rose and Orthodox monasticism in America

If the Antiochian Evangelical Orthodox mission popularised Orthodoxy among Protestant evangelicals, Fr Seraphim Rose adopted a very different, yet complementary approach. He was brought up in a conventional Protestant home in California, and as a student was attracted to East Asian religions. Eugene Rose, as he then was, studied Zen Buddhism under Alan Watts, and later Chinese religion and philosophy, and learnt Chinese in order to do so.

He encountered Orthodox Christianity in San Francisco at the cathedral of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, under Bishop John Maximovitch, who had spent part of his ministry in Shanghai and has since been canonised as a saint by the ROCA, and is venerated as a saint by

reprinted many times.

many other Orthodox as well. Eugene Rose was attracted by the ascetical side of Orthodoxy, and the teaching of *podvig* or spiritual struggle. He and a Russian friend started a monastery in northern California, which attracted a number of Americans to the monastic life.

Once again, the monastery of St Herman of Alaska, as it was called, published a great deal of Orthodox literature in English. In this case, however, it published mainly translations of the writings of the leaders of the revival of Russian monasticism of the 19th century, thus making these works available to an English readership. I also deal with the influence of this group in more detail in another chapter.⁷⁸

SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter I have concentrated on Orthodox mission in Africa, because that is one of the places where Orthodoxy has been growing fastest at the end of the 20th century, and I have noted briefly some of the other places where Orthodoxy has been growing.

On the whole, the examples I have given of Orthodox mission methods seem to confirm the observations of Bosch (1991:207f) that Orthodox mission is "centripetal rather than centrifugal, organic rather than organized". Many of the movements of people toward Orthodoxy have been movements of people from outside wanting to come in. This is certainly true in the case of the Portuguese and Indonesian missions. The Orthodox Churches in those countries were not established by missionaries going out from Orthodox countries, but by natives of those countries.

Some, like Daniel William Alexander in South Africa, did not even succeed in coming in, yet Alexander was instrumental in bringing many thousands of others, in Kenya, Uganda and other places in to the Orthodox Church. Reuben Spartas waited 14 years before the African Orthodox Church in Uganda was finally received by the Patriarchate of Alexandria, and had been searching for Orthodoxy for several years before that.

78 After the death of Fr Seraphim Rose, the St Herman's Monastery left the Orthodox Church, and became a schismatic group under an *episcopus vagans*, Metropolitan Pangratiot of Vassiloupolis (Queens, New York). It united with a New Age group, the Holy Order of MANS (Lucas 1995).

The role of *episcopi vagantes* like Joseph René Vilatte is a strange one. They were unorthodox in both their methods and their theology. Some of the bodies they founded were as ephemeral and eccentric as they themselves were. And yet some of the seeds they sowed so promiscuously took root, and were transplanted into the Orthodox fold. Daniel William Alexander was no *episcopus vagans* himself. He seems to have taken his episcopate seriously. He tried to restrain schismatic tendencies, and encouraged other groups to unite with the African Orthodox Church. Perhaps in a time when the Orthodox Church was unable to engage in mission, the *episcopi vagantes* provided a substitute of sorts.

Bodies such as the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in the USA, and *Apostoliki Diakonia* in Greece have supported some "centrifugal" mission efforts, but these are mainly short-term efforts to boost local efforts. The initiative in mission tends to be from the local church, or from people outside the church altogether who are seeking Orthodoxy.

CHAPTER 5

Methods and models

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I shall look at some of the ways in which the Orthodox Church has extended itself in the past, and sometimes more recently. These include such things as martyrdom and persecution, which were common in the first three centuries, and even more widespread in the 20th century. Another is what I have called "Mission and statecraft", which is one of the ways in which Christianity, both Eastern and Western, spread between the 5th and 9th centuries, especially in northern Europe. Yet another is monastic mission, which covers the same period as the "mission and statecraft", and extends beyond it to the present. Then there is mission and colonialism. From the 16th to the 19th century Christian mission, both Eastern and Western, was linked with the colonial expansion of European empires. I look briefly at mission in the Far East, and then at the Orthodox Diaspora of the 19th and 20th centuries.

While not all of these could strictly speaking be called mission "methods", since they were not tools deliberately chosen by missionaries, they do give a picture of some of the ways and circumstances in which the Orthodox Church has spread. The "ways" and "circumstances" are also linked. Martyrdom is not possible without persecution. Both the "statecraft" and "colonial" models require some connection between secular rulers and the church. Both the "colonial" and "diaspora" models require movement of peoples; the first to places under the same political authority, the second to places under a different political authority. So the circumstances often determine the means and methods of mission. At the end of the chapter I look at some of the more usual "methods" such as preaching and teaching, and look at them in relation to the circumstances in which they were used as well.

The question of mission methods raises also the question of the goals of mission, and indeed the nature of mission. What is mission? Some kind of provisional definition is needed, at least for the purposes of this chapter. Stamoolis (1986:48-49) has pointed out some of the difficulties

in answering this question from an Orthodox point of view. Orthodox missionaries have rarely, if ever, begun their work with an attempt to formulate a definition of mission. But Stamoolis (1986:52-53) goes on to point out that one of the aims that can be discerned in Orthodox mission is the planting of the Church.

I have pointed out earlier (see page 6) that "mission" is a Latin term, and that the Greek equivalent is "apostolic". Apostles are those who are sent, and the ikon of Pentecost shows the apostles being sent into the world. The great missionary saints of the Orthodox Church have been known as *isapostolos* - "equal-to-the-apostles". These are those who have been primarily responsible for the planting of the Church in places where there has been no Orthodox Church before. The descriptions of the ministry of these missionary saints, therefore, can provide some clues to Orthodox missiology. Their methods varied enormously, according to the different circumstances in which they conducted their mission. For example, St Nina, the Apostle of Georgia, and St Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, were both slaves. Both evangelised people among whom they were originally in involuntary servitude. St Frumentius, the Apostle of Ethiopia, was a merchant who was shipwrecked. Though Patrick voluntarily returned to those among whom he was a slave, and Frumentius was later sent back as a bishop to those among whom he had been marooned, none of them went to the countries where they planted the Church with a self-conscious missionary intention. They were certainly not career missionaries. Their mission was mainly due to circumstances beyond their control. They took advantage of the circumstances to evangelise those among whom they found themselves. In some cases the planting of Orthodox churches even seems to have been quite fortuitous, as in the case of Kenya, where it seems to have been the result of a chance meeting.

The examples I have mentioned illustrate the point that mission is primarily the work of God. It was not by planning, or developing strategies and tactics, that these missionaries were successful. There are examples in the Bible too - Joseph was taken to Egypt as a slave (Genesis 37:28). The story of Nina of Georgia has echoes of the slave in 2 Kings 5:2-3, who was instrumental in directing Naaman, the Syrian commander, to Elisha for healing. This is similar to what Western missiologists have referred to as the *missio Dei* (see Bosch 1991:390ff). It is also the core idea of monastic mission in the Orthodox Church, which I shall deal with in more detail later in this chapter.

Stamoolis (1986:49ff) points out that the ultimate aim of Orthodox mission is the glory of God. Christ sends his disciples as the Father sent him, and he was sent to redeem the world from sin and death and from bondage to corruption. If sin is "falling short of the glory of God" (Ro 3:23), then salvation is the restoration of the glory of God. A missionary who has not been transfigured in such a way as to manifest the glory of God has little chance of success. The Church, as the body of Christ, is the community of those called to manifest that glory, bound in sacramental fellowship (communion, community, *kinonia*, *sobornost*) with each other and with God.⁷⁹ Thus the planting of the Church is the immediate aim of mission.

In discussing mission *methods* therefore, this *aim* must be borne in mind. The methods have the aim of planting a church in a place where none has existed before, or where it has been weakened or destroyed. The aim may not always be a conscious determination. It is often worked out by hindsight, as the unintended result of a certain course of action which may have been quite involuntary, such as being captured as a slave. Those who have a reputation of having planted the church, whatever the methods they used, are called in the Orthodox Church "equal to the apostles" (*isapostolos*). One also needs to keep Orthodox ecclesiology in mind. Many Western Protestant mission agencies speak of "church planting", but they speak from a background of congregationalist or independent ecclesiology. According to the ecclesiology of congregationalism or independency, "church planting" means the establishment of individual congregations, which may or may not have any continuing connection with any other congregations or with the founding mission agency. For such Protestant groups "church planting" therefore means

⁷⁹ Transliterations of Greek words into English vary greatly. I have transliterated the Greek word phonetically, the way it is pronounced in Greek (and thus by most Orthodox Christians). It has been Anglicised among Western Christians with the pronunciation "coin-O-nia", and often spelt "koinonia", whereas among Orthodox Christians it is pronounced "ki-no-NI-a". The Greek diphthong that looks like "oi" is pronounced like the "ee" in "keen". It has also been transliterated into English letters as "oe" (in "coenobitic") and "e" (in "ecumenical"). The varying systems of transliteration often make it difficult to see that words like *koinonia* and *coenobitic* have the same root.

"planting churches" rather than "planting the Church" which is the Orthodox understanding of the phrase. In the Orthodox understanding the local church is the diocese, with the faithful gathered with their bishop, with the priests and deacons. The diocese may be composed of several local congregations, but none of these is seen as a church independently of the diocese (see Hayes 1993:23).

While church planting is a central aim of mission, it is not the only aim. Mission in a wider sense is that the Church is sent into the world to do and to be. Thus at some points in this chapter I shall touch on topics like healing or ecology. Though these are not necessarily always linked to church planting, they are also part of the mission of the Church. Healing, for example, can be both a method and an aim of mission. Concern for ecology, the proper stewardship of the earth and the nonhuman creation, is an essential part of the Christian faith.

MARTYRDOM AND PERSECUTION

The word "martyr" means witness, and has legal connotations - a witness who testifies in a court of law. A witness is one who gives testimony to her own experience. If the starting point for the understanding of Orthodox mission is the ikon of the descent of the Holy Spirit, the starting point for understanding martyrdom is the result: "we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God" (Ac 2:11). This was a fulfilment of the promise of Jesus: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Ac 1:8). While not all Christians are apostles, planters of churches, all are called to be witnesses, to tell the mighty works of God.

The *Acts of the Apostles* continues, telling how the authorities tried to suppress the telling (Ac 4:18-21) until finally St Stephen, the Protomartyr, is killed to suppress his testimony (Ac 7:54-60). From then on, a faithful witness must be prepared to die. So John, on Patmos, is told to write to the church of Smyrna, "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10). In this there is a harking back to the Protomartyr. The reward is the

stephanon tis zois, the crown of life. The *stephanon* was the crown or garland given to an athlete who had completed a race, and those who were prepared to die bore the ultimate testimony to the resurrection of Christ, to his conquest of evil and death.

St Stephen was the first of many martyrs, those who had held to their testimony in the face of death. Christians took to celebrating the Eucharist, the Divine Liturgy, on the graves of the martyrs (Rev 6:9-11), and to this day the altar on which the Eucharist is celebrated is primarily represented by the *antimension*, the cloth showing the burial of Christ and the four evangelists, signed by the bishop, and into which are sewn the relics of the saints (Hagood 1975:xxix-xxx).

As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire, persecution could break out at any time. Until the "Edict of Milan", which proclaimed official toleration for Christians, physical death at the hands of state officials was a real risk for anyone who became a Christian (Cross & Livingstone 1983:915). Anyone could die, and many did. Persecution was not continuous, but was usually sporadic and local. In the pre-Nicene period, martyrdom was one of the most significant means of recruitment of new members for the Church. When persecution officially ceased in the Roman Empire, the cult of the martyrs continued. Though other missionary methods were introduced, or became more prominent, martyrdom, either directly or through the cult of the martyrs, remained a means by which people became Christian.

For the first 300 years Christians were liable to persecution within the Roman Empire. For the next 300 years Christians within the empire generally enjoyed freedom from official state persecution: most of the emperors were themselves Christian, and actively supported the Christian faith, and some promoted mission beyond the borders of the empire. Three centuries of persecution were followed by three centuries of relative peace. The Arab conquest of northern Africa, and later the Near East, put an end to this period of peace for many Christians. Mission was placed under severe legal restraints, and martyrdom again became an important method of mission, one of the only ones that could be said to be permitted by the authorities, because without their cooperation it could not take place. Stamoelis (1986:127) notes that martyrdom is not a form of witness that can be pursued without suitable external pressures. Suicide is not martyrdom, but being put to death when one could recant is. Since the seventh century, then, there has never been a time when

some Christians, somewhere, have not been under threat of persecution, and where martyrdom has not been a possibility. Though it is not an option for Christian witness everywhere and at all times, there are always some places in which it is a possibility.

Martyrdom in Soviet Russia

For Orthodox Christians one of the outstanding examples of martyrdom as a method of mission is the persecution of Christians during the communist period in Russia, and the countries that fell into the Soviet sphere of influence. It is prominent for several reasons. In the first place, as it took place in the twentieth century, it is a matter of recent memory. Millions of Christians now living experienced the persecution at first hand, and many have friends or relatives who died for their faith. There are many Christians now living who came to faith because of the martyrs.⁸⁰ Secondly, it was on a larger scale than any previous persecutions. Thirdly, it was qualitatively different from most previous persecutions.

In the Roman Empire of the first three centuries, Christians were regarded by the state primarily as a political threat. The main reason for persecution was their refusal to participate in the official emperor cult, and this was taken as a sign of disloyalty to the state, and Christians were called "atheists" because they did not acknowledge the divinity of the emperor.⁸¹ In other circumstances too, the Christian insistence on seeing Christ as king has been seen as a sign of political disloyalty. For Christians under Muslim rule, there was a certain amount of respect and tolerance built in to Islam itself. Christians were not always expected to compromise their faith by adopting the faith of their Muslim rulers, but a Muslim who became a Christian was in danger of death (Stamoolis 1986:126). There was, however, in the Ottoman empire,

⁸⁰ Missiological researchers now have an almost unprecedented opportunity to make an empirical study of the role of martyrdom in conversion.

⁸¹ *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 9 (Staniforth 1968:158).

the system of *devshirme*, in which the sons of Christian families were abducted by the state and indoctrinated with Islam before joining the army as janissaries, and there were periods in which attempts were made to forcibly convert Christians *en masse* (Yannoulatos 1984:460).

In the Soviet period, unlike the Roman empire, it was the state, and not the Christians, that was atheist. Christians were indeed suspected of political disloyalty, as in the pagan Roman empire. But the demands of the Soviet state went far beyond those of the pagan Roman state. It did not attack the Church primarily because it was associated with the *ancien régime*, but because the logic of the state ideology demanded the complete denial of the existence of God (Struve 1992:256f).

In 1933 a group of Soviet geologists were working in the Siberian Taiga, not far from a concentration camp. One day they found a freshly dug trench near their camp, and saw soldiers leading prisoners to the trench. The soldiers ordered the geologists to go into their tents, explaining that they were going to liquidate Orthodox priests, "an element alien to the Soviet system". The geologists overheard what followed, the same command repeated 60 times: "Say there is no God and your life will be spared". And the same reply repeated 60 times: "God exists", followed by a shot (Pospelovsky 1991:277). Pospelovsky does not record whether this particular instance of martyrdom resulted in any conversions, but does note that it made a sufficiently deep impression on the geologists that at least one of them passed on the information 50 years after the event.

Pospelovsky (1988:275-276) also describes the trial and execution of Metropolitan Veniamin of Petrograd in 1922. The court was packed with over 3000 people each day of the trial, many of them organised mobs of communists and *komsomols* (members of the communist youth league). The bishop's defence counsel, Gurovich, was a Jew, and said that he was happy to defend the bishop to repay the Orthodox Church for her help to the Jews during an anti-semitic campaign in Russia before the revolution. The spectators in the courtroom, despite the fact that many were young communists who had gone there out of enmity towards the bishop, rose and applauded the defence counsel's speech, and stood for the bishop's blessing.

As in the ancient Roman empire, however, the pressure on Christians in the Soviet Union was not uniform. During the civil war that followed the Revolution the Church continued its life. Once the Soviet state stabilised, however, the pressure on the Church increased. In 1914 there were 1025 monasteries in Russia, but by 1929 not a single one remained open (Davis 1995:146). Pressure eased off when the state was again under threat, during the Second World War, and the western territories conquered at the time of the Nazi-Soviet pact included many functioning monasteries and churches. When the Nazis invaded the USSR, many churches reopened in the conquered territories, and within Russia itself pressure on the Church eased, so many of those churches remained open after the war. After 1960, under Krushchev, the pressure was increased again, only to be gradually lifted during the period of *glasnost* in the late 1980s.

When the monasteries closed, the monastics who were not immediately killed were scattered, and though some apostasised, others remained faithful, and continued their life of prayer and witness in their families, with whom they went to live, or in prison camps, or in secular employment. Though the extent and significance of the "underground church" in the Soviet Union has often been exaggerated or distorted, it remains true that the prison camps were important recruiting grounds for Christian converts, and the sacraments were more frequently available to the prison population than to those outside in the 1930s (Davis 1995:130f).

MISSION AND STATECRAFT

In the pre-Nicene period, martyrdom was one of the characteristic methods of mission, though it has been equally prominent in the modern period, if not more so. When rulers began to favour Christianity, they also tended to promote mission, whether by passive toleration or active encouragement.

The most notable ruler to do this was Constantine the Great, Roman emperor from 312-337. I have already described in some detail the Christianisation of Ethiopia, where the Christian faith spread first among the ruling classes, and had their support. In this section, however, I would like to make a particular comparative study of two examples: the establishment of Christianity in ancient Russia and in Anglo-Saxon England.

The Christianisation of ancient Russia and England

These particular examples are interesting for several reasons. 1) After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Russian Orthodox Church was the only Orthodox Church notably active in external mission until the 20th century, and it remains, even after two generations of severe persecution, the largest of the Orthodox Churches; 2) both Russia and England are examples of the evangelisation of northern Europe, in the East and the West, before the schism between East and West. The missions to both were post-classical and premodern, and were missions to premodern societies. The comparison can therefore serve to show some of the common characteristics of East and West, and where they may have diverged, and also some of the characteristics of premodern mission in premodern societies; 3) both countries went on to develop empires in the colonial period, and thus later comparisons can also be drawn; 4) in this particular model of mission, the role of women is very important, though often underestimated; 5) the celebration of the millennium of Christianity in ancient Russia in 1988 led to a reexamination of the historical records, and a greater focus of scholarly attention on the events and their significance.

The Christianisation of Kievan Rus

In the 10th century the principality of Kievan Rus assumed a growing importance in international trade. The Mediterranean was closed to trade between Eastern and Western Europe by Arab pirates, and the rivers from the Black Sea through Russian rivers to the Baltic provided an alternative route (Zernov 1961:111; Kochan 1978:14). The area round the middle Dnieper had been settled by eastern Slavs from the sixth century, and eventually came under Khazar suzerainty. The trading led to the development of a large number of towns, each of which sought to control adjacent territory, and was unified by Varangian invaders from Scandinavia, led by Rurik, who took Novgorod in 862. His successor Oleg moved south, taking Kiev in 882, which he made his capital. Over the next couple of generations the Varangians were gradually absorbed by the eastern Slavs, the Rus, and adopted their language (Kochan 1978:15f).

Across the Black Sea most of the trade went through the so-called "Byzantine" Empire, with its capital at Constantinople.⁸² An embassy of

⁸² The "Byzantine" Empire is a fiction of Western historians, created for ideological purposes. It was known to its inhabitants as

the Rus visited Constantinople about 838, and relations with them were regarded as an important part of the foreign policy of the empire (Meyendorff 1989:9). There were Greek colonies on the northern shore of the Black Sea, and though one might have expected some Christian influence to extend from them to their northern neighbours, they were separated by the steppe empires of western Eurasia, such as that of the Goths, until the 9th century (Majeska 1990:17). The importance of foreign relations with the Rus was emphasised by an attack on Constantinople itself in 860 by more than 200 ships (Constantelos 1988:364). The emperor was out of the city on a campaign with most of the army, and the fact that the attack did not succeed was ascribed by the inhabitants to the "protection of the Mother of God" (Majeska 1990:18).⁸³

Byzantine foreign policy in such cases was to try to win allies, and if possible to convert them to Christianity. Constantine the Philosopher (better-known to history as St Cyril, who with his brother Methodius later led a mission to Moravia) led an embassy to Cherson, one of the Greek cities in the Crimea, where he learnt Hebrew in the hope of winning the Jewish Khazars as allies against the Rus. His debates with rabbis at the Khazar court produced few converts, but did achieve the hoped-for alliance against the Rus. It is possible that he established contact with the Rus as well, since he is known primarily for his mission to the Slavs, albeit those in the West. In 867 the Patriarch of Constantinople reported that a bishop had been sent to the "godless Rus" (Majeska 1990:19). In 882 two Russo-Varangian princes, Askold and Dir, were martyred by Oleg, who captured Kiev and made it his capital, and Oleg seems to have tried to eradicate Christianity (Constantelos 1988:365).

the "Roman" empire, and they called themselves Romans.

⁸³ This event is celebrated by the Russian Orthodox Church as the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos (Pokrov). It is regarded as being of far less importance by the Greeks, though they were the ones who received the protection from the then-pagan Russians.

Oleg did not succeed in this, however, and there remained a substantial Christian community in Kiev, and the Rus were exposed to Christian influences. Russian envoys to Constantinople were taken on guided tours of churches, and had the faith explained to them. By 944, under the rule of Prince Igor, a diplomatic mission went to sign a treaty, and it is clear that it consisted of both Christians and non-Christians. The Christians had taken their oaths in the Church of St Elias in Kiev, and the non-Christians had taken theirs before the statue of the god Perun (Constantelos 1988:367).

Igor's successor Svyatoslav embarked on a campaign of conquest, to expand the frontiers. He conquered the Khazars in the east, and the Bulgarians in the south-west, and left most aspects of rule other than the military to his mother Olga. She concentrated on matters such as religion, trade and diplomacy, and personally led an embassy to Constantinople, where she appeared at her reception by the emperor Constantine with a retinue of women, leaving the males to tag along behind. She was apparently the first woman barbarian ruler ever to see Constantinople, and she also wanted to become a Christian. It seems that the emperor was so impressed by her abilities that he sought her hand in marriage to cement the alliance. It is said that she astutely persuaded the emperor to be her godfather at her baptism, after which she pointed out that canon law would forbid their marriage (Kimball 1990:3-4).

St Olga did not seek to make Christianity the official religion, but nonetheless she encouraged its spread, though her son Svyatoslav, the Viking adventurer, would have none of it. After her death, in fact, Christians were persecuted, and this persecution continued into the reign of her grandson Vladimir (Rauschenbach 1992:43-44).

When Vladimir came to the throne in 978 the semi-tribal, semi-urban society of Kievan Rus needed to become more cohesive if it was to prosper and grow. Even before becoming a Christian, Vladimir was something of a religious reformer, and tried to strengthen the unity of the Rus by uniting the gods of the various tribes in a single pantheon, and spreading their worship throughout his domain. But adapting the cult of deities of semi-nomadic tribes did not seem to fit the needs of a kingdom that needed to stabilise. The frontiers were reasonably secure. There were no more neighbours to conquer, so a pillage and burn economy was a dead end. An answer was to seek to develop the state, using the Byzantine empire as a model and mentor, and that would mean adopting its

religion as well as other aspects of its life and culture (Rauschenbach 1992:44). Whether Vladimir calculated this in precisely these terms, it is not possible to know at this distance in time, but some such considerations may have influenced him.

Because of the close link between Church and State in Byzantium, receiving baptism from Constantinople would tend to make Vladimir Constantinople's vassal. Vladimir seized the opportunity presented when the Emperor Basil II faced a rebellion that threatened his throne, and sought Vladimir's help in crushing the rebels. Vladimir's conditions for doing this were firstly that by being baptised he would not become a vassal, and secondly, he wanted the hand of the emperor's sister, Anna, in marriage. In the circumstances the emperor could not refuse, but once the immediate danger was past, the emperor tried to avoid his side of the bargain. Vladimir's troops thereupon occupied Cherson, the Byzantine city in the Crimea. Vladimir was baptised, married Anna, and made Christianity the official religion of the state (Rauschenbach 1992:46). The precise place of his baptism is uncertain. Some sources indicate that it was in Cherson, others in Kiev. It is possible that he was admitted as a catechumen in Cherson and actually baptised in Kiev. The mass baptisms of the Rus then began.

It is clear from the above historical account that the introduction of Christianity to the Rus was not a sudden affair, but a gradual process. In a trading and warrior state, there was much cultural interchange with neighbouring peoples and kingdoms. This has been expressed formulaically by the Russian chronicle in its account of Vladimir sending envoys to the eastern Christians, the Western Christians, the Muslims and the Jews, to decide which religion to adopt, and hearing those to Constantinople report that the worship in the Church of the Holy Wisdom there was like heaven on earth (Majeska 1990:22). There were no doubt plenty of former members of diplomatic missions who would have reported such things, and besides there were churches in Kiev itself. Apart from the diplomatic and aesthetic advantages, Vladimir's own grandmother, Olga, had been a Christian.

While the Chronicle may have exaggerated the contrast between the "before" and "after", it is clear that the Christian faith made sufficient impression on Vladimir to make him change his lifestyle and his style of ruling quite radically, showing mercy on criminals by abolish-

ing capital punishment, and setting up what was virtually a welfare state (Zernov 1961:113).

The Russian Orthodox Church has regarded St Olga and St Vladimir as their apostles, as *isapostolos* (equal to the apostles). What is significant here is that they were of the laity, not monks or clergy. They were not sent out as missionaries to places far away, taking the Christian faith with them, but rather went out to find the Christian faith, and to bring it to their people. They were rulers, and considerations of diplomacy and statecraft must have entered into their calculations, though the accounts of the change in St Vladimir in particular after his baptism show that their conversion was no less genuine for that. The name of the bishop who was first sent to the "godless Rus" some 120 years before Vladimir's conversion is not remembered. The founding saints of Russian and Ukrainian Orthodoxy are the first secular rulers of that society who became Christian.

The Christianisation of England

At the opposite end of Europe, some three or four centuries earlier, the English were Christianised. From the Orthodox viewpoint, this too is an example of Orthodox mission, because in the 6th and 7th centuries the West was still Orthodox.

The English, like the Scandinavian Varangians who conquered and ruled the Slavic Rus, were invaders. The largely Celtic inhabitants of Britain had been conquered first by the Romans under Julius Caesar, and southern Britain was part of the Roman empire. The presence of British bishops at the Council of Arles in 314 is evidence that there was an organised Christian church there under Roman rule, and there is much archaeological evidence to support this. When the Romans conquered Britain, they tended to identify their own gods with British ones - the British god of war, Camulos, for example, was identified with the Roman god Mars (Hutton 1991:211). The Romans tended to worship in temples, while the British worshipped in the open air, but the British also began to follow Roman practice by building some shrines (Hutton 1991:226-227). Being part of the Roman empire brought other religious practices, such as Mithraism and Christianity.

At the beginning of the 5th century, Roman troops were withdrawn from Britain to help defend Italy itself, while Picts, Scots and Saxons from across the sea posed an increasing threat to Britain. By 410, the central Roman administration of Britain had collapsed, and the emigration

of skilled administrators led to a collapse of the infrastructure. Local rulers brought in mercenaries to repel invaders, and the mercenaries took power. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes from Germany and Denmark came no longer as raiders but as colonists and settlers, driving out the British. Tribal chiefs established their power in the areas they settled, and eventually warlords consolidated their power and formed kingdoms - Kent in the south-east, Wessex in the south-west, Mercia in the midlands, Anglia in the east and Northumbria in the north-east. By the end of the 5th century Southern Britain had become England, the land of the English.

Unlike the Varangians in Rus, the English did not adopt the language and customs of those they conquered, but imposed their own, and practised the religions they had brought with them. The British Christians were unable to evangelise their pagan conquerors, just as, in the following century in Egypt, Coptic Christians were unable to evangelise their Arab conquerors.

In Ireland, however, the Christian faith had taken root and was flourishing. Ireland had never been under Roman rule, and was probably evangelised by missionaries from Gaul and Britain. The most famous missionary, St Patrick, was the son of a Romano-British civil servant, born in north Britain about 415. He was captured and taken to Ireland as a slave in the chaos following the Roman withdrawal from Britain. After escaping, he returned to Ireland as a missionary, and helped to organise the burgeoning Irish church. As the British were driven westwards or absorbed by the English invaders, their rulers and clergy being denounced by the monk Gildas as paragons of immorality and vice, the faith they found so hard to keep was flowering across the sea to the west (Mayr-Harting 1991:34). Monastic life, in particular, was strong, and soon missionaries were going out from the Irish monasteries. Northern Britain was divided between the Picts in the east, and the Scots (themselves immigrants from Ireland) in the west. In 563 Colum Cille (Columba), an Irish monk, established a monastery on the island of Iona, which became a base for the evangelisation of the Scots, the Picts and the English.

In Roman times the centres of the British dioceses had been the towns, but as a result of the invasions, when urban life was destroyed, by the time Gildas wrote in the 6th century, they were often centred on the courts of tribal kings, or in Ireland, in monasteries (Mayr-Harting

1991:34f). At the time of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in England, Irish monasticism flourished, and expanded. Irish monks founded monasteries on remote islands, and in places like Gaul, Cornwall, Scotland, and elsewhere. In the course of their wanderings (*peregrinatio*) they often did convert the pagans in their vicinity, but this was not the reason for their going out. And when they began evangelising the English, it was because they were invited to do so by King Oswald of Northumbria, who had just united the kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia (Mayr-Harting 1991:93). Like St Vladimir in Kievan Rus, Oswald was perhaps, for reasons of statecraft, looking for something that would strengthen the bonds of his newly united kingdom, though he had in fact become a Christian before he became king, while living among the Irish. The first missionary sent to him was not suitable, so he chose another, Aidan, who established a monastery on the island of Lindisfarne. Though he was bishop of the Northumbrians, he appointed an abbot to rule the monastery, to whom he himself, as a monk, was subject (Mayr-Harting 1991:95). Northumbria then, through alliances and marriages, influenced other kingdoms to adopt the Christian faith.

One feature of Northumbrian Christianity was its monasteries, which were very often double monasteries, that is, with both male and female monastics. The double monasteries were invariably ruled by an abbess, of whom Hilda of Whitby was one of the most famous (Mayr-Harting 1991:151). The first such monasteries were mostly founded by women belonging to the royal families - widows or other relations of the kings. As in Kievan Rus, therefore, women played a significant role in mission.

At this point, before going on to consider monastic mission itself in more detail, it is worth reflecting on the relation between royal and monastic mission. The Irish and English societies I have been describing, and also that of Kievan Rus, were tribal and warrior societies, with economies based partly on trade and partly on conquest and looting. In such a society, a "royal mission" can seem almost a contradiction in terms. The kings in such a society were warlords, whose authority in the eyes of their followers was based, at least in part, on their success in conquest. Christianity, with its ethic of love and meekness, hardly seemed calculated to appeal to such people.

Yet it did appeal, and once accepted, it transformed the societies into something else. In this, the contrast between the royal courts and the monasteries was perhaps significant in this. Many of the monks, including the abbots of important monasteries, refused to ride horses,

for example, but rode donkeys (Mayr-Harting 1991:96f). Monasticism was thus a counterbalance to royal power. Boris, the first Christian king of Bulgaria, retired to a monastery in his old age (Schmemmann 1977:262) and the Serbian state was founded by king Stephen and his monastic brother, St Sava (Schmemmann 1977:268). Even where the secular authorities encouraged the establishment of the Christian faith in their domains, the responsibility for its further spread was often the result of monastic mission. Reimer (1994:204) maintains that in Russia the expansion of the Christian faith was the result of spiritual movements in monastic circles rather than royal initiatives. So we need to look more closely at monastic mission.

MONASTIC MISSION

I have already briefly described the rise and spread of the monastic movement, and its importance in mission (see page 77). It now remains to consider some of the ways in which monastic mission operated.

From the 5th century onwards monastic mission was one of the major means of the growth of the Christian Church. Yet monks did not see themselves primarily as missionaries, nor their work as "outreach". St Seraphim of Sarov, one of the great Russian monastic saints of the 19th century, is reported to have said, "Find inner peace, and thousands around you will be saved". And such was the nature of monastic mission. The monks sought to live lives of personal holiness, dedicated to God. In order to do this they often lived as hermits, and sought to live in remote places, far from human habitation. St Seraphim of Sarov himself lived in complete solitude for several years, and only towards the end of his life would he receive visitors, and then thousands flocked to him for spiritual advice, prayer and healing (Seraphim 1991:19). Many monastic missionaries had no thought of setting out to preach to or convert or minister to pagans. Their sole thought was to become better Christians themselves.

Sometimes conversion was a by-product of the search for solitude. St Columba settled on the isolated island of Iona to build a monastery, and converted King Brude of the Picts - but that was a matter of necessity, for the monastery was on an island off King Brude's coast, and his conversion was necessary if the monks were to live there in security (Mayr-Harting 1991:92). In most cases, it was precisely the search for holiness that made monastic missionaries effective. While some went out on

preaching and teaching missions, most stayed at home and were visited by people who asked for their prayers, their ministry and their advice. When sick people were healed as a result of the prayers of the monastics, people settled in the neighbourhood of the monasteries. Traders set up stalls to cater for the need of pilgrims for food, shelter, and entertainment. Eventually the monastics lost the solitude they had sought, and would move elsewhere.

Much of the advice sought from the monastics had to do with relationships, within the family or with neighbours. The monastics were seen as closer to God, and therefore as mediators in relationships with both God and with fellow human beings.

Kaplan (1984:70ff) analyses the role of monastic saints in the Christianisation of Ethiopia. He lists five characteristics of the monastic holy man as mediator, in which the holy men are said to have intervened between men and demonic, divine or natural forces. These characteristics are not confined to Ethiopia, but could fairly be said to be characteristic of premodern monastic mission in other places as well.

1 *The exorcist.* In Ethiopian Christian society Satan and the demonic forces he led were regarded as the haters of saints. Virtually any harmful event was seen as evidence of demonic activity, but this was seen especially in relation to political power. The more powerful and autocratic the king, the greater the number of instances of demonic activity (Kaplan 1984:72). Satan was seen as particularly active in inciting people to make false accusations against others. This is, of course, Satan's primary activity in the Bible too (Job 1, 6; Zech 3:1-5; Rev 12:10), and the very word "satan" means "accuser". Many of the stories of the holy men describe how they drove out demons who were causing quarrels and other anti-social behaviour. They used prayers, the sign of the cross, recitation of psalms and sprinkling with holy water to drive out evil spirits.

2 *The stranger.* In becoming a monk, the holy man could cast off the alliances and loyalties he inherited by virtue of being born in a particular family or region, and could "strip himself of his inherited

social identity and be reborn as a new social being" (Kaplan 1984:75). He was a "stranger", and, like many strangers, was capable of acting as a mediator. One man, for example, had stolen some corn from his neighbour. Abba Anorewos went to the thief and asked for a "gift" of corn. When he received the "gift", he returned the stolen portion to its rightful owner, and kept the rest as his fee. The monks lived very different lives from those of ordinary people. The special clothing they wore gave no indication of rank or social standing. Their ascetic practices, too, set them apart. These were not different from those practised by Christian "athletes" in other lands: celibacy, fasting, prayer, sleeplessness, bowing, standing and wearing uncomfortable clothes. Ethiopian Christians have longer and stricter fasts than those of other countries - about 6 months of the year are fasting periods, but the monks had more fasting days.

- 3 *The angel.* As the stranger the monastic holy man was seen as being able to mediate in disputes between one person and another, so the monastic aspiration to live as the angels (celibate, not eating and drinking, constant in prayer) was seen as making them closer to God, and thus in a sense mediators between ordinary Christians and God. In Ethiopian society, where the king could only be approached through a variety of officials, provincial governors and the like, this may have been a natural development.
- 4 *The healer.* Many of the stories of the Ethiopian saints attribute healing powers to them. People sought out the holy men for their help in times of illness and distress. They did not normally heal through specialist secular medical knowledge (as many later European missionaries did - e.g. David Livingstone). The monastic holy men were seen as healers because they were close to God. Prayer was

the usual method of healing. Saliva was often used as well, because it was believed that the saliva of a Christian is sanctified by the body and blood of Christ (Kaplan 1984:84). Holy water was also widely used for healing, as were the garments of monks. It is significant that many of the accounts of healing indicate that people approached the monks only as a last resort, and that no profession of faith was demanded of them. In contrast to the Muslim healers, who travelled widely, the Christian healers waited until people came to them. Those who were healed usually told others, and thus certain monks gained a reputation as healers. Something that distinguished the monastic holy men from other healers is that they charged nothing for their cures. In one of the very few recorded instances of a saint receiving a gift for a cure, he was given the gift before the cure, and gave it away to charity. This too was not peculiar to Ethiopia, but was one of the features that distinguished Christian healers from many others, whether they used medical means or not. Cosmas and Damian, two popular saints among the Greek Orthodox, are known as "unmercenary doctors", or, literally, "silverless ones" because they charged no fees (see Kaplan 1984:87). In many places today there is a strong secular tendency to move away from this Christian understanding of healing, which can be seen in the pressure for the privatisation of health services, doctors owning shares in profit-making hospitals, et cetera. The same problem can be seen in the New Testament, in the case of the woman who had been bankrupted by greedy doctors before she came to Jesus (Mk 6:25-26).

5 *The lion tamer.* The monastic holy men not only mediated between man and man, and between man and God, but also between human beings and wild animals. They were believed to be able to protect people from harmful animals, and yet also to have a special

relationship with animals. In some ways, this is related to the idea of the demonic forces, which were believed to be able to control wild animals. Poisonous snakes and large carnivores such as lions and leopards were particularly dangerous in Africa before the nineteenth century. These accounts are very similar to many biblical ones - Daniel being unharmed in the lion's den, and St Paul being unharmed when bitten by a poisonous snake, for example. But the relation between the holy men and wild animals was not seen only as one of conflict, but also one of friendliness. There are stories of lions, rhinoceroses and leopards allowing holy men to mount and ride them and even to talk to them. Again, this is not peculiar to Ethiopian monastics. St Seraphim of Sarov made friends with a bear and several other animals (Stefanatos 1992:281), as did St Columbanus in Gaul (Mayr-Harting 1991:92). Theologically, this indicates an understanding that the enmity between human beings and animals brought about through the fall has been done away with. Salvation is not simply an individual affair, between the individual and God, but rather God reconciles the world to himself, and redeems it from bondage to corruption and conflict. The monastic holy man is in a sense the image of the reconciling ministry of Christ on earth, and by growing in holiness monastics seek to live transfigured lives and so transfigure the world (Stefanatos 1992:75). Christians, as a new creation in Christ, should be able to live in harmony with other human beings, with God, and with nature and their natural environment, and the monastic holy men are examples and models of this (Kaplan 1984:89).

There is little in this that is peculiarly African by nature. Similar stories are told of the monastic holy men who evangelised England, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Lappland, Georgia, Armenia and Siberia. Whether Eastern or Western, African, European or Asian, the stories are

remarkably similar. In terms of Western European historiography, with its traditional division into Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern, this model of monastic mission belongs to the mediaeval period, or, more specifically, to the early mediaeval period. In studying Orthodox mission, however, such periodisation does not work so well, and I prefer to refer to such mission methods as "premodern". But while Western monasticism changed in the later middle ages, and in the modern period, Orthodox monasticism did not. It remains essentially premodern in both its presuppositions and its mission methods. I shall examine the question of periodisation and "premodern" mission in more detail in chapter 7.

Around the time of the split between Western and Eastern Christianity, Western monasticism began to change, and developed new forms. Monastic or religious "orders" were formed, which grouped monasteries under a common rule, which was the rule of the order rather than the monastery, and each order took on its own characteristics. Some religious orders were not, strictly speaking, "monastic" - the Franciscan and Dominican friars, for example, which appeared in the 12th century, or the Jesuits, which appeared in the 16th. Some of these orders were founded with a distinctly missionary purpose, and their members were specialists, and in later centuries often had specific missionary training.

Orthodox monasticism did not develop in this way, but remained as it had in the early centuries. Monasteries were not banded together into "orders", nor did they specialise in the way that Roman Catholic orders did. The primary aim of monastics remained personal holiness, and growing closer to God. What is now called mission was, nevertheless, for many centuries primarily a result of the activities of monks.

This approach often seems strange to Western Christians, who have grown up in a milieu in which activism and specialisation seem normal. But a pair of Western Protestant authors grasped something of its spirit when they wrote:

We agree with those who have reminded us in recent years that the Christian faith is *indicative* (the fact that God reconciles the world in Christ), not *imperative* (*Go to church! Do not drink bourbon! Feed the hungry! Search and destroy!*). But we believe that St Paul's imperative use of "reconcile" calls attention to a kind of behavior by the Christian towards the world, behavior which "does" by *being*, "acts" by *living* - that is *being and living* as God made us in Christ (Campbell & Holloway 1970:1).

And that is the kind of behaviour exemplified by Orthodox monasticism. The missionary work of Orthodox monastics has been characterised by behaviour that "does" by being, and "acts" by living. Their primary aim is *theosis*, or sanctification - by living lives closer to God, others will be attracted, not by their activities and programmes, but by God reflected in them. Here too is the Orthodox equivalent of what Western missiologists have called the *missio Dei*, which, according to Bosch (1991:390) was only discovered in the West after the Willingen Conference in 1952, but has been a basic presupposition of Orthodox mission all along. In Orthodoxy the *missio Dei* is seen as incarnational, and takes place primarily through the Spirit of God living in Christians.

"Orthodoxy" means not only right dogma, but also right living, and these two aspects of Orthodoxy cannot be separated. As it is commonly expressed, Orthodoxy is meaningless without orthopraxy. So a person, and especially a monastic, aims at deification (*theosis*) of the soul and the body. When someone who lives in the Orthodox faith shows their faith in the right way of living, then mission takes place. Mission is not so much preaching as the manifestation of God in our lives, and in the life of prayer. In the Divine Liturgy, monastics pray for the whole world, and in their personal prayer they bring the *ecumene* before God, so they practise mission in the *ecumene* without anyone noticing it. When Christ is alive in a person, then the life of that person speaks without words, and works without working.⁸⁴

This does not mean that all preaching was without words. Hilarion of Gaza, a disciple of Anthony the Great, established his monastery at Gaza as a missionary centre, from which monks travelled throughout Palestine preaching the gospel (Veronis 1994:38).

In recent years there have also been Orthodox monasteries that have seen themselves as having a distinctly missionary vocation. One example is the monastery of St John the Forerunner in Karea, near Athens (Veronis 1994:133). It began as a sisterhood living in homes under the direction of their spiritual father. Their aim was to live lives dedi-

84 Interview with Sr Philothea, Karea, Greece, 1998-04-04

cated to God, and to serve the needs of people outside the Church, and also those within who lacked knowledge of the Christian faith. They offered to serve as missionaries, and the Archbishop of Athens showed them the abandoned monastery at Karea, and offered it to them in 1971.

Since then the monastery has grown to have about 40 sisters, who come from Greece, Albania, Kenya and Finland. Some have worked in mission in Africa and Albania. Their missionary vocation is expressed by their being open to the will of God. They do not seek to evangelise, or make plans for missionary action. They do not take any initiative, but wait for whatever God sends, and what God sends may be quite unexpected. They are called sisters because they are sisters to everyone, ready to help anyone whom God sends to them.

If the local church, usually in the person of its bishop, invites them to work in a place, they will consider the call, and respond to it if it seems to be God's will, but they always put themselves at the disposal of the local church, to serve as and how they are needed. Their missionary vocation is quite explicit, but equally explicit is their rejection of planning, strategising and goal-setting.⁸⁵ This is different from many Protestant mission organisations, which have often tended to work independently of the local church, or, if they have started a local church in a place, have tended to dominate it for many years afterwards, and have, especially in recent years, tended to emphasise planning, and the setting of goals or targets for the people they want to reach (see Dayton & Fraser 1980: passim). It differs too, from many missionary orders of the Roman Catholic Church, who have sought to place themselves at the disposal of the pope of Rome, for service anywhere in the world, overriding the concerns of the local bishop.

MISSION AND COLONIALISM

In the modern period, roughly from the Renaissance onwards, mission has often been associated with the colonial expansion of the great European empires. Orthodox mission in this period, like that of the West, was also often associated with colonialism.

85 Interview with Sr Philothea, Karea, Greece, 1998-04-04

The Alaskan mission

Russian sailors explored the straits separating Asia and America from the mid-seventeenth century, and Vitus Bering's expeditions in the early eighteenth century confirmed Russian interest in the north-western coast of America (Oleksa 1992:81-82). The high prices obtained for the furs brought from these expeditions sparked off a Fur Rush in the period from 1741-1798. This was the period of the *promyshlenniki* - the pioneer explorers and traders, most of them Siberian, who traded on their own account.⁸⁶ Their role has been disputed by historians, not least their own accounts of their times, where they tended to exaggerate their exploits and the population of the places they visited and settled in (Oleksa 1992:83).

In many ways the *promyshlenniki* were not dissimilar from the foreigners who traded in what is now Namibia in the mid-nineteenth century, before the establishment of German colonial rule, or the whites who settled in Natal before the Voortrekkers arrived in 1838. "The *promyshlenniki* married Unangan and Sugpiaq wives, fathered hundreds of bilingual children, whom they baptized, and thus prepared the ground for the sowing of the seed, the Gospel message brought by eight monks from Finland's Valaam" (Oleksa 1992:93).

In Natal and Namibia, too, foreign hunters and traders entered, and married local wives, though they did not normally baptise their own children - they had their children baptised by the foreign missionaries who arrived about the same time, and usually independently of the traders. Such missionaries were Allen Gardiner in Natal, and Hugo Hahn in Namibia. While the parallels are not exact, there are enough similarities to show that this kind of activity was common in many different parts of the world in the 18th and 19th centuries. The *promyshlenniki* had their equivalents in other countries.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ It is difficult to find one word to translate *promyshlennik* - it can mean entrepreneur, trader, explorer, exploiter, pioneer, and all of these.

⁸⁷ My sources for such information are too numerous to quote here, and it is based on family history research. For example, my wife's great-great grandfather, Frederick Thomas Green (1827-1876), who was born in Quebec, was such a *promyshlennik* in what is now Namibia and Botswana. He was a partner of the Swede, Charles John Andersson, and his first wife was a Herero, Betsy Kaipukire. His

In Alaska the *promyshlenniki* were eventually replaced by trading companies, of which the largest and most powerful was the Russian America Company. This, again, was not dissimilar to the Dutch and British East India companies, which were active in parts of Asia and Africa during the same period.

Gregory Shelikov, a Ukrainian adventurer, set up the Russian America Company which sought a monopoly on all trade, and to conquer and hold Alaska. He boasted of having done so to Catherine the Great, who was, however, a supporter of *laissez faire* capitalism and free trade, and not in favour of monopolies. Suspecting that Shelikov's claims of his power and influence were exaggerated, she sent an expedition to check on them, and they reported unfavourably, and noted that his treatment of the Americans was brutal (Oleksa 1992:89ff). Shelikov fared better with Catherine's son, Paul I, and the Russian America Company gained its charter and monopoly in 1798 (Oleksa 1992:93).

Shelikov also made glowing reports to the Metropolitan of St Petersburg, and claimed that a church had already been built in Kodiak, and that the company would support a missionary there. In view of Shelikov's (greatly exaggerated) account of the numbers of people involved, the Metropolitan arranged for 8 monks from the Valaam Monastery in Finland to go as missionaries - the first-ever overseas mission of the Russian Orthodox Church. On their arrival in Kodiak in 1794, however, they found that Shelikov's boasts and promises were empty. The local manager of the company, Alexander Baranov, was a brutal exploiter and oppressor of the Americans. The church and school Shelikov boasted of did not exist, and the promised supplies never materialised (Oleksa 1992:106ff).

marriage represented an alliance with Maharero, the leader of a Herero group, to whom Green was known as Kerina (the Herero pronunciation of "Green"), and praise songs are still extant which praise him for supplying and teaching the use of firearms to the Hereros. One of his descendants, Erich Getzen, alias Mburumba Kerina, is credited with the invention of the name "Namibia".

At first the missionaries thought that Baranov must be the villain of the piece, and wrote letters of complaint to Shelikov in Siberia, apparently under the impression that once he knew of the abuses, he would take steps to correct them. As the company controlled the means of communication, Baranov sent his own defence in the mail as well, and Archimandrite Ioasaph, the leader of the mission, was summoned to Irkutsk in Siberia to sort things out, and he left one of the lay monks, Herman, in charge of the mission. In Irkutsk, Archimandrite Ioasaph suggested that instead of sending Americans to Siberia for theological training, qualified theological instructors should be sent to Alaska, and that they should be trained locally. Ioasaph was also made a bishop, but he and his party were drowned on their return voyage, leaving Herman in charge of the mission. Apart from Ioasaph, the other monks had little theological education. They came from poor families, and several of them were serfs. The death of Ioasaph meant that the missionaries had no influential support back in Moscow and St Petersburg, and Baranov was free to oppress them as he did the Americans. He closed the churches, forbade the missionaries to hold services, and persecuted any natives who were seen with them. The missionary band dwindled until only Herman was left, and he retreated to Spruce Island for a life of hesychasm and prayer, to practise "passive" mission (Veronis 1994:81).

The question of the relation of mission and colonialism in Alaska is a vexed one. Oleksa (1992:224) points out that most Alaskan history texts speak of the decades of the competing *promyshlenniki* as the most oppressive period, and of the Company era under Baranov as an improvement, when law and order were imposed and justice established. "This is, of course, what Shelikov and his shareholders, wanted everyone, including the government, to believe. Their aim was to work systematically, to exploit the country's resources methodically. In doing so they relocated, enslaved, exploited and killed thousands of native Alaskans" (Oleksa (1992:224)).

An incident that illustrates this is the question of taking the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar. The monks encouraged the native Alaskans to do this, while the company officials, led by Baranov, opposed it. Oleksa (1992:223) puts two accounts of the events, one from the point of view of the missionaries, and the other from the point of view of the company. It might be thought that the missionaries, in encouraging the Alaskans to take the oath of allegiance, were simply agents of

imperialism and colonialism. In his account, Baranov said that one of the monks had called him a "traitor to the emperor" for his reluctance to allow the Alaskans to swear the oath of allegiance, but a little later on he says that by inciting the Alaskans to take the oath of allegiance they were actually encouraging the natives to declare their independence and freedom, and saw it as clear evidence of revolt on the part of the monks and their followers (Oleksa 1992:225). Oleksa also points out that by taking the oath, the Alaskans would be entitled to the protection of the civil law and justice of the Russian empire, against the exactions of the company. The protection of the law would entitle them to hunt and trade on their own account, and be able to appeal to a higher authority than Baranov's. On Oleksa's interpretation, then, it would appear that the monks were no more agents of imperialism than was St Paul when he appealed to Caesar.

In this there are some interesting parallels with the situation in South Africa. Dr John Philip, of the London Missionary Society, sought to improve the legal status of the Khoikhoi in the Cape Colony, and to a certain extent Ordinance 50 provided the kind of protection he was looking for, at least on paper (Elbourne & Ross 1997:38). In the same period in the Cape Colony, most missionaries wanted the Khoikhoi to become "settled", "respectable" and "civilised", and to learn an independent capitalist culture. Most farmers and officials, however, wanted a cheap and docile labour force as a landless proletariat, completely dependent on them, and used both legal and illegal means, including violence, to achieve this (Elbourne & Ross 1997:37). This is very similar to the behaviour of Baranov. When the Khoikhoi and former slaves had the vote in the Cape Colony, they maintained an exaggerated loyalty towards Britain in the abstract, and political antipathy towards the interests of the Dutch and English farmers - again, the kind of response that Baranov seemed to have feared in Alaska (Elbourne & Ross 1997:46).

There were also a number of differences between the situation in Southern Africa and that in Alaska. In Southern Africa missionaries were often of different background to the officials of the Dutch East India Company, or later the British colonial rules. Saayman (1991:26) follows the conventional wisdom of many historians of the 1970s in maintaining that British missionaries, in particular, were part of the ruling class, and that the ideology they propagated depended on their position in the

upper reaches of the social hierarchy. This was not true of the early Russian missionaries in Alaska, most of whom came from the serfs, and more recent historical research indicates that it was not true in Southern Africa either.⁸⁸

In what later became Namibia, many of the early missionaries were German, whereas the foreign traders and hunters (*promyshlenniki*) were mostly of British and Scandinavian background. In what later became South Africa too, missionaries were often of a different ethnic and linguistic background from the Voortrekkers and white settlers. Elphick & Davenport (1997:xiii) maintain that "there has been an excessive tendency among modern historians to regard materialist motivation as the essential undercurrent of change", and their work seeks to correct that.

Concerning Alaska, Oleksa (1992:109) notes something similar: "Many modern historians have erroneously assumed that because the Orthodox Church was the established church of the Russian empire, governed since Peter the Great's time by a synod appointed by the state, that the clergy constituted a privileged class of petty bureaucrats whose function in Kodiak was to "pacify" the natives, and assist the colonial regime in subduing a recalcitrant population, by convincing them that it was their Christian duty to obey their superiors. All the existing documents from the first years of the Valaam mission's presence on Kodiak testify that the opposite occurred".

There were, however, significant differences in the approach of Orthodox missionaries in Alaska and Protestant missionaries in Southern Africa to the native cultures. I will deal with the question of mission and culture in more detail in chapter 8, but at this point I will note that the contrast is made clearer after the sale of Alaska to the USA in 1867. The Russian missionaries respected the native culture, whereas the American (mainly Calvinist) missionaries had a deliberate policy of destroying the native culture and language, following the policy of the US government (Elanna & Balluta 1992:302). The Russian missionaries

⁸⁸ See, e.g., Comaroff & Comaroff (1991), who examine the background of many missionaries and show that they did not come from the ruling classes, but from the upper working class.

noted that Alaskan domestic architecture was actually an icon of the creation of the world, so that each house is a microcosm, a miniature world, and the missionaries often lived in such houses (Oleksa 1992:104) whereas Protestant missionaries in Southern Africa were concerned to make their converts live in villages with straight streets and square houses on the bourgeois European model (Elbourne & Ross 1997:38).

I believe the question of the relationship between mission and colonialism needs to be reexamined. Though I have included this discussion in this chapter on mission methods, colonialism cannot really be regarded as a "method" of mission. It did provide both an opportunity and an incentive for mission, and influenced mission methods in various ways. If it had not been for the glowing (and baseless) reports of Shelikov, the Russian mission may never have gone to Alaska, and in that sense colonialism provided the opportunity. But the aims of the missionaries and the Russian America Company were very different, and frequently clashed.

THE FAR EAST - CHINA, KOREA AND JAPAN

I have already given a brief historical outline of the Orthodox missions in China and Japan in chapter 3. What is interesting here is the contrasting methods that were used, and the differences between Orthodox methods and those of other Christian groups. Orthodoxy entered China largely through a group of prisoners of war taken in a border clash between China and Russia, and continued for a long time as part of the diplomatic relations between Russia and China. It was a rather strange combination of mission as statecraft and mission as diaspora. It did not spread much among Chinese people until after the Boxer rebellion, when there was a remarkable growth for a while. Then refugees came from Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, and Orthodoxy in China took on more of a diaspora character.

In Japan, the process was entirely different. St Nicholas of Japan, though initially attached to the diplomatic service as a chaplain, saw his main mission as to spread the Orthodox Christian faith among the Japanese people. In this, he was a little like modern-day Protestant "tentmaker" missionaries, who seek opportunities to evangelise in "closed" countries by getting secular employment there.

His methods are also interesting because they share some common features with methods advocated by two Protestant missionaries in about the same place and period - the Presbyterian John Nevius in Korea, and Roland Allen in China.

Allen, an Anglican, was particularly concerned about access to the sacraments. He noted that most foreign missionaries in China tended to control their converts, and were slow to ordain local leaders, thereby depriving many of the sacraments, which Allen regarded as essential to Christian growth. He advocated the speedy ordination of minimally-trained local leaders, and a large amount of local autonomy for them, saying that this was the method used by St Paul (Allen 1962:103). He maintained that many missionaries lacked faith in the Holy Spirit at work in the converts, and that they should trust the Holy Spirit to preserve the newly ordained from serious error.

Nevius, a Presbyterian, was more concerned about preaching and teaching than the sacraments, but criticised the common policy of making use of paid "native agents". He, like Allen, suggested that the mission should depend on unpaid local leaders, though he saw them as evangelists and teachers rather than as priests and deacons, as Allen did (Nevius s.a.:21). Unlike Allen, Nevius was not in favour of rapid advancement of new converts, as he feared that it would make them puffed up and proud. He did see, rightly, that if the first converts were soon made into paid agents, then the growth of the church would be limited by the funds available to pay these "native agents", and like Allen, sought to make the local congregations responsible for their own growth.

St Nicholas of Japan advocated and practised a method similar to both, where the foreign missionary (himself) taught a small group, who in turn taught others, so that most of the mission in Japan was done by Japanese. He concentrated on teaching the smaller group, and on translation. Some of the small group he taught were ordained as priests and deacons, while others became evangelists and teachers. Unlike the method suggested by Allen, the priests and deacons were not in secular employment, but they were ordained relatively quickly. He concentrated on those who showed an interest in the Christian faith, and did not try to reach large numbers of people by public preaching.

Like Nevius, his method did not involve using paid agents, and the early Japanese evangelists supported themselves, or were supported by friends, family members, and the local congregations they started, in informal networks (Cary 1976:393). He encouraged the evangelists to collect money, however, with the aim of teaching a suitable person Russian, and then sending him to a theological seminary in Russia. The intention was that when he returned he would open a theological and general school in Japan. When there were 500 baptised believers, one of the evangelists would be sent to Russia for training and ordination as a priest, and similarly for each 500 new believers. When the number reached 5000, a bishop should be appointed (Cary 1976:384).

These methods were used in eastern Asia, where few people had any previous knowledge or experience of Christianity, yet people did have experience of different religions and philosophies, and were open to discussing them. The approach was initially a person-to-person one, or else teaching people in small groups.

MISSION AND EMIGRATION - THE DIASPORA

In the previous chapter I mentioned that Orthodoxy had been established in Southern Africa by immigrant communities, and this is true of many other parts of the world as well, particularly Australia and the eastern parts of North America.

Where such emigration of people from Orthodox countries took place, Orthodox hierarchs were usually very slow to respond to the needs of these communities, especially to such distant places as Australia. In some case, the emigrants went as refugees, and in the circumstances in which they left their home countries, there was no opportunity for the home church to care for the needs of its emigrants, because of the crisis it faced at home. So, for example, many Arabs emigrated to America as a result of the Druze-Christian war in Lebanon in 1860, or the Zionist occupation of Palestine in the 1940s. Russians left after the Bolshevik revolution, where the church had to battle to survive at home and so on.

In the countries from which the emigrants came, the church was an integral part of the community, but in most cases the church did not accompany people when they emigrated. Not only did emigrants find themselves in a strange land and a strange culture, but even those who shared their religion were often very different. In places like Greece,

different villages and islands had different traditions and customs. When they arrived in a strange land, there was a natural desire to stick together, to have a familiar anchor. But even the familiar was unfamiliar.

It was perhaps easier for emigrants from places like Syria and Palestine, where Orthodox Christians were still a minority, though the minority mentality still clung to those who were no longer minorities in their homelands, but whose ancestors had been under Turkish rule until quite recently. In their new countries, therefore, immigrant community organisations were set up by lay leaders, and the structures were not well-defined. Class, regional and ideological antagonisms were carried over from the home countries, and disputes were common. Orthodox migrant conflicts have often assumed an intra-ethnic form, pitting fellow expatriates against each other (Doumanis 1992:61).

In the cities of Australia and South Africa, the early Greek communities were modelled on traditional forms of Greek local government, which gave rise to institutions known as *koinotites*, usually referred to in English as "communities". The same committee managed cultural, educational, sporting and religious activities. The church collections were used to fund any or all of these various activities. The *koinotites* jealously guarded their authority, and perceived one of the greatest threats to their authority as coming from the clergy (Doumanis 1992:65). When clergy did reach the immigrant communities, they were regarded as salaried employees of the *koinotites*. When the Patriarch of Constantinople decided to send a bishop to Australia in 1924 the decision was greeted with outrage by some sections of the community, and schisms resulted. The Sydney *koinotia* refused to allow the bishop into their church, while in Melbourne the anti-episcopal faction broke away to form a schismatic congregation elsewhere (Doumanis 1992:66).

From a purely sociological point of view, such problems were not unique to Orthodoxy, but were common in such situations. In South Africa the Anglican community was split into the Church of the Province of South Africa and the Church of England in South Africa for similar reasons, when many of those who had established Anglican churches as independent corporations would not accept the authority of the bishop of Cape Town, Robert Gray, to call a synod.

The missiological implications of this have been seen to some extent in the previous chapter, where I showed that Orthodoxy was largely inward-looking in Southern Africa, where there was a large, mainly Greek, immigrant community, whereas it grew much more rapidly in tropical Africa, where the immigrant communities were smaller and less significant.

Initially it could be said that there was a pastoral failure, rather than a missionary one. As Doumanis (1992:61) notes:

Orthodox hierarchs were slow to respond to the religious needs of newly emerging and distant emigrant communities. The Orthodox Church possessed no effective strategies to expand its ecclesiastical structures, particularly to such distant places as Australia. The initiative instead was invariably taken up by the emigrant laity, who bought, maintained and controlled religious property. This gave the laity unprecedented powers over religious affairs, and presented considerable obstacles to later attempts by prelates to establish Church authority.

Priests, when they arrived in such a community, were often treated as salaried employees of a secular corporation, and such corporations were for the most part not interested in mission. If a priest was interested in mission, the attitude of the community was often that "that is not what he is paid to do". As time passed, and the immigrant community became more established in the new country, new problems emerged. The children and grandchildren of immigrants grew up with little knowledge of Greek, Russian, Serbian or other languages of the home country. Clergy, however, continued to be brought from overseas, and often did not speak the local language. This meant that the younger generation often grew up ignorant of the Orthodox faith, because there was no one to teach them.

Where the Church authority was strong enough, and the immigrant community large enough, seminaries for local training of clergy were established, and this has gradually begun to overcome some of the problems. In the case of Russian communities the problem was realised somewhat earlier, because after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia the prospect of aid from the "home" church, whether financial or in the sending of clergy, dropped to almost nothing. Immigrant communities were also

joined by exiles from the Soviet Union, often members of the intelligentsia who had been deported. One such group established a seminary in Paris, St Sergius, and later one in New York, St Vladimir's, where the teaching was in French and English respectively.

In the case of America the situation was further complicated. The Orthodox Church there has been established as a mission in Alaska, rather than as a *diaspora* emigrant church. In the decades before the First World War, however, there was a flood of emigrants from various Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe and the Near East. After the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, it was clear that the Russian Church would no longer be in a position to care for them, and so the other Orthodox Churches sent bishops to America to care for their emigrant members. These bishops had overlapping jurisdictions, to such an extent that in America the term "jurisdiction" has become almost the equivalent of the Western term "denomination". So there were Russian, Greek, Antiochian, Serbian, Bulgarian and other "jurisdictions" established. Even the Russians themselves were divided. Some bishops exiled from Russia formed a synod, and eventually called themselves the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia (ROCOR) or the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (Antic 1988:137). Others set up a provisional church administration which was eventually recognised by the Moscow Patriarchate as an autocephalous church, the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in 1970. The Patriarchate of Constantinople did not recognise the autocephaly, since it had its own (largely Greek) Archdiocese of North and South America which was in fact numerically larger than the OCA.

The term *diaspora* was originally used of Jews who were scattered among the nations after various conquests of their country - in Babylon, Egypt, and elsewhere. The Jewish communities of the diaspora were originally inward looking, seeking to preserve their religion, language and culture intact in a foreign land. Eventually, however, they became more integrated into the foreign society. So the Jews of the diaspora made a great contribution to Christian mission by translating the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, the *lingua franca* of the Eastern Mediterranean lands, thus making those scriptures accessible to a wide range of people, and available to be used by Christian missionaries in spreading the Christian faith. So *diaspora* is also used to describe the Orthodox Christians who emigrated from Orthodox countries in Eastern Europe to other parts of the world.

The missionary effect of the diaspora is usually a slow and delayed one. For the first generation of immigrants, the church is a link with home, and has little to do with the new country in which they find themselves. For the second generation - those born in the new country, or who were young children when their parents emigrated, this persists, but it is modified by their exposure to the environment in the new country. They are often bilingual, having grown up speaking the language of their parents, but also using the local vernacular at school and work. Their understanding of the church and its organisation is influenced by their experience of the new country, which is not Orthodox, so they seek to run the church along the lines of a commercial corporation, and many are registered as companies.

It is with the third generation, however, that the critical point is reached. They speak the vernacular, and often don't know the language of the home country at all. They have become detribalised. For them, the church itself is foreign and unfamiliar. They often marry local people, and may join the church of their marriage partner. If they have any religious interest, it is often awakened by people from other churches, who communicate with them in more familiar terms. They may visit the churches of friends or spouses, and there they may experience a religious conversion.

In English-speaking countries, such people have sometimes joined Roman Catholic or Anglican Churches. Anglicans tend to engage in proselytism with people of an Orthodox background, saying that their church is "the same", but just in a more culturally familiar form, and that the Anglican and Orthodox Churches are "in communion" with each other. This is not true, but it is a common belief among many Anglicans. Others may join Pentecostal or evangelical churches, which stress individual conversion, and encourage people to join them.

In such cases, one of two things may happen. One is that they repudiate their Orthodox heritage, judging what little they know of it according to the theological criteria of the group they have joined. Thus they maintain, for example, that the Orthodox "worship idols", and "don't know Christ". They then seek to recruit their nominally Orthodox acquaintances for their new church. The other possibility is that, having had an experience of Christ in a Pentecostal or evangelical church, the things in their Orthodox background and upbringing gradually begin to make more sense. The ikons in the church that their parents lifted

them up to kiss are no longer incomprehensible figures from a foreign land, but become more real to them. They realise that the Orthodox Church has more than they thought, and they return, with a new desire to learn. They buy Orthodox books, and start urging priests to use more of the vernacular language in the services. They start inviting their friends and acquaintances to go to the Orthodox church with them, and become evangelists for Orthodoxy. In such ways, the diaspora gradually turns to mission.⁸⁹

In North America, the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), is an example of a mission initiative by a church that had its origin in the Orthodox diaspora. The mission centre, based in St Augustine, Florida, began as an initiative of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, is now supported by several those of other national origins as well. The OCMC collects funds for mission, and has sent short-term and long-term missionaries to Africa, Asia and Europe. Some of the long-term missionaries now working to rebuild the Orthodox Church in Albania, for example, served as short-term missionaries in East Africa first.⁹⁰ The short-term missionaries, often in groups from different parishes, have helped to make their home churches much more aware of mission.

In some of the countries of the diaspora, there has been another effect, shown by bodies like the OCMC. The countries in Eastern Europe from which the Orthodox immigrants came were often poor. They emigrated to make their fortunes in other countries, and by the third generation, many of the members of the diaspora communities were relatively wealthy, compared with those in the home countries. When the mission consciousness did appear, they were in a far better position to support it. In the 1960s, the St Sergius Seminary in Paris was still very much a refugee community. The students lived in the crypt under the church, with a concrete floor with a drain running down the middle of it. Their

⁸⁹ My source for information in this section is mainly discussions with several people who have had experiences similar to those I have described.

⁹⁰ Interview with Fr Luke Veronis, Boston, August 1995.

cubicles were partitioned with threadbare cloths held up by string. In North America in 1990, St Vladimir's Seminary (an offshoot of St Sergius) has substantial buildings in spacious grounds.⁹¹ The diaspora has therefore often had the effect of making financial resources available for mission as well.

The Orthodox diaspora has not generally been conducive to mission. It initially often has a negative effect, as it did, for example, with the influx of Russian refugees into China after the Bolshevik Revolution, where mission was slowed as the church's main focus shifted to ministry to the refugees (Stamoulis 1986:42). It was only after two generations that the diaspora gradually began to turn to mission and began having a positive effect.

PREACHING

One of the stereotypes of the missionary in Western culture is the preacher, often shown in cartoons wearing an old-fashioned sun helmet, standing under a tree, proclaiming his message. Such cartoon missionaries are almost invariably male and white, and their audiences are almost invariably male and black.

The itinerant evangelist who preaches in a hall, a tent or a stadium is to be found in most countries today. This is often augmented or even replaced by electronic means, and some simply do their preaching from the radio or TV studio.

One of the pioneers of this method of mission in the West was undoubtedly John Wesley (1703-1791), whose open-air preaching contributed a great deal to the evangelical revival in Britain in the 18th century. Wesley's eastern contemporary, St Cosmas the Aetolian, however, is probably as little known in the West as Wesley is in the East.

For 17 years Cosmas was a monk in the Philotheou monastery on Mount Athos when he felt called by God to preach. With the permission of the elders of the monastery he went to Constantinople, where he sought and obtained the written permission of Patriarch Seraphim II to preach

⁹¹ Personal observation, from visiting St Sergius Seminary in April 1968 and St Vladimir's Seminary in 1995

(Cavarnos 1985:13-14). For 20 years, until his death at the hands of the Turks in 1779, he travelled throughout the Balkans as an itinerant evangelist. He spoke to large audiences, mostly in the open air, explaining the basic doctrines of Orthodoxy, and exhorting them to turn from wickedness and live a godly life. He established more than 200 schools, and distributed books, mainly the writings of the church fathers, to all who could read, or promised that they would learn to read (Cavarnos 1985:15ff).

Preaching, especially in the open air, has mainly been used for revival of people who already know something about the Christian faith, at least to the extent of having it as part of their cultural heritage. St Cosmas the Aetolian was preaching primarily to people who had a Christian heritage, which they were neglecting, and the same may be said of Wesley. In the 20th century some Western evangelists have used open-air preaching as a means of evangelising non-Christians, but it does not appear to have been particularly successful. In the case of St Cosmas, non-Christians also heard his preaching, and some Muslims and Jews may have converted as a result. Eventually he was arrested by the Ottoman authorities in Albania and hanged on a trumped up charge. His body was thrown into a river, from which his disciples retrieved it a few days later (Veronis 1994:75).

TEACHING

St Cosmas the Aetolian, in addition to his public preaching, also opened schools and did much teaching. St Nicholas of Japan concentrated even more on teaching. As I have noted above, public preaching as a method of mission has mainly been used in places where people already know something of the Christian faith, as part of the general culture. Teaching, however, is much more widely used. Jesus himself used both public preaching and small group teaching (Mk 4:33-34).

The Catechetical School of Alexandria, started in the 2nd century, drew Christians and pagans alike, and taught secular subjects as well as theology. It had many famous teachers, among them Origen, who left after a disagreement with the bishop.

Teaching, of course, takes place at many different levels, and not all teaching is "missionary" in the sense of being directed towards those outside the Church. A good example of missionary teaching is that of St Nicholas of Japan. He went to the Russian consulate in Hakodate as

chaplain in 1861, and began learning Japanese, and giving Russian lessons to Japanese (Ushimaru 1980:117). A samurai and Shinto priest, Takuma Sawabe, who visited the consulate to give fencing lessons to the consul's son, one day burst into Father Nikolai's room, and threatened to kill him because of the evil doctrines he taught. Father Nikolai asked how he knew they were evil, if he did not know what they were, and began to explain them. He became so interested that he asked if he could return for further instruction. He told his friends about what he was learning, and they were amazed that one who had been so vocal in demanding the expulsion of foreigners should now be taking such an interest in their religion. Some thought he had gone insane. When he was baptised, he took the Christian name of Paul, perhaps because his patron too had once persecuted the Church of God (Cary 1976:378f). Sawabe taught any of his friends who were interested, and if they asked questions he was unable to answer, he would ask Father Nikolai about them, and take the answers back.

The content of the first teaching of the Japanese evangelists was the fundamental aspects of Christianity - the Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer (Cary 1976:383). It could be said that these covered the fundamentals of Christian doctrine (the Creed), Christian ethics (the Ten Commandments), and prayer (the Lord's Prayer). The evangelists themselves would meet to study the New Testament in greater depth. At some points the differences occasioned some debate among the enquirers. At one meeting, for example, there was considerable discussion on the Christian command to love one's enemies. This seemed to conflict with the Confucian code, in which one could not live under the same sky as someone who had murdered or harmed one's ruler or a member of one's family, thus imposing the obligation of seeking vengeance.

In the content of this teaching, there is little difference from that followed by many Western missionaries in the 19th century, not only in eastern Asia, but in other parts of the world. A difference may be seen, as I pointed out in chapter 2, in the nature of the link between Orthodox teaching and worship.

LITURGY AND WORSHIP

One of the characteristics of Orthodox teaching is that it is teaching directed at how to worship. As has often been pointed out, the very word *Orthodox* means right praise, or right glory. The teaching is therefore

aimed not so much at a theoretical understanding of doctrine, but rather at enabling people to worship God rightly, and to give God glory, and to more and more reflect the glory of God, from which sin alienates us.

One of the first things children (and adult catechumens) are taught, therefore, is how to make the sign of the cross. As St Paul said that he would glory in the cross of Christ, so the cross, the shame of Christ, is really the true glory of every Christian. So Orthodox teaching cannot be understood apart from Orthodox worship. In the early days of the Church, worship was not used so much as a "method" of mission. Indeed, at one point in the Divine Liturgy, the catechumens had to leave the temple, and though it is no longer usual for them to do so, the deacon still announces "let no catechumen remain".

The account of the emissaries of St Vladimir saying that the worship in the Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople left them not knowing whether they were in heaven or on earth indicates, however, that even at that time the exclusion of catechumens was not complete, and that it was possible even for non-Christians to have some experience of Orthodox worship.

In our day, this is a method of evangelism that is quite commonly used by Orthodox Christians, particularly in non-Orthodox countries. If a friend or acquaintance expresses an interest in knowing more about the Christian faith, one of the first responses of Orthodox Christians is to say "Come and see", and to invite them to attend a service. In similar circumstances a Protestant would be more likely to give a verbal response: to give a friend a tract or booklet, or, if more evangelically inclined, to give a "testimony".

Orthodox worship involves all the senses, and is not purely rational and intellectual. One sees the ikons, hears the hymns, smells the incense, touches the floor, and tastes the body and blood of Christ. Worship is physical, and not merely verbal or rational. One makes the sign of the cross, one bows, and one prostrates oneself to the floor. Since "orthodoxy" means right worship as well as right doctrine, it is by these things, as much as by a correct articulation of a verbal formulation that a person's orthodoxy is judged. At a time when Russian politicians are keen to have their public image associated with the church, this can show how genuine they are. An ultra-right wing Russian politician, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who likes to speak as though he is the

protector of Orthodoxy, showed the falseness of his claim when he did not even know how to light a candle in church, but tried to light one with his cigarette lighter (Daniel 1996:373). Under the Bolsheviks, the KGB spies stood out like sore thumbs, because they did not know how to worship. Their very stance betrayed them.

Having said this, however, in Orthodoxy worship is linked more to the motivation and the goal of mission, rather than being a method of mission. Orthodox worship is not "user-friendly". Some Protestant evangelical and Pentecostal churches have a Sunday morning service for believers, and a Sunday evening evangelistic service, aimed at attracting outsiders. Orthodox worship makes no such concessions. It is directed towards God, not man. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, it nevertheless often draws people to the Orthodox Church.

CONCLUSION

Many of the mission methods used by the Orthodox Church have been used by other Christian groups as well. Where there are differences in the use of these methods between Orthodox and other groups, the differences are often caused by a different approach or different presuppositions. The difference is often in the theological or ecclesiological presuppositions. It may also be the result of a different approach, caused by a different worldview or outlook. The Orthodox approach has often been less affected by modernity, or at least affected by it in a different way - as, for example, in the case of monastic mission. I shall examine the effects of modernity in more detail in chapter 7.

Most of the mission methods I have described in this chapter belong to the past, even if, as in the case of martyrdom in the Soviet Union, it is the recent past. Some, however, such as monastic mission, preaching and teaching, are likely to be equally applicable in the present and future as well. As I pointed out in the introduction to the chapter, the appropriateness of the means often depends on the circumstances. In Chapter 6 I will look at some of the changing circumstances in which Orthodox mission will be conducted in the near future, and discuss problems and opportunities they create, and the means and methods appropriate to these circumstances.

CHAPTER 6

Contemporary issues in Orthodox mission

For Orthodox Christians in the last decade of the twentieth century, there are a number of important unresolved questions relating to mission and evangelism. These will be prominent on the agenda of Orthodox missionaries and missiologists for the next decade or more. Alkiviadis Calivas, in a paper read at the International Orthodox Conference on Mission and Evangelism in August 1995, noted, "Among these troublesome and divisive issues two are of special interest to the Orthodox in the current state of affairs between the churches. The first is related to the resurgence and indiscriminate exercise of proselytism by some religious bodies in traditional Orthodox lands. The second is related to the theological positions being promoted in some ecumenical circles which call to question, dilute, or betray basic Christian beliefs and morals" (Calivas 1994:3). To these I would add two more: the renewal of Orthodox Churches in the Second World, and their task of reevangelisation of those lands, and the relation of the Church to secular nationalism and violence, and the task of reconciliation.

Some of these questions have been raised in an acute form by the collapse of atheist regimes in the Second World, and the resurrection of Orthodoxy, particularly in Russia. At the same time, foreign religious movements have taken advantage of the new freedom of religion in Eastern Europe to engage in active proselytising. These bodies are both Christian and non-Christian. They include the Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant denominations, and also semi-Christian or non-Christian groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Moonies, Scientologists, and the Aum Shinrikyo group from Japan. This has led to a variety of responses on the part of members of the Russian Orthodox Church, ranging from urging the state to ban such organisations to a renewed interest in missiology and seeking to reformulate the goals of Orthodox mission for current conditions. Some of the important questions here are the distinction between proselytism and evangelism; the relation between mission and ecumenism; the relationship between church and state; and the question of religious freedom.

These questions are faced in a different form by Orthodox Christians in the so-called *diaspora* - countries that were not traditionally Orthodox, but to which Orthodox Christians have emigrated, and where they have formed Orthodox communities. Such communities are found in North and South America, Australia, parts of Africa, and parts of Western Europe, and, to a lesser extent, in Eastern Asia. In many of those places, Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians are seeking to become Orthodox. Some of these are nominal or secularised Christians who had lost their faith (if they ever had any) and have rediscovered it in an Orthodox context. Others, however, have been committed members of other Christian bodies who have become convinced of the truth of Orthodox Christianity. There is a dual fear on the part of the ethnic Orthodox of the "Diaspora" - firstly, that the influx of members of a different ethnic background will dilute the ethnic character of their church; and secondly, that this will be regarded by the bodies from which these new Orthodox Christians have come as a form of proselytism, and so will weaken the argument on the part of Orthodox Christians that Western Christian bodies should not proselytise in traditionally Orthodox countries such as Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece. A second question facing the "Diaspora" Orthodox is that of inculturation - to what extent can they inculturate the Orthodox faith in American, Australian or Western European society?

Another question is that of theology of religions, which is closely related to that of proselytism and evangelism. I shall deal with this in Chapter 7. Yet another question is that of the role of the Church in reconciliation in places like the former Yugoslavia, where ethnic violence has flared up after the collapse of repressive regimes.

PROSELYTISM, EVANGELISM AND ECUMENISM

The relationship between proselytism, evangelism and ecumenism is one of the most important unresolved questions in Orthodox missiology today. An Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism, organised by the World Council of Churches, was held at Sergiev Posad in Russia from June 26-29 1995. This called for further study of the causes of proselytism, and, perhaps more significantly, for the establishment of a chair of missiology in every theological school, and inter-Orthodox training for missionary work. A few weeks later, at the International Conference on Mission and Evangelism held at Holy Cross Orthodox Seminary in Brookline, Massachusetts in August 1995 the question was either raised directly or

alluded to in several of the papers, and in discussions following the papers. It was clear from the discussions at the second conference that there is considerable disagreement about the nature of the problem, and the possible solutions for it. Orthodox Christians from different countries see the problem from different perspectives, according to their own local circumstances. What is lacking is a global perspective.⁹²

In the Second World, the former communist countries, Christians face a new situation of religious freedom after decades of official state-sponsored atheist repression. Orthodox Christians in countries like Russia, however, had no sooner begun to enjoy this new-found freedom to practise and proclaim their faith than they found that others, from other countries, were also taking advantage of this freedom to proselytise among Orthodox Christians, and to seek to recruit them as members of various non-Orthodox Christian denominations, or other religious bodies.

The Orthodox Church was ill-equipped to face such a situation. In countries like Russia it had been repressed, but so were all other religious bodies. The only serious rival for the loyalties of Orthodox Christians was the Communist Party, which used all the power of the State to engage in its own proselytising. Orthodox Christians in the USSR had looked to the Western Churches for some kind of sympathy, and there were indeed many expressions of sympathy and solidarity for "the persecuted Christians of the Soviet Union". With the advent of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, however, this sympathy seemed to evaporate. The Russian Orthodox Church was like a man who travelled from Jerusalem to Jericho and was attacked by robbers, who beat him up, leaving him injured and unconscious. When he came to, still aching from the beating, he found the Priest and the Levite from the Western denominations going through what was left of his scattered belongings, trying to collect whatever the robbers had left before he was strong enough to gather them together for himself.

⁹² The source for this is my personal observation and evaluation, having been present at the conference at Holy Cross Seminary.

The Russian Orthodox Church had been a member of the World Council of Churches since 1961, and had enjoyed a degree of ecumenical fellowship with many of the Western denominations. The proselytising behaviour of some of the Western bodies seemed like a betrayal of that fellowship. While many of the proselytising bodies were not members of the World Council of Churches, at least some of them, such as the United Methodist Church of the USA, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, were members. Attempts to resolve the problem by dialogue with the bodies concerned have met with an unsatisfactory response (Speranskaya 1995:4).

In some Second World countries relations with Roman Catholics, especially with the Uniates, have been problematic, where accusations of proselytism have come from both the Orthodox and Catholic sides (see, e.g. Bourdeaux 1991:155ff).

The problem takes a slightly different form in Muslim countries where Orthodox Christians (both Eastern and Oriental) are a minority, but were there before the Muslim conquest. Western missionaries have often gone to those countries, and have found it easier to proselytise among the Orthodox than to evangelise among the non-Christian population.

In Greece and Cyprus there are Orthodox majorities, with no very recent history of persecution in the former, and the problem of proselytism is still present. A recent evangelical Protestant survey of the state of Christianity in the world and the need for mission described the situation in Greece as follows: "The last decade had brought increasing liberty to preach the gospel, and a decline in the hold of traditional Orthodoxy over the people, but in 1984 several evangelical leaders were sentenced to a period of imprisonment for 'proselytisation'. Pray for complete cultural and legal equality for non-Orthodox believers concomitant with membership of the European Community" (Johnstone 1987:194).

The response from Orthodox Churches in these countries has been varied. In some countries there has been a tendency to rely on the state to use its power to protect the Orthodox Church, leading to allegations of persecution on the part of Protestant missionary organisations from other countries. Orthodox Christians in Russia and Greece, for example, have used the argument that their countries are Christian and have been for many centuries. They have a Christian culture, which they have defended and preserved against Islamic or communist persecution, often

at the cost of the blood of many martyrs. It is therefore right that the state should protect the Orthodox Church from unfair competition from foreign missionaries, both Christian and non-Christian, who are practising a form of cultural imperialism, using their economic power, coming as they do from rich Western countries, to buy people.⁹³

Christians in Western countries, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, sometimes find such an attitude difficult to understand. In the USA and many other countries religious freedom is guaranteed by the constitution.⁹⁴ Seeking to use state power to establish a "most-favoured religion" status for Orthodoxy will carry the danger of depriving others of their religious freedom. In Western countries Orthodox Christians are a minority, and it is the laws that guarantee religious freedom that give them their own freedom to worship.⁹⁵

At the International Orthodox Mission Conference in August 1995, Fr Thomas Hopko, Dean of St Vladimir's Seminary in New York, noted that a renewed zeal for evangelism must go hand in hand with tolerance:

93 Interview with Fr Anatoly Frolov of Klin

94 There is, however, a certain inconsistency in these attitudes. The Keston Institute, based in the UK, is devoted to publicising violations of religious freedom in the former Soviet Union, and has tended to misrepresent the Orthodox Church in the process. As I have shown in chapter 4, however, there was far less religious freedom for Orthodox Christians in British-ruled Kenya in the 1950s than there is for non-Orthodox Christians in Russia today. At that time most of the Orthodox clergy in Kenya were in concentration camps.

95 A recent law in the Russian Federation, which was supported by the Russian Orthodox Church, among other groups, gives a "most favoured religion" status to the Russian Orthodox Church, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam, which are regarded as traditional Russian religions. Other bodies, especially those that have been active in Russia for less than 15 years, face restrictions in such things as ownership of property and the granting of visas to foreign workers. A similar, though somewhat more restrictive and strictly applied law is found in Indonesia, where Orthodox Christians have found that it restricts their religious freedom, since the only recognised forms of Christianity are Protestant and Roman Catholic.

Tolerance is always in order when it means that we coexist peacefully with people whose ideas and manners differ from our own, even when to do so is to risk the impression that truth is relative and all customs and mores are equally acceptable (as happens in North America). Tolerance is never in order when it means that we remain idle before wickedness which harms human beings and destroys God's creation.

To be tolerant is to be neither indifferent nor relativistic. Neither is it to sanction injustice or to be permissive of evil. Injustice is intolerable and evil has no rights. But the only weapons which Christians may use against injustice and evil are personal persuasion and political legislation, both of which are to be enacted in an atmosphere of respect. While Christians are permitted under certain conditions to participate in police and military actions to enforce civil laws and to oppose criminality, we may not obey evil laws nor resort to evil actions in defence of the good. This means that Christians are inevitably called to suffer in this age, and perhaps even to die. This is our gospel, our witness and our defence (Hopko 1995:4).

What is more, if in some of the traditionally Orthodox countries there is a danger of some Orthodox Christians leaving the Orthodox Church and joining other bodies, in some Western countries Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians are joining the Orthodox Church in considerable numbers. In many places in the so-called *Diaspora*, many or most of the clergy being ordained were not born into Orthodox families, but joined the Orthodox Church in later life. While Protestants are going to traditionally Orthodox countries to proselytise there, in some countries where there is a Protestant majority, growing numbers of former Protestants and Roman Catholics are becoming Orthodox. In the USA for example, of the three main Christian groupings - Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox, it is the Orthodox who are growing fastest (Keller 1995:4). If Orthodox Christians in traditionally Orthodox countries seek to deny Protestants the right to proselytise there, yet Orthodox Churches in predominantly Protestant countries continue to receive Protestant converts, are not the Orthodox seeking to apply double standards? This is a very important question, that needs to be dealt with, and I shall return to it later.

Many of the Protestant converts to Orthodoxy have helped to feed some of the Protestant concern, experience, knowledge and ethos of mission into North American Orthodoxy, and, through literature, this has spread to other parts of the English-speaking world. The Antiochian Evangelical

Orthodox Mission, for example, produced popular apologetic Orthodox literature geared towards Protestant readers.

There are also growing Orthodox Churches in countries like Portugal and Indonesia. These were started by citizens of those countries who had visions that they should become Orthodox Christians, and who had to travel elsewhere to learn about Orthodoxy.

The Orthodox Churches in Indonesia and Portugal raise the question of "proselytism" in a different way. Indonesia is a Muslim country, and most of the Orthodox Christians there are former Muslims. Unlike the countries of the Near and Middle East, Orthodox Christianity was not there before the arrival of Islam. Some Muslims are asking for the help of the state in making it more difficult for Muslims to convert to Christianity. Can Orthodox Christians demand religious freedom for Orthodox Christians in places like Indonesia, but seek to deny that freedom to non-Orthodox in places like Greece or Russia?

Portugal is a Roman Catholic country, and the establishment of Orthodox parishes there could be seen by the Roman Catholic Church in much the same way as the establishment of Roman Catholic parishes in Russia would be seen by the Russian Orthodox Church, or like the activities of the Uniates in the Ukraine. It is perhaps significant that the Portuguese Orthodox Church is under the protection of the Orthodox Church in Poland, which is likewise a minority in a predominantly Roman Catholic country.⁹⁶

In South Africa, full religious freedom has only been gained recently. Under the apartheid policy of the previous regime there were restrictions that sought to make religious bodies conform to the apartheid policy of the government, and those that did not conform were restricted and even persecuted to varying degrees, while those that supported the apartheid policy were given various favours by the government. Now all religious bodies are free to practise and propagate their faith. There is no single dominant religious confession, and indeed there are about

⁹⁶ Interviews with Revd. Daniel Byantoro of Indonesia, and Bishop Jeremias of Wroclaw, Poland.

7000 different Christian denominations, many of them very small.⁹⁷ Orthodox Christians are mainly in immigrant communities most of which are inward-looking. If "proselytism" is mentioned at all, it is mainly referred to in the sense that the Orthodox Church does not generally seek to witness to those outside it. Attempts to do so are regarded by some as "proselytism", and therefore as undesirable, though this is changing, and this attitude is far less common now than it was 10-12 years ago.

Proselytism and evangelism

In dealing with this question, one of the first things that needs to be done is to make a distinction between proselytism and evangelism. One reason for the existing confusion on the topic is that evangelism and proselytism are frequently confused. In some places *evangelism* is discouraged on the grounds that "the Orthodox Church does not proselytise".

The 1995 Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism defined proselytism as "the conversion of Christians from one confession to another through methods and means that contradict the spirit of Christian love and violate the freedom of the human person".⁹⁸ Yelena Speranskaya, in a paper presented to the Consultation, notes that one of the essential characteristics of proselytism is the claim to exclusiveness. At the time of the Crusades, when the Latin Church was founding its patriarchates in the East, it did so on the basis of soteriological exclusiveness, "suggesting, as it were, that the Orthodox Church was incapable of serving the purpose of salvation, and therefore could not be recognised as a true Church of Christ". Speranskaya also rightly points out that "the unsettled issues of ecclesiology and of soteriology continue to provide the main ground for proselytism". She goes on to quote ecumenical documents, in which, *inter alia*, proselytism is described as a corruption of Christian witness, a corruption which takes

97 This figure is from a list kept by the government department of physical planning, which has kept a record of all the various Christian bodies that had been in official correspondence with government departments.

98 Final Document of the Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism (WCC, Geneva, 1995).

place "when we put the success of our church before the honor of Christ; when we commit the dishonesty of comparing the ideal of our own church with the actual achievement of another; when we seek to advance our own cause by bearing false witness against another church" (Speranskaya 1995:1-2).

Defining proselytism in terms of claims to exclusiveness, however, raises problems for Orthodox ecclesiology, which defines the Church in terms of such exclusiveness. In terms of Orthodox ecclesiology, the Orthodox Church is not merely one Christian denomination among many, but it is the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church". This is surely a claim to exclusiveness. One argument that has sometimes been raised here is that the difference is that the Orthodox claim to exclusiveness is true, whereas all others are false. This does not take matters much further, though, since Muslims in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia make the same claim for Islam. To follow such a line of argument to its logical conclusion would lead to "holy war".

I believe that the other definitions, though true, do not go far enough. Proselytism is indeed a corruption of Christian witness, but it is not simply seen in the conversion of Christians from one confession to another, but also in the conversion of non-Christians to Christianity, or indeed to any other religious or ideological system. The use of any form of coercion to secure conversion to any faith, religion or ideology could be described as proselytism. Coercion may be political, or economic, or may take the form of emotional blackmail, deceit or fraud.

We also need to consider the nature of evangelism, and how it differs from proselytism. Evangelism is the proclamation of good news. For Christians, it is specifically the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. In what way is Jesus Christ "news", and why is this news "good"? To summarise the gospel briefly, we could say that God made the world, and put man (male and female) in charge of it, as the "economos", the steward, of creation, to care for it and give thanks for it. The world God made is good, but evil has entered into the world. Man has sinned, and fallen from the glory of God, and thus subjected the whole world to evil, corruption and death, to the power of the devil. The result is violence, oppression, war, exploitation, hatred and all the suffering that we human beings inflict on each other. Because of our sin we have alienated ourselves from the life of God, and cannot get out of

the mess we are in. The world has in effect become a prison camp, with Satan as the jailer (Luke 11:21-22). The good news is that God has not left us in this condition, but in Jesus Christ has become man, bound the strong man, defeated the powers of the evil one by his cross and resurrection, thereby overcoming the alienation between man and God, and calls us to become what God intended us to be, to become partakers of the divine nature as he himself has partaken of our human nature. By being baptised, we identify ourselves with his death and resurrection, and we receive the Holy Spirit. We continue to grow in him through receiving the holy sacrament of his body and blood.

I have dealt with the content of the Christian gospel, the message that is proclaimed in evangelism, more fully in chapter 2, so I will not go into more detail here. The essence of this message is good news - the good news that we are set free from bondage to evil and death, and set free to become partakers of the divine nature. The proclamation of this message is what we call "evangelism". At the centre of this message is the good news of freedom, that we are set free. Any suggestion of coercion, therefore, undermines the core of the message and is counter-productive. Christian evangelists are not to force the good news on the world by hook or by crook, because the moment they try to do so, it ceases to be good news, and becomes bad news. This would turn the gospel into an ideology. The responsibility of Christian witnesses, or evangelists, therefore, is to present the good news, not to convert people. Conversion is not the task of the evangelist, the human agent of the good news, but is the work of the Holy Spirit. The task of Christian evangelists and teachers is to ensure that if people accept Christ, they accept the true Christ and not a caricature of him, and that if they reject Christ, they reject the true Christ and not a caricature (Hopko 1995:2; Davies 1990:5).

Evangelism, therefore, is not very much concerned with *results*. It is not so much concerned with the harvest as with the proper sowing of the seed. The human evangelists are concerned with the means, and content to leave the ends to God. Proselytism, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that the end justifies the means.

What I have presented here is a brief summary of the main distinctions I see between evangelism and proselytism. It needs a much more detailed study, and that should form part of the task of the chairs of missiology that the Consultation on Mission and Proselytism recommended be set up

in every theological school. The main missiological problem in this is the confusion between evangelism and proselytism that exists in many Orthodox circles today. Until the distinction is clarified, there will be little progress in solving the problems.

Ecumenism

I pointed out earlier that the formal ecumenical movement of today, especially the World Council of Churches, had its origin in the Protestant missionary activities of the nineteenth century, and that the International Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 was a significant moment in the development of the ecumenical movement. One of the problems that led to the holding of such conferences was the competition between different Christian mission organisations within the same territory. There was some concern that Western divisions and denominationalism should not be exported to other parts of the world.

One proposal for dealing with this was the concept of "comity" - the idea that certain tribes, peoples or territories should be regarded as the legitimate "sphere of influence" of one mission organisation, and that other mission organisations should keep out of that area. In order for comity to work, missions of different denominations recognised each other as valid branches of the one church of Christ (Beaver 1981:203-204). In this respect, however, the Edinburgh Conference seems to have been an ecclesiastical version of the 19th-century diplomatic conferences in which the European powers carved up most of the rest of the world into their colonies, protectorates, or spheres of influence.

Similarly, in dealing with the question of proselytism between Christian groups, there have been appeals to the mutual respect between Christians of different confessions that has been fostered by the ecumenical movement. "The correct understanding of freedom in Christ lies at the heart of the ecumenical commitment of various Christian churches that does not allow them to regard traditionally Orthodox regions as their 'terra missionis'."⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Communiqué on the Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism (WCC, Geneva, 1995), p. 4.

This, however, raises several questions about ecclesiology. Can one, for example, describe the Orthodox Church as a "confession"? Is there any authority, in the Holy Scriptures, or the writings of the Church Fathers, for doing so? On what terms and conditions does the Orthodox Church participate in the ecumenical movement in general, and in such bodies as the World Council of Churches in particular? This is still a matter of debate among theologians and hierarchs of the Church, yet the phrasing of the statement seems to assume that the Orthodox Church is just one "confession" among many, and that the Orthodox Church has accepted a Protestant ecclesiology in which "confession" is an accepted term. It is for this reason that the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia have declared "ecumenism" to be a heresy, at least to the extent that it requires us to think that the Orthodox Church is something other than the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church that we confess in the Symbol of Faith. In Orthodox ecclesiology, there is no place for the understanding that the Orthodox Church is a "denomination" or a "confession". It seems, therefore, that the ideal of "ecumenical coexistence" will not be able to solve the problem of intra-Christian proselytism.

It also seems unlikely that statements made by the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical organisations will be effective in deterring religious bodies that want to evangelise or proselytise in traditionally Orthodox lands. For various reasons the old "comity" agreements between missionary groups were not very effective, and there do not seem to be any reasons why new ones would be any more effective.

Partly as a result of this, and for other reasons, many of the Orthodox Churches have been having second thoughts about their participation in the ecumenical movement, and the World Council of Churches in particular. At an inter-Orthodox consultation on ecumenism held at Thessaloniki in May 1998, there was a division of opinion about this. The Greek churches, around the Mediterranean (Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Greece and Cyprus) were cautiously in favour of continued involvement, and were opposed to the antiecumenists. The Slavic churches were more inclined to withdrawal, and some, such as Georgia, have already done so. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk proposed a boycott of the Harare Assembly of the World Council of Churches, scheduled for December 1998, which was resisted by the Greek churches. The Russian Orthodox Church is also under pressure from an antiecumenical nation-

alistic coalition at home, which includes such groups as the Radonezh Brotherhood. There have recently been reports that a bishop associated with this group, bishop Nikon of Ekaterinberg, confiscated books written by American Orthodox theologians such as Fr Alexander Schmemmann and Fr John Meyendorff from students at the local theological seminary, and that he defrocked a priest who refused to denounce such books. If the Russian Orthodox Church were to withdraw from the WCC altogether, it could give the impression that this group had "won", and might therefore encourage it to escalate its demands.¹⁰⁰ This nationalist group is also in the forefront of demands that the state take action against foreign religious groups. The increasing power struggle within the Russian Orthodox Church makes it difficult to develop creative responses to the need for mission and evangelism.

An additional problem is that many Protestant bodies that are interested in or support mission activity in the Second World are not members of the World Council of Churches, in part, at least, because they regard the WCC as lukewarm about mission. Many of these groups opposed the integration of the International Missionary Council into the WCC, because they feared that "mission" would be swallowed up by "church". The controversy over this point led to Protestants being divided into "ecumenicals", who saw unity as the priority, and "evangelicals", who saw mission as the priority. Many of the "evangelicals" have held their own international conferences, most notably at Lausanne, Switzerland in 1974, apart from the World Council of Churches. They were not opposed to the cooperation of different Christian bodies in mission, but they believed that mission should be the priority, and must be pursued even at the expense of unity (Bosch 1980:29ff). Most of these evangelicals reject such things as "comity" agreements, on the grounds that they could lead to a region or territory not being evangelised because the group or organisation to which that territory had been "allocated" might not be effective. This is the argument that many such groups use to support their mission in Russia. They say that the Orthodox Church is not effective in evangelism, and that others must therefore enter the

100 "Walking a tightrope", an article by Alexander Maliutin in *Moskovskie novosti*, 19 May 1998.

field.¹⁰¹ Agreements or statements about proselytism by bodies such as the World Council of Churches are therefore unlikely to do anything at all to diminish proselytism on the part of evangelical groups that are not members of the WCC. For such groups, in particular, a different approach is needed. For a start, Orthodox missiologists need to try to understand evangelical Protestant missiology, and evangelical Protestants should try to understand Orthodox missiology. At the moment there is a tendency for both sides to talk past each other, and to attack caricatures of each other.

Evangelical and Orthodox missiology

For the first 250 years of Protestantism, there was very little Protestant missionary work among non-Christians. For the most part Protestants confined their activities to the lands of Western Europe that were regarded as already Christian (Bosch 1980:122ff). When Protestant mission to other places and peoples began, therefore, it was mainly carried out by societies of like-minded people who saw the need for mission. Many of these missionary groups were inter-denominational. A mission society would recruit, train and send missionaries to a place. There the missionaries would preach, gather their converts, and eventually form a "church" or denomination, which might have no relation to the denomination the missionary originally came from.

This would be entirely foreign to Orthodox ecclesiology or missiology. Though there have been Orthodox mission societies, they have never worked apart from the Church. Evangelical Protestant missiology, however, tends to see things differently. The church started by missionaries in a foreign place might be entirely separate from the church that the missionaries came from in their home country. For example, Anglican missionaries from Australia have worked with an evangelical mission association in South Africa, which started the African Evangelical Church. The African Evangelical Church had, and has, no connection or communion with the Anglican Church in South Africa. The missionary is

101 Here I am simply stating the argument that is often used. I am not supporting claims to the truth of the argument, which is not the point at issue here.

thus an Anglican in Australia, and an African Evangelical in South Africa, and sees no contradiction in this situation. An Anglican missionary couple from England, who went to work with an interdenominational missionary service organisation in the USA, worshipped with the Vineyard Christian Fellowship while they were in the USA, and returned to their Anglican parish when they went back to England.¹⁰² Though not all evangelical Protestant missionaries have this attitude, a significantly large number do. The intention of such missionaries is generally to evangelise, not to proselytise. Though their activities may look like proselytising to Orthodox Christians, they themselves do not see it in this way. They see the Orthodox Church as just another denomination, and believe that true ecumenism is to be found in thinking that "denomination does not matter". They do not see why the Orthodox Church should be concerned about its members leaving to join other denominations, because they regard those other denominations as just another part of Christ's vineyard. If, as I mentioned earlier, the Orthodox Church is content to regard itself as one "confession" among many, it will be giving support to this kind of ecclesiology.

A further concern of many evangelical Protestants is with what they call "unreached peoples". They see these as groups of people; not as countries, but as sociological groups that are bound together by one or more common characteristics. These common characteristics may include language, residence, occupation, religion, ethnicity, customs etc. (Dayton & Fraser 1980:132). Protestant mission organisations have compiled computer databases of many such groups of people around the world, including information about the percentage of members of that group that are practising Christians, and the churches or mission organisations that are seeking to evangelise them.

These groups are categorised as "unreached" when fewer than 20% of the members of the group are practising Christians. In a country like Russia, there may be an Orthodox Church in the middle of an area where such a "people group" lives, but if few or none of that particular group is active in the church, they will be listed in the database as

¹⁰² Both cases cited are of people personally known to me.

"unreached". The information in the databases is not always accurate, because the evangelical bodies that have contributed the data have not always been aware of Orthodox mission activities. A sample of the kind of information published by such groups is the following description of the Autonomous Republic of Buryatia within the Russian Federation, "Population - 1 million. Buryats 24%, Russians, 70%. Capital: Ulan Ude. Religion: Buddhism in the east; animism in the West ... The Buryats have been cattle farmers for hundreds of years. They especially honor the horse. The East and West Buryats should be distinguished. The West Buryats learned farming from the Russians while the East Buryats remained cattle herders. The East and West Buryats differ in their beliefs as seen above. Despite all the missionary outreach by the Russian Orthodox Church, the Buryats did not convert."¹⁰³ The implication of this is that since the Russian Orthodox Church has "failed" to convert the Buryats, evangelical Protestant bodies should now try to do so.

One problem with this is that Protestant missionaries might go to the Buryat Autonomous Republic and might also be unsuccessful in converting the Buryats, and then turn to proselytising among Russian Orthodox Christians living there. This has happened before in the Near and Middle East.

I have only given a very simplified outline of some aspects of evangelical Protestant missiology and some of its effects. The problems arising from this situation are exacerbated by poor communication and ignorance. Because of the barriers to communication in the past, the evangelical Protestant missiologists (mainly from the USA) and Russian Orthodox missiologists know very little about each other. There are still barriers, in that their cultural assumptions and motivations are also very different. One of the speakers at the Orthodox Mission Conference in Brookline pointed out that much American mission in the Second and Third Worlds is based on four things: (1) Evangelical Protestantism,

¹⁰³ Wood, Rick. "Are there unreached peoples in the Russian Federation?" (*Mission Frontiers*, 4 March 1992), p. 8.

(2) Free-market capitalism, (3) Pluralistic consciousness, (4) Conservative political agenda. All four of these, he said, are alien to Eastern European culture in general, and Russian Orthodox culture in particular, at least in the form in which they are familiar to Americans.

The willingness to proselytise is closely linked with the cultural assumptions based on free-market capitalism and pluralistic consciousness. Americans tend to have a "supermarket" ecclesiology, where different denominations and sects compete in the market-place for converts, and only the fittest survive. These cultural assumptions are so basic that many Americans are unable to distinguish between them and the gospel, nor are they able to see that much of what they regard as "evangelism" is in fact cultural imperialism. Because the Russian Orthodox Church does not share these cultural assumptions, many American evangelicals find it difficult to recognise the Russian Orthodox Church as a Christian Church at all. The competitive proselytism that seems so strange to Russian Christians seems not only normal, but right to American Protestant Christians. Part of their mission is to teach Russia the value of the free-market system, in religion as well as in commerce.

Clearly there is a communication problem on both sides of the Orthodox-Evangelical divide. Is there anything that Orthodox Christians in Russia can do about this situation? Some positive steps have already been taken. Firstly, the Holy Synod has set up a special working group for the revival of the Orthodox mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in its canonical territory, with Bishop Ioann of Belgorad as chairman.¹⁰⁴ Secondly, the Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism, held in June 1995, recommended that the Orthodox Churches establish inter-Orthodox training for missionary work, and establish a chair of missiology at every theological school. Obviously it will take time for these recommendations to be accepted by the various Orthodox Churches, and even more time for them to be fully implemented. It might help if at least some of the chairs for missiology included a study of comparative missiology, and if communication established, as far as pos-

104 Department of External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Information Bulletin*, (No 7, 1995), p.5.

sible, with missiologists of other Christian bodies, including Roman Catholics, and ecumenical and evangelical Protestants, in order to try to remove the kind of misunderstandings I have referred to above. It is interesting, in this connection, that at least two, and possibly more, of the Orthodox missionaries working in Albania in the 1990s had received missiological training at evangelical Protestant institutions such as the Fuller School of World Mission.¹⁰⁵

In places like Western Europe and North America, many people are becoming Orthodox. This could be because the Orthodox Church is more effective in evangelising a secular society than other Christian groups. But it also needs to be recognised that many of those who are joining or seeking to join the Orthodox Church are not nominal Christians or totally secularised people. Many of them have been committed members of Catholic, Protestant or Pentecostal churches, and there have been instances where whole congregations, with their clergy, have sought to join the Orthodox Church. This could lay the Orthodox Church open to accusations of proselytism just as some Protestant and Catholic activities in Russia have led the Orthodox Church there to make such accusations. It could be said that the Orthodox Church favours religious freedom in places like North America, where it finds it advantageous, yet seeks to deny it in places like Russia.

This has led some Orthodox bishops in the West to be wary of receiving members or groups from other bodies into the Orthodox Church. Is the receiving of such people evangelism or proselytism; is it desirable or undesirable? If the Orthodox Church asks non-Orthodox bodies to stop proselytising in Russia, and those bodies in response asked the Orthodox to stop proselytising in Western Europe and North America, what should the Orthodox response be? Even if non-Orthodox bodies do not ask the question, Orthodox Christians from different countries need to discuss it among themselves, because different bishops have had different policies, and that has caused friction in some places.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Fr Luke Veronis, August 1995.

One point that needs to be made here is that the situation in North America and Western Europe on the one hand, and Russia and the Second World on the other, for example, is not altogether comparable. In North America there are Orthodox Christians producing apologetic literature aimed at Protestants and Roman Catholics, but these are North American Christians doing it with North American money. There is a growing Orthodox Church in Portugal, but there are no Russian or Bulgarian or Romanian or Greek missionaries there. It is growing because of the activities of Portuguese Orthodox Christians. In Russia, the accusations of proselytism are mostly directed against *foreign* missionaries using foreign money. If large numbers of Russian Orthodox missionaries were travelling to North America and proselytising among Protestant groups there, the situation might be comparable, but this is not what is happening. If American Protestants complain about immigration restrictions on foreign missionaries in Russia, and say that these impair their religious freedom, they might ask what freedom similar numbers of Russian missionaries would have to travel to America to engage in similar activities.

Orthodox mission has sometimes been described as centripetal rather than centrifugal, and most of these instances seem to bear this out.

Should Orthodox Churches be more strict about receiving active Christians from non-Orthodox bodies into the Orthodox Church, in order to avoid accusations of proselytism? I believe that in some places the Orthodox Church is already too strict about this. The important thing is to avoid proselytism as such. Orthodox Christians should not urge people to leave other religious bodies and join the Orthodox Church *unless they are already convinced of the truth of Orthodoxy*. There have been cases where people who have been members of other bodies have become convinced of the truth of Orthodoxy, and yet have found it very difficult to be received into the Orthodox Church. Having found what they believe is the pearl of great price, they have sold everything they have, and then found that the pearl remains beyond their reach. They are left in an ecclesiastical limbo. They have left another religious body, but the Orthodox Church will not receive them for the sake of "our good ecumenical relations" with the body they have left. In such cases, it could indeed be said that ecumenism has become a heresy.

The best solution to such problems is to ensure that Orthodox Christians understand the real distinction between evangelism and proselytism, and make sure that they practise the former and avoid the latter. Those who are knocking on the door of their own free will should be granted entrance without undue delay. Those who are not knocking should not be coerced, enticed or deceived into knocking.

Conclusion

The problem of proselytism in the Second World has had at least two beneficial effects: it has stirred the Russian Orthodox Church to set up a working group to revitalise its own missionary work, and it has led the Orthodox Consultation on Mission and Proselytism to call for inter-Orthodox training for missionary work, and for the study of missiology in all theological schools. It has also, however, had effects that may be of doubtful benefit, such as asking the state to restrict the influx of foreign religious teachers.

Opinion surveys have shown that the Russian Orthodox Church is the most popular public institution in Russia, a long way ahead of the army, the news media, and political and government institutions. This in itself provides the Church with a unique opportunity for evangelisation. In such a situation, the main mission task of the Church should be evangelism and catechesis, rather than wasting energy in trying to prevent other groups from proselytising. Surveys have also shown that of the three main Christian groupings in America, Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox, Orthodoxy is growing fastest.¹⁰⁶ If the middle of the twentieth century was a time of drought for Orthodox mission, the drought has broken.

The most urgent need is to train Orthodox missionaries, catechists and evangelists who can evangelise without proselytising.

NATIONALISM, VIOLENCE AND RECONCILIATION

¹⁰⁶ Keller, Daniel, "Rome and Orthodoxy - roots of the ancient schism", (*Again*, Vol. 18, No. 2), p.4.

The challenge of violence and reconciliation is one that faces Christians in many parts of the world. For the purpose of this thesis, I shall concentrate on the former Yugoslavia, where the problem faces Orthodox Christians in its most acute form. At the same time, however, it is very difficult to write about, because the problem is enormously complicated, and it is continuing even as I write, so that what I write here may be overtaken by events.

Because the problem is such an immediate one, it is also difficult to get accurate information. Much of what is written is propaganda, written from a partisan viewpoint, and designed to put the motives and actions of all other participants in the worst possible light. Distinguishing truth from falsehood in such a situation is not easy.

Another problem is where to start. The problem has historical roots, some of which go back a long way, and the temptation is to go further and further back, until the immediate problem is lost in the mists of ancient history. Nevertheless, some historical background is necessary, though it will be oversimplified.

Historical background

Yugoslavia appeared as a state only after the First World War, when it was formed from the remnants of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, which had disappeared in the course of that conflict. It could be said that the result was a triumph for Serbia, because the war started as a result of the assassination of the Crown Prince of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the streets of Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb nationalist, Gavrilo Princip. Austria blamed Serbia for the assassination, and gave Serbia an impossible ultimatum. War followed, and devastated Europe over the next four years.

Serbia survived, but the Austro-Hungarian empire did not. Serbia then became the core of a south Slav national state, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929. It was ruled by a Serbian royal dynasty in an authoritarian manner, and the Serbs, who were Orthodox, were the dominant partners in the union. The Croats and Slovenes were Roman Catholics, and found their interests subordinated to Serbian ones. The rise of Nazi Germany, and the Anschluss with Austria, made a new Germanic empire dominant in the Balkans again, and Yugoslavia was compliant for the most part, until a putsch in Belgrade brought an anti-Nazi group to power. The Germans and Italians then

invaded and occupied Yugoslavia, and formed a kind of "Vichy Croatia", with a puppet regime led by Ante Pavelic, and the ruling party, the Ustashi, was strongly pro-fascist. Thousands of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and opponents of the regime were killed.

In Serbia, units of the former Yugoslav army took to the hills as guerrilla groups called Chetniks. Another group of guerrillas, led by Josip Broz, better known by his *nom-de-guerre* Tito, were judged by the allies as more effective at fighting the Germans and Italians than the royalist Chetniks, and eventually received the bulk of the allied aid, and took power after the war (MacLean 1949:330ff). The Democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that was formed after the war was dominated by the Communist Party, led by Tito. It was a federal state made up of six republics (Crnobrnja 1994:68).

This was different from the pre-war royalist state, where the aim has been to encourage people to see themselves as Yugoslavs, of a single nationality. Tito sought to defuse ethnic strife (much-exacerbated by atrocities committed during the war, which for Yugoslavia had been a civil war), by stressing "brotherhood and unity", but between ethnic groups seen as national entities rather than for the country as a whole (Crnobrnja 1994:69). The official policy was to forget the past. The victims of the Ustashi regime demanded retribution, but the Communist Party sought to achieve reconciliation by treating the past as a closed book. So it was said that Yugoslavia had seven neighbours, six republics, five nations, four languages, three religions, two scripts and one goal - to live in brotherhood and unity (Crnobrnja 1994:15). It sounded fine at the time, but we now know that it failed. Many are now saying that the failure to deal with the problems in the aftermath of the Second World War was simply storing up trouble for later.

One problem of the pre-war kingdom had been the numerical predominance of the Serbs. Tito "solved" this by splitting off areas of Serbia where there were national minorities, such as Hungarians and Albanians, into autonomous provinces, Vojvodina in the north and Kosovo in the south, which seemed to solve the problem at the time, but would come back to haunt Yugoslavs after his death (Crnobrnja 1994:70). Both Serbs and Croats therefore had grievances - the Croats felt they were stigmatised for their alliance with the oppressors during the war, while the Serbs felt there had been no restitution for their sufferings, and that their autonomous provinces put Serbia at a disadvantage vis a vis the other

republics.

Tito broke from Stalin in 1948, which put Yugoslavia in an anomalous position. It was a communist state, but excommunicated from the communist bloc. Tito thereupon helped to form the non-aligned movement, making Yugoslavia the only Third-World country in Europe.

The death of Tito, however, brought to the surface the problems that had been suppressed for so long. In 1981 a student riot in Kosovo led to ethnic cleansing of Serbs from that province by the Albanian nationalist authorities (Crnobrnja 1994:93). The failure of the federal authorities to do anything about it led in turn to a growing wave of Serbian nationalism. This was expressed in a draft memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, which was leaked to the press and attacked by them. It maintained that the Yugoslav Communist Party had been dominated by an anti-Serb coalition, which suppressed not only the political but also the cultural organisations of Serbs living in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Pancovic 1994:445). It accused Communist historiography of denigrating the democratic tradition of a civil society and independent state, which Serbia had achieved in the 19th century, but in spite of this it did not call for the revival of the ideals of a democratic society, but appealed rather to the original communist principles drafted in 1943 (Pancovic 1994:446). Eventually Slobodan Milosevic, the leader of the Communist Party in Serbia (later renamed the Socialist Party), capitalised on it to increase his own power (Crnobrnja 1994:97).

Milosevic at once went about limiting the autonomy of the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, with the use of strong-arm tactics, in such a way as to restore Serbia's equality with the other republics in the federation. But Milosevic went further, making Serbia "more equal". By rights, Serbia should have had one vote in the federal presidency, but it now had three, controlling the votes formerly exercised by Kosovo and Vojvodina (Crnobrnja 1994:104). The balance had swung the other way. From being disproportionately weak in the federation, Serbia became disproportionately strong, and still the nationalist momentum showed no sign of being checked. Croat and Slovenian fears of Serbian dominance led to nationalistic revivals of their own, which in turn led to fears of a revival of the Ustashi genocide among the Serb population of Croatia, fears which were not calmed by the "rehabilitation" of fascist wartime leaders, and their portrayal as heroes (Crnobrnja 1994:151). First Slovenia and then Croatia tried to secede from the Yugoslav feder-

ation, which the Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA) tried to prevent. The army had its own agenda. It was devoted to the sovereignty and territorial preservation of Yugoslavia (Crnobrnja 1994:121). As the power of the Yugoslav federal authorities crumbled, the JNA became increasingly independent of civilian control (Basom 1996:514).

Historians will no doubt debate the point for years, but the turning point in the slide into violence was probably the recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia by the European Union, under very strong diplomatic pressure from Germany. It was the promise or threat of recognition that was the strongest bargaining tool, which the European nations threw away, thus vastly increasing the Serbian weight in what was left of the federation, and in the JNA itself. In the subsequent fighting, the Serbs, who inherited most of the heavy weaponry of the JNA, were able to inflict more damage.

The fires of nationalism, having been kindled, have proved a lot more difficult to extinguish, and this is because most of those who kindled them have no desire to extinguish them, but continue to fan the flames in order to achieve their aims.

Serbian nationalism and mission

Since my thesis is on Orthodox mission, I will not consider the other nationalisms that led to the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, since they are less connected with Orthodoxy. I am here concerned mainly with Serbian nationalism as a missiological problem.

Two Serbian religious cults, that of St Sava (c. 1175-1235) and that of the Kosovo martyrs and St Tsar Lazar are the earliest defining marks of a Serb national identity. St Sava is the founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and being a member of the Church founded by St Sava is the distinguishing mark of a Christian Serb. Those who died in the battle of Kosovo are regarded as martyrs, because by confronting a larger Ottoman force they showed that they preferred death and the heavenly kingdom to a life of slavery under the infidel (Pavkovic 1994:442).

In the 19th century, with the growth of liberal nationalism, language also became a criterion. Those speaking the Serbo-Croatian language were regarded as one nation, even though they belonged to three different religious groups - Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Muslim. At that time nationalism was a struggle against the multi-national empires, such as

the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, and language became an important identifying mark, and helped to give rise to the Yugoslav idea (Pavkovic 1994:444). But for the most part Eastern European nationalism was not as closely linked with bourgeois liberalism as it was in the West, where it was linked with the idea of popular sovereignty and went hand in hand with the cult of individualism. Eastern European nationalism was more influenced by the ideas of the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder, who put the stress on individuals finding their identity as part of the nation, and every nation having its own national spirit (*Volksgeist*). There was therefore less emphasis on human rights and personal freedom (Gotovska-Popova 1993:173). The 19th-century Balkan nationalism was also often anti-clerical, as in Western Europe. When the Balkan states became independent, they were not interested in either separation of church and state on the one hand, or a Byzantine "symphony of the powers" on the other. They were more interested in using and controlling the Church (Papadakis 1988:49).

In Western Europe, the national states were the result of a struggle against domestic monarchies, and there was a unification and centralisation process. In the east the struggle was for national identities against big multinational empires. The national movements fought against foreign rule, and there was an identifiable enemy, so there was more of an "us and them" mentality (Gotovska-Popova 1993:174). Communism continued this image of the "enemy" and deepened this pattern, though the enemy changed from the Emperor and the Sultan to the bourgeois-capitalist West.

During the Yugoslav period there was a drop in the number of people claiming Christian affiliation in Yugoslavia, and a rise in the number claiming no denominational affiliation. The Orthodox Church showed the most marked drop in affiliation. In 1931, almost half the population of Yugoslavia claimed to be Orthodox (49%). By 1953 this had dropped to 42% and by 1987 to 28% (Flere 1991:153-154). By comparison, the number of those claiming affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church had dropped by a smaller proportion, from 37% in 1931 to 32% in 1953 and 24% in 1987 (Flere 1991:152). The Muslim proportion of the population grew slightly in the corresponding period, from 11% in 1931 to 12% in 1953 and 16% in 1987 (Flere 1991:154). The greatest change, however, was in non-affiliation, which was negligible in 1931, grew to 12,5% in 1953 and was 31,6% in 1987.

As a corollary, it may be noted that the percentage of Serbs and Montenegrins who were members of the Communist Party was higher than their percentage of the population. One in four Montenegrins and one in six Serbs was a member of the Communist Party, compared with one in eight (Bosnian) Muslims, one in 10 Croats and one in 11 Albanians (Gotovska-Popova 1993:179). Because of the decline in religion, nationalism tends to become more fanatical, and the nation becomes a kind of substitute God. Nationalism becomes ethnolatry, and the communists tended to have a similar attitude towards the Communist Party. These attitudes therefore led to a growing belief that violence is justified in defence of the cause. When the two were combined, as in Serbia in the late 1980s the result was disastrous. The Communist Party in Serbia, from being firmly internationalist in the 1940s, was riding the nationalist lion in the 1980s (Gotovska-Popova 1993:181f). This then put the party in direct competition with the Serbian Orthodox Church in another way, by claiming, in effect, to be the guardian of the Serbian people.

In countering this claim, the Serbian Orthodox Church reasserted its own claim. The claim perhaps needed to be asserted, but the circumstances were distinctly unfavourable for doing so. The voice of the church had been suppressed for 40 years, and, as I have pointed out, the Serbs were the most secularised people in Yugoslavia. For the most part, the message fell on deaf ears, and if it was heard at all, the distinction between the religious nationalism of the Church and the secular nationalism of the Party simply did not get through to most people.

This phenomenon was not, however, confined to Yugoslavia, but was found in most of the communist states in Eastern Europe. In the 1980s, for example the communist government of Bulgaria forced ethnic minorities, such as Turks, to take "Bulgarian" names. In Russia, the successor party to the former Communist Party is far more nationalistic than many others.

As a South African looking at this situation, it is tempting to make comparisons with the relationship of the Dutch Reformed Church with Afrikaner nationalism, and there are certain points of comparison. Both Afrikaners and Serbs saw a battle as a focus of the nation - the Battle of Blood River and the Battle of Kosovo, and both were seen as battles of Christians versus infidels. A difference, however, is that the Serbs lost the Battle of Kosovo, while the Afrikaners won the Battle of Blood River. In both nationalisms, things like language played a strong part,

though in the Serb case it was more the Cyrillic script than the language itself. Since the break-up of Yugoslavia, however, Serbs and Croats are tending more and more to emphasise the differences in the language rather than just the script. In both, the church saw itself as the defender of the rights of the people. But there are also important differences. In Afrikaner society, nationalism flourished in the soil of religion. It was not primarily a secular nationalism. The new nationalism of Serbia, however, has been fundamentally a secular phenomenon, and its flames were fanned primarily by the communists (see e.g. Meyendorff 1978:87,156).

As the figures above show, of all the ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia, the Serbs were the most secularised. But since Serb national identity also had religious roots, going back a long way before the growth of liberal nationalism in the 19th century, the growth of a new Serb nationalism in the 1980s provided the Serbian Orthodox Church with both a difficulty and an opportunity. The opportunity lay in the fact that a reviving nationalism could stimulate a new interest in the religious symbolism of St Sava. The difficulty was that a Church that had not merely been ignored, but also suppressed for the last 40 years, could now be exploited for political gain by demagogues who had both the power and experience to coopt the church as a political tool, and who were the very ones who had suppressed the church and prevented its voice from being heard (see van Dartel 1992:278).

Gotovska-Popova (1993:183) points out that one way of defusing the nationalist tensions would be for people to find a sense of identity and belonging in a group larger than the nation. She acknowledges that the idea of a "Yugoslav" identity failed, and considered the possibility of people seeing themselves as members of the human race in general, or Europe in particular. What she does not consider at all is the possibility of the church being a source of such identity. This is not surprising, since the church has generally been written out of history in most of the Balkan countries by Marxist historians, or included only peripherally as an agent of capitalism or feudalism, or grudgingly as a bearer of national culture. It has not only been Marxist historians who have done this, but secular Western historians have done so as well, so the religious motives of kings and rulers in the past have been

downplayed, or presented purely as rationalisations for political or economic motives (see van Dartel 1992:275). The history that most people in the Balkans learnt at school has been slanted in this way (van Dartel 1992:276).

There are signs, however, that a wider consciousness is beginning to emerge in church circles. One such sign is the formation of the Balkan Orthodox Youth Association, which is creating a network of contacts across national and state boundaries. While this may not do much for relations between groups such as Serbs and Croats, who are divided by religion, it is succeeding in bringing together Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians, Greeks and Albanians. Though these countries are nominally Orthodox, they do have a recent history of conflict on such questions as Macedonia, which could easily become another Balkan flash point. Some of those who pioneered such contacts are now teaching in the newly reopened faculties of theology at the Balkan universities, and thus are in turn influencing the younger generation of theologians, church teachers, clergy and monastics.

Nationalism and mission

As in Serbia, so in most of the other countries of the Second World, nationalism affects mission both positively and negatively. In Russia, opinion polls have consistently shown that the Russian Orthodox Church is the most trusted public body in post-Soviet Russia (Bacon 1997:253). In the eyes of many, the Church represents the "true Russia" that was suppressed in the Soviet period. It has been suggested that adherence to the Church represents adherence to "the Russian idea" rather than to Christianity as such (Bacon 1997:255). The initial popularity of the church in the early 1990s may have been because of the novelty of church attendance in the immediate post-Soviet period, or perhaps because the church was seen as a focal point of opposition to communism (Daniel 1996:371).

These two factors probably contribute to the desire of political leaders to be associated with the Russian Orthodox Church in the public mind, and especially to seek to be photographed with the clergy, to be seen with them on public platforms and so on (Bacon 1997:257). During the 1996 election campaign the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, and runner-up in the election, Gennadi Zyuganov, played the nationalist card, with overtones of xenophobia and anti-Semitism,

and overtly made use of Orthodox symbols. Perhaps he felt it necessary to give more emphasis to Orthodoxy and to show that he favoured it to counterbalance the record of over 200000 clergy and monastics killed by his predecessors (Bacon 1997:258).

In view of the rise of nationalist sentiment, and the identification of the Orthodox Church with the "Russian idea", and its public popularity, one might expect the situation to be favourable for mission. People might be more willing to give the church a hearing. The Orthodox Church, however, has generally maintained a position of official political neutrality, and had given no overt support to any political group. Thus while politicians have been wooing the church, the church has not reciprocated, but in line with the idea of separation of church and state, has not demonstrated any political agenda. Some clergy and laity have shown signs of activism for the right or the left, both in church and in society, but the patriarch and most of the bishops have not done this. As a result, there is also a public perception that the church has very little influence on politics, daily life, and the morals of the people. Though churches are full in many places, only 7% of the population of Russia attend services once a month or more, while 60% have never attended a church service (Bacon 1997:255).

One problem that the church faces in this situation is that of how to respond. There is a lack of trained clergy, of teachers who can teach others. After years of isolation, the church cannot really influence society as a whole. To do so requires the cultivation of an Orthodox mind, or *fronima* (Rom 8:6-8). Nationalism may provide an opportunity, but it brings with it the danger of chauvinism and xenophobia. And whereas it can provide a favourable climate for mission in one sense, it can be a hindrance in others. Among the national minorities in the Russian Federation, Russian nationalism can be seen as alienating factor rather than as an attraction. Most Russians implicitly regard Orthodoxy as their ethnic church. Though it is not stated, it can put pressure on those of other groups to support Russian interests and has in fact led to a resurgence of paganism and the growth of neopaganism among some national minorities (Filatov & Shchipkov 1997:179).

Similarly, in Yugoslavia, the rising nationalism and ethnic tensions make it very difficult for the Serbian Orthodox Church to undertake mission in Kosovo, where most of the population is Albanian and Muslim.

STAGNATION AND SCHISM

Another problem that has become evident in post-communist Eastern Europe is schism, which has led to stagnation and a failure in mission. In discussing this problem I shall concentrate on Bulgaria, which is one of the places where it has been manifested most acutely, but it is also a problem in other countries, such as Ukraine and Russia.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church, so many of its members believe, was left in the weakest condition after the communist period. At the time of the initial communist take-over, about 60 priests and monastics were killed, but after that there was little overt persecution. The communists sought to control the church and weaken it internally rather than attacking it directly and giving it martyrs.

Even before the communist takeover in 1944, however, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was not very strong, and Bulgaria had been regarded as the least religious nation in Europe (Broun 1993:207). At various times in the past the Bulgarian Patriarchate had been abolished, and the Bulgarian Church had been subjected to Constantinople. This had happened in the 18th century under Ottoman rule, and for a long time after the restoration of political independence, the independence of the Bulgarian Church was not recognised by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Bulgarian Church was technically in schism, and thus cut off from the rest of the Orthodox world, from 1872 until 1945, and the restored Patriarchate was only recognised by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1961 (Zoe sa:36-37).

The main method the communists used to weaken the Church was by infiltrating spies and informers, and by ensuring that the best clergy were overlooked for promotion, while the worst candidates for office were promoted. This policy was followed especially after 1971, when it became apparent to the authorities that the Church was not dying out (Broun 1993:208). In theological seminaries and academies, the best students failed, while the worst ones passed. Those who showed signs of venality and corruption, or who were notorious drunks or fornicators, or had other obvious moral failings, were preferred for promotion over others. The aim was to destroy the public image of the church and expose it to ridicule.

This was done in other communist countries as well, but in Bulgaria the policy was more successful than in most. The end of communist rule was also carefully managed and controlled by the communists themselves. They stage-managed a schism in the church.

One of the leading figures in the schism was a monastic priest, Christofor Subev, who had been twice married (which was uncanonical for priests), and took monastic vows in 1980, enrolling in a theological correspondence course, though one of his teachers then suspected that he was a spy for the security forces (Broun 1993:209). He was active in the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), a coalition of anti-communist political groups that came to power in an election held in October 1991, and in March 1992 three bishops, led by Metropolitan Pimen of Nevrokop, called for the resignation of Patriarch Maxim on the grounds that he had been uncanonically elected in 1971, and in May they formed a new synod, which was called the Provisional Synod, which consecrated Subev as a bishop. Subev and his supporters then occupied the Synod building, but instead of acting as the rightful synod, which they claimed to be, they behaved more like looters (Broun 1993:213).

The schismatics claimed that the official church leaders had been collaborators with the communist regime, and were therefore unfit to hold office. They claimed to be a movement to purify the church, but the motives of their leaders were impure, and they were in fact just as guilty of collaboration as those they were denouncing. This suited the politicians, and the main issue became one of property and economic influence. The communists had expropriated church lands and property, and the government authorities say that the property cannot be returned, because the church is divided, and so it is not clear which body should receive it. In the mean time, those who managed the end of communist rule had arranged things in such a way that they obtained beneficial control of a great deal of the former church property, to exploit for their own profit, and politicians make sure that the situation continues by playing off one faction against the other.

The church authorities, on the other hand, have rather naively written to the government asking for properties to be returned, without going through the procedures laid down for restoring of property, and employ-

ing lawyers to ensure that the registration documents are in order.¹⁰⁷

Real renewal in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church will have to come from a different source altogether, and there are signs that this is happening, though on a very small scale compared with other former communist countries.

One such source of renewal is the Patriarch Evthymios Youth Movement, named after the foremost leader of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church just before the Turkish conquest. The youth movement started in 1991, during a prolonged student strike. Students began giving lectures in the Orthodox faith and theology to anyone willing to listen. They met with some initial opposition from both the state and the church authorities, but persisted, and the youth movement which grew as a result soon had branches in various parts of the country. It is relatively easy to form a branch - all it needs are five members who are willing to follow the constitutional pattern laid down, so it is possible for the movement to spread to various parts of the country.¹⁰⁸

Another group is the Pokrov Foundation, which was started by a group of young people in a Sofia parish, the Church of the Protecting Veil (Pokrov) of the Mother of God. Some of the members had experience of working with NGOs, and they set up the Pokrov Foundation on the same lines. Their administrative infrastructure has therefore been able to help other bodies, such as the Patriarch Evthymios Youth Movement and the Balkan Orthodox Youth Association and a number of other NGOs devoted to charitable and development purposes. An example of such bodies is a Christian Medical Group, which is seeking to provide medical, dental and psychiatric help to mentally ill people who are not institutionalised.

The main aim of the Pokrov Foundation, however, is to promote the renewal of parish community life. During the communist period, Christians preferred to be anonymous. They went to church, but did not interact with other people there. They hoped they would not be recognised by

107 Interview with Plamen Sivov, 26 March 1998

108 Interview with Prof Dimiter Kirov, Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria,
1998-03-25

anyone who knew them. The consequences of being seen in church could be unpleasant, ranging from ridicule to loss of promotion at work or even loss of a job, visits from the police, harassment by government officials and worse. This pattern of anonymity has persisted in the post-communist period, and as a result few parishes have any real form of communal life.¹⁰⁹

The Pokrov Foundation hope to convert the crypt of their own parish church into a parish community centre, in order to rectify this within their own parish, and also to encourage a renewal of parish life throughout Bulgaria.¹¹⁰

The stagnation in the church also extends to the monastic life. In many other Eastern European countries, monasticism is reviving, but there have been few signs of such a revival in Bulgaria, where there are more monasteries than monks. The great Rila monastery, for example, which has accommodation for over 300 monks, has only 10 monks in residence. Also, because of the government policies of weakening the church, many of the monasteries do not have a good quality of leadership.

One result of this is that when people are called to the monastic life, some prefer to start a new monastic community rather than join an existing one. One such monastery is the St Peter and Paul monastery a few kilometres outside Sofia. It was a male monastery in mediaeval times, but was destroyed in the Turkish conquest, and all the monks killed. The people in the local village remembered what had occurred there, however, and when Bulgaria became independent again in the 19th century, a hermit settled there and began to rebuild the church, only to have it destroyed once again by the communists. Now two nuns have moved in to reestablish it as a women's monastery. They have rebuilt the ruined church, and a house in which they live. Both are fairly recent

109 Interview with Marin Varvanov, 24 March 1998

110 Interview with Plamen Sivov, 27 March 1998.

converts to Christianity. Sr Veronica, the abbess, was a chemist before becoming a Christian, and Sr Desislava, a novice, was trained as a film director¹¹¹.

PROSPECTS FOR RENEWAL

In this chapter I have mentioned several factors that are influencing Orthodox mission now, and are likely to continue to influence it for some time to come. They are felt most acutely in the Second World, but also have an effect in other places as well. A common thread that runs through all of them, as I have presented them in this chapter, is that they are all problems that have come to the fore as a result of the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. It is this that has opened the door to external proselytism, which has in turn caused problems in ecumenical relations with other Christian bodies. The fall of the communist regimes has also led to a rise in nationalism and xenophobia, and has left the church in a weak state, so that it is not equipped to cope adequately with these problems.

I have mentioned several signs of renewal in Bulgarian Church life, and if the Orthodox Church in the Second World is to cope with the problems of the post-communist era, there will need to be renewal. The stagnation was not unique to Bulgaria. As I pointed out above, in Yugoslavia the Orthodox Church lost more members to secularism than the other main religious bodies. If it is to offer an alternative to secular nationalism with its accompanying violence, and not simply to be coopted as a figurehead by the state, the Church needs to speak with its own voice, and in such a way that it can be heard. The same applies to the question of proselytism and evangelism. The Church needs to be renewed itself if it is to evangelise effectively.

The problem here, however, is how "renewal" is to be understood. Among Western Christians, renewal is often understood as innovation. There have been numerous "renewal" movements in the West: a "liturgical renewal", which involved changing the forms of the liturgies; a "charismatic renewal", which involved discovering new forms of spirituality,

111 Interview with St Veronica & Plamen Sivov, March 1998

and a different theological understanding of how the Holy Spirit operates. Orthodox Christians, particularly in the former communist countries, are deeply suspicious of such forms of renewal, which were supported by the Bolsheviks in their efforts to destroy the Church. There were groups of "Renovationists" in Russia, for example, who wanted to change the rules about clerical marriage - that priests could not marry after ordination, and that only monastic priests could become bishops (Davis 1995:4). The Church had survived the Bolshevik era precisely because it was conservative, and dug in and changed as little as possible. It assumed, rightly, that external pressure to change was hostile, and that the Bolshevik support for the "Renovationists" was not from a benign neutrality, but was calculated to weaken and eventually destroy the Church.

So to Orthodox Christians generally, "renewal" does not mean innovation or "renovation". It does mean restoration. One of the means the Bolsheviks used in their attempts to destroy the Church was to hide it from public view - "out of sight, out of mind". The church's activities were to be confined within the walls of the building. Priests were forbidden to wear clerical dress in the streets, and in 1932 they were even forbidden to live in cities. Church bells were destroyed, or were not allowed to be rung. Crosses and domes were removed from the temples (Davis 1995:8). Whatever was left had to be done out of public view.

When the anti-religious decrees were relaxed, and finally abolished, the process was reversed. When temples were restored, very often the first things to be restored were the crosses on top of the gilded cupolas, and the bells. Though inside the walls might not be plastered, and the floor bare and unfinished concrete, with paper ikons stuck to a makeshift ikonostasis with sticky tape, the external signs were given priority. Westerners, including western Christians, often found this quite incomprehensible. To them, spending money on gilded cupolas rather than feeding the poor or even heating the church interior seemed like getting priorities wrong. Their response was like that of Judas when he said "Why was this not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" (John 12:5). For Russian Christians, however, it is precisely the bells and gilded cupolas that are part of the witness of the Church, and indeed part of its missionary proclamation.

The same may be said of the rebuilding of the Church of Christ the Saviour in central Moscow, which Stalin had so ostentatiously demolished in 1931 to build the Palace of the Soviets, which was to have been the largest building in the world. In the end it was never built, and the site was used for a public swimming bath. Then the temple was rebuilt, as nearly as possible according to the original plans. Again, to many Western Christians it seemed an incomprehensible waste of money on an empty symbolic gesture. But for Orthodox Christians, symbolic gestures are never empty, and the rebuilding was a witness to the words of Christ who said "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:19). The rebuilding was symbolic not merely of renewal, but of resurrection.

To be effective, however, the renewal of the visible signs of the church needs to be accompanied by the renewal of its inner life. And that renewal has to be founded on repentance and deification (*theosis*). As I pointed out in the previous chapter, in discussing monastic mission, the core of that mission is the life of Christ made visible in the lives of Christians. The communists used various methods to try to extinguish that light, both externally and visibly, and inwardly and invisibly. For Orthodox Christians, therefore, renewal does not mean, as it so often does in the West, abandoning tradition, and talking about new wine needing new bottles. It means rather repentance for abandoning the tradition, immersing oneself in it, and going deeper into it.

There is a danger here too, however. The danger is that people will revere the past for the sake of the past, and the result of that will not be renewal, but mere reaction. There is a difference between restoring tradition for the sake of Christ, and worshipping tradition because one idolises the past. This can easily become as great a danger as renovationism. The distinction will be seen in the main focus of activity, and what people talk about. When people talk about the love of Christ, and radiate the love of Christ in their lives, then a resurrection will be seen. Where people talk about the evil of those who disagree with them, and where their speech is full of condemnation, there is no hope of resurrection, but only much labour to try to preserve a corpse from decay.

There are, however, many signs of renewal. There is a revival of monastic life in Serbia, in Russia, and above all in Romania. There is a revival of parish life in many places too. Though in some cases these signs may seem small or insignificant, one has only to compare the situation today with what it was 30 years ago to see how much things have changed.

Although in this chapter I have concentrated on the Second World, the issues I have dealt with here are not confined to the former communist countries. I have used them as case studies because there the problems surfaced suddenly, and appeared more acutely there than elsewhere. This makes it easier to study them. The same problems are present in the diaspora, though they sometimes take different forms.

Nationalism can appear as ethnocentrism in diaspora parishes. It is a hindrance to mission in that people can be interested in Orthodoxy, and may want to become Orthodox, but their local Orthodox parish appears to be an exclusive ethnic club. Western missiologists have been concerned about the contextualisation and inculturation of Christianity exported from modern societies in Western Europe and America to premodern societies in the Third World. Orthodox missiologists, when considering the diaspora, face the opposite problem. As Calivas (1995:13) says, "There are those who believe that the American way is suspect and even corrupt. They maintain that to survive, Orthodox people are obliged to live as a remnant in artificial islands, isolated from the main stream of American life. This attitude, however, is inherently wrong. It is a prescription for the transformation of the Church into a sect and for her ultimate demise as a spiritual force in our society."

In the next chapter I will deal with the question of mission and culture in more detail. At this point perhaps what needs to be pointed out is that nationalism is the other side of the inculturation coin. Western Christians, and Western secular writers and journalists, when looking at the Orthodox Church and nationalism in Eastern Europe, sometimes seem to demand simplistic solutions. All the problems could be solved if the Orthodox Churches would adopt Western culture and values. There should be separation of church and state. Religion should be seen as a private affair. Churches should be seen as Western denominations - voluntary associations of autonomous individuals. Then people would be free to attend the "church of their choice", making their selection on the principles of the free market, in which the suppliers who offer the best

combination of packaging, taste, price and value for money would get the biggest share of the market. Religion should be seen as a commodity like any other, and members of the church would be consumers of this commodity. This is, of course, a caricature, but a caricature emphasises certain characteristics in order to draw attention to them.

And the point here is that Orthodoxy is holistic. In the way Orthodox mission has taken place, Orthodoxy has become inculturated into the life of the people. One cannot find a culture-free "core" of Christianity, that can be separated from its cultural "shell". The problem with the ethnocentrism of many diaspora parishes is not that they have retained too much of their ethnic culture, but that they have lost it. Or rather, they have lost the holistic vision that held it together. The members of the parish have adopted the "religion is a private affair" view of modernity, and their church with its foreign-sounding priest and its quaint ethnic practices is in another world from their everyday life.

Jesus said to his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt 5:13), and in places like Eastern Europe the Church has sought to be the salt of the nation. To seek to take the salt out of the food by making it a "private affair" does not solve the problem. The problem is not too much salt, but rather too little, and in the wrong places. Before it can transform society, however, the Church needs to be transformed itself, which comes back to the question of renewal.

CHAPTER 7

Paradigm shifts, worldviews and culture

In the earlier chapters I have referred to different worldviews found in premodern, modern and postmodern societies, and I have suggested that mission methods have often been influenced by these different worldviews. I have also suggested that the differences between Orthodox mission methods and those used by Western Christians can be accounted for by differences in worldviews. Much of the pioneering work in examining the relations between worldviews and mission was done by David Bosch (1991).

Bosch (1991:181ff) suggests that the history of Christian mission can be divided into six periods, each of which has its own missionary "paradigm". In this he follows the Roman Catholic theologian Hans Kung, who suggested the six "paradigms", and the philosopher of science, Thomas Kuhn, who suggested that scientific knowledge does not grow steadily by the gradual acquisition of more knowledge of the physical world, but rather in a series of revolutions, each of which is the result of the adoption of a new theoretical model or structure, which Kuhn calls a paradigm (Bosch 1991:184). Kuhn thought that in suggesting this, he was applying an insight borrowed from the social sciences to the natural sciences, and was rather surprised to find that his "paradigm" theory was eagerly taken up by social scientists as something new.

Kung's historico-theological paradigms, which Bosch adopts and applies to missiology, are:

- (1) The apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity
- (2) The Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period
- (3) The mediaeval Roman Catholic paradigm
- (4) The Protestant (Reformation) paradigm
- (5) The modern Enlightenment paradigm
- (6) The emerging ecumenical paradigm

Bosch (1991:188) notes, however, that:

It might also have been possible to follow another division. James P. Martin (1987) divides the history of the church and of theology into only three eras. Kung's second, third and fourth epochs are grouped together and referred to as "pre-critical", "vitalistic" or "symbolic". This is followed by the Enlightenment as the second era, which is described as "critical", "analytical" and "mechanistic". The third epoch, now emerging, is described as "post-critical", "holistic" and "ecumenical".

Neither of these suggested sets of paradigms, however, provides a useful framework of interpretation from the Orthodox point of view, however useful they may be in analysing Western historical, theological and missionary development. And even in trying to make sense of Western developments, I would, as an Orthodox Christian, be inclined to modify Martin's three paradigm classification by including Kung's third and fourth eras with Martin's second era. Western historians commonly divide European history into three main periods: ancient, mediaeval and modern. The mediaeval period is usually seen as lasting from about 500-1500, but from the Orthodox point of view one of the most significant breaks occurred in the middle of this period.

The eleventh-century schism between East and West was followed by a different approach to soteriology that dominated Western theology from the twelfth century onwards. I have already dealt with this in chapter 2. But there were other differences, relating to theological method. Western scholasticism introduced a new kind of rationalism into theology, which developed into the secular reason of the Enlightenment. In the later period, of course, rationalism was modified by empiricism, which was largely absent from the twelfth century. There was certainly a change in Western European culture at this time, which can be seen not only in theology, but in art, architecture, politics, economics and literature. It was the time of the building of the great Western cathedrals, at Chartres, Durham and other places. The style was different from anything that ever went before. In part, this was because of new architectural techniques. The development of the flying buttress made it possible to build much higher. But there was also a theological difference. The new Western cathedrals soared heavenwards, to a God who lived up in the sky. On the outside their spires pointed upwards, and inside there was an impression of height. It was the expression in stone

of man's aspiration to reach the heavens, the dwelling place of God. Orthodox architecture, on the other hand, emphasised God bringing heaven down to earth. Orthodox architecture expressed the spirit of the Orthodox greeting - "Christ is in our midst".

In an earlier chapter (see p. 72) I noted the difference between the Orthodox and the Western evaluation of the Constantinian era. For Bosch, this era was characterised by what he calls the "corpus Christianum", and he evaluates it as follows:

Christendom, the *corpus Christianum*, has collapsed. Many have lamented this; many still lament it today. In reality, however, it is a liberation. The Church can now once again truly be the Church. Out of the ruins of the *corpus Christianum* the *corpus Christi*, the Body of Christ, arises, stripped of her earlier self-assurance, of her self-confidence and megalomania. Precisely in her mission the Church confesses her guilt about the way in which she has always attempted to dominate the world" (Bosch 1980:248).

If, as some Western theologians believe, all theology is "contextual" then this statement too must be examined in its context. Bosch was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, a body that helped to shape, and for a long time uncritically supported, the political ideology of *apartheid*. When the National Party, with its *apartheid* ideology, came to power in South Africa in 1948, it appointed a commission, the Tomlinson Commission, to see how *apartheid* could be turned into a practical policy (Reader's Digest 1988:378ff). One of the results of this was that the government officially and unofficially encouraged mission by the three Dutch Reformed churches, and placed obstacles in the way of mission by other Christian bodies, at times resorting to outright persecution (see Bosch 1991:304). There was a price to be paid for this cooperation or harmony between church and state, and those within the Dutch Reformed Churches who were unwilling to pay the price, or even questioned it, found themselves ostracised and placed in the same kind of position as those from other Christian bodies who were treated with hostility by the government. In some ways these "rebels" within the Dutch Reformed churches were in an even worse position than those in other Christian bodies - the others at least enjoyed solidarity in their persecution, while those within the Dutch Reformed churches found themselves isolated. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that Bosch

regards the collapse of the "corpus Christianum" as a liberation. His statement that "Precisely in her mission the Church confesses her guilt about the way in which she has always attempted to dominate the world" needs to be seen in this context.

Bosch fails to realise how "contextual" his own theology is when he attempts to "universalise" it, and claim it as normative by harping on Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge (Bosch 1991:483). Again, it needs to be pointed out that in Africa this *corpus Christianum* lasted for a mere 300 years, and that Christians in Africa (and much of the Near East) were under Muslim domination for the next 1500 years. It is difficult to relate Bosch's statement about the Church "always attempting to dominate the world" to the Church in Egypt, at any time during the last 1500 years. Bosch's view is far too Eurocentric, and Western Eurocentric at that.

Yet it also needs to be noted that there are certain similarities between Bosch's context in South Africa and the experience of Orthodox Christians in Russia in the early years of the twentieth century. The Orthodox understanding of the relationship between church and state was indeed different from the Western one, but for nearly 200 years the Russian Orthodox Church was subjected to a kind of captivity as a result of the attempt of Tsar Peter the Great to use the Church as an instrument of state policy, when it became the state "Department of the Orthodox Confession". The "reforms" of Peter the Great represented the reign of Western state absolutism in Russia (Schmemmann 1977:331-332). In the time of the abortive 1905 revolution many Russian Orthodox Christians were looking for a kind of "liberation" similar to that which Bosch speaks of. Yet in spite of the similarities, there are also profound differences.

At the opposite extreme from those who sought "liberation" of the church from the state, there is also an apocalyptic strand of thinking among some Orthodox Christians, which sees the Orthodox Christian empire as the restraint that held back the rule of the Antichrist (2 Thess 2:7). To them, the postmodern age is also a post-Christian age, and thus for Christians there is little to do but keep the faith, dig in, and prepare for persecution. "Orthodox Christian government and public order (whose chief representative on earth was the Orthodox emperor) and the Orthodox Christian world view no longer exist as a whole, and Satan has been 'loosed out of his prison,' where he was kept by the grace of the

Church of Christ in order to 'deceive the nations' (Apoc. 20:7-8) and prepare them to worship Antichrist at the end of the age" (Rose 1990:139-140). For many, this dark period was ushered in with the murder of the Russian royal family by the Bolsheviki in 1918.

The Constantinian era was not seen, as it so often is in the West, as one of darkness, but as one of light. It was the victory of light over darkness, the vindication of the martyrs over their persecutors, coming as it did just after the most widespread and severe persecution faced by Christians. Constantine's victory over Maxentius and the Edict of Milan were regarded by most Christians at the time in much the same way as many South Africans regarded F.W. de Klerk's victory over P.W. Botha at the National Party congress in 1989, and the subsequent unbanning of opposition political organisations on 2 February 1990.

This Christian Roman empire lasted a thousand years, until it was captured by the Turks in 1453. Then Philotheus, a monk of the Eleazar Monastery in Pskov, prophesied to the Tsar that "Two Romes have fallen, a third stands, a fourth there shall not be ..." and after the fall of Constantinople Moscow came to regard itself as the third Rome (Billington 1966:58). This apocalyptic strand can be traced through Russian Orthodox thinking until the present. For the "apocalyptic" Orthodox, therefore, the Constantinian era ended in 1918. Some might say that Tsar Nicholas II was not quite the last Christian emperor. There was also Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, who also died at the hands of regicides, in 1974, though as the Church of Ethiopia was non-Chalcedonian, most Orthodox Christians would say that that did not count.

One can find parallels to this in Western Christian experience. In England, the "glorious revolution" of 1688, with the deposition of King James II could be seen to occupy a similar place in history, to the fall of the Tsar in Russia, and in the Church of England there was a group of nonjurors (also called Jacobites) who regarded their ordination oath to the deposed king as binding, and so this could be regarded in some sense as a parallel experience (Cross & Livingstone 1983:979-980). The French Revolution of 1789 could also be seen in a similar way. There are apocalyptic Protestant groups in the USA who look back to a golden age of the USA as a "Christian nation", and point to such things as the prohibition of official prayers in state schools as signs of the coming reign of Antichrist. In South Africa some Protestant Christians with an

apocalyptic bent regarded the tri-cameral parliament, introduced in 1985, as a similar sign, as the Indian "House of Delegates" would have Muslim and Hindu members, and would thus make parliament a "non-Christian" body.

There are even borrowings between these groups. A widespread urban legend circulated by and among apocalyptic Protestant groups, to the effect that the bar codes used to identify products for sale all contain the number 666, has been repeated in a book published by an Orthodox priest in Greece, though with no mention of its Protestant source.¹¹² Apocalyptic expectations relating to the idea of a Christian emperor can be found in the new Rastafarian religious movement in the Caribbean, where Haile Selassie (Ras Tafari) is regarded by many as a messianic figure (Redington 1994:3), and are also echoed in the fire-walking ceremonies in parts of Greece in honour of Saint Constantine (Danforth 1989).

One can thus find at least some parallels for comparison between Orthodox and Western Christians in the matter of church-state relations, and even some resemblances. There are resemblances in some of the circumstances, and even, superficially, in some of the responses. But neither the Bosch/Kung list of paradigms, nor those listed by Martin, are adequate for the analysis of Orthodox mission.

On the question of the relationship of mission to political power, the Constantinian dispensation, whether it ended in 633, 1388, 1393, 1453, 1917 or 1974, is indeed significant, but a rigid periodisation can be misleading. Ethiopia was ruled by Christian emperors from the fourth century to the twentieth century, and so could perhaps be regarded as a

112 Computer-literate evangelical Protestant Christians have tried for many years to refute this particular urban legend, without success. The codes that indicate the beginning, middle and end of the bar code (which enable the code to be read either left-to-right or right-to-left) are said by the propagators of this particular urban legend to represent the numeral 6, because they appear to the human eye to resemble one of the forms of that numeral by having two thin black lines. In fact in bar codes the white spaces are as significant as the black lines, and there is no real resemblance between any of the control codes and the codes for the numeral 6.

paradigm case for the "Constantinian model", except that it was never part of the Roman Empire. Though there were changes of dynasty, there is more continuity, for a longer period, than is to be found anywhere else. There are indeed parallels to be found between mission in Ethiopia and mission in other parts of the Christian world, but there are also significant differences, not least that, like Egypt, Ethiopia was dominated by non-Chalcedonian Christology, and so was regarded by most of the Christian world as technically heretical. Many parts of the Orthodox Christian world were dominated by Islam, and still are. For the Russian Orthodox Church, modernity was an external imposition, coming initially from Peter the Great, and then from the Bolsheviks, both of whom intended, in different ways, to use the Church as an instrument of state policy.

The concept of the *corpus Christianum* is therefore, I believe, not particularly helpful in identifying missionary paradigms in terms of historical periods. It does have its uses, in the sense that the vision of a Christian empire was often a component of premodern mission, but it was not nearly as universal or monolithic as Bosch makes it sound, nor was it as constricting. The National Party regime in South Africa, against which Bosch was reacting, had as much, if not more, in common with the post-Christian dictatorships of Hitler and Stalin, which represented the worst side of modernity, as it did with any premodern vision of empire. Judging that vision from such a standpoint seems to take too seriously the National Party's quite spurious claim to have been defending "Western Christian civilisation".

Apart from the church and state question, however, there are also a number of other serious problems with Bosch's presentation of his missionary paradigm of the Eastern Church, which contains such serious distortions as to make it almost unusable. Bosch, for example, contrives to give the picture of a church that has exchanged a dynamic eschatology for a static philosophical and metaphysical doctrine. He contrasts the Sermon on the Mount with the Nicene Creed (Symbol of Faith), which, he says, has nothing to say about the believer's conduct (Bosch 1991:195). In doing so, Bosch creates a picture of a church that is enamoured of abstract philosophical speculation for its own sake. Nowhere does he mention that much of the introduction of Greek philosophy was done by heretics. The Church did not necessarily eschew philosophical enquiry, but where such enquiry produced a picture of God substantially at vari-

ance with the tradition handed down, the Church rejected it. The definitions of faith, such as the Nicene Creed, arose out of a struggle and a conflict, and not from calm philosophical speculation. Bosch plays this down, and devotes much space to Origen, whom he describes as "the first person in whom the Eastern theological paradigm clearly manifested itself" (Bosch 1991:206), in spite of the fact that much of the Eastern paradigm actually developed in the struggle against Origen's thinking over the next few centuries.

Schmemmann (1977:157:ff) describes this as a struggle between the Hellenisation of Christianity, and the Christianisation of Hellenism, in which Origen represented the former trend, which it took many centuries to defeat. Most Western theologians, at least those cited by Bosch, appear to think that Origen won. If Bosch had really wanted to represent the Eastern Church mission paradigm, he would have done better to cite St Maximus the Confessor.

It was St Maximus's opposition to the monothelism of his times, and to the Platonic theology of Origen, that laid the foundations for the positive view which Orthodox missions have generally had of traditional societies in central and eastern Europe in the 9th & 10th centuries, and across central Asia and into eastern Siberia and Alaska over the next 800 years. "Orthodox evangelists felt no obligation to attack all the pre-contact religious beliefs of shamanistic tribes, for they could perceive in them some of the positive appreciation of the cosmos that is central to St Maximus' theology. They could affirm that the spiritual realities these societies worshipped were indeed 'logoi' related to the Divine Logos, whose personal existence these societies had simply never imagined" (Oleksa 1992:61).

The problem here is that, in spite of describing it as the paradigm of the Eastern Church, Bosch uses mainly Western sources, and Western sources that are thoroughly imbued with the Enlightenment paradigm. If Bosch had read some contemporary Eastern sources, such as the *Philokalia*,¹¹³ for example, he would have found that there was a great deal of concern with the conduct of believers.

113 A collection of sayings of the desert fathers.

Bosch presents the paradigm of the Eastern Church in these terms: "The Christian religion saves *from* this earth; it does not change or renew the earth" (Bosch 1991:198). Yet it was precisely in these terms that an Orthodox professor of History of Religions at Athens University distinguished between Orthodoxy and Japanese philosophy. Japanese philosophy, he said, unlike Orthodoxy, was not really concerned with the world as God's creation.¹¹⁴ When, in the second part of his chapter, Bosch starts quoting Orthodox sources, his portrayal becomes more accurate, but it does not hang together with his presentation of the patristic period. There is a jump; Bosch fails to link his rather one-sided description of the patristic theological background with his largely accurate description of what modern Orthodox missiologists have said. There is a discontinuity.

Saayman (in Saayman & Kritzinger 1996:45) notes some of the weaknesses of Bosch's evaluation of the patristic period, but I believe is also misled by it. Bosch (1991:200) attributes the repudiation of magic, superstition and idolatry to the influence of Greek philosophy on the Church in the patristic period, and tends to present this as a positive achievement. Saayman points out, correctly in my view, that the repudiation of these things by Western missionaries in Africa in the modern period sometimes had disastrous results. But in attributing it to the influence of Greek philosophy in the patristic period, he fails to see the real source of Bosch's error. I have pointed out (Hayes 1995), that this repudiation was indeed a result of the Enlightenment, but far from being the result of the influence Greek philosophy in the patristic period, it was caused rather by the Enlightenment's break with the thinking of the immediately preceding period, that of the Great Witch Hunt. The discontinuity is too great for it to be ascribed to the influence of Greek philosophy. The true Orthodox paradigm retained an attitude to magic and witchcraft that was a lot closer to that in most African societies than it was to the attitude of the Western missionaries who repudiated such things.

114 Interview with Prof. Stylianos Papalexandropoulos, Athens, April 1998.

If Bosch's six paradigms, and his Eastern Church paradigm in particular, fail to provide the tools to analyse Orthodox missiology, is there any value at all in thinking in terms of such paradigms? I believe there is, and Bosch himself indicates the way, though indirectly.

Martin's classification into "pre-critical", "Enlightenment" and "post-critical" (Bosch 1991:188) seems more useful. Martin's division is related particularly to theology and textual studies, but such a tripartite division can also be useful for missiology, though I would suggest that the divisions would better be called "premodern", "modern" and "postmodern". And it is noteworthy that as Bosch gets further into his argument, he uses these terms rather than the six paradigms he initially posits (see, e.g. Bosch 1991:478). These paradigms are also not to be rigidly periodised. They are to be found in different places in different periods, and in many places all three can be found existing side-by-side. In many parts of Africa, for example, there are people whose outlook is predominantly premodern, especially in rural areas. There are also those whose outlook is predominantly modern or post-modern, especially in the cities. In using a term like "modernity" to describe the culture and worldview that developed in Western Europe, I would also put its beginning a lot further back than Martin. Martin classified the Protestant reformation as part of the "pre-critical" period, but I would trace the roots of modernity further back, to the theology of Anselm and the scholastic method that developed in the later middle ages. In other places, however, modernity appeared later, and had different effects. These paradigms can also be modes of thinking that can be adopted by people for different purposes, thus they need not be tied to particular periods. Perhaps part of the postmodern outlook is the flexibility with which people can switch paradigms for different purposes.

When looking for missiological paradigms, it can be useful to consider some of the ideas of Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian communications theorist. His ideas were very much in vogue in certain circles in the 1960s, and he is now perhaps best known for some of his aphorisms, such as "the medium is the message/massage" and catch phrases like "the global village". Some of his theories, such as his view that different media could be classified as "hot" or "cool" seemed to lack a solid foundation, and the classifications often seemed arbitrary. Many of his sayings were trite and superficial, yet his description of some of the

differences between premodern, modern and postmodern culture are worth considering. Some of his observations on the effects of the invention of printing can illuminate the differences between modern and premodern cultures.

In McLuhan's categories, premodern culture is an aural, manuscript culture, while the age of print is a predominantly visual culture. Manuscripts were expensive, and difficult to copy, and few people could read, so reading was usually not a private, but a communal activity. People would hear scriptures read in church, rather than doing it privately and individually, for example. "With print Europe experienced its first consumer phase, for not only is print a consumer medium and commodity, but it taught men how to organize all other activities on a systematic lineal basis. It showed men how to create markets and national armies. For the hot medium of print enabled men to see their vernaculars, and to visualize national unity and power in terms of the vernacular bounds" (McLuhan 1962:138). Print, according to McLuhan, was the first form of mass production, and it promoted linear thinking, the idea of one thing following on another. Most printed books are designed to be read from beginning to end.

Similarly, McLuhan maintains that electronic media have brought about a change in culture. When referring to electronic media, he was referring mainly to the black and white television of North America in the 1950s and 1960s, with its flickering images and poor definition. He thought that colour television would not fit his theories. While it may be too much to say that the medium *is* the message, McLuhan did draw attention to the way in which the medium influences and shapes the message. A culture both shapes and is shaped by its communications media, and the manuscript/print/electronic division does in some ways provide an image of the premodern, modern and postmodern cultures. In this, I am referring particularly to verbal communication.

I believe, therefore, it is also legitimate to see premodern culture as an oral or manuscript culture, modern culture as a print culture, and postmodern culture as an electronic communications culture.

And the postmodern form of communication, electronic communication, has more in common with the premodern, in that it tends not to be in sequential order. Television programmes jump from scene to scene, and present a mosaic of impressions. On the World Wide Web one may view text

and pictures, but the hypertext links allow one to follow a single theme or idea through several different documents held in different parts of the world, rather than reading a single document, in sequential fashion, from beginning to end.

PREMODERN AND MODERN MISSION COMPARED

In the earlier chapters I have tried to show that there are common threads linking what I have called "premodern" mission methods, which in Western Europe might perhaps be called "early mediaeval" mission methods. Here I shall summarise some of those characteristics, and compare them with some of the characteristics of modern mission methods.

One characteristic of premodern mission, therefore, is that it is mission in an aural, preprint culture. Premodern cultures might be literate or illiterate, but before the age of print even their written literature tended to be read aloud. Premodern missionaries usually prized literacy, and taught it. They, like modern missionaries, promoted literacy in illiterate cultures, and if necessary invented alphabets in which to reduce languages to writing. Modern mission, and particularly Protestant mission, has promoted literacy even more. It has been much more dependent on, and shaped by, the print medium. The distribution of tracts and printed books and pamphlets has played a big part in modern mission.

Premodern mission tends to be communal rather than individualistic. The emphasis is on church planting, or establishing Christian communities, rather than individual conversions. Modern mission, and again, especially Protestantism, has emphasised individualism. Quite a lot of Protestant mission has emphasised individual conversion or "decisions for Christ" rather than church planting.

Premodern mission has often had a healing ministry, but the healing is through prayer, laying on of hands, sacramental anointing, holy water, wonder-working ikons or relics, the sign of the cross and such things. Modern mission has relied more on modern medicine for its healing ministry, using drugs, hospitals, clinics and surgeries. While there have been Pentecostal healing evangelists, the medical model of healing has been predominant.

In chapter 1 I pointed out that Orthodox mission may be seen as holistic (see page 26), but this is a characteristic of premodern mission, when contrasted with modern mission.

Stewart (1991) points out that in rural Greece, especially on the islands, modernity only began to be a significant factor in the life of people after the First World War, when people from those places began to move to the cities. There is a parallel here to the urbanisation of Africans and Afrikaners in Southern Africa in the same period.

Stewart (1991:5ff) also points out that the local religious practices in the rural areas were often regarded by 19th-century Greek folklorists and others as survivals from the ancient Greek pagan religion. There were two reasons for this: one is that such beliefs were, according to the official teaching of the Orthodox Church, superstition. The second was the desire to demonstrate a continuity between the modern Greek state and the glories of classical Greece. In addition, in the 20th century, neopagans have often maintained that Christianity was a mere veneer, and that right through the centuries people throughout Europe have continued to practice "the old religion", while paying mere lip service to the officially-sanctioned Christian faith. Stewart, however, demonstrates that this is not so. The local religious observances, and beliefs in demons, are in fact thoroughly integrated into the Orthodox worldview of the people who practise them. They are not something apart.

Many Orthodox Christians, in the Balkans and elsewhere, have shared such a premodern worldview until at least the middle of the 20th century. In Russia modernity was in many ways confined to the French-speaking court of the successors of Peter the Great. The peasants and serfs were relatively little affected by it, and, as I have pointed out, many of the first missionaries to Alaska, for example, were monks who had been serfs. Thus even into the 20th century, Orthodox mission has been far less affected by modernity than Western mission was.

This is not to say that Orthodoxy was completely unaffected by modernity or the Enlightenment. St Innocent of Alaska made clocks as a hobby, and the making of clocks was one of the hallmarks of the Enlightenment. Accurate clocks were essential for global navigation (Bronowski 1976:243), and by the end of Russian rule in Alaska in 1867, "Aleuts were sailing the ships, writing the books, keeping the accounts, engraving the maps, navigating the seven seas, and populating Alaska's cities" (Oleksa 1987:17). Thus some of the scientific aspects of the Enlightenment were undoubtedly present in Russian missions in Alaska.

THE POSTMODERN AGE

Like holism, the concept of postmodernism seems to have expanded a long way beyond its original reference to a movement in art, architecture and literature. Westphal (1990:114) suggests that "We should not get our information about postmodernism from *Time* and *Newsweek* but from the careful reading of writers like Lyotard, Foucault and Derrida, and the best secondary literature on them". This is probably wise advice if one intends to make extensive use of postmodern and deconstructive techniques for analysing missiological texts. That, however, goes considerably beyond my aims in this thesis. Westphal (1990:115) does, however, go on to point out that the mark of the postmodern is the refusal to cultivate a nostalgia for the unattainable, the unattainable in this case being the certainty of foundationalism. "The parliament of modernity includes the party of Enlightenment, with its rationalist and empiricist versions of foundationalism (from Descartes to Husserl and from Locke to logical positivism), and the party of Hegelian holism, with its antifoundationalist claims that certainty is never warranted at the beginning but only at the end, when totality is achieved" (Westphal 1990:115).

Though, by strict definition, postmodernism is a particular kind of reaction against modernity, I will also use it in a wider sense of meaning "after the modern age", a period in which many of the characteristics of modernity are questioned, and seen to be inadequate. The reasons for reaction against modernity can vary enormously. In Africa as I noted above, premodern, modern and postmodern cultures live side-by-side, and can perhaps even be found in the same people.

Calivas (1995), referring to Thomas Oden, notes that modernity has three distinct strata of meanings comparable to a target with its concentric circles and a bull's-eye. The outer circle refers to the dominant intellectual ideology of the West from the French Revolution to the present. The key features of this period are "moral relativism, narcissistic hedonism, naturalistic reductionism and autonomous individualism" (Calivas 1995:10). The second circle defines modernity as "a mentality, found especially among certain intellectual elites, which assumes that chronologically recent ways of knowing the truth are self-evidently superior to all premodern alternatives" (Calivas 1995:10). This could be extended from "chronologically recent" to geographically close, as it

includes the Western attitude to societies whose values and culture were premodern, or at least not characterised by modernity, in the Western understanding. Westerners therefore described such societies as "primitive" or "uncivilised".

The inner circle, according to Oden, is the decline of modernity which began to emerge rapidly about three decades ago, and he cautions that modernity should not be rejected in an indiscriminating way. We need to reject only its "pretensions, self-deceptions and myopia" (Calivas 1995:10). The decline, therefore, began in the 1960s, which, curiously enough, was the very time at which Western theologians began praising secularisation as a production of the Christian world view.¹¹⁵

The Western secular theologians wrote books in which they pointed out all the things that "modern man could not believe", and which, by implication, the Christian Church should jettison. Among these were beliefs such as the resurrection of Christ, yet ironically, in that very same period, thousands of young people were marching the streets of cities all over the world, carrying posters with slogans like "Che Guevara lives" and "Chairman Mao will live for 10000 years". It seemed that postmodern man had less difficulty in believing in such things as resurrection than "modern man" did.

One characteristic of the postmodern age, therefore, has been a revival of religious consciousness, and a greater value being placed on religious traditions. Modernism has generally been opposed to tradition, and since tradition is very important to Orthodoxy, there might be some points at which it has a greater affinity with postmodernism than Western Christianity, which has tended to absorb more of modernity than Orthodoxy has. But the postmodern approach to tradition is not simply a return to the premodern approach. Cahoone (1996:19), writing of post-modern trends in architecture, says:

115 The irony of this is symbolized, for me, by some Dutch Roman Catholic monks I visited in 1967. They prided themselves on the modernization of their order, symbolized by their abandoning their monastic habits for business suits. At about the same time, a disc jockey appeared on TV wearing a monastic habit.

The postmodern architect often incorporates ornamentation that modernism had banished into an otherwise modernist setting. But notice that this is not premodernism pure and simple: rather, it is a kind of pluralism. Architectural postmodernism uses premodern elements within a whole that is anything but traditional. Synthesising, juxtaposing, and ironically commenting on traditions is not traditional. To be traditionalist or premodernist is to be faithful to one tradition, not all traditions. To respect and sample from all traditions is precisely to be modern and cosmopolitan, not traditional. Traditionalism is no more compatible with a plurality of traditions than monogamy is compatible with a plurality of sexual partners. Nevertheless postmodernism may often exhibit similarities to premodernism, since they share the same enemy.

The same could be said of the postmodern approach to religion.

This could affect Orthodox mission both positively and negatively. It could make Orthodoxy more attractive to some, not because Orthodox Christians are better equipped to speak to the postmodern mind and culture than Western Christians; they are not. But in the West, at least, the postmodern mind may be more open to hearing the message of Orthodoxy than it is to hearing the message of Western Christianity, which is more tinged with modernity and therefore more alien. In the East, however, people who are attracted by Western values may move away from Orthodoxy because they see themselves as moving from traditionalism to modernity.

Before dealing with this point, however, it will be useful to look at the Orthodox view of the relationship between Christianity and culture more generally.

CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE

The relationship between mission and culture is a very complex topic. There have been enormous differences in policy and practice at different times and places. There are contrasts, not only between Orthodox and Western Christian approaches, but even between the approaches of different Orthodox missionaries. In the "diaspora" type of mission situation, for example, there is a tendency towards cultural assimilation of converts, and, in places like North America, there have been opposed views on such things as the use of the vernacular in the services. This is because for the immigrant community that established the church, the language of the church is the language of the "home" country.

In places like Siberia or Alaska, however, there was a different approach. In the early part of the 18th century Orthodox mission in Siberia tended to be closely linked with colonialism and Russification, and some bad methods were used. Converts were baptised without being taught, and in some cases financial inducements were offered. The clergy were often poorly trained in mission, or not trained at all (Kobtzeff 1986:269). This began to change for various reasons. One reason was possibly a revival in monastic life which began in the second half of the 18th century, and flourished in many places in the 19th century.

I shall concentrate on Alaska in this section, partly because it has been fairly well documented, and also because Orthodox missions were followed by Western missions in the same geographical territory, and often among the same people, so it is possible to make comparisons. The comparison may not be entirely fair, because it is comparing one of the better examples of Orthodox mission (it would also be possible to find bad ones) with one of the worse examples of Western mission (it would be possible to find better ones). Nevertheless, I believe the comparison is a useful one.

The main aim of the Russian Orthodox mission in Alaska was acceptance of the Christian faith, rather than cultural change and wholesale assimilation. Ethnohistorical data show that the main cultural changes brought about by the Orthodox mission were the substitution of burial for cremation, marriage customs, and the eradication of beliefs and practices related to shamanism (Ellanna & Balluta 1992:299).

St Innocent of Alaska, who went to the Aleutian islands as a missionary in the 1830s, and later became Metropolitan of Moscow, where he started the Orthodox Missionary Society, laid down principles for the conduct of Russian missionaries. Among these principles were that

baptism should be preceded by instruction, and should be given only to those who consented. The priests were admonished not to represent any particular government nor show open contempt for Native manners of living or insult them. Priests were to treat native peoples with kindness, gentleness, pleasantness, and wisdom, and, through these means, win their confidence. They were to discourage the Native practice of polygamy, but not with force. Priests were not to expect Native people to observe fasting in the same way as demanded of clergy. Finally, they were to make attendance at services an absolute duty...

They were not to discourage ancient customs, so long as they were not contrary to Russian Orthodox Christianity. Even those which were could be tolerated, while not accepted... The church rejected the view that the cultural heritages of all believers should be molded into a common pattern, a protest to assimilative policies practiced by other religious missions in Alaska (Ellanna & Balluta 1992:298).

Some clergy did not follow these instructions and adopted an aggressive attitude, but where this happened they could be, and sometimes were dismissed (Ellanna & Balluta 1992:296). The very fact that these points had to be laid down at all suggests that the bishop knew from experience that there had been abuses: that people were baptised without preparation, and sometimes without their consent, or that priests sometimes behaved as if they were representatives of the imperial government. This had happened in some of the earlier missionary attempts in Siberia, and as a result many uninstructed or poorly instructed converts had fallen away (Veronis 1994:87f).

The Russian missionaries translated the services of the Church and the scriptures and other writings into the local languages, and encouraged the native Alaskans to become literate in these languages and to build up a literary culture (Oleksa 1992:128).

There was little change in the first couple of decades after the purchase of Alaska by the USA in 1867, but the passing of the First Organic Act of 1884 opened the way to an aggressive cultural imperialism on the part of the US government in alliance with Protestant missionaries. Sheldon Jackson, the first commissioner of the Board of Education in Alaska, who served from 1885-1908, used his position to promote his own version of Presbyterianism in educational policy. He explicitly announced his intention of wiping out the Orthodox faith. He divided the Alaskan natives and territories among various Protestant denominations, and imported teachers to instruct the natives in "civilised" methods of food production. He prohibited the use of native languages in missionary schools that received federal subsidies. There was a conscious and deliberate policy of suppressing native language and culture, and assimilating it to the Western (i.e. modern) world view. Modernity was to be imposed by the government educational system (Ellanna & Balluta 1992:300; Oswalt 1990:137ff; Oleksa 1992:171ff).

The contrast here is stark, but it was not unique to the Alaskan situation. There are significant parallels to the South African Bantu Education Act of 1954, which effectively nationalised most of the church schools in South Africa, and thereafter tended to limit access to them to the three Afrikaans Calvinist denominations whose theology had much the same source as the Presbyterians favoured by Sheldon Jackson (see Kinghorn 1997:147).

There were also, of course, significant differences. In the USA, the aim was the assimilation of the newly acquired territory of Alaska to the dominant culture of the USA as a whole. In South Africa, the Bantu Education Act was aimed at furthering segregation, which was in many ways opposite to assimilation, and the supporters of the Act claimed that assimilation was precisely one of the evils the Act was designed to prevent. Nevertheless, the manner in which it was imposed represented crude cultural and political domination by the state, in alliance with certain religious bodies, and with the aim of eliminating the influence of other religious bodies.

Protestant missionaries in Alaska, such as the Moravians, found it very difficult to accept even the non-religious culture of the Alaskans. They were appalled at the lack of cleanliness, and especially at the dirty clothing. Eskimo skin parkas were never cleaned, and might not be discarded until they were full of holes and the fur worn away (Oswalt 1990:83). But St Herman of Alaska, we are told, "did not wear a shirt, but instead a smock of deerskin, which he did not take off or change for several years at a time, so that the fur on it was completely worn off, and the leather glossy" (Oleksa 1992:119).

In the case of Alaska, then, Orthodox missions were far less insistent on cultural change than Protestant missions, with Roman Catholic missions falling somewhere in between (Ellanna & Balluta 1992:299; Oswalt 1990:134,183).

The question of mission and culture, however, is one on which there is very little understanding or communication between Orthodox and Western missiologists. When Western missiologists ask Orthodox Christians about "inculturation" they usually have entirely different things in mind, such as, for example, representing Christ in art as belonging to various different ethnic groups - as a blue-eyed blond in northern Europe, as

Chinese in China, as African in Africa and so on. This is something totally alien to Orthodox ikonography, but on hearing that Orthodox missionaries do not do things like that, they tend to assume that Orthodox missionaries simply impose their own culture.

From the Council of Trent until the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church imposed a remarkably strict liturgical uniformity. Roman Catholic services were the same throughout the world, and they were in Latin, with very few exceptions (most of the exceptions were former Orthodox Churches that had united with the Roman Catholic Church). In the Orthodox Churches too, there was a trend towards greater uniformity. In Africa, both the Greek Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox Patriarchates use Byzantine liturgies, instead of the ancient African Liturgy of St Mark. The Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches use different music, their ikonographic styles are recognisably different, and their church architecture is different, but the differences are slight, and the fundamentals remain the same. The ikons, though different in style, are the same in form. The temples, though different externally, are constructed on the same principle. Though Greek temples have hemispherical domes and Russian ones often have onion domes, inside the general plan is the same, and the ikons are found in the same places. So in Alaska, in China, in Japan and elsewhere, the fundamentals of worship, and of vestments and dress remain the same, though the language is local. In the Roman Catholic Church, many monastics now wear secular dress. Orthodox monastics, on the other hand, wear the same dress as in the past, which is basically the same for both males and females.

For Orthodox Christians, inculturation is not to be seen in different ways of celebrating the services of the church or different styles of ikonography. At its best it is to be seen that any culture is to be transfigured by the life of Christ. This is in fact the other side of the nationalist coin. It was because Orthodoxy had become so inculturated into the life of the people that it could not be eradicated by Arab or Turkish rule in the Near East or in the Balkans. It could not be eradicated by Tatar or Bolshevik rule in Russia, and it could not be eradicated by Anglo-Saxon rule in Alaska. Thus Stamoolis (1986:64), a Protestant, says that "Orthodoxy's close cultural identification, even though at times creating difficulties, has been more of an asset than a liability".

In many ways, therefore, Orthodox inculturation operates at a different level from Western ideas of inculturation. It starts from different theological premisses, which are often not articulated, but simply absorbed. One of these is the idea that the image of God in man was not entirely destroyed in the fall. Unlike many Western theologies, Orthodoxy does not proceed from the assumption of total depravity, and that a non-Christian culture must necessarily therefore be evil. Orthodox Christians, and monastics in particular, seek the virtues of modesty, humility, patience and love. They may not always succeed in demonstrating these virtues. Lack of discernment and incontinence impede the realisation of these virtues, and place one closer to the devil and further from God (Stewart 1991:146).

This is illustrated in the correspondence between Mrs Agnes Newhall, matron of the Jesse Lee Home (a Methodist institution in Alaska), and Fr Alexander Kedrofsky, the Orthodox Dean of the Unalashka District (Oleksa 1987:328ff). Fr Alexander was concerned that children were being abducted and sent to the home against their will and the will of their parents, and that in the home they were not allowed to practise their Orthodox faith. He wrote to Mrs Newhall about a girl who had died in the home and was buried according to Protestant rites, and complained that he had not been called to minister to her in her last illness.

In her reply, Mrs Newhall said that interference in the running of the home would not be tolerated, and went on to attack the Aleuts thus: "Is not the moral condition of the greater part of the natives in this village deplorable? Very religious as outward forms go, but intensely sinful in life. Most of their homes are veritable brothels of sin. Is not dishonesty, profanity, adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, strife and drunkenness rife? Is it not an insult to God and the cross of Christ for such workers of iniquity to call themselves Christians? We think so" (Oleksa 1987:332).

Father Alexander replied that the home was established as a hostel attached to the school, that he appreciated its aims, but that it was promised that it would not interfere with the religion of the children, but that this undertaking had recently been broken: "Can it be that Protestantism finds in our Savior's words (see Matthew XXVIII, 19) authority for missionaries to act as your Home has acted here in

Unalashka?! No! The Lord does not command deceit and craftiness as methods to be used in missionary work, to propagate His teaching, but directly forbids them, for that such things are of the Devil..." (Oleksa 1987:334).

On the sinful condition of the natives, he asked, "From what do you conclude that the natives of these parts live such very sinful lives? Coming to the list of the sins which you say prevail among the natives, I must inform you that some of these sins do not exist among them at all, others do exist as you say, but not universally by far; and others again exist in no greater degree than, I dare say, we shall find them in ourselves, you and I! - if only we take the trouble to learn impartially to 'know ourselves' and if we dig, with severe self-criticism, to the bottom of our hearts... The alleged total depravity of the natives causes you deep sorrow; yet do tell me, on your conscience, is the moral life of the people from whom you came here, any better than theirs?... Lastly you should know that, if the people here can sin, they can also repent *and that is what most imports*" (Oleksa 1987:336-337).

It is this desire for humility, the view of oneself as the first of sinners, which was particularly strong in the monastic missionaries, that tended to mitigate the worst effects of the association of Russian mission with colonialism. The entanglement of mission with colonialism in the Russian empire, as in other European empires in the 19th century, had as much potential for evil in Russia as it did anywhere else, and this often led to actual evil. But the Russian missionaries, especially the monastic ones who had been influenced by the late 17th-century monastic revival, as the Valaam missionaries who went to Alaska were, were accustomed to try to cultivate the virtues of modesty and humility, and so not to see themselves, their moral lives, their culture or their nationality, as superior to those they went to. In the case of Alaska, it was above all the example of St Herman, who not only preached these virtues but lived them, who enabled the Aleuts, Eskimos and Indians to adopt the Orthodox Christian faith as their own, despite the abuse they received at the hands of officials of the Russian America Company (Mousalimos 1991:157f).

This emphasis on humility was linked to the premodern worldview that remained, at least to some extent, in the Orthodox Church. From the Renaissance on, Western culture tended to place less emphasis on humility. Humanism emphasised human rights and dignity, and pride in

human accomplishments. To those who live in them, "civilised" societies had more accomplishments to boast of than "primitive" ones, and such an attitude of cultural superiority became inextricably linked with modernity.

But though Orthodox missionaries may have had less of a bias (or, perhaps more accurately, a stronger counter-bias) to the attitude of cultural superiority, one also needs to consider their attitude to religious superiority. If Orthodox missionaries were inclined to show a greater respect for the culture of the people they went to, what about their attitude to the religions? And, perhaps more important, how did they evaluate and interpret those religions?

THEOLOGY OF RELIGION

In Western theology, discussion of "theology of religion" seems to have narrowed to a point where it is not concerned with other religions at all. It is rather concerned solely with Christians, and with classifying them as "inclusivist", "exclusivist" or "pluralist" (or variations on those terms). To call such introspective evaluations of Christian thought-processes "theology of religion" seems somehow inadequate. An Orthodox Christian, on being asked to locate the Orthodox Church in relation to those positions, and to state whether Orthodoxy was "inclusive", "exclusive" or "pluralist" might well respond that it is all three, and go on to query the relevance of the question.

Though Western theologians have classified Christian theologies of religion in various ways, the fundamental assumptions appear to be the same. Race (an Anglican) and D'Costa (a Roman Catholic), for example, speak of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism (Race 1972; D'Costa 1986). Those who adopt the exclusive model take their cue from Acts 4:12, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." The inclusive model allows the possibility of salvation in non-Christian religions, but regards Christ as the normative way of salvation. The pluralist model sees each religion as offering salvation to its adherents, and emphasises the importance of interreligious dialogue.

Knitter (also a Roman Catholic) has four classifications, which he describes as "The Conservative Evangelical model: the one true religion"; the "Mainline Protestant model: salvation only in Christ"; "The Catholic model: many ways, one norm"; and "The theocentric model: many ways to the center" (Knitter 1985).

Many Western theologians write as though religious pluralism is something new, or assert, as Race (1972:1-2) does, that "the present experience [of religious pluralism] transcends any earlier sense Christians may have had of its significance", which he ascribes to the new mobility brought about by modern means of transport, the academic study of comparative religion and the new missionary consciousness found among many non-Christian religions. This perception may arise from the peculiar circumstances of most Western Christians between the ninth and the sixteenth centuries. In that period Western Europe was nominally Christian, and other religions were to be found only on the peripheries - tribal and nature religions in the north-east, and Islam in the south and east. Only in Spain and North Africa did Western Christians continue to live in an Islamic society, and in North Africa the Church had practically disappeared by the eleventh century.

By the sixteenth century technological developments in shipbuilding and navigation had allowed Western Europeans to bypass the Islamic world, and once again establish contact with Eastern Asia, and to make contact with most of the American continents for the first time.

For Eastern Christians, however, the picture was very different. The Church grew in a religiously plural society, and much of this religious pluralism persisted for some time after Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman empire. In fourth-century Antioch, for example, there were more pagan temples than Christian churches, and the educational system was still basically the Greek *paideia* (Harkins 1979:xxv). The rise of Islam in the seventh century meant that many Orthodox Christians were living in a predominantly Muslim society, and continue to do so to this day (Drummond 1985:83). In Russia, Orthodox Christians were under Tatar rule for some centuries and even in the Byzantine Empire they "felt less threatened by Mongols and Turks than by the papacy, the Teutonic Knights and the monarchies of Central Europe" (Meyendorff 1989:47).

In the Western perception, therefore, a plurality of religions is a new phenomenon, which demands a new theological explanation, while for Orthodox Christians, especially those living among Western Christians, Western Christianity itself is the "new" (and sometimes more puzzling) phenomenon. Nevertheless the Christian Church came into being in a world in which there was a plurality of religions, and religious pluralism is not really a new phenomenon.

Alan Race (1972:2) quotes Wilfred Cantwell Smith as saying:

From now on any serious intellectual statement of the Christian faith must include, if it is to serve its purposes among men, some *doctrine of other religions*. We explain the fact of the Milky Way by the doctrine of creation, but how do we explain the fact that the *Bhagavad Gita* is there? (emphasis mine)

The interesting thing here is that none of the writings of Western theologians about "inclusive", "exclusive" "pluralist" or "theocentric" models, and their classifications of different Christian approaches to interreligious dialogue in terms of these models, either explain, nor do they purport to explain, why the *Bhagavad Gita* is there. They are not so much theologies of religion as attitudes to religious pluralism. Knitter, though he has much to say about the need for "authentic dialogue", does not give much evidence of such dialogue in his book.

Whatever scheme of classification one adopts, I believe that the fundamental question is a false one, both in terms of Christian theology and in terms of other religions. What is fundamental to the Christian faith is that salvation is not found in "religion" at all, but in a person, Jesus Christ. A second problem is that other religions may have a very different concept of "salvation" from that of Christianity, if indeed they have a concept of "salvation" at all. For many, the question of "salvation" is irrelevant. And even if they do have a concept of "salvation", it is highly unlikely that it will be interpreted in Christian terms. Even Christians cannot agree among themselves on what constitutes "salvation", and therefore to make "salvation" the yardstick imposes a Christian framework (or rather, the framework of a particular sub-set of Christians). It seems to me that Knitter, and most other "theologians of religion" are not even trying to compare apples with oranges - at least apples and oranges are both fruit - they are trying to compare chalk with cheese.

Even the use of the term "faith", as found in terms like "interfaith dialogue", or "people of faith", is an imposition of Christian categories and terminology. When Christianity spread through the ancient Graeco-Roman world, there was indeed a situation of religious pluralism. Christians called non-Christians "pagans", but that in itself was a peculiarly Christian coinage - "pagani" were civilians, rather than soldiers, and in Christian slang referred to those who had not enlisted by baptism in the army of Christ. Paganism was a matter of cult rather

than creed. No group of pagans ever referred to themselves as "the faithful" (Fox 1987:31). In the Graeco-Roman world there were the cults of various deities, and there was philosophy, which tended to be seen as something apart from the cults. Christians, however, integrated cult and philosophy into "faith". To speak of "interfaith" dialogue, therefore, is already to impose a Christian conceptual framework.

The concept of "religion" as a phenomenon is a product of the Western Enlightenment.

The term "religion", as a generic description of what the plural "religions" are about, is part of everyday discourse and is used with some precision by scholars. However, it was not always so. The concepts "religion" and "the religions", as we presently understand them, emerged quite late in Western thought, during the Enlightenment. Between them, these two notions provided a new framework for classifying particular aspects of human life" (Harrison 1990a:1).

The problem is that by classifying particular aspects of human life, the concepts of "religion" and "religions" tended to be studied apart from their context, as if "religion" could somehow be separated from the rest of life, and studied on its own.

Orthodox views

Orthodox views of other religions are difficult to classify according to the Western criteria of "exclusive", "inclusive" and "pluralist". Orthodox views could be said to be all three, and "none of the above". There is not really a systematically worked-out "theology of religions" in Orthodoxy at all. It is rather an enacted theology, seen in the life and the worship of the Church. In the absence of an Orthodox "theology of religions", all that I shall do here will be to point to some Orthodox views, and make some observations on how they relate to mission.

St Justin Martyr, one of the earliest Christian writers to discuss the relation of the Christian faith to other religions, says:

We do not worship with many sacrifices and floral offerings the things men have made, set in temples, and called gods. We know that they are inanimate and lifeless and have not the form of God (for we do not think that God has that form which some say they reproduce in order to give honor to Him) -- but have the names and shapes of those evil demons who have appeared [to men] (St Justin Martyr 1948:41).

In Orthodox ikonography God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are never represented in material form. Jesus Christ, as the incarnate Son of God, is indeed represented graphically in ikons, because though "no one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (Jn 1:18). During the iconoclastic controversy the iconophiles made their position clear: "an idol was the image of a creature which was worshipped as God, as was the case with the pagans" (Sideris 1973:211)

The iconophiles relied a great deal on St Basil the Great's contention that the honour of the image is transferred to the prototype (Sideris 1973:213). For a theology of religions the important question is therefore not so much the image itself, but the nature of the prototype. If the image is of Christ, then honour to the ikon of Christ is honour to Christ, and it is therefore not idolatry. If the image is of the Theotokos or of one of the saints, then honour to their ikons is not idolatry because they are not mistaken for God. The essence of idolatry is worshipping the creature instead of the creator. For St Justin Martyr, the pagans not only worshipped images, but regarded the prototype as God himself, whereas Justin himself thought that the prototypes were evil demons.

Justin's view is not the only possible one. It is also possible that the "idols" of the pagans are false images of the true God, as St Paul seems to suggest (Ac 17:22-31) or of created spiritual beings, not necessarily evil (Col 1-2).

Arseniev, in discussing the phenomenon of religious pluralism, speaks of two views. What he calls the "ultra-calvinistic" view "denies the existence of any positive trait in the fallen nature of man and therefore also in all heathen religions". He also describes a "relativistic" view that considers all the so-called higher religions as more or less equal in their ultimate value, "as equally valuable and acceptable approaches to the mystery of the Divine" (Arseniev 1982:39). Arseniev identifies the latter view with the adepts of theosophy and with some Indian religious thinkers. He also speaks of another kind of relativistic approach that is based on agnostic or atheist premisses: the view that all religions are projections of the human mind and therefore

subject to the laws of human evolution. When linked with an optimistic appraisal of this evolution as a continuous human ascent to higher forms of moral consciousness, Arseniev (1982:40) calls this view the "positivistic" view.

Arseniev's "ultra-Calvinist view" seems to coincide with the "exclusive" view described by Race and D'Costa, and Knitter's "Conservative Evangelical" view, while his "relativistic" view is similar to the pluralist view described by the Western writers.

Justin Martyr's comments have little in common with the pluralist view, and recent Orthodox writers also seem to allow no room for it. For example, Hopko (1982:15f) says:

While affirming that God is indeed unknowable in His innermost being, and that there are indeed a multitude of manifestations of God and revelations in and toward His creatures, and that there are indeed an immense variety of forms and categories of expression and explanation proper to God in human thought and speech, the Orthodox tradition remains adamant in its insistence that not all of man's thoughts and words about God are "adequate to divinity" (to use a traditional expression), and that indeed most of man's ideas and words about God are plainly wrong, being, as they are, the inventions of the vain imagination of creaturely minds and not the fruit of a living experience of God in the actual reality of His self-disclosure.

Arseniev's description of what he calls an "ultra-Calvinistic" view, on the other hand, expresses the Orthodox unease with the Western "exclusive" view, which appears to be based on the notion of total depravity.

Justin's view of pagan cults was rather negative, when compared with some other Orthodox views. He, and many other early Christian writers, were rather more positive about pagan philosophy, however. While not every philosophical view or system was regarded as compatible with Christianity, Christians could, and did, adapt some of them. In more recent times, the same trend continues. Fr Seraphim Rose, for example, who studied Chinese philosophy, wrote on "Christ the eternal Tao" (Christensen 1996:61).

The religions of southern and eastern Asia - Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism etc., seem to show a similar distinction between cult and philosophy to that which was found in the ancient Roman empire in which Christianity first appeared. Though Western science of religion,

influenced by the Enlightenment, has classified these as "religions", there are problems with such an approach. Atlases showing the "religions of the world" often show China, for example, with overlapping symbols representing Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism and Marxism-Leninism (Readers Digest s.a.:133). But these are philosophies, not cults.

Among Chinese people, however, there are numerous cults - of localised spirits, ancestors and various other deities (Noss 1980:240ff). These bear a similar relationship to Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism and even Marxism-Leninism to that which the cults of Zeus, Diana, Venus and Mars bore to Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism etc. in the West. Buddhism, while basically atheistic, has also become attached to various cults, particularly in its Mahayana form (Noss 1980:148). In Hinduism the various permutations of cult and philosophy have been described and categorised in a more self-conscious and systematic way than in most other religions (see Noss 1980:179ff).

What is perhaps more interesting than these, however, is the relationship between the Orthodox worldview and that of African traditional societies that practise African traditional religion, or that of the hunting and fishing societies in Alaska.

Stewart (1991:167-168), for example, describes the worldview of the inhabitants of villages on the Greek island of Naxos. There is a conception of the human settlement as ringed or encircled by a protective force. Circles in Greece are formed by right-handed, counter-clockwise motion (moving to one's right as one faces into the circle). Ikons and the gospel book are carried in procession counter-clockwise. The circle divides space into two. The interior is the sanctified *ecumene*, the area beyond is conceded to the disease and misfortune-bearing demons. If one is attacked by a demon beyond the confines of the village, the wise course of action is to take a black-handled knife and etch a circle into the ground around oneself. Inside this circle one should then carve the sign of the cross. This creates a miniature replica of the village with its central church. If one remains within this circle, the demons may not penetrate and harm one.

What is interesting here is that Comaroff and Comaroff (1991:130) make very similar observations about Tswana conceptions of space. The Tswana town (motse) evoked the triumph of social order over the wild beyond the settlement. Circles and arcs were the primary motif in Tswana architecture.

Oleksa (1992:19) notes something similar in Alaska. In the Yup'ik Eskimo culture a house is a microcosm, an image of the world, and it is circular. Rituals are performed inside or outside the house at certain seasons. "Though the structure of houses has recently changed to federally-funded rectangular frame houses, these behaviors persist. The house is no longer structurally a microcosm, but the rituals survive."

Oleksa also notes that modern societies conceptualise and organise time in lines - "boxes on calendars, appointment books and travel schedules". But in traditional societies, the time spent building a house is not work as opposed to leisure time, but meaningful sacred time in contrast to meaningless profane time (Oleksa 1992:20).

In the Orthodox world too, the house is a microcosm. As with the village, with its church in the centre, representing the *ecumene*, as opposed to the demon-infested wilderness, so the house has its ikon corner, where prayers are said. Orthodoxy has its centre not only in the temple, but in the home. The ikon corner is to the home what the church is to the village.

Western missionaries often showed an inordinate concern about square houses, and regarded the building of these by their converts as a sign of the success of their mission (see Elphick & Davenport 1997:38). While Orthodox missionaries often taught people the technology to build square houses, their concern with such architecture does not seem to have been so ideologically driven.

In East Africa, as in Alaska, many Africans who have become Orthodox see Orthodoxy as a fulfilment of the traditional religion. As one Orthodox evangelist put it:

The Orthodox Church I think will work to bring Orthodox Churches in the Eastern Province. It's only the district, the province, that lacks the Orthodox Churches. I think when it is brought to the people most of them are Bantus, Bantu people, Bantu-speaking language, and they are more or less Orthodox, according to how they perform their traditions. It is more or less Orthodox, yes. Like going to trees, sacrificing animals - they have this kind of thing. So when they see a priest sacrificing it's similar, it's not new to them, because they have been seeing this for a long time. We have shrines. They really respect the shrines, as we do the altar....

You see the Protestants are charismatics, they bring new ideas to the African people, but the Orthodox, I feel it is more or less African. We had Bishop Nicholas, he came to Kenya, he went to Kikuyuland and

he said, "Oh, but the Kikuyus are Orthodox - they are doing exactly what the Orthodox do." The Kamba people, the Kikuyu people and the Meru people are the same, they have the same parent. It's only where they live, the language they speak is more or less the same.¹¹⁶

I noted earlier that Orthodoxy started in Kenya as a result of a protest against a decree by Protestant missionaries banning female circumcision. This decree was enforced by means of the *kirore* oath-taking ceremony. Orthodox missionaries generally did not seek to impose moral values in such a fashion. Nevertheless, female circumcision has tended to die out among the Kikuyu Orthodox, not as a result of a prohibition, but because baptism has come to be seen as the true initiation (Wentink 1968:43).

In Alaska, the monastic mission that arrived in 1794 from Valaam baptised 6000 Alutiiq within a few months of their arrival in Kodiak. Mousalimas (1991:164) points out that the acceptance of Christianity was so rapid, not only on Kodiak, but elsewhere in Alaska, that it must have been related to events that took place before the missionaries arrived. And it appears that this is indeed so. There are accounts of shamans and visionaries advising people to be baptised. Similar observations were made by Ivan Veniaminov (known to Orthodox Christians as St Innocent of Alaska) in the 1820s. He himself came from the Lake Baikal region of Siberia, where the term "shaman" originated, borrowed from the Tungus-speaking Evenk people by anthropologists to describe similar phenomena all around the world (Mousalimas 1991:163).

As time passed, shamanism was in part rejected, and in part absorbed into Orthodoxy, and reinterpreted. The spirits of the people and the places were reinterpreted in the Orthodox cosmology as angels and demons. This process has taken place in many different times and places. Ancient Serbian ancestor veneration was reinterpreted as the *Slava*, a family festival honouring the patron saint of the family, usually the saint on whose day the remote ancestor was baptised, where prayers are said for the living and the dead. Before the older beliefs were fully integrated, they were regarded as *dvoeverie* (double-mindedness) in Russia.

116 Interview with Joel Muindi, Nairobi, 13 Nov 1995

Though there is not much in the way of explicit theology dealing with this, there are some pointers. Through Origen, the Church was offered Platonic dualism - the view that spirit was good and matter was evil, and that even the devil and his angels could be saved if they made progress from spirit to matter. Origen's view was rejected by the Orthodox Church. In the Orthodox view there is to be no dualism. Satan is not to be regarded as a power equal to God. He is God's creation, and operates subject to the divine will. He has no independent power. He may tempt, but his success is dependent on lapses of human will. Satan is also strictly and intrinsically evil. The Church does not accept the existence of ambiguous fairy-like creatures that can switch sides (Stewart 1991:148).

Yet in another sense there is a kind of dualism. A person, a place, or a community may have a guardian angel or a patron saint. In the pagan world, tutelary deities often could have a benign or a malign aspect. In the Orthodox view, the malign "aspect" is actually another spirit altogether. Guardian angels do not switch sides between God and the devil, serving one one day and the other the next. Evil spirits are exorcised, not placated.

In such ways Orthodox Christians have reinterpreted the deities of other cults. When Justin Martyr refers to pagan deities as "evil demons", therefore, it is not the only or the last word Orthodoxy would have to say on the subject. But, even when Orthodox Christians are most accommodating towards other religions, it is also not a word they would repudiate.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

To summarise, then I believe that Bosch's six missiological paradigms are not very useful for interpreting Orthodox missiology. Even for Western missiology, they are not adequate. William Burrows has proposed that a seventh paradigm should be added - the Roman Catholic inculturation paradigm (Saayman & Kritzinger 1996:121). For Orthodox missiology, Bosch's "Eastern" paradigm fails to link his very Western interpretation of the patristic period with the recent Orthodox missiologists whose work he describes. But rather than multiplying paradigms, I believe that it is easier to reduce them to three: premodern, modern and postmodern. Even Bosch himself tends to do this.

This criticism is not intended to detract from the enormous contribution Bosch has made. Despite the shortcomings that I have noted here, and those that others have noted elsewhere, Bosch has certainly stimulated reflection on the possible role of such mission paradigms. Without that stimulation, especially on the influence of the Enlightenment, I would never have written this thesis.

In considering the Orthodox approach to other religions, the categories commonly used by Western theologians and missiologists (exclusive, inclusive and pluralist) are even more inadequate, because those categories are quite foreign to the Orthodox worldview. Orthodox Christians might deny that any of them is Orthodox¹¹⁷ or might say that they are all valid, and that the only danger would be in not holding all three at the same time, which could lead to an unbalanced view.

The division into premodern, modern and postmodern paradigms is a more useful one in interpreting the different approaches to culture and religion, as I have tried to show in discussing the approach of Orthodox missionaries to premodern cultures and religions, and comparing it with Western missionaries whose approach has been influenced more strongly by modernity. I will try to draw these threads together in the concluding chapter, which follows.

117 A speaker, James Cutsinger, who proposed them in a paper read at the International Orthodox Mission Conference in Brookline, Massachusetts in August 1995 got a very critical reception from all the theologians present.

CHAPTER 8

Orthodox mission in the twenty-first century

In the history of Orthodox mission, we have seen two kinds of approach to the world. There is one where the world is evaluated positively, and another where it is evaluated negatively. In the first view, the world is seen primarily as God's world, part of his good creation. In the second view, it is seen primarily as the fallen world, the world that lies in the power of the evil one. These two approaches extend to cover the *ecumene*, the humanly inhabited world. They are found in relation to culture, to church and state, to the relation of the Church to human society. If Christians are in the world but not of it, then some have emphasised the importance of being in the world, and others have emphasised the importance of not being of this world. I have pointed out that I believe that both these approaches are authentic parts of the Orthodox tradition, and that both are in fact essential to the maintenance of that tradition.

How does this affect Orthodox mission as we approach the twenty-first century? In the First World, the predominant culture is post-Christian. Modernity has affected Christian thinking, and postmodernism has affected some of those who have abandoned the Christian faith altogether. In the Second World, several decades of communist rule have effectively secularised society, leading to a modern post-Enlightenment outlook, though it has sometimes taken a different form to that of the First World. In the Third World, Christianity has been expanding tremendously in Africa, and has been shifting from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant emphasis in Latin America, while remaining a minority religion in most of Asia. There is a sense in which postmodern culture is spreading throughout the world, though taking different forms in different places.

How do Orthodox Christians evaluate these cultural changes in relation to mission? In the negative, or pessimistic view, often expressed by Fr Seraphim Rose, these cultural changes exemplify the spread of nihilism (Rose 1994:12). They are inimical to the gospel, and most Orthodox chur-

ches will lapse into apostasy as the world is prepared for the coming of the Antichrist. Mission, then, becomes the gathering of the faithful remnant out of the world, and out of those Orthodox churches that are seen as apostate. In its extreme form, this view is expressed in sectarianism and schism, over such questions as the calendar, or, in the Second World, over such questions as Sergianism - those who were said to be too subservient to the communist state. The emphasis is on maintaining the distinction between the Church and the world.

In the positive, more optimistic view, the world's culture is not seen so negatively. The Orthodox Christian faith can be incarnated in any culture. The positive approach of St Nicholas of Japan or St Innocent of Alaska to the local cultures in the countries where they were missionaries can also be used with the cultures of modernity and post-modernity. In its extreme form, however, the effect of such accommodation can be to do away with the need for mission at all, such as when a prominent bishop was reported as saying that Mohammed was a prophet of God. Orthodox Christianity then becomes nothing more than a way of "being religious" for people of a certain ethnic or national cultural background.

One of the things that keeps these two tendencies from falling apart completely is that they both look to the same missionary saints: Nicholas of Japan, Herman of Alaska, and Innocent of Moscow as examples, even though there may be different emphases in their interpretations of their life and ministry.

It is probably too soon to try to define the characteristics of post-modernism or postmodernity. It is sufficient to note that in many areas of culture the influence of the Enlightenment, or modernity, has begun to wane, or at least to be modified by new approaches that are in some ways incompatible with modernity. The secular science of the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on empirical verification, also gave rise to scepticism about what could not be verified empirically. In the post-modern world, however, such scepticism is often found side by side with credulity. It is said that G.K. Chesterton once remarked that when people stop believing in God, they do not believe in nothing, but they will believe in anything.¹¹⁸ So we find, for example, that people who are sceptical about the resurrection, or even the existence of Jesus Christ, are sometimes quite willing to believe the most amazing stories about flying saucers and the like.

In some ways the postmodern world looks very similar to the world in which the Christian faith first appeared. There is, for example, a similar religious pluralism. The rapid growth of communications has made it possible for religions that were previously confined to one area to be found all over the globe. As a result of missionary activities and the diaspora of members of different religions, people living in places where, a couple of centuries ago, they would have had little chance of meeting members of more than one or two religions in the normal course of their daily lives, can now encounter dozens of different religious views and outlooks. Interreligious dialogue, which previously was regarded as the province of specialists, and involved meetings to which people travelled from all over the world at great expense, now also takes place electronically. Ordinary lay Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Wiccans, neopagans, Mormons, Baha'i and many others from different parts of the world meet and discuss their religious beliefs and practices on electronic networks. There are also numerous new religious movements, and they too spread rapidly and widely. In the nineteenth century, St Nicholas of Japan took Orthodox Christianity from Russia to Japan. In the twentieth century, a new religious movement, the Aum Shinrikyo sect, has more adherents in Russia than in Japan where it originated.

Many of the new religious movements are extremely eclectic. The neopagan religions of the First World are usually conscious attempts to revive the pre-Christian religions of northern Europe, especially the Celtic and Teutonic ones. But in North America (and sometimes elsewhere) they are often combined with elements of North American native religion. Wicca, which, like some of the others, also claims to be a revival of a pre-Christian religion of Northern Europe, is in fact nothing of the kind. It has reinterpreted and combined elements from many different religions, ancient and modern, including Christianity, and some of the

118 I have not been able to find the source of this "quotation", and nor have most Chesterton scholars (<http://www.chesterton.org>). It is, however, the kind of thing he could have said.

elements were made up by twentieth-century novelists. Many Wiccans are solitary, and consciously practise a kind of "mix and match" religion. There is also the New Age movement, which is even more eclectic. Many Christians characterise the neopagan religions as "New Age cults", though most neopagans themselves do not see themselves as "New Age", and make a distinction.

These movements, however, even where they do claim premodern roots, have a radically different attitude. They cannot be regarded simply as a revival of premodern religions; they are primarily a reaction against modernism. And they are therefore profoundly influenced by modernism. Tinker (1993:121) observes:

The withering of white Christian spirituality has so disillusioned people that many have engaged in a relatively intense search for something to fill the spiritual void, from Buddhism, Sufi mysticism, or Hindu meditation to Lynn Andrews hucksterism or the so-called "men's council" movement, with channeling, astrology, and witchcraft falling somewhere in between. In this time of spiritual crisis, Indian [i.e. native American] spirituality, which just a short while ago was the anathema of heathenism, has now become an appealing alternative to many of the seekers.

The main difficulty is that Indian spiritual traditions are still rooted in cultural contexts that are quite foreign to white Euroamericans, yet Euroamerican cultural structures are the only devices Euroamericans have for any deep structure understanding of native spiritual traditions. Hence, those native traditions can only be understood by analogy with white experience... Both well-meaning New Age liberals and hopeful Indian spiritual traditionalists can easily be swept up into a modern process of imposed cultural change, without recognizing deep structure cultural imposition even when in their midst. The first Indian casualty today in any such New Age spiritual-cultural encounter is most often the deep structure cultural value of community and group cohesion that is important to virtually every indigenous people. As adherents of Western cultures, Europeans and Euroamericans live habitual responses to the world that are culturally rooted in an individualist deep structure rather than communitarian. In this "meeting" of cultures, the communal cultural value of Indian people is transformed by those who do not even begin to see the cultural imposition that has occurred, however unintended. Hence dancing in a ceremony in order "that the people might live" gives way to the New Age Euroamerican quest for individual spiritual power. What other reason would a New Yorker have for rushing out to South Dakota to spend eight days participating in a Sun Dance ceremony? Yet well-meaning New Agers drive in from New York and Chicago, or fly in from Austria and Denmark, to participate in

annual ceremonies originally intended to secure the well-being of the local, spatially-configured community. These visitors see little or nothing at all of the reservation community, pay little attention to the poverty and suffering of the people there, and finally leave having achieved only a personal, individual spiritual high. "That the people might live" survives merely as an abstract ideal at best.

According to Tinker then, modernity can be not merely imposed from without, by aggressive culturally-insensitive Western missionaries, but also from within, by religious sympathisers who are ostensibly seeking to learn. In Alaska and East Africa, however, the native people who had become Orthodox regarded Orthodoxy as part of their culture within a very short time, as I have shown in Chapter 7. I believe this might well be because the Orthodox missionaries were themselves rooted in a communitarian deep structure rather than an individualist one. In addition, as I have tried to show in chapter 2, Orthodox soteriology has tended to regard human nature and human institutions in a somewhat more positive light than much Western theology, as distorted and blemished by human sinfulness rather than "totally depraved".

The modern revival of the ancient European cults of Odin, Thor and Lugh among people living in the First World involves the same kind of reinterpretation of premodern beliefs, as that described by Tinker, but at least it does no harm to living community practitioners of those cults. In part the phenomenon that Tinker describes is the difference between tribal and urban cultures. It is also the difference between what McLuhan (1967:84) describes as literate and preliterate, or manuscript and print, cultures. The cohesive kinship community structure of the tribal polity makes way for the anonymous individualism of the urban one - a process that began in the modern age in north-western Europe with scholasticism and the Renaissance (McLuhan 1967:100).

One reason for the rapid growth of African Independent Churches could be their successful retribalisation of the Enlightenment-style Christianity preached by most Western Protestant missionaries. In effect, they have reinterpreted the Christianity of modernity in premodern terms, and have rejected the "cult of civilisation" in which it was packaged. And it is precisely among such groups that Orthodox Christianity is growing in Africa today.

Postmodernism is primarily a First-World phenomenon, though because of the ease of communication, it is influencing other parts of the world as well. Within the First World, many Christians who have been brought up in "Enlightenment" denominations are discovering Orthodox Christianity, and Orthodox apologists are seeking to help these "Enlightenment" Christians to understand Orthodoxy. The religious pluralism of our time has brought these Christians into closer contact with each other. Orthodox Christians from Eastern Europe and the Near East have migrated to America, those from Cyprus have gone as migrant workers to Western Europe, and stayed. Refugees from the Bolshevik Russia have settled in other parts of the world. In the past, the differences between them and Western Christians were explained ethnically. It was the difference between the Greek and German, the Cypriot and British, the Arab and American, the Russian and English, way of seeing things. The new Orthodox apologetic literature takes a different approach, comparing the paradigms or worldviews, rather than national characteristics.

One example of such literature is Bajis (1989) *Common ground: an introduction to Eastern Christianity for the American Christian*. The book begins with a section called "Western and Eastern outlooks compared", which starts at the levels of paradigms or worldviews or frames of reference. Bajis notes that:

- (1) Eastern Christianity is communal
- (2) Eastern Christianity is intuitive
- (3) Eastern Christianity is holistic
- (4) Eastern Christianity sees the Church as a living organism of which Christ himself is a member
- (5) Eastern Christianity sees the Christian faith as relational, personal and experiential
- (6) Eastern Christianity sees the grasp of truth as dependant [sic] upon one's moral and spiritual sensitivity (Bajis 1989:6-8).

In many ways, these are characteristics of premodern thinking as opposed to modern thinking. Bajis seems to be inviting his readers to suspend their modern worldview, and try to see things through premodern eyes. As I have tried to show in earlier chapters, Eastern and Western Christianity have been influenced by modernity in different ways, and

this accounts for most of the differences listed above (see, e.g. page 225 & 231). Daneel and others have observed similar differences between African Independent Churches and the Western missions in Africa. In parts of rural Greece, as described by Stewart (1991), Hart (1991) and others, the same could be said.

Modernity tends to be analytic rather than synthetic. It seeks to understand things by breaking them down rather than by building them up. It relegates "religion" to the "private" sphere. It is individualist rather than communal. Modernity is not holistic: its analytical approach seeks to reduce wholes to their components, to disassemble and dissect, and to see the whole as purely the sum of its parts. The holistic view of Orthodoxy (and many premodern societies) is quite alien to this approach.

In the modern world - that is, the world of modernity - Orthodoxy finds itself misunderstood. Modernity has faced ideological battles between individualism and collectivism, which to the Orthodox appear to be two sides of the same modernist coin. But to collectivists, such as the Bolsheviki, Orthodoxy, with the value it gives to the human person, seems to be yet another manifestation of bourgeois individualism. To individualists, Orthodox communalism seems to be another manifestation of totalitarian collectivism, and many Western observers of Russia have seen a continuity between the Orthodox vision of "Holy Russia" and the political messianism of the Bolshevik regime, while to the Orthodox the Bolshevik regime was the logical conclusion of the ideas of the Western Enlightenment, imported and imposed by Peter the Great. In this way Western professional "Russia-watchers" still give a picture of the Russian Orthodox Church in which many Orthodox Christians find it difficult to recognise themselves.

Orthodox communalism, expressed in such terms as *kinonia* and *sobornost*, is hard to express in English. "Fellowship" has become trite, "conciliarity" is too abstract, "community" is too vague. But at its root, it means something similar to the Zulu saying, "umuntu ungununtu ngabantu" - a person is a person because of people; or as the English poet John Donne put it, "No man is an island".

In the light of this, one might expect Orthodox mission to be more effective in premodern societies, and as I have tried to show in the preceding chapters, this does appear to be the case. In Alaska and East Africa, for example, Orthodoxy could become part of the culture of

people. Even where it changed and influenced the culture of the people, it did so in an organic and internal way, so that baptism replaced initiation ceremonies such as female circumcision, even where Orthodoxy had been accepted in a protest movement against a missionary ban on female circumcision. In the diaspora among people from Eastern Europe or the Near East who emigrated to North America, Australia, and other places, Orthodox mission has been less effective, however.

In itself, however, the greater effectiveness of Orthodox mission among premodern people, particularly in hunting, gathering and pastoral societies, is not necessarily unique. Western mission has also tended to be more successful among such peoples in Africa and South America, while spreading more slowly among people who follow the "great religions" such as Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam. But Orthodoxy does seem to have been more easily "contextualised" in premodern cultures, and to become part of the culture of such people.

In the diaspora, Orthodox people, many of them coming from villages in the Balkans and the Near East with a premodern worldview, have emigrated to cultures where modernity is part of the culture. The cultural milieu has tended to be assimilative and hostile to tradition. Orthodox immigrants have often sought to identify with the host culture, and Orthodoxy has tended to become a relic of the past, or a mark of ethnic identity or nostalgia for one's ethnic roots. In such societies, Orthodoxy found it difficult to "contextualise" the Christian faith - unlike Western Christianity, and Protestant Christianity in particular, which both helped to produce modernity, and was in turn a product of it.

Postmodernity has been bringing a change in this. It is less hostile to tradition, and has often led people to search for "traditional wisdom" outside modernity. The danger, as Tinker has pointed out above, is that the eclectic postmodern approach, while valuing tradition more than modernism does, can also destroy the traditions it seeks to adopt, by appropriating the superficial forms, but not the worldview they are based on. Thus it can sometimes come as a surprise to Orthodox Christians in the diaspora to find that attitudes in the surrounding society towards them are beginning to change. They may find that some people, at least, no longer regard them as irrelevant relics of the past, but as somehow "cool" and "countercultural".

The West, after centuries of using terms such as "navel gazing" as a term of abuse, symbolic of all that is backward and out-of-date about the Orthodox Church, as suddenly begin to show an interest in such things. An age that has begun to look to gurus - Hindu holy men from India - for advice, is more open to the message of monastic spiritual elders from places like Mount Athos, whose long hair and beards have now become a symbol of ancient spiritual wisdom.

In Russia, one of the characteristics of the religious revival of the late Soviet era, particularly among the intelligentsia, was that it was driven by a search for the roots of Russian culture. Marxist materialism was somehow unsatisfying, and people began a spiritual search in traditional Russian culture. Though this was in many cases a religious search, it was not necessarily a Christian one. Russian culture, however, was profoundly shaped by the Orthodox Christian faith, and thus led many of these searchers to Orthodox Christianity.¹¹⁹

One of the mission strategies being followed in the current religious revival in Russia, therefore, is the promotion and teaching of Russian Orthodox culture.¹²⁰ As time passes, however, I believe that such an approach will prove to be inadequate. In the Soviet era, pre-Soviet Russian culture was sanitised and Bowdlerised to fit the Marxist ideology. Those who discovered the Christian faith by exploring Russian culture did so as a deliberate choice, which was an act of rebellion or non-conformism according to the values of the dominant culture.

The collapse of the Soviet system, however, has opened the floodgates to a much wider range of cultural choices. There are many more choices, and young people who have grown up without knowing anything of the restriction of life under the Soviet system might be less inclined to seek answers in the Russian culture of the past. Those who are most involved in the religious revival, in the 25-40 age group, never had the opportunities to encounter the variety of culture that the younger generation is now able to experience, and might therefore not be able to interpret the newer imported cultures as easily in Orthodox terms.

119 Interview with Sergei Chapnin.

120 Interview with Andrei Borisovich Efimov, of the St Ikhon's Institute.

The generation of the under-25s, however, who have grown up without really knowing the communist system, might be more difficult to reach by such a method, or might, if they do adopt it, lapse into nationalism and xenophobia, covered with a very thin veneer of Orthodoxy. The collapse of communism has not yet led to its replacement by anything else. The glowing picture of the virtues of capitalism and the free-market system painted by Western propaganda has created a lot of unfulfilled expectations. What it has done, and what Western Christian missionaries to Russia have sometimes unconsciously reinforced, has been to implant Western values of individualism and greed, which find little outlet in Russia, except in a life of crime.

The tensions in Russian society are also to be found in the Russian Orthodox Church. There are groups within the Church that have adopted a xenophobic and nationalist attitude, and have rejected even Orthodox Christians from outside Russia. The leaders of the Church are under constant pressure from such groups to suppress foreign influences, to discipline clergy who are seen as "modernist" and so on.

As the Russian Orthodox Church is the largest Orthodox Church in the world, this is bound to affect Orthodox mission, not only in Russia, but elsewhere as well. It could easily cause a kind of paralysis, and a concentration on external and political considerations. Questions such as participation in the ecumenical movement, for example, could be decided on the grounds of political expediency, on whether it would promote or block the influence of this or that power bloc or pressure group. Such an attitude will not promote Orthodox mission.

If Orthodox mission is to be effective in future, then I believe tradition and traditionalism are very important. The Orthodox Church needs to avoid the error made by so many Western Christians in self-consciously seeking to make the church "relevant to modern man" by the wholesale adoption of modern culture, values and attitudes. It also needs to avoid the pseudotraditionalism of making certain selected traditions badges of identity, and therefore marks of self-righteousness. The self-righteous denunciations of others by many of the Old

Calendrists,¹²¹ for example, have little to do with the genuine Orthodox tradition that promotes the virtues of modesty, humility, patience and love. Using traditions as badges of identity to denounce others is quite incompatible with this.

What is most urgently needed for mission is the renewal of the genuine tradition of Orthodox monasticism that promotes these virtues. In many places, this is happening. Monasteries, like mission, have been growing since the 1960s. If this genuine spiritual life in Orthodoxy grows, then mission will be the automatic consequence. If Orthodox leaders who participate in the ecumenical movement are filled with these virtues, then they will not be corrupted by their participation in it, as the xenophobes and nationalists fear, nor, should they withdraw from the ecumenical movement, would it be from considerations of political expediency.

The revival of interest in tradition that has come with postmodernity provides a mission opportunity for Orthodox Christians not only in the First World, but also in the Second and Third Worlds as well. The religious eclecticism of the New Age is not confined to the First World. It is universal. One of the students at the Orthodox theological seminary in Nairobi was from a country town in Cameroun. He had been baptised a Roman Catholic, and at the age of 16 had become a Rosicrucian, and had tried Ekankar, Wicca and several other Western religious movements before becoming a Hindu and travelling to India to spend some years studying under a guru. On his return to Cameroun he had a vision in which his spirit guides told him to worship the Triune God, and he travelled to Yaounde, the capital, to look for a trinitarian church. The first one he found was the Orthodox Cathedral, so he became an Orthodox Christian.¹²²

121 The distinction between followers of the Old Calendar and Old Calendrists needs to be borne in mind. Most Orthodox Christians still use the Julian Calendar, including those in the Russian and Serbian Churches, Many of the Greek churches use the new calendar. This is not necessarily a cause of division. Old Calendrists, however, have made the distinction an ideological one, and denounce those who use the Gregorian calendar as heretics, modernists, schismatics and apostates.

122 Interview with Vincent Sotabinda, Nairobi, November 1995

But postmodernity, as a reaction against modernity, can also impose the values of modernity. Traditions can become diluted by eclecticism, and the salt can lose its savour. The Orthodox vision and vocation is not to be overwhelmed by the world, but it is a vision of a world renewed and restored by the life of Christ. The traditions need to be strengthened so that they are not diluted and overwhelmed by eclecticism. This means that monasticism needs to be restored, as is happening in parts of Greece, Russia, Serbia and other places. It also needs to be returned to Africa, where it started.

The obstacles to this are great. Where, in the Orthodox diaspora, Orthodox Christians have sought to accommodate to modernity, monasticism has not flourished. Some have tended to be embarrassed by it, and have at best regarded it as a quaint survival, or not quite in accordance with the image of a "modern" church. In the Second World, monasteries have to overcome the deliberate attempts to destroy them made by communist regimes. To extend the metaphor used by Sister Philotheia of the Monastery of St John the Forerunner in Karea, Athens, the wells are few, and so many are having to make do with bottled water. And sometimes the bottled water could come from contaminated wells.

As we look forward to the 21st century then, the Orthodox Church in its mission is faced by both opportunities and dangers. For the first time since the 6th century, more Orthodox Christians in more countries are free to engage in mission, unhindered by hostile and repressive governments. The Orthodox Church's unique experience of modernity, and its stronger base in premodern culture, gives it more opportunities than Western Christians to make its message heard, both among those who are becoming somewhat disillusioned with modernity, and among those who have been, rather reluctantly, dragged into it.

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- HTM Holy Transfiguration Monastery
- SAB Sentrale Argiefbewaarplek (South African Central Government Archives, Pretoria).
- SPCK Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge

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