THE RUSSIAN PRESENCE IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE 1843–1914

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Church and Politics in the Near East

BY

DEREK HOPWOOD

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FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest (Isaiah 62).

PREFACE

THIS book attempts to trace two themes in a part of the Arab world. One is the involvement of a Great Power in the area; the other the effect of that involvement on a people previously little exposed to external influences. Both themes are commonplaces of the region and of the period. The resulting relationship may be between a Power and a whole people—the 'imperial' relationship in which physical occupation and often force are involved—or between a Power and a section of a people—a relationship more delicate, depending neither on force nor on occupation but on a complex balancing of interests. Implicit in both is the apposition of strength and weakness and the certainty that in the final analysis the Power will place its own interests before those of its protégés.

Russia experienced both kinds of relationship. In Central Asia one people after another fell into her 'imperial' orbit. In the Arab world she did not, unlike Britain and France, physically occupy a country. Her intrigues and desires ranged wide but it was on Jerusalem, the centre of the Orthodox East, that her eyes finally rested. It was 'for Jerusalem's sake' that much of her effort was expended—an effort that brought her into a close association with the Orthodox Arabs of the Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch who were willy nilly the recipients of her attentions for more than sixty years. But the relationship was not simply with the Arabs. It was complicated by the presence in both Churches of a Greek hierarchy which had links with the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, by the interests and claims, both political and religious, of other Powers and by the Ottoman desire to be sole arbiters in their own bailiwick. The process thus worked out left its traces. These were not as deep as those left by Britain and France, yet Orthodox Arab society was set on a path which would have been notably different had it not been for Russian intervention.

Strictly, this study is confined to the activities of Imperial Russia but the movements set in train are in part followed through to the middle of the twentieth century and the establishing of a relationship with Soviet Russia is noted.

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It is pleasant to record one's debt to one's teacher. I do so with more than usual gratitude. Albert Hourani introduced me to the modern history of the Middle East, read every word of this study in its original form and kindly blunted his sharper criticisms. He has borne with me as a colleague ever since. The same fate has befallen Miss Elizabeth Monroe who has always been helpful and constructive in her criticism. To many at St Antony's College, Oxford, I am grateful for providing a stimulating intellectual atmosphere. Professor Theofanis Stavrou, a pioneer in the study of Russian interest in the Near East, has generously discussed his ideas with me. The research for this book could not have been completed without generous financial help from the William Waldorf Astor Foundation which enabled me to spend some months in the United States studying the Russian sources.

D. H.

Oxford, November 1968.

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RUSSIA AND THE NEAR EAST

> Sooner or later Constantinople must be ours (DOSTOEVSKI).
>
> The entire policy of Tsarist Russia was first of all an Asiatic policy (COUNT LAMZDORF).

POWERFUL states living in close proximity can only with difficulty avoid rivalry and enmity. In the nineteenth century Russia and the Ottoman Empire were neighbours with a common frontier in the Caucasus, a frontier which Russia had been pushing gradually southwards into Ottoman territory. With the growing power of the Russian state territorial rivalry could not have been avoided, but the Russo-Turkish relationship involved far more than disputes over territory. Strategically Turkey controlled Russia's only outlet to the Mediterranean at the Straits; politically she ruled a large number of Russia's fellow Slavs and Christians, and religiously she was a Muslim power seated at the centre of Byzantine Orthodoxy and dominating the Holy Places of Palestine. Russian statesmen who directed their country's Ottoman policy held views influenced to a greater or lesser degree by these three facts. For most, if religion had any relevance at all, it was pressed into service as the handmaiden of politics. For a few, a genuine concern for the Christians of the Ottoman Empire was the mainspring of their policy. Yet others—usually those who held no responsibility for the direction of policy—dreamed of the immediate deliverance of Constantinople out of Muslim hands as a step towards the eventual liberation of all Ottoman Christians.

In the early history of the Russian state the Byzantine heritage had played an important role. Vladimir, Grand Duke of Kiev, had been baptized a Christian by the Byzantines in the tenth century and under him the state became a considerable power in eastern Europe, subject to the ecclesiastical authority of Constantinople. Though the Tartar conquest isolated Russia from the Byzantine capital, the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch was in theory at least unchallenged by the Russian Church. But the rise of Muscovy and the decline of the Byzantine Empire changed this situation. In 1439 at the Council of Florence the patriarch in a last attempt to enlist the help of the West against the invading Turks had agreed to reunion with Rome. Moscow regarded this as treason and the Greek Metropolitan of the city was driven from the country. On the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the authority of the patriarch was effectively destroyed and the Russian Church became independent in practice. This state of affairs was not formally recognized until 1589 when Tsar Feodor created the Patriarchate of Moscow. As Russian Christianity had sprung from Constantinople it was natural that the ecclesiastics of the Russian Church, many of whom were Greek, should admire Byzantium and on the fall of Constantinople claim that their princes, as the most powerful rulers in the Orthodox world, were the protectors of the Orthodox faith and the political heirs of the Emperor. Moreover, the city of Moscow had inherited the functions of Constantinople and had become a third Rome. The monk Philotheos writing to Grand Duke Basil III declared that 'the first Rome collapsed owing to its heresies, the second Rome fell a victim to the Turks, but a new and third Rome has sprung up in the North'.[1] Ivan III to strengthen this claim married the niece of the Emperor Constantine who had fallen at the capture of Constantinople and the Russian prince was described in the liturgy as 'the ruler and autocrat of all Russia, the new Tsar Constantine in the new city of Constantine—Moscow.' Ivan the Terrible was crowned in 1547 no longer as Prince of Muscovy but as 'Tsar', the term used of the Byzantine Emperors. The Russian court inherited the splendours of the Byzantine court and the Russian Church the splendours of the Byzantine liturgy. The heritage of Byzantium was vital to the development of the Russian State. The Greeks continued to play an important part in the life of the Russian Church and although the Tsar was regarded as the spiritual head of the

[1] Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome*, p. 36.

Orthodox 'Empire', the Ecumenical Patriarch never formally renounced his superior position in the Greek Orthodox world[1] and he considered it the responsibility of the Greeks to propagate Christianity in the four Eastern patriarchates. The Russians pressed their claims and looked with suspicion on the Greeks who listed the Moscow patriarchate as fifth and not first in importance. Some Russians were content to accept this situation and to concede spiritual pre-eminence to Constantinople and the Greeks. Patriarch Nikon (1652–66) attempted in the seventeenth century to reintroduce Greek customs into the Russian Church and denied that the prestige of Constantinople had been inherited by Moscow. Although his reforms endured, Nikon himself was dismissed and the Greek influence he had fostered gradually declined. By the eighteenth century relations between Russia and the Orthodox East had deteriorated. Greek and Russian paths diverged and formal relations between the Tsar and the Eastern Patriarchs almost ceased. Peter the Great (1689–1725) restricted the gifts of money which the Tsars had formerly sent to the Eastern Churches and in the more secular, westward-looking atmosphere of Peter's Russia, visits by Greek hierarchs to the 'pious Orthodox Tsar' were no longer the custom. Another factor in the deterioration was the growth of hostility between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The Greek hierarchy had attained to a privileged position in Constantinople and were unwilling to displease the Sultan by maintaining too close a link with his adversary.

Peter was also responsible for that move which radically changed the internal position of the Russian Church—the abolition of the patriarchate. Essential to this study is an appreciation of the nature of the relationship between Church and State in Russia. Russia had inherited from Byzantium the tradition of imperial domination of the Church where it was the aim of the Emperor to keep in his grasp the government of the clergy. It was natural therefore that the rulers of Russia should regard the Church as an extension of government. Peter the Great carried this situation to an extreme by abolishing the patriarchate, which was opposed to his programme of modernization, and by placing the Church under the Holy Synod whose head, the Over Procurator, was a civil official appointed by the Tsar. Through the Synod, Peter's hand was laid firmly on the whole Church and this control was strengthened during the follow-

[1] Kapterev, *Kharakter snoshenii*, pp. 35–7.

ing century. The parish church became the official place for publication of laws and decrees, the clergy supported the State by sermons on State occasions and by informing on 'unreliable' parishioners.

In 1817 Alexander I created for a short period the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education under whose authority the Synod was placed, thus losing any vestige of independence. But in 1824 the Ministry was abolished and the Procurator received the status of minister with the Synod as his ministry. He was admitted to the Council of Ministers and became the sole intermediary between the Tsar and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He reported to the Tsar on the affairs of the Church and requested imperial consent for Church decrees. The Synod was usually composed of clergy attentive to the wishes of the Procurator and the clergy were themselves dominated by the lay members. The Church was, and remained, especially under a strong Procurator firmly under civil control and was used as a part of the State apparatus.

* * * *

If Russia's ecclesiastical relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarch was complicated by his position in the Ottoman Empire, her political relations with Turkey were no less influenced by the fact that thousands of Orthodox Christians were living under Muslim rule. Russia had soon opened diplomatic relations with Turkey and in 1497 Ivan III had sent M. A. Pleshcheev to Constantinople as the first Russian envoy. The Russian Government soon realized that the Ecumenical Patriarch, living in the capital, possessing a certain standing with the Porte and having ties with the ruling circles, could if necessary be of use to an envoy and at the end of the sixteenth century, under Boris Godunov, the envoy was ordered to hold regular consultations with the patriarch.

The Russian claim to be the heir of Byzantium carried little weight until the Tsars had the power to support it. In earlier centuries the rulers of Russia had been engaged in unifying their state and in expelling the Tartar invaders but in 1570 they proved strong enough to repel a Turkish invasion of Astrakhan. This was the first occasion on which the two armies had met and although Russia was not then strong enough to engage in a war of reprisal it was the forerunner of many such clashes. Seven times between 1676 and 1812 the two countries were openly at war. The Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 after a decisive Turkish defeat marked a new

turn in Russia's Eastern affairs. It was important because of Peter the Great's attempt to come officially between the Sultan and his Christian subjects. Russia insisted on adding religious questions to the peace conference agenda, especially that of the return of the Holy Sepulchre to the Greeks. She gained little by the treaty but it resulted in the agreement of 1700 whereby Russian subjects were to be allowed free access to Palestine and the Holy Places. Under Catherine the Great (1762–96) the famous scheme for the partition of the Ottoman Empire was devised in which Russia's territorial and religious claims were formally combined. Grand Duke Constantine, the second son of the heir apparent, was nurtured in the Greek tradition prior to being placed on the throne of a resuscitated Byzantine Empire. Russia fomented rebellion in the Crimea, the Morea, and Georgia, and thus provoked, Turkey declared war in 1769. Catherine now embarked on her 'Oriental Project'. The Russian fleet entered the Mediterranean and landed troops in Greece and Lebanon. In Europe the Ottoman armies were overwhelmingly defeated and Turkey was compelled to sign the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774. Considering that the Ottomans had been everywhere defeated and that Russia had obtained possession of the Crimea, Wallachia, Moldavia, Bessarabia, and Georgia, the terms of the treaty were moderate. The Crimea and Bessarabia were given independence and other lost territories were restored to Turkey. More important than territorial gains and losses were two articles in the treaty on which Russia based her future claim to protect and intercede for the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman Empire. Article seven recorded:

> La Sublime Porte promet une protection constante à la religion chrétienne et aux Eglises de cette religion. Elle permet au Ministre de la Cour impériale de Russie de faire en toute occasion des représentations à la Porte tant en faveur de l'Eglise construite à Constantinople . . . qu'en faveur de ceux qui la desservent, et elle promet de donner attention à ces observations comme venant d'une personne considérée, et appartenant à une Puissance voisine et sincèrement amie.[1]

In the following years Catherine continued with her plans to drive the Turks from Europe. The Ottoman Empire was powerless to prevent the subsequent annexation of the Crimea in 1783—the first loss of a purely Muslim area to a Christian Power. War was

[1] Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes*, i. p. 323.

once again declared in 1787, but a British threat to support Turkey against the Russian invasion led Catherine to sign the Treaty of Jassy by which territorial acquisitions west of the Dnester were renounced and thoughts of freeing Greece and Constantinople from the Turks were temporarily abandoned.

Catherine's successor, Tsar Paul, sought and secured a friendly understanding with Turkey hoping to extend Russian influence to the shores of the Mediterranean by diplomacy rather than by force of arms. But further wars followed and in 1828 Russia was fighting Turkey over the question of Greek independence. By the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 Greek autonomy was recognized and in the following year Greece was granted complete independence from the Ottoman Empire. The same treaty strengthened Russia's claim to protect Ottoman Christians and allowed Russian subjects commercial privileges in Turkish territories.

The Russian Foreign Minister at this period, Count Nesselrode[1] was responsible for the change in foreign policy by which, after the death of Alexander I in 1825 and after Adrianople, Russia abandoned the goal of conquering Constantinople in favour of keeping Turkey a weak, dependent power. Nesselrode wrote in 1829 to the Russian Ambassador in London:

> . . . the idea of expelling the Turks from Europe, of re-establishing in the cathedral of Santa Sophia worship to the true God is undoubtedly very attractive and if it is realized we shall live in history. But what will Russia gain from it? Glory, yes, but at the same time she will lose all those positive advantages which guarantee her a neighbour weakened by a series of fortunate wars and unavoidable clashes with the European Powers . . .
>
> It seems to me there can be no doubt on the question of choice and therefore let us keep at bay all alliances which have the aim of bringing about events which would be a real misfortune for Russia. If by the will of Providence the fall of the Ottoman Empire is irreversibly determined, then we would have to bow to this misfortune . . .[2]

The culmination of this policy was reached in 1833 when the Sultan turned to Russia for help against Muhammad 'Ali, his rebellious Pasha in Egypt. In return for aid Russia obtained the Treaty of

[1] Count Karl Robert Nesselrode (1780–1862) was appointed to the Tsar's headquarters in 1811 and from then onward directed foreign policy for the rest of his life. Foreign Minister 1822–56, Chancellor 1844–62. He is an important figure in Russia's Palestine policy until the Crimean War.

[2] Printed by Shebunin, *Rossiya na blizhnem Vostoke*, pp. 37–8.

Hünkâr Iskelesi which provided for a military alliance between the two Powers in which Turkey would undertake to close the Straits against the warships of any Power 'under any pretext whatsoever'. Although this appeared to give Russia a large share in determining Turkish foreign policy, the advantages of the treaty were perhaps potential rather than actual. The terms were in fact modified in 1841 by the London Convention at which the Powers insisted that Turkey forbade the passage of any foreign warships including those of Russia through the Straits in times of peace.

Although Nesselrode was officially directing his 'weak-neighbour' policy, his influence was modified by three factors. Firstly Nicholas I spoke with two voices and despite the fact that the change of policy had been associated with his accession, he could still reply to a memorandum of N. S. Mordvinov[1] suggesting that in 1833 it was time for Russia to seize the Holy Land: 'You have guessed my innermost desire but I know that its fulfilment is difficult and will meet important obstacles.'[2] Secondly many minor Russian officials held a quite different attitude from that of their superiors. Although Slavophile ideas were not applied to foreign policy until later, their influence was beginning to permeate Russian thinking. The Slavophiles believed that the mission of Holy Russia was to save their Slav brothers from the infidel Muslim and dreamed poetically of a 'great Greco-Russian Orthodox empire'.[3] Bishop Porfiri Uspenski expressed the extreme view. 'Russia from eternity has been ordained to illumine Asia and to unite all Slavs. There will be a union of all Slav races with Armenia, Syria, Arabia and Ethiopia and they will all praise God in Santa Sophia'.[4] The third factor was that it was impossible for the Russian Government to ignore completely Turkish misgovernment, the risings of Orthodox Christians and their appeals for help. However much Nesselrode frowned on revolutionary movements, Russia still encouraged and demanded concessions from the Porte and thereby appeared to some extent to be the protector of revolution.

This study is not primarily concerned with Russia's relations with the Ottoman Empire, but with her interest in an integral part

[1] Count Nikolai Semenovich Mordvinov 1754–1845.

[2] *Soobshcheniya Imperatorskovo Pravoslavnovo Palestinskovo Obshchestva*, 22. p. 179.

[3] The phrase is that of Tyutchev, not a whole-hearted Slavophile. See Florovsky, 'The historical premonitions of Tyutchev', *Slavonic Rev.* iii (1924). p. 344.

[4] Uspenski, *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 588.

of the Empire—Syria. Geographical greater Syria in Ottoman times was an area stretching from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, from Sinai to the hills of southern Turkey. As such it was not an administrative entity but was divided into three *vilayets* or provinces—Aleppo, Damascus, and Saida. (Palestine apart from being a biblical memory had no separate existence.) The population amounted to possibly one and a half million of whom the majority were Muslim Arabs. Added to these were minority groups of non-Arab Muslims, heterodox sects, and a substantial number of Christians—Maronites, Eastern Orthodox, Uniate, Armenian and others. The Christians lived throughout the area often concentrated in towns or, like the Maronites, on Mount Lebanon where they were in a majority, giving the region a predominantly Christian atmosphere.

In 1830 it was possible to look back over two or three centuries of Syrian history and maintain that a certain pattern of history had emerged, clearly not of progress, but of continuity of life under loose Ottoman control. Local factions and families grew in power or declined, opposed to or co-operating with the Turks, but it was generally a struggle within the context of a local society into which European politics did not enter. These centuries constituted a period of economic decline, of uncertain security as settled areas were continuously exposed to Bedouin incursions, and of harsh taxation. The Ottoman writ rarely ran outside the towns while within them the governors were often unsure of their own authority. A certain degree of prosperity resulted from the commerce of the towns but agriculture was at a very low ebb. Mount Lebanon followed a separate pattern where strong families established virtually independent rule and brought order to the area. The sufferers from Ottoman maladministration were Muslims and Christians alike, but the Christians, as a minority and as second-class citizens, had more to endure than their Muslim neighbours. A Christian lived on the borders of Muslim tolerance, sometimes physically persecuted but always subject to restrictions and humiliation.

This was 1830. In 1831 Muhammad 'Ali, the rebellious Egyptian vassal of the Ottoman Sultan, sent his son Ibrahim to occupy Syria and thereby threaten Constantinople. During a decade of occupation major reforms were introduced into the region. Despite strong opposition to Egyptian rule the population of Syria now enjoyed security of life and property, greater justice and economic prosperity.

Bedouin raiding was partially curbed and travel in the countryside was made safer. But because of heavy taxation and conscription, forced labour and cruelty the new regime was extremely unpopular with the Muslim population who were now to bear an additional and unprecedented burden. The Egyptian regime was peculiarly sympathetic to the Christian population. European consulates were opened for the first time in Damascus and Jerusalem, missionary activity was permitted and equal status was granted to non-Muslims. Life became easier and safer for the Christians who could now build and repair churches, were exempted from conscription and were able to increase in prosperity. The temptations offered by this change in status were great and the Christians sharpened Muslim animosity by flaunting their new privileges. Thus a feeling of resentment was kindled which was to have repercussions in later years.

Through a combination of European and Ottoman diplomacy and arms and an insurrection in Lebanon, Ibrahim was forced to withdraw from Syria in 1840. Once the strong arm imposing reform from above had been lifted the Christians reaped the consequences of their emancipation. Although under restored Ottoman rule Christians retained their privileges the Ottoman authorities were not always able or willing to prevent the attacks on Christian lives and property which culminated in the Damascus massacres of 1860. Despite general Muslim opposition to greater Christian equality the changes introduced under Ibrahim could not be reversed. European consuls were now always prepared to bring cases of abuse to the notice of the local authorities or even to make representations to the Porte. Ibrahim had opened Syria to the West, to its missionaries, consuls, and trade. A new period had begun and Russia together with the other European powers was anxious to take full advantage of it.

Although Syria had not played an important role in Russian politics the Palestinian Holy Places, associated with both the Old and New Testaments, had always been dear to the Russian believer's heart, and the Holy Land was in some way claimed as an extension of Russia.

Russia's name has been made known throughout every country by her statesmen and politicians. It is quite different in Palestine which is our native land and in which we do not recognize ourselves as foreigners. The participation of Russia in the affairs of Palestine and the Christian

East has not been the result of temporary and transient political factors but from the beginning has been an affair of the people, who instinctively and enthusiastically claimed the Holy Land as their own just as much as Holy Russia.[1]

The Russian peasant had been led by an ardent faith to undertake the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, often walking, and sometimes dying, on his way to the Holy City. For the Orthodox Russian it was one of the highest expressions of his faith. Dostoevski wrote movingly of it:

From the beginning of the Russian people and their state . . . pilgrims began to journey to the holy lands. Thus the backward, wholly illiterate Russian people, that is the simplest village peasants, who know nothing about history and geography, are—and for a long time in the past have been—fully aware of the fact that the Holy Land and the local Eastern Christians have been conquered by the impious Mohammedans, the Turks, and that Christians in the whole East have been, and are, enduring a hard and difficult life.[2]

The Holy Sepulchre was the mother shrine of the whole Church. Most of the early Russian writings on Palestine were descriptions of the pilgrimage. Even the perils of the journey before the establishment of the Russian State did not deter the pilgrim. The Slavs knew the route to the East in the sixth and seventh centuries. The first recorded journey is that of Varlaam in 1062. In the following century the abbot Daniel placed a lamp on the Holy Sepulchre 'in the name of all Russia.'[3] Russians other than pilgrims had been seen in Syria, however. The Arab geographer of the ninth century, Ibn Khurdadhbih, knew of Russian traders on the Mediterranean coast.[4] Other Arab sources indicate that Russians were fighting in the Byzantine ranks in Syria in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[5]

In the other direction, the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch had played an important role in the development of the Russian Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Patriarch of Jerusalem was of prime importance in the relationship between Moscow and the Orthodox East, exerting considerable influence

[1] M. P. Solovev, *Soobshcheniya*, 5. p. 286.
[2] *Diary of a writer* (Eng. trans.), p. 802.
[3] Khitrowo, *Itinéraires russes en Orient, Vie et pèlerinage de Daniel*, p. 76.
[4] Ibn Khurdadhbih, *Kitab al-mamalik wal-masalik* (ed. M. J. de Goeje), p. 154.
[5] Dantsig, p. 186.

on the religous and political life of Russia.[1] The patriarchs often visited the Tsar in Moscow[2] and took part in important ecclesiastical events such as the trial of Nikon which both the Patriarch of Alexandria and Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch, attended.[3] The later seventeenth century saw the intensification of the struggle over the Holy Places, and Dositheos, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1690–1707) tried to involve Peter the Great in a war with the Ottoman Empire over this question.[4] His seventeen year fight for possession of the shrines and his request for Russian protection, if achieving little of immediate value, at least demonstrated to Russia the political implications of religious issues in the East. With the general decline in Greco-Russian relations contacts between Russia and Syria became fewer, although pilgrims continued to visit Palestine and requests for monetary help continued to come from the Churches of Antioch and Jerusalem. These requests were seldom refused, as financial aid was at that time the only expression which Russia could make of the sympathy she felt toward the Syrian and Palestinian Orthodox Christians. The Metropolitan of Moscow, Filaret, noted in 1859: 'In the past century and this present century contacts [between Russia and Syria] have been few because there were no strong reasons for them. But the relationship has been one of goodwill—for example, we gave the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria convents in Moscow and helped them to take from Russia large gifts of money for their churches.'[5] But no interest was taken in the maintenance of Orthodoxy among the Arabs and no attempts were made to supervise the use made of Russian alms.

Syria entered into the field of conflict between Russia and the Ottoman Empire during the Russo-Turkish war of 1768–74 when Catherine's fleet moved into the Mediterranean prepared to aid any revolt against the Porte. In 1772 the fleet based on the island of Paros blockaded the Dardanelles and attacked the coasts of European and Asiatic Turkey. The same year a flotilla sailed to the Syrian coast to aid 'Ali Bey, the chief Mamluke of Egypt, who had risen against the Turks and who was beseiged in Saida (Sidon). The

[1] Kapterev studied in detail the history of this relationship. (*Snosheniya Ierusalimskikh patriarkhov s russkim pravitel'stvom s poloviny XVI do serediny XIX st.*)

[2] *Travels of Marcarius*, p. 28.

[3] Ibid., p. 120.

[4] Kapterev, *Snosheniya*, pp. 273–5, 281–2.

[5] Filaret, *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov*, p. 380.

Turkish fleet was driven from the harbour and 'Ali defeated the Turkish land forces. The flotilla then sailed along the coast to Beirut where five hundred Albanian soldiers were landed. Ships standing at anchor were burned and the town surrendered to the Russian commander, agreeing to pay to the Russians the tribute usually sent to the Porte. In July the fleet returned to Paros. Seven months later (March 1773) another flotilla sailed to Sur to aid 'Ali's successor Dahir 'Umar who had entered into an alliance with the Druze *amir* Yusuf Shihab. The Russians agreed to help the Druzes who were engaged in a struggle against Ahmad Jazzar, the Turkish supported governor of Beirut. Russian ships moved to the Beirut roads and negotiations were opened with the Druzes whereby the latter recognized Russian protection and agreed to fight the Turks for as long as the Russo-Turkish war lasted. The fleet bombarded Beirut and breached the walls but the Druzes failed to attack. The Russians withdrew in August on Yusuf's promise to harry the Turks from the mountains, but Beirut was growing short of food and there was talk of surrender. Russian troops were landed in October and eventually the city surrendered to the Druzes. The Russians remained in occupation until January 1774. 'Pendant ce temps, le pavillon moscovite flotta sur Baruth, le portrait de l'Impératrice fut élevé sur la principale porte, devant laquelle on obligea les passants à faire la révérence, les cavaliers à descendre de cheval.'[1] It was reported that Yusuf Shihab in a fit of gratitude requested Russian citizenship, but that the Russian Commander-in-Chief refused his request.[2] In January the Russian flotilla rejoined the main fleet. At the peace of Küçük Kaynarca Russia made no demands to keep Lebanon under her protection. The occupation of Beirut had been a policy of expediency in supporting a local Arab revolt which contributed towards the defeat of Turkey. Catherine's main objective was still Constantinople and the Straits, and interest in the Arab areas of the Near East lay dormant until the following century.

After the new century had begun and the threat of Napoleon had been removed Russia found time to consider other less pressing affairs. In 1814 the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Polikarpos,[3] complained to Tsar Alexander I that anti-Orthodox propaganda was causing

[1] Report from the French Consul in Tripoli. (Charles-Roux, *Les échelles de Syrie et de Palestine au XVIIIe siècle*, p. 106.)

[2] Bazili, *Siriya i Palestina*, ii. p. 343.

[3] Polikarpos, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1808–27).

him concern. At that time this could only have been French-inspired Roman Catholic propaganda, and the Tsar instructed the Constantinople Envoy, Stroganov, to make representations to the Porte.[1] The dispute mainly concerned the Holy Places and French encroachments on fanatically held Greek rights. Fanaticism was increased by the faith of both sides in the support of their respective protectors. The Sultan issued a firman in 1817 confirming the *status quo ante* but Stroganov reported in the following year that Catholic activities had not ceased. Russia also had early warning of the difficulties which her pilgrims were encountering in Jerusalem. They had no official protection while in Palestine and were at the mercy of both Turks and Greeks. Archimandrite Arsenios, a Russian subject and member of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre who had been sent to Moscow as superior of the Jerusalem convent, drew the attention of the Tsar to the plight of the pilgrims and suggested in 1819 that a monastery should be set aside for them in Jerusalem. This advice was not acted upon for over twenty years.

Syria came once more to the forefront of Russian diplomacy during the international crisis resulting from Muhammad 'Ali's invasion of Syria. Although this was largely caused by the delicate balance of European power—Russia suspected that Muhammad 'Ali was prey to French influence, Palmerston believed that Russia was seeking an alliance with the rebel—Nesselrode was concerned that on Muhammad 'Ali's defeat by Britain and Turkey and on his evacuation of Syria a regime acceptable to Russia should be established. Russia did not wish to see the Holy Places under the joint protection of the Christian Powers of Europe, as was suggested by Prussia,[2] and rejected any plan to free Palestine completely from the Ottoman Empire. Nesselrode hoped to continue to exercise indirect influence by exerting pressure on a weak Constantinople. 'We want to avoid general European interference in the Christian East and the collective protection of Christians. We believe that the protestations of brotherly love from the other European Powers have ulterior motives and therefore we cannot co-operate with them'.[3] Titov, the Envoy in Constantinople, was advised to regard with caution the actions of his fellow European diplomats. In drawing up its own plan the Ministry of Foreign Affairs relied on a report written by A. N. Muravev,[4] a member of the Chancellery

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 21.
[2] Ibid., p. 184.
[3] Ibid., p. 188.
[4] Count Andrei Nicolaevich Muravev, 1806–74.

of the Holy Synod who had visited Palestine in 1838. His recommendations were that Jerusalem should be included in the sanjak of Acre and that the Pasha, under the supervision of the European Powers, should be made responsible for the safety of pilgrims; that the Tsar should exercise especial protection over the Orthodox Holy Places (but not over the Orthodox population), and that a Russian mission should be established in Jerusalem.[1] The mission would go some way towards countering the bad impression made by the irresponsible behaviour of Russian pilgrims. It would be a centre of diplomatic and religious activity, responsible to the legation in Constantinople. Financial support would come from collections made in Russia for the Holy Sepulchre. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted favourably on the whole to Muravev's report. It did not approve the transference of Jerusalem to the sanjak of Acre but suggested that the city should be made independent and directly responsible to the Ottoman Government in Constantinople.[2] Nothing immediate was done concerning the establishment of a mission. The Ministry laid down its principle aims: to obtain as independent pasha of Jerusalem a reliable man to protect the pilgrims; to put an end to the squabbles over the Holy Places; to prevent the *mufti* and *qadi* of Jerusalem from extorting rewards from Greek monks who appealed to them in cases of persecution; and, if such persecutions were once stopped by the Ottoman authorities, to persuade the Patriarch of Jerusalem to live in his see.[3] Russian diplomacy gained a notable triumph when Palestine and Jerusalem were formed into a special sanjak under a *mir-miran* responsible to the Governor-of Saida.[4] In June 1841 the Sultan issued a firman to the new governor in accordance with Russian desires. He was to protect the Christians as a whole including the pilgrims. The *qadis* were to cease their extortions and the persecution of monks was forbidden. Titov advised, however, that the patriarch should remain in Constantinople where he could exercise a greater influence. His transfer would excite the suspicion of the other Powers.[5]

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 185. The texts of the official documents are taken from Popoff, *La question des Lieux Saints.*

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 190.

[4] Bazili, ii. p. 3. Ubicini, *Lettres*, i. p. 48.

[5] This was only a few months before the arrival of the first Anglican bishop in Jerusalem in January 1842.

Immediately prior to these moves the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had reached the conclusion that stronger consular representation was essential in Syria. In December 1838 K. M. Bazili was appointed Consul in Jaffa. He was born in Constantinople into a Greek family which had connections with the Greek and Albanian national movements. His grandfather had taken part in the Albanian uprising against the Turks in 1772 and his father was sentenced to death in 1821 for supporting the Greek revolution. With the help of Stroganov, the Russian Envoy in Constantinople, Bazili and his family escaped to Odessa. He always felt an affinity with the Greeks because of his father's part in the Greek national movement yet he grew up and was educated in Russia. He attended school with Gogol with whom he maintained a lifelong friendship. In 1830 he was appointed dragoman to the admiral commanding the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean and in 1833 was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

By 1838 the Russian consular service in Syria had been in existence for some twenty years but was weak and ineffective. The first post had been established in 1820 in Jaffa, the port through which Russian pilgrims entered Palestine. In the eighteen thirties consular agents had been appointed in Aleppo, Latakia, Beirut, and Saida. All posts were under the jurisdiction of the Consul in Alexandria. In August 1839 it was decided to transfer the Jaffa consulate to Beirut where it became the Russian Consulate of Syria and Palestine. Beirut was increasing in importance as a centre of trade and was the home of other European consuls. Finally in 1843 Bazili was made consul-general and given charge of all consular agents in Syria including Jerusalem. His instructions from St Petersburg exhorted him to 'establish the friendliest relations with the patriarch and church authorities living in Syria and Palestine,' 'to pay attention to the interests of religion and the Eastern Church which never cease to engage the attention of the Imperial Court' and to 'establish satisfactory relations with the heads of the other Christian sects.'[1] He was also instructed to help Russian pilgrims. This he did largely by obtaining for their use the monasteries of St Catherine and St Theodore in Jerusalem. The Greeks leased these monasteries to Russia but rejected any notion of Russian control over them. He made periodic visits to Jerusalem especially during festivals, accompanied by as much pomp as could be mustered. The British consul

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 190., Smilyanskaya, p. 63.

reported apprehensively: 'The Russian Consul from Beirut has been up at the Easter festivities. His presence gave a character to the Greek and Armenian ceremonies—he appeared in his uniform and was attended by the Russian pilgrims, many of them old soldiers in their regimentals . . . The pilgrims from Russia have been heard to speak openly of the period when this country will be under the Russian government.'[1] Young also referred inaccurately to the 're-animation' of Russian influence over the Orthodox Church and to the 'considerable presents'[2] sent to decorate the Holy Sepulchre, although as late as 1840 the Russian government had no settled policy towards Palestine and was destined never to exercise influence over the Greeks of Jerusalem. The British agents, however, claimed that they could see the Russian hand at work. Young ascribed the Ottoman refusal to grant permission for the building of an Anglican church in Jerusalem to Russian intrigue and the Consul in Beirut, Colonel Rose, had decided to support the building of this church as a means of scoring over Russian diplomacy.[3] In 1844 Young was assessing to Stratford Canning the long term aims of Russian policy. 'Jerusalem is now become a central point of interest to France and Russia . . . It is no doubt the object of Russia to subjugate the primitive churches of these countries'.[4] Nesselrode's expressed aim of not arousing the suspicion of other Powers had quite clearly failed in Palestine. Young further noted that Bazili was acting openly in Jerusalem 'as the protector of the Greek convents'[5] and Rose reported that the Russian consul was angered by the attempts of his French colleague to gain influence there.[6] Bazili was also working actively against the missionaries in Syria. He complained to St Petersburg of the help given by the British Consul in Damascus to missionaries working to convert the Orthodox to Protestantism. Nesselrode passed these complaints to Lord Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary, who warned the Consuls in Damascus[7] and Beirut against arousing Russian hostility. 'It is unnecessary to observe to you that the religious hostility or active interference of Russia in the East is not to be desired'.[8]

[1] Young to Palmerston, 28 April 1840. (FO 78/413.)
[2] Young to Palmerston, 14 March 1839. (FO 78/368.)
[3] Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine 1800–1901*, p. 72.
[4] Young to Stratford Canning, 8 January 1844. (FO 78/581.)
[5] Ibid.
[6] Rose to Aberdeen, 10 June 1844. (FO 78/577.)
[7] Aberdeen to Consul Wood in Damascus, 20 December 1844. (FO 78/579.)
[8] Aberdeen to Rose, 19 September 1844. (FO 78/575.)

But the Russians themselves were not so sure of any positive results accruing from the activities of their agents and even the Greek Patriarch of Antioch said of Bazili: 'If it were possible to set up a ladder to heaven, I would immediately climb up to complain of Bazili's lack of solicitude for downtrodden Orthodoxy'.[1] Nonetheless, Bazili and his colleagues were the first tangible evidence of Russia's interest in Syria and by their reports drew the attention of the Government to growing missionary activity and to the need for a constructive policy.

[1] Bezobrazov, *Materialy dlya biografii Porfiriya Uspenkovo*, i. p. 434.

2

THE ORTHODOX WORLD OF SYRIA AND PALESTINE

THE Orthodox Church of Syria and Palestine in 1840, that is immediately prior to the foundation of the first Russian mission in Jerusalem, could boast an unbroken history reaching back to the very beginnings of Christianity and despite the many adversities brought about by foreign invasion and rule it had maintained its tradition of life and worship in most of the towns and in many of the villages of the region. The way of life which had developed under Greek, Arab, Mongol, and Seljuk rule through its prolonged adaptation to conditions under non-Christian governments was given a permanent definition with the coming of the Ottoman Empire to Syria. Syria fell to the Ottoman armies in 1516 and at once both the Ecumenical Patriarch and the civil authorities in Constantinople assumed greater control over the Church in Antioch and Jerusalem. All the Orthodox inhabitants of the region became members of the Orthodox (or *Rum*) *millet* of the Ottoman Empire. On the fall of Constantinople in 1453 Mehmet the Conqueror had conferred on the Ecumenical Patriarch the civil as well as religious headship of the Orthodox *millet* or 'nation'.[1] Subsequently other autonomous Christian[2] *millets* were recognized by the Ottoman Government. The head of the Orthodox *millet* was chosen by the *millet* itself and approved by the Sultan. He held an official position in the State and in the provinces the local patriarchs were ex-officio members of the administrative councils. The government of the *millet* was conducted by the Patriarch who possessed autonomy in spiritual affairs and in certain administrative and judicial matters. The Christians and Jews did not form part of the community of the Ottoman State and had no share in either its military or religious organization. The *millets* emphasized their 'separateness'. As the system crystallized religious divisions were emphasized and the tendency increased for an Orthodox Syrian to

[1] This included all Orthodox Christians—Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Arab.
[2] The Jews also constituted a *millet*.

regard himself as under religious, rather than imperial or national, allegiance. This further led him, living as he did on the margin of Muslim society and under Muslim domination, to look in upon his own community and to regard both his Christian and Muslim neighbours with suspicion, even aversion. Membership of the community defined his status and set the bounds to his public and private activities, often determining what occupation he should follow. In this way a cohesive community came into being. To leave it could entail ostracism and loss of livelihood and its members were forced to be dependent on and loyal to one another. The *millet* system was one of the chief reasons why the Orthodox Church was able to survive as an entity throughout the centuries of Turkish Muslim domination.

In the ancient Orthodox Church there were four patriarchates—Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. In theory all were autonomous and equal in rank, but in practice Constantinople by virtue of its position at the centre of the Empire outshone the others in prestige and authority. Two of the patriarchates, Antioch and Jerusalem, covered the area of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. Jerusalem was the smaller of the two numerically and territorially. Its ancient jurisdiction covering Arabia, Mesopotamia, the Jordan, Palestine and parts of the Sinai peninsula had shrunk to the area of Palestine with the addition of one or two towns on the east bank of the Jordan. The original number of over one hundred metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops had by the nineteenth century decreased to fewer than twenty. As most sees were titular only the total varied considerably, new creations depending on the will of the patriarch who was himself Bishop of Jerusalem although resident in Constantinople. It is likely that throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the total did not exceed thirteen, including Jerusalem, Nazareth, Lydda, Gaza, and Bethlehem. At the beginning of the twentieth century several further bishoprics were created. [1]

Although the bishoprics retained their ancient boundaries the numbers of the faithful within each see were small indeed. In 1840 there were probably only 20,000 Orthodox members of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem[2] scattered throughout some seventy villages and

[1] Lebedev, *Istoriya greko-vostochnoi tserkvi pod vlast'yu turok*, p. 758.

[2] By 1904 this figure had risen to 49,596. See Bertram and Luke, *Report of the Commission* . . . p. 9.

towns in Palestine and in one or two areas beyond the Jordan. The largest concentration of population was in Jerusalem and fifteen surrounding villages belonging to the see. In the city itself the Orthodox, Greeks and Arabs, represented about one twelfth of the total. Nowhere in Palestine, with the possible exception of one or two villages, were the Orthodox in a majority. In Jerusalem they had as part guardians of the Holy Places an importance far outweighing their numbers and an influence which increased in the early years of the nineteenth century. Other larger sees were Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Acre, while several of the smaller sees had populations of two to four hundred with only one or two churches for the whole diocese. Towns which had significant Orthodox minorities were Jaffa, Bethlehem, Bait Jala, Ramalla, as-Salt, and Nazareth. Small groups of Orthodox inhabitants were to be found in villages lying between Gaza and Kafr Yasif.

The fate of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem since its foundation in 451 has always been linked with its political history. Probably sometime during the previous century there had arisen in Jerusalem the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre—a group of monks to conduct services in the Holy Sepulchre and to look after the needs of pilgrims. Although there is historical evidence of the existence of the Brotherhood from the twelfth century, little is known of its internal organization, the earliest constitution dating from the seventeenth century.[1] The Bishop of Jerusalem was a member and it is likely that from their number the first patriarch was elected. From that time the Patriarchate and the Brotherhood were virtually synonymous, the Brotherhood becoming a monastic organization of which the patriarch was abbot. Membership was probably open to all, no distinction being made between the Greek, Aramean and possibly Arab inhabitants of the Holy Land. The patriarch was likewise elected regardless of race until the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem in 636 after which patriarchs of the nationality of the conquerors were elected. During the period of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem the Orthodox Church was persecuted and the patriarch was compelled to live in Constantinople. The Church also suffered under Seljuk rule. It was not until the Mamluke period that greater tolerance was enjoyed. The patriarch was then able to return to Jerusalem and succeeding patriarchs were chosen from among the Orthodox Arabs. But this was not able to prevent the gradual decline

[1] Sokolov, *Svyatogrobskoe Bratstvo* (*Soobshcheniya*, 17. p. 4).

of the patriarchate, a victim of the wars and disturbances which troubled Palestine.[1]

Ironically it was a further Muslim conquest which saved the Orthodox Church from complete extinction. In 1517 the Ottoman Sultan, Selim the first, conquered Jerusalem and within the *millet* system gave true responsibility for the Church of Jerusalem to the Patriarch of Constantinople. It is, therefore, no coincidence that the successor to the Arab patriarch of that time, 'Ata' Allah,[2] was a Greek, Germanos, from the Morea, who instituted the custom of nominating a Greek successor and of living not in Jerusalem but in Constantinople as a member of the Ecumenical Patriarch's court. The Arab contention is that Germanos was elected in the belief that he was an Arab, as he had concealed his Greek origin under a cloak of fluent Arabic.[3] It was assumed then that Greek supremacy had been ensured by a regulation attributed to Germanos which excluded Arabs from entering the Brotherhood. The authenticity of this regulation is doubtful, but it is certain that the Arab hierarchy was gradually replaced by Greeks and that the nineteenth century exclusively Greek character of the Brotherhood and hierarchy has been historically justified by Greek apologists.[4] Nevertheless, the Arab inhabitants of Palestine believed that their ancient rights—receiving alms, living in houses belonging to the patriarchate, enjoying educational facilities—had been guaranteed in writing by the Greeks.[5]

Although Greek and Arab controversialists view the dispute in racial terms, the concept of race had little meaning in the Ottoman Empire until the late eighteenth century. Religious solidarity was more important than racial pride, but in the eighteenth century Greek national consciousness began to develop within the Orthodox *millet* until it exploded into the Greek War of Independence in 1822–3. Once a large number of Greeks were outside the Ottoman Empire the Orthodox Arabs began to lose the feeling of corporate identity with their Greek hierarchy, especially with those who came

[1] Greek historians attribute the decline to the ineptitude of the Arab patriarchs. (Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie*, p. 51.)

[2] In Greek, Dorotheos.

[3] Khuriyan, p. 109.

[4] Bertram and Luke, op. cit., pp. 284–91. (Memorandum communicated by Archimandrite Kallistos on the character and composition of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.) Moschopoulos, *La question de Palestine*, p. 329 ff.

[5] *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 680.

to them as Hellenes and not as members of the *Rum-millet*, and it was inevitable that in the face of Arab opposition the Greeks should close their ranks. This developed to such an extent that a Greek monk was able to write later: 'This Brotherhood, then, constitutes the only component element which goes to make up the Church of Jerusalem'.[1] Yet although the patriarch claimed that his sole responsibility in co-operation with the Brotherhood was the guardianship of the Holy Places, he remained in Turkish eyes the legal head of the Orthodox community in Palestine.

The Patriarchate of Antioch was, like that of Jerusalem, only a shadow of its former magnificance. Although it was extensive in area, stretching some five hundred miles from Erzerum[2] in Asia Minor to the southern limits of Lebanon, its population was small and scattered throughout the most varied terrain. In some sees it was said that the bishop had as many miles to travel as he had parishioners to visit. The city of Antioch had declined from being the third largest city of the Roman Empire to an insignificant and remote town with no church and a hostile Muslim population. The patriarch had under the Turkish regime moved his seat from Antioch to Damascus, the centre of effective power in Syria. Of some possible two hundred sees in existence at the height of the patriarchate's power, the patriarch now ruled over only twelve: Antioch which included Damascus and was the patriarch's own see,[3] Sur, Beirut, Zahle, Homs, Hama, 'Akkar, Tripoli, Latakia, Adana, Erzerum, and Diyarbakir. The see of Acre had been ceded to Jerusalem and that of Aleppo[4] to Constantinople.

The see of Antioch lay between Latakia and Adana covering the mountainous area peopled by the Nusairis[5] and regions inhabited by Kurdish and Turkish nomads. A number of Armenians lived in the neighbourhood of Aintab and Kilis. The Orthodox inhabitants were some of the poorest in the patriarchate. The jurisdiction of Damascus reached from Homs to the Jordan and included the Hauran, but half the Orthodox population lived in Damascus. The see of Sur, which included Saida, lay on the Lebanese coast. It suffered great poverty and was an area of Protestant missionary

[1] Bertram and Luke, op. cit., p. 288.
[2] Under Russian occupation from July to September 1829.
[3] An archimandrite lived as his representative in Antioch.
[4] This see was returned to Antioch in 1888.
[5] A quasi-Muslim sect holding Shi'ite, pre-Islamic, and Christian beliefs.

activity. Both Beirut and Mount Lebanon[1] were included in the diocese of Beirut where the Maronites predominated. This region with its Christian majority was the centre of Maronite life and culture, but had never had like importance for the Orthodox people who did not form a compact group but were dispersed through the region as minorities. In the see of Zahle, stretching from Damascus to North Lebanon and including Baalbek, the Orthodox were outnumbered by Uniates, Maronites, and Nusairis. Saidnaya, formerly an independent bishopric, was now part of Zahle. The Orthodox inhabitants of the sees of Homs and Hama, which lay along the Orontes valley, were almost the only Christians in this area. The northern region of Lebanon and the southern slopes of the Jebel Ansariya formed the diocese of 'Akkar where a large Orthodox population lived among a Nusairi majority. Tripoli and Latakia were the centres of two other sees. The Orthodox lived in the towns of the area and on the slopes of Mount Lebanon and in the valleys of the Jebel Ansariya among Muslims, Maronites, and Nusairis. The three remaining sees of Adana, Erzerum, and Diyarbakir were mainly in Asia Minor, although the last, whose Orthodox inhabitants had largely become Uniates, covered a large, undetermined area including Kurdistan and land extending to the Tigris. No exact figures exist for the Orthodox population of Syria in 1850 but it is likely that they numbered some sixty to seventy thousand forming about one twelfth of the total population.

The Bishop of Antioch, as head of the Church in the third largest city of the Roman Empire, gradually acquired pre-eminence over other bishops and became a *de facto* patriarch. In 638 Antioch fell to the Arabs and the succession of patriarchs became irregular until in 969 the city was restored to Byzantium. During the Crusades the patriarch joined his colleagues in Constantinople and only returned to Antioch under the Seljuks. The patriarchs were chiefly Arabs ruling over an Arab Church in which there was little Greek interest or influence. This continued under the Ottoman regime until 1728, during which time the Church had suffered from large scale internal dissensions caused by numerous conversions to the Uniate Church. The allegiance of certain patriarchs was in doubt and on the death of the Arab Patriarch Athanasios the Synod of

[1] An independent see of Jubail was created in the twentieth century for the Mountain.

Antioch asked the Ecumenical Patriarch to appoint Sylvester, a Greek from Constantinople, in the hope that he might heal the divisions. In fact the Church did split and a second line of patriarchs headed a Uniate Church. The custom continued in the Orthodox Church, however, of Greek patriarchs receiving their appointments from the Patriarch of Constantinople. In Arab eyes this line of patriarchs was the direct cause of the increasing number of converts to Uniatism, which further led to Ottoman recognition of the Greek Catholics as members of an independent church. The patriarchs themselves although nominally heads of the community could exert little influence, as any attempt to discipline or reprove could be met by the threat to apostatize to Uniatism.

The bishops suffered from the general decline of the Orthodox Church in Palestine and Syria. The majority were Greek but those in Jerusalem fulfilled almost no episcopal duties, rather leading monastic lives in the Monastery of the Holy Sepulchre as monks with episcopal titles. They never entered their sees, being ignorant even of the limits of their theoretical jurisdiction. No bishop of the Church of Jerusalem, excepting perhaps the Metropolitan of Nazareth, derived any income from his see. The bishoprics were, moreover, so limited in area that in the view of a Russian historian they would in Russia hardly have ranked as village parishes.[1] In Jerusalem the bishops played virtually no part in the life of the local Orthodox church and had lost the respect of priests and people. A proportion of the bishops in Antioch were Arabs, but, as a Russian observer noted, they were scattered throughout the patriarchate and were distinguished neither by learning nor dignity. They resided in their dioceses and lived on the alms of parishioners and on the revenue from the monastery allotted to each bishop. Very few had received an adequate theological training. The bishops as a whole had inherited titles and a hierarchical system which had little relevance to the Church in the nineteenth century.

The monastic life of the Church was at a low ebb and had, unlike Catholicism, no monastic orders to support it. The nearest approach to an order was the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre which lived in the convent of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The other monasteries of Jerusalem—some twenty in number—were usually inhabited by a solitary monk and were often intended to serve as hospices for pilgrims (many were built solely for this purpose). Outside

[1] Lebedev, op. cit., p. 758.

Jerusalem were the three famous monasteries of Mar Ilyas, Mar Saba, and the Cross. The Monastery of the Cross was a large building later to be used for housing an ecclesiastical seminary. Mar Ilyas on the Bethlehem road was one of the finest possessions of the patriarchate. The celebrated monastery of Mar Saba was situated to the south of Jerusalem in the Hebron valley. This monastery housed a small company of monks which included an occasional Russian. Christian Arab peasants had originally worked the land surrounding the monastery but it had later passed into Muslim hands. The Arabs of the neighbourhood had received gifts of bread from the monks until the custom was abolished by Ibrahim Pasha. In return the monastery was pillaged in the mid 1830's and was only restored in 1840 with Russian funds. Other Orthodox monasteries were to be found in Jericho, Jordan, Jaffa, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, all offering accommodation and usually at famous places of pilgrimage. The seventeen or so monasteries in the Patriarchate of Antioch were in general smaller and poorer, but as pilgrims rarely visited the area they had been built specifically as monasteries and not as hospices. Many were extremely ill-kept. The largest and richest was the Monastery of St George (Mar Jurjus) situated outside Tripoli and belonging to the see of 'Akkar. Its main income was derived, it was said, from gifts from the Nusairis, from the production of silk and the cultivation of its arable land in five neighbouring villages whose peasants worked the land according to fixed rules of partnership by which they received a quarter of the produce. The Monastery of Balamand had fallen into decay in the eighteen thirties when a Syrian Arab monk, Athanasios, restored its fortunes by opening a school, gathering together some thirty monks and cultivating its fields and olive plantations. The Patriarch Methodios later closed the school and dismissed Athanasios, but twenty of the monks remained to supervise the husbandry.

The Monastery of Dair as-Saiyida was situated in the village of Saidnaya in the hills outside Damascus. Forty Orthodox nuns maintained the convent which derived its income from cultivation and from freewill offerings. A strict religious life was followed but an Anglican visitor censured the nuns for their exploitation of the credulity of Orthodox Arabs who came to see the miraculous picture of the Virgin preserved in the chapel.[1]

[1] Porter, *Five years in Damascus*, i. p. 341f.

The parish clergy constituted the lowest ranks of the Orthodox hierarchy and were almost without exception drawn from Arabic-speaking Syrians. Their parishes were villages or districts of the larger towns and their flocks usually small. Priests were not officially appointed but were chosen by the villagers from among themselves. In the villages they were ordinary peasants and in the towns petty tradesmen or artisans. The only educational qualification necessary was an ability to read and indeed some priests began to learn to read only two months before their ordination.[1] Most had little understanding of the liturgy and rites of the Church and were forbidden to preach, preaching being almost unknown in the village churches. They read the service and conducted baptisms, marriages, and funerals but were not expected to act as spiritual advisors or confessors. Priests received small salaries from the patriarchate and these they had to implement with fees received for officiations and visits to the sick. They also continued to follow their previous occupation, often working in the fields alongside their parishioners. Those who could write were able to supplement their income by copying out psalms to be worn as amulets. Priests had also to be married so that they would have a home and family to support them in case of need.

In Palestine where the priests were recruited from the humblest classes there was little to distinguish their life from that of the peasants and yet they were treated with reverence. In Syria the position was somewhat better, especially in the larger towns where there existed a certain number of educated men ready to enter the priesthood. In the remoter areas the priest's life was as hard as that of his colleague in Palestine. Nor in 1840 was their position likely to improve as there were no theological schools for the training of future priests and as married men they would never be able to rise in the hierarchy. Despite these difficulties many of them were conscientious, sober,[2] hardworking and, since they were Arabs, close to the people.

The poverty of the people was matched by the poverty of their churches. The village churches of Syria and Palestine were in general in a wretched condition. They had been plundered, ruined by earthquakes, had fallen into disrepair, or were uncompleted or

[1] Titov, *Naumov*, p. 243.

[2] A point much stressed by a Russian observer aware of the notorious prevalence of drunkenness among Russian priests. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 57.)

unfurnished owing to the indigence of the villagers. The completed churches, even those of ancient foundation, were often windowless, unlit and even dirty. Most had no ikonastasis and few had altars. In some the priests kept their cattle and corn. Those in the larger towns were generally in good repair and well furnished. The Greeks ascribed the poor state of most of the churches to the fact that all available funds were needed to bribe the Arabs to remain Orthodox, while the Arabs complained that money sent from Russia for the repair of churches found its way into Greek pockets. There were altogether some three hundred churches in Antioch and eighty in Jerusalem. The ninety thousand Orthodox people of Syria were the heirs of a once flourishing Church who had preserved their faith through twelve centuries of Muslim or Catholic domination. They were all Arabic-speaking Christians who considered themselves true Arabs and vigorously denied that they were *al-yunan al-muta-'arrabun*—Arabized Greeks who had forgotten their native language. There were disputes over the origins of the Orthodox or Melkite Christians of Syria and Palestine—disputes which had sharp point during the later Greco-Arab struggles in Antioch and Jerusalem. To the Greeks the Orthodox Arabs were arabophone Greeks, descendents of the early Greek colonizers of the Syrian littoral. 'There are in Syria a large number of Orthodox Christians, descendents of the Greeks, who still, despite their life among the Arabs, retain their religious traditions . . . but who have lost their original language . . . Their number has been decreasing and they have begun to wander into the Western Churches . . . nevertheless there remains in Syria a large number of Greeks who speak the Arabic language.'[1] The Arabs retorted that they were descendents of the early pre-Islamic invaders of Syria who founded the Christian kingdoms of Hira and Ghassan,[2] stretching from Mesopotamia to Damascus. (To this day the Christian Arabs of Lebanon call themselves *Bani Ghassan*.) They claimed that they had never been Greek-speaking and that Greek, although often used in the liturgy, had been unintelligible to them. The third and non-partisan argument holds that the

[1] Report from a correspondent in Syria of the Constantinople newspaper *Kiri'* printed in *Khulasa*, p. 36. See also Qustantin al-Basha in *Bahth intiqadi fi asl ar-Rum al-Malikiyin wa-lughatihim*.

[2] See al-Ya'qubi, *Ta'rikh*, i. p. 234; also Salah ad-Din al-Munajjid, Manazil al-qaba'il al-'arabiya haul Dimashq (*Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Arabi*, xxx. (1955) p. 61).

Orthodox Arabs were descendents of the original Semitic races of Syria, the Arameans, who had become Aramaic-speaking Christians. They had retained their Aramaic until the eighth century when they had gradually been absorbed into the Arab population after the Muslim conquest and, while remaining Christian, had adopted Arabic as their mother tongue. According to this point of view the Greeks had been confined to the towns as soldiers, administrators, and merchants and the peasant population had remained largely unaffected by Greek civilization. But these arguments left the reality untouched and the Orthodox population of Syria felt and believed itself to be Arab.

Although the Orthodox Arabs were of one *millet* and one Church their conditions of life varied considerably from area to area. In Palestine the majority of the population were *fellahin*, considered by the Russians to be 'serfs',[1] and this was confirmed by the British Consul in Jerusalem, Finn, who described the Orthodox villagers of Bait Jala as 'practically serfs' in their 'obligations' to the Greek convent.[2] In other areas, notably Nablus and Ramla, the Orthodox Arabs did not own their land but worked it for landlords. The *fellah* and his family including the women, cultivated the land and gave up a proportion of the produce to the landlord. The lives of the Orthodox Arabs of Jerusalem were closely bound up with the patriarchate which provided them with houses and a daily ration of bread and paid their *kharaj*, the poll tax payable by Ottoman Christians for exemption from military service. Two events had changed the tenor of their life, the first being the Greek revolt during which the Orthodox Christians of Jerusalem had been persecuted[3] and the second the regime of Ibrahim Pasha under which Christians had been given greater freedom. In 1845 Bishop Porfiri Uspenski noted the 'surprising freedom' which they enjoyed, celebrating their weddings with processions and singing.[4] The Arabs of the city were often tradesmen or craftsmen.

The Christians of Syria impressed most travellers by being more spirited and independent than those of Palestine, although in many cases they were no wealthier. Those of Lebanon were the most advanced although few in numbers. The peasants in the mountains led semi-independent lives, but always in fear of the

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 9. p. 163.
[2] Finn, *Stirring Times*, i. p. 361.
[3] Neophytos, p. 21.
[4] *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 652.

Ottoman authorities. Inhabitants of the coastal towns benefited from trade with Europe. In Beirut there were rich Orthodox businessmen who were beginning to come under the influence of French culture and who, in the Russian view, showed a reprehensible lack of interest in the material and social needs of the Orthodox community.[1] Peasants in other areas lived in conditions of great difficulty and poverty. In the villages around Damascus the Orthodox were peasant farmers among an overwhelming Muslim majority, and those on the eastern slopes of Mount Hermon lived among a Druze majority in wretched conditions cultivating land for feudal landowners. On the borders of the Syrian desert Orthodox Arabs who lived by farming were a prey to Bedouin raids. Despite poverty and illiteracy, the Arabs of these areas were not submissive but were imbued with the frontier spirit and carried arms.

In the larger towns and especially in Damascus the Orthodox Arabs lived as a community which virtually ensured its survival by specializing in certain crafts and thus safeguarding its indispensability to the rest of the population. They followed such trades as tailoring, jewellery-making, stonecutting, and masonry,[2] and silk manufacturing. In Damascus the silk trade had declined gradually with the import of European goods and many trades and branches of other industries were not open to Christians who, as they owned no land, had fallen into great need.[3] Damascus was also a city of Muslim fanaticism in which Christians were exposed to many indignities. They were, for example, not allowed to ride animals of any kind and were made to dress in black. Even European travellers were obliged to alight at the city gates.[4]

The religious life of the Orthodox Arabs had languished through neglect by the Greek hierarchy, an inadequate priesthood and centuries of Muslim rule. As the Orthodox community had acquired non-religious characteristics, religion had come to be little more than a label and a defence against outside interferences, divorced from inner conviction and only a formally observed way of life. Consequently customs, fasts, and festivals were all the more strictly

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 45; 9. p. 60.

[2] Ilyas Qudsi, *Actes du 6ième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, 1883, Actes ii, p. 29. Bazantay, *Enquête sur l'artisanat à Antioche*, p. 14.

[3] Report of Russian Consul in Beirut. (Bazili, ii. p. 182.)

[4] Kayat, *Voice from Lebanon*, p. 52.

observed but often with little knowledge of their original purposes,[1] and as the priests were often untrained and uneducated a deep ignorance of their faith prevailed. In some cases superstition, such as belief in the power of the evil eye, had crept into people's lives. In others Muslim practices were adopted such as the veiling of women or their strict segregation in harems. Bishop Porfiri reported: 'The Arab Muslims and Christians are exactly the same in Palestine—in language, customs and vices, the worst vice being blood revenge.'[2] An Arab Christian himself admitted: 'We are very ignorant, the only difference between our women and those of the Moslems is that the latter swear by the Prophet and ours by the Virgin.'[3] In the popular religion of both Orthodox and Muslim there were many common saints, festivals, and holy places.

But there was also a popular spirit in the Church which made it possible for the laity to ignore the neglect of their hierarchy and it was the close co-operation between clergy and laity, often giving rise to a church quite independent of outside authority, which helped to save the Orthodox Church from disintegration. Not all Orthodox Arabs were content, however, to accept their society as it was. There existed a handful of serious thinkers who recognized its faults and were prepared to work for its reform. In 1840 As'ad Khaiyat opened a small school in Beirut in an attempt to further the education of women. Athanasios reorganized the Monastery of Balamand and Father Yusuf Haddad ran a school in Damascus in which children studied Arabic, Greek, and Italian, and a class of boys intended for the ministry read theology.[4] Some of the students had completed the lay courses and had founded small schools in other parts of Syria.

The great threat facing the Orthodox Arabs in the mid-nineteenth century was the growth of foreign missions and this problem was aggravated by the weak internal state of their Church. It was in the sixteenth century that the Roman Catholic Church began to establish its first regular contacts with Syria, but organized missionary work did not begin until the seventeenth century with the foundation of the Propaganda Fide in 1622. The Jesuits were particularly active and colleges were established in Rome to train eastern clergy.

[1] Wilson noticed that to many Orthodox peasants the essential feature of the Lent fast was the consuming of olive oil. (*Peasant Life in the Holy Land*, p. 47.)

[2] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iv. p. 96.

[3] Wilson, p. 55.

[4] Kayat, p. 287. *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 255.

This upsurge of activity led to the establishment of French protection over eastern Catholics especially the Maronites of Lebanon, and to the growth of Uniate communities who acknowledged the supremacy of Rome and the Pope, while retaining their own patriarch and liturgy. The Uniates drew most of their strength from the Orthodox particularly after the establishment of the Uniate patriarchate of Antioch in 1728. Five years previously the Sultan had issued a firman at the request of the four Orthodox patriarchs forbidding Catholic missionaries to convert any of his Christian subjects,[1] but in the Catholic view the adherents of the Uniate patriarch were not converts but the true heirs of the ancient patriarchate while the Orthodox Christians were considered schismatics. Missionary activity received an impetus under Muhammad 'Ali's regime when Christian missions were allowed a greater freedom from which the French especially benefited. By the end of the eighteenth century the Uniate Church had appeared in Palestine. By a firman of 1829 the Uniates were allowed freedom of worship there. The Russians claim that the number of Catholics within the area of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem rose from 3,000 to 13,000 within the forty years from 1840 to 1880. Schools opened by Catholic missionaries held great attractions for the Orthodox Arabs who were starved of education. The French language was held in especial esteem particularly by the rich bourgeois Christians of Beirut. In the schools contacts with members of other communities led Orthodox children to widen their horizons and to break with the traditions of their fathers.

The Protestants entered the area much later than the Catholics. In the early nineteenth century American Presbyterians chose Beirut as their centre and the Anglicans, Jerusalem.[2] The Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim communities of Palestine were closed to missionaries and consequently most missionary activity was directed towards the Orthodox. Small Protestant churches were established in Lebanon and Palestine but the Protestants with their simpler forms of worship were not feared by the Orthodox as were the Catholics.

A discerning Orthodox Arab, writing in 1892 and looking back

[1] Charles-Roux, *France et Chrétiens d'orient*, p. 66.

[2] Several American missionaries have described their work, notably Jessup, *53 Years in Syria*. Missionary activities have been fully described by Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine* and *American Interests in Syria*.

over the century, was deeply aware of the shortcomings of his community:

The Orthodox people have a strong tradition behind them yet we recognise our millet as backward in comparison with other millets—backward in improving the lot of the peasants. This is clearly shown by the well-ordered spiritual affairs of others, by their many libraries and schools where young minds are trained for future profit. How ashamed we are that we have no ecclesiastical college, no scientific library, even no properly organised preparatory schools. There is no trace of an ordered monasticism and our monasteries have been disorganised and abandoned. It is necessary for us to send our children to western schools and they grow up knowing nothing of their religious duties. They consequently lack all desire for the improvement of their millet.[1]

[1] *Khulasa*, pp. 252–3. (The passage is considerably abbreviated.)

PART II

Russian Missions in Jerusalem

3

THE PIONEER: PORFIRI USPENSKI

In 1841 the first moves were made which were to lead to the establishment of a permanent Russian presence in Jerusalem—one which continued almost without interruption until 1917. Protasov,[1] the Procurator of the Holy Synod, suggested that an archimandrite and two or three monks should be sent to Jerusalem to found in the Greek Monastery of the Cross a school for teaching Russian and Greek, to supervise the use made of Russian alms and to care for Russian pilgrims. Protasov, in his capacity as Procurator, submitted these proposals to the Tsar who requested from Nesselrode more detailed information. In reply he drew up in 1842 a memorandum[2] in which he ascribed the precarious position of the Palestinian Orthodox Church to Muslim domination, Catholic and Protestant propaganda, and the 'insufficiency of the moral and material means of the Greek clergy to forestall this proselytism.' The Chancellor agreed that a 'reliable and educated member of the Russian clergy in Jerusalem' would be an advantage, but pointed out that none had been sent in the past in order not to arouse the 'suspicions' of the Sublime Porte and the 'jealousy' of the other Powers. The necessary spur to action had finally been provided by the appointment of an Anglican bishop to Jerusalem.[3] A Russian

[1] Count Nikolai Aleksandrovich Protasov, Procurator 1836–55, died 1855.

[2] This document is printed in full by Bezobrazov, i. pp. 5–8. Zapiska ob otpravlenii russkovo dukhovnovo litsa v Ierusalim, 13 June 1842. (Dates in the text are given throughout according to the western calendar. Those in the footnotes are given as found in the documents and works cited.)

[3] Bishop Alexander arrived in Jerusalem in January 1842.

cleric by reason of his rank would be able more easily to penetrate the Greek hierarchy than would a diplomatic agent. The Greeks would respect his moral support and advice. But Nesselrode continued more cautiously in his memorandum: 'It must be admitted that the open despatch of a cleric to Jerusalem also has disadvantages which stem partly from various political considerations, partly from the personal views of the Greek hierarchy. We should therefore at first limit ourselves to a probationary measure.'[1] An archimandrite would be sent to Jerusalem as a pilgrim and once there he would attempt to gain the confidence of the Arab clergy and through them form an opinion on the best methods by which Russia could support the Church in Palestine. If experience showed that the presence of such an agent brought real advantages to the Orthodox Church, his stay could be lengthened 'on some plausible excuse' and he would then be given more definite instructions for further action.

This document marked the first positive step in Palestinian affairs by the Russian Government but it was ironic that the plan for Russian support of an Orthodox Church was formulated by a German Protestant,[2] Nesselrode. His policy of keeping the Ottoman Empire weak and dependent led him to try to forestall the interference of the other Powers and consequently his emissary's activities in Jerusalem were to be kept secret. His excessive timidity, especially when other nationalities were openly active, was later condemned by Russian ecclesiastical historians as 'miserable hide and seek.'[3] Moreover, ignorance of church affairs when formulating his proposals led him to several false assumptions, principally that a private Russian cleric would be able to exert influence over the Greek patriarchate. The clash here between the interests and methods of Church and State derived from the very nature of their relationship in Russia. Although the plan was of great concern to the clerical members of the Church it was drawn up by a member of the Government not directly involved in ecclesiastical affairs. The Church was looked upon as an extension of government and diplomacy and as such was expected to execute such schemes as were submitted to it by the Foreign Ministry. This was especially true

[1] Bezobrazov, loc. cit.

[2] Nesselrode, born in Lisbon, where his father was the Russian Ambassador, and educated in Berlin, was a baptized member of the Anglican Church.

[3] *Soobshcheniya*, 6, p. 27.

when a plan concerned such a sensitive area of the Ottoman Empire as Jerusalem. There was a delicate and complex relationship of power in St Petersburg based on the position and personality of those contending for the ear of the Tsar and as far as Palestine was concerned the plans finally approved were almost always compromises, with the Church attempting to modify ideas thought up by statesmen. This lack of unanimity of purpose can be traced through the following eighty years of Russian policy in Syria.

However, the memorandum quickly gained the Tsar's approval and on July 3rd the Procurator asked the Synod to recommend a 'gentle, cautious and reliable' archimandrite suitable for Nesselrode's proposals.[1] Four days later their choice fell on Archimandrite Porfiri Uspenski, who had at the time charge of the Russian ecclesiastical mission in Vienna, 'because of his knowledge of Greek and because of his experience in dealing with our foreign co-religionaries.'[2] His appointment was approved by the Tsar in November.

Konstantin Aleksandrovich Uspenski was born in 1804 in Kostroma, the chief town of the guberniya of that name to the north-east of Moscow. After his primary education he attended the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy from 1825–9 and was then appointed to teach in Odessa. In 1829 he took monastic vows and was given the spiritual name of Porfiri. He was created archimandrite in 1834. After holding several posts as a teacher of theology he was sent in 1840 to Vienna.[3] The choice of Porfiri was a strange one, as his initial inexperience led him into rash actions and intolerant judgement. He was incurably verbose and bordered on eccentricity.[4] He seemed hardly to fulfil any of the requirements of caution, gentleness, and reliability. His diaries are a curious mixture of biblical archaeology, personal impressions and exhortations, and a strangely British preoccupation with the weather, but they sketch

[1] Proposal of Count Protasov to the Holy Synod. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 8.)

[2] Ukaz Sinoda, 26 June 1842. (Ibid.)

[3] At this point Porfiri began to keep a diary and continued to do so throughout the rest of his long life. It is on this work that much of our knowledge of the contemporary life of the Syrian Orthodox Church is based. *Kniga bytya moevo*, edited by Syrku, published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences for the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, 8 vols., SPB, 1894–1900.

[4] Bertram and Young in their *Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government of Palestine to inquire and report upon certain controversies between the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Arab Orthodox Community*, 1926, describe him as an 'ecclesiastic of peculiar propensities.' (p. 25.)

a valuable picture of government in St Petersburg and life in Syria at the middle of the nineteenth century.

He arrived in St Petersburg in October 1842 but it was not until eight months later that he prepared to leave for the East. The delay was caused by a crisis in Russo-Turkish relations.[1] In May 1843 he was summoned to the Asiatic Department[2] of the Foreign Ministry to meet its director, Senyavin, and Titov, on leave from Constantinople. They first expressed regret that news of his appointment had become common knowledge in St Petersburg.[3] The secret had been ill-kept, but although secrecy had been a basic premise of Nesselrode's proposals there was no mention of a change of plan. Porfiri was briefed on his mission by Senyavin.

> Perform faithfully the duties of a pilgrim. Do not surround yourself with any mystery but do not on any account reveal that you have been sent by the government. Try to gain the trust and love of the eastern clergy . . . and try to discover their real demands, and the aims, successes and spirit of the Catholics, Armenians and Protestants. Do not commit yourself in any way. Your main task is to collect information.[4]

It is clear that Nesselrode had further diluted his original intentions and that Porfiri was in no sense to be sent to Jerusalem as a resident but only as a gatherer of information. His urgent request to be sent openly on behalf of the Church was uncompromisingly rejected. The duplicity of the role he was asked to play distressed him. He confided to his diary after an interview with the Patriarch of Jerusalem: 'I make no attempt to hide the fact that the secret of my mission embarrassed me . . . It is painful to think that I, a stripling in his presence, have to be a spy on his activities, and his judge.'[5]

Porfiri was not given all the details of Nesselrode's memorandum, but the latter did send to Titov further instructions which were to be given to Porfiri in Constantinople.[6] They added little to his previous orders. The chancellor stressed the need to gain the trust of the Arabs and suggested that this could be done if Porfiri spoke to them of the interests of the 'whole church' rather than of specific Russian interests which might arouse suspicion of political motives.[7]

[1] There was a crisis over the exiling of Prince Obrenović of Serbia. The Russian diplomatic mission was preparing to leave Constantinople.

[2] The Asiatic Department dealt with the whole of the Ottoman Empire, including Turkey in Europe.

[3] *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 120.

[4] Ibid., p. 125.

[5] Ibid., p. 169.

[6] Delo Sinoda, no. 28809. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 746.)

[7] Ibid.

With these instructions the 'gentle' pilgrim began his journey to the East. By September 1843 he was in Constantinople where his first meetings took place with the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople. He left for Beirut in October and spent the following ten months in Syria and Palestine, travelling to Damascus where he met and had several discussions with the Patriarch of Antioch.[1] From Damascus he visited Saidnaya and went as far north as Tripoli. After returning to Damascus he moved to Haifa and inland to Jerusalem where he spent the major portion of his time. He made excursions to Nazareth, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Gaza and visited many of the smaller Orthodox villages in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. In each locality his chief object was to visit the Orthodox church and to meet the local priest. He also had a deep interest in biblical archaeology and devoted many pages of his diary to descriptions of little known biblical sites and remains. He was often the first Russian to have entered the more isolated Orthodox Arab villages and there developed a two way influence from these meetings. It was flattering to the local Arabs to learn that remote and mighty Russia, however little they might know her, was beginning to take an interest in their affairs. Until Porfiri's arrival their horizon had been bounded by their village, occasionally by neighbouring villages, rarely by the larger towns. Their personal contacts were chiefly local. If Porfiri opened a larger world to the Orthodox Arabs, he was also the first to take back to Russia a detailed personal knowledge of large areas of Syria and Palestine. He returned to Beirut in August 1844.

The impressions of Syrian church life on a young and inexperienced monk brought up among the splendours of the Russian Church were shattering. Uncontrolled, waspish outbursts against the Greeks fill the pages of the first two volumes of Porfiri's diary. The twin themes of his writings are the depressed state of Orthodoxy and the conflict between Arab and Greek, and he ascribed the causes of both of these to the Greek hierarchy. For the poor state of the churches he blamed Greek negligence; for the low ebb of theological knowledge he blamed Greek apathy towards Arab advancement. These charges he based on a growing collection of observations on Greek corruption, indifference and immorality, which, he remarked were worse in Palestine than in Syria. One heated interview with

[1] Methodios, Patriarch 1823–50.

Cyril,[1] Bishop of Lydda and future patriarch with whom Porfiri was to become friendly, led to the following exchange:

Cyril: The Arabs are rascals . . . They hate and defame us. You have no affection for us and defend them.

Porfiri: God knows the extent of my love towards you, but I pity the Arabs and I am prepared to defend them before anyone.

Cyril: They have no faith; they are barbarians, villains.

Porfiri: You must teach them faith for you have fostered their unbelief.

Cyril: They will not listen to us.

Porfiri: That is not surprising, for you do not love but despise them. They are a martyr people. They are persecuted by the Muslims yet receive no protection from you. They even have nowhere to pray. The village churches are in a most miserable condition.

Cyril: You forget that we are under the Turkish yoke.

Porfiri: That does not prevent you from repairing and . . . decorating the churches . . . The priests do not understand their duties. They keep their cattle in church. When they ask for help you refuse to see them . . .

Cyril: We do not accept Arab priests among us so as not to lower our episcopal dignity . . . Nor do we understand their language.

Porfiri: Why not learn Arabic, or if you are too old why not have an interpreter to forward their requests?

Cyril: We cannot introduce new customs.

Porfiri: So you cling to your old habits. There will be no school for the sons of Arab priests; Arab widows and orphans will receive no shelter in convents: no Arab will be a bishop or head of a monastery.[2]

In this interview lies the heart of Porfiri's conclusions. The atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion which clouded his dealings with the Greeks strengthened his determination to work for Arab advancement and to present their case in St Petersburg.[3] He gradually forgot the conflicting instructions that he had been given; he was in any case unfitted for the delicate game which the Government had intended him to play. He was in no sense a diplomat and the less he tried to be one the more trusted he was by both Arabs

[1] Cyril (Kurillos). Patriarch of Jerusalem 1843–72. Died 1877.

[2] *Kniga bytya moevo*, ii. p. 265 ff.

[3] On various occasions he wrote in his diary of his intention to expose the Greeks. 'I am an axe lying at the roots of a rotten tree.' (Ibid.) 'We cannot cope with the Arabs' confessed a Greek bishop. 'If you cannot, then others will' answered Porfiri. (Ibid., ii. p. 275.)

and Greeks. His official role was soon well known in Jerusalem[1] and he openly received Arab complaints with the promise to forward them officially to St Petersburg. A Greek writer[2] sees his work as an attempt to provoke the Arabs to rise against the Greeks and to replace them in the hierarchy, but in fact Porfiri was too much of a realist to suggest that the Greeks should be expelled from Palestine.

In August 1844 he was back in Constantinople armed with material for his report to the Government. This he submitted to Titov on November 8th. It was published some sixty six years later from a manuscript left by Porfiri.[3] In it he summarized the problems of the Orthodox Church in Syria and the work of non-Orthodox missionaries, adding his recommendations for future policy. He saw the Church of Jerusalem to be in a dangerous position internally. The patriarch lived away from Jerusalem, which was both unnecessary and uncanonical. Consequently the Arabs had long since ceased to regard him as their head. The Synod of the Patriarchate existed in name only and the real power was wielded by its lay secretary. The Greek clergy was almost entirely lacking in theological education which was deemed less important than wealth, as positions in the churches were bought and sold. There was a shameful lack of a strict monastic life among the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. Celibacy was not practised, female housekeepers being kept in most monasteries.[4] The Arab clergy was in a wretched position, unlettered and unpaid. Almost total dissension existed between Arab priests and Greek hierarchy. The priests received money neither from the treasury of the Holy Sepulchre nor from their bishops and were barred from the hierarchy. The Arab people were subjected to a foreign hierarchy which did little for them. Village churches were in a state of disrepair and village schools almost non-existent. Moreover, large sums of money sent annually from Russia to Jerusalem disappeared without trace.

[1] The French consul believed that Porfiri had been appointed Consul in Jerusalem and the Governor asked the Greeks for confirmation of this. (*Soobshcheniya*, 6. p. 50.)

[2] Moschopoulos, *La Terre Sainte*, p. 244.

[3] Bezobrazov, i. pp. 51–96.

[4] Porfiri cites several examples in his diary of the evils of this custom which was not uncommon in Russia itself. A Russian newspaper was writing in 1906: 'the neighbourhoods of all the famous monasteries are populated by women whose children are the offspring of the monks.' (Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, p. 82.)

The second section of the report dealt with a problem closer to the heart of the Foreign Ministry—the involvement of other Powers in Palestine or, in ecclesiastical terms, the activities there of foreign missionaries. Porfiri alleged that the greatest danger came from the French protected Uniates. He related in his diary several cases of Orthodox families who were tempted into Uniatism through disillusion with Greek corruption or by the offer of French protection.[1] Uniatism had made great strides in Palestine and the Greek clergy was powerless to attack it. The Anglicans under their newly appointed bishop were also to be feared. The Arabs had been obliged to abandon the customary splendour of the Orthodox service for more simple forms of worship and were consequently already 'inclined to receive Protestantism.'[2]

Porfiri's recommendations fell into two parts, the one containing answers to the problems he had enumerated and the other his view of future Russian activity. He believed that his proposed reforms in Palestine would be brought about if a permanent representation were established in Jerusalem. A small mission sent to the city under the leadership of a bishop would stir the conscience of the Greek hierarchy. It would endeavour to treat the Arabs with respect and reconcile them with the Greeks, protect them from the Turkish authorities, and run a school and distribute Russian alms.

This enthusiastic plan would surely have foundered on Greek opposition as it introduced an unwelcome third party into the administration of the Church of Jerusalem, but having submitted his report Porfiri began to lobby for its realization. After spending a year in Sinai and Athos he returned to St Petersburg in October 1845. His original instructions had only requested him to submit information but he now conceived it his duty to go further and endeavour to arouse the interest of influential people in his schemes. Without him it is quite possible that no further action would have been taken, at least until after the Crimean War. His persistent lobbying was met with opposition or indifference. The Synod, which showed little love to clerics in the service of the Foreign Ministry, kept him without quarters and money for a period, and Protasov received him coldly. 'I expected that he would thank me, but no.'[3] He aroused Titov's antagonism by adversely criticizing Bazili and

[1] See *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 271, 676; ii. p. 74.
[2] Bezobrazov, i. p. 80.
[3] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 101.

other diplomatic agents in the East[1] but received his main support from Nesselrode who spoke of his work in Jerusalem 'with great praise.'[2] He claimed that he was kept away from the ladies of the court on whom it was feared he would exercise undue influence and who might then coerce Nesselrode.[3] The latter, whose support eventually proved decisive, had continued to be concerned with the fate of the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire.[4] In January 1847 Porfiri submitted a further report, on the Church of Antioch,[5] which in Titov's opinion concerned itself far too much with politics.[6] The latter did hint, however, that Porfiri would be sent again to Jerusalem, but that 'the opening of a Russian monastery and school would be postponed as a precaution against causing any noise in Europe'.[7]

Porfiri's persistence was rewarded when in February the Tsar approved the Procurator's recommendation to send a mission to Jerusalem and asked Nesselrode and the Procurator to nominate a suitable person as director and to investigate possible sources of finance. Only after six months of vacillation did the Synod in a secret ukaz recommend that, 'the same Father Archimandrite Porfiri be sent to Jerusalem not as a Russian prior but as a pilgrim with the permission and formal recommendation of the Russian hierarchy.'[8] Within a month Nesselrode had thought out a further set of instructions[9] which far from satisfied Porfiri's demands. They were in essence a second boiling of his original proposals. Porfiri would again don the pilgrim's mantle and he and a small staff[10] would reside in Jerusalem for a probationary period of three years. No official recognition would be given to them although the

[1] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 138. [2] Ibid., p. 64. [3] Ibid., p. 106.

[4] His famous memorandum of December 1844 to the British Government recommended a joint policy towards the Ottoman Empire. '. . . the Cabinets cannot see with indifference the Christian population in Turkey exposed to flagrant acts of oppression and religious intolerance.' Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, i. pp. 130–1.

[5] Otchet o siriiskoi tserkvi, submitted to the Procurator of the Holy Synod, 15 January 1847. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 161 ff.)

[6] Porfiri's chief proposal was that with Russian help an Arab should be elected in place of the Greek Patriarch.

[7] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 138.

[8] Ukaz Sinoda ob otpravlenii v Ierusalim dukhovnoi missii. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 16.)

[9] Instructions to Archimandrite Porfiri, approved by the Tsar, 28 August 1847. (Ibid.)

[10] Porfiri took with him one senior monk, two seminary students and one lay brother. (*Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 155.)

Metropolitan of St Petersburg would furnish Porfiri with a formal letter of recommendation to the patriarch.[1] The mission was given the daunting task of reforming the Greek clergy both internally, and externally in their relationship with the Arab clergy and laity. Sympathy was to be shown to the people in their struggles against missionary propaganda. An annual sum of 10,000 roubles was allotted to support the mission.[2]

Porfiri was not at all satisfied with Nesselrode's proposals and called the mission 'fatuous and spiritless',[3] while the future founder of the Orthodox Palestine Society described the instructions as 'the fruits of idle ideas cooked up in the Chancellery by one having not the slightest idea of local conditions and less idea still of the then state of affairs in the Patriarchate.'[4]

The Catholics had their patriarch[5] and the Anglicans their bishop. The Orthodox Church of Russia was to be represented by an archimandrite forbidden to reveal his mission and burdened with prohibitions. The small financial allowance was a clear demonstration of official apathy and virtually condemned the mission to failure even before its departure from Russia.

Porfiri left St Petersburg in October 1847 with his early enthusiasm considerably dampened and with a soberer appreciation of the role he was to play. By February 1848 he was again in Jerusalem. The king-pin in the success of his future work would have to be his relationship with the Patriarch of Jerusalem. During Porfiri's absence from Palestine, Athanasios,[6] who had exercised little influence in his see, had died and been replaced by Cyril. The new patriarch was less fanatically Panhellenist than his colleagues and was the most impressive of the nineteenth century patriarchs. He had attained office only with Russian help and allegiance to Russia led to his eventual deposition. He was the first patriarch to return to Jerusalem and to act independently of Constantinople. Porfiri was thus able to deal with him personally and a close friendship grew between them. This was only possible as Porfiri in no way tried to 'reform' the Greeks and refused to interfere in the internal affairs

[1] Ukaz Sinoda, to Metropolitan Antoni. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 16).

[2] Extract from the Chancellor's report to the Tsar, 9 October 1847. (Ibid., p. 24.)

[3] *Kniga bytya moevo*, vii. p. 126.

[4] Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie v Svyatoi Zemle*, p. 76.

[5] Joseph Valerga, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, 1847–72. The Latin Patriarchate had remained titular from the Crusades until its re-establishment under Valerga.

[6] Athanasios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, 1827–45.

of the Church. The Patriarch for his part often sought Porfiri's advice, sometimes even accepting it.[1] Porfiri's relations with the other Greeks were correct but unfriendly. His object was not to compromise himself in the eyes of the Arabs by appearing to condone the behaviour of those bishops who refused to live in their sees. As the modesty of Porfiri's mission was quickly apparent, the enmity of the Greeks was not aroused. He was even accepted by them and others[2] as the official representative of the Russian Government and Church although his Government still refused to appoint him to any official position. They did, however, prolong the stay of his mission in Jerusalem indefinitely.

The Orthodox Arabs at first saw Porfiri as a fairy godmother to direct the flow of Russian alms into their pockets, but these hopes were soon dashed. In despair they turned against him and sent a letter to the Russian Synod in which they complained of his failure to help them.[3] Although he apparently wished to serve the Arabs it was not his intention to alienate the Greeks by appropriating their chief source of income. He used the only money available, his own salary, to distribute gifts to Arab priests, to provide ikons and decorations for their churches and to give alms to the poor. He gradually regained the confidence of the Arabs and occasionally transmitted their requests or complaints to the patriarch. He fought against proselytism by visiting villages threatened by the Uniates or Protestants,[4] by sending small sums of money or by encouraging the patriarch to send teachers to or found schools in those villages. It was in the field of education that he was most active and it was there that co-operation between Porfiri and the patriarch was most fruitful. The parish school in Jerusalem was improved and a small number of Arab priests were trained there. A seminary was founded in the Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem, officially open first of

[1] Porfiri's report on his mission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1855. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 394 ff.)

[2] Consul Finn met Porfiri at a reception in the Austrian Consulate in 1853. He describes him as 'a gentleman of very polished and affable manners, composed in speech, precise in dress.' (Finn, *Stirring Times*, i. p. 81.)

[3] Bezobrazov, loc. cit.

[4] A section of the Orthodox population of Nablus was converted to Protestantism but eventually repented. Porfiri welcomed the wanderers back, warning them that 'if all Nablus become Protestant then England would set up workshops and factories there in which young girls would be forced to work and where their innocence would not be safe.' (*Kniga bytya moevo*, iv. p. 85.) Tibawi (*British Interests*, p. 93 ff.) describes some of the difficulties the Protestants faced in Nablus.

all to Arab boys and only secondly to Greeks, but in fact few Arabs studied there. Those who did graduate were not allowed to enter the hierarchy.[1] Porfiri was appointed guardian of the seminary. In 1853 the patriarch appointed him chairman of a board of guardians for all Palestinian schools[2] and in that position he was responsible for appointing teachers and providing accommodation, equipment, and textbooks. To obtain these texts Porfiri encouraged the patriarch to set up an Arabic printing press in Jerusalem and by February 1854 several works had been printed.

In almost all Porfiri attempted to do he was hindered and frustrated by a combination of apathy and opposition in St Petersburg. Successive requests were rejected or ignored and eventually his salary even ceased to arrive. Undeterred, he continued to forward proposals until the end of his mission. He requested money to found a hospital and library, to help Russian pilgrims and to improve schools.[3] Through government hesitation an opportunity was lost to provide permanent accommodation for Russian officials in Jerusalem and consequently he remained dependent on Greek goodwill for his quarters.[4] Gradually he accepted the fact that St Petersburg had to all intents and purposes abandoned him and that without their financial help he could do little. He devoted the majority of his time to learned research and to travelling throughout Syria. During the whole of his stay in Palestine he was plagued by acute ill-health and twice had to leave to seek treatment.

The Crimean War brought the work of the mission to a halt. Late in 1853 Bazili left Syria. Porfiri, still forgotten, wrote to St Petersburg for advice and money for the journey back to Russia. Neither was forthcoming. In December the French consul asked in the diwan why one important Russian Government agent was still living in Jerusalem.[5] The Turks, on learning that this was Porfiri,

[1] *Khulasat ta'rikh kanisat Urshalim al-urthudhuksiya*, by Shahhada Khuri and Niqula Khuri, p. 198 ff. The authors assert that under Cyril the patriarchate rose to the heights of progress and success. Porfiri's mission is mentioned but he is not given credit for the opening of the seminary.

[2] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iv. p. 391. An English visitor comments very favourably on these Greek schools. (Graham, *Jerusalem, its Missions, Schools, Convents &c.*, p. 75.)

[3] He asked for 1,000 roubles to develop the school system and thereby encourage the Arabs to send their children to the improved schools. He noted: 'To my great grief this request had no success. The North is very cold.' (Bezobrazov, i. p. 363.)

[4] The Greeks built a house at their own expense. It became known as Porfiri's house although he was never able to live in it.

[5] *Kniga bytya moevo*, v. p. 172.

ordered him to be expelled. He was taken under the protection of the Austrian consul who gave him money and shelter until he was able to leave the country in May 1854. His departure from the Holy City was witnessed only by a group of grateful mothers whose children had entered the schools he had organized.[1]

Reasons for the failure of Porfiri's mission to Jerusalem are very clear. His Government's plans were unrealizable even had he been given adequate financial support. The conflict between secular and ecclesiastical interests in St Petersburg led to confusion over the aims of the mission. Neither Synod nor Foreign Ministry would accept complete responsibility. Eventually neither accepted any responsibility at all and Porfiri was abandoned. A second area of conflict was the Greco-Arab relationship. Policy demanded that Russia should support the Greek hierarchy yet many Russians felt impelled to oppose Greek oppression of Slav and Arab Orthodox communities. Porfiri was caught between these two currents and could do little to satisfy either demand. Nor was he able to demonstrate to Jerusalem the magnificence of the Russian Orthodox service. He was given the 'gloomy and small'[2] church of the Archangel monastery and was only rarely permitted to take part in Greek services in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The return of the patriarch to Jerusalem, the fulfilment of one of Porfiri's greatest wishes, was probably due more to the re-establishment of the Latin Patriarchate than to Russian pressure. Porfiri bitterly summed up his work: 'It seems the mission was sent to Jerusalem only to preside over the obsequies of Orthodoxy.'[3] However, by his very presence he introduced a faint ray of light into the obscurantist society of the Greek hierarchy and brought some hope into the lives of the Orthodox Arabs. He was a pioneer who laid the foundations, albeit somewhat shaky, on which Russia was able to build in Syria and Palestine during the following sixty years.

[1] *Kniga bytya moevo* v., p. 217.
[2] *Soobshcheniya*, 16. p. 480.
[3] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 64.

4

BISHOP AND PALESTINE COMMITTEE

Jerusalem is the centre of the world and our mission must be there (Russian Foreign Ministry report).

THE real cause of the Crimean War was not the petty squabbles of a few Greek and Latin priests but the rivalry of the Great Powers and the difference in their attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire. The conflict over the Holy Places was made the excuse for bringing this rivalry into the open. However much the Tsar might talk about the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire,[1] Nesselrode's practical policy had been to maintain Turkey as a buffer state—'a weak neighbour'—securing the Straits and the Black Sea. The first condition of this policy was that Turkey should fear Russia more than any other Power but by 1852 Russia had lost to France much of her predominance at Constantinople. This political confrontation was embittered by the continuing dispute in Palestine between the Orthodox and Catholics, a dispute which brought the respective champions of the two Churches—Russia and France—into further conflict.

In 1847 the silver star marking the place of the Nativity in Bethlehem had been removed, and as the inscription had been in Latin it was immediately assumed that the culprits were Greek.[2] In a note of 1850 the French Government demanded certain exclusive rights in the Churches of the Holy Sepulchre and the Nativity and the replacement of the star. Russian opposition was instantly aroused and under Russian pressure the Sultan issued a firman which confirmed the custom of entrusting the keys of the Church of the Nativity to the Greeks, the Latins and the Armenians. In Jerusalem the Governor, Afif Bey, was at Russia's request to read the firman in public but despite continual prompting by Bazili he

[1] Notably the famous conversations between Nicholas I and Sir Hamilton Seymour in January 1853 when the former alluded to the future partition of the Ottoman Empire. (Hurewitz, i. p. 135.)

[2] Porfiri submitted a report to the Russian Government detailing Orthodox rights in the Holy Places. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 97 ff.)

refused to do so.[1] He finally revealed that he had been instructed not to read it. The Patriarch Cyril was dissatisfied with the Sultan's ruling and expressed his determination to prevent the Catholics from gaining any further rights.[2] Both Porfiri and Bazili attempted to restrain the patriarch from rash behaviour in the tense atmosphere which pervaded the Holy Places. On December 22nd the star was replaced in Bethlehem and the Russian Government in the name of Orthodoxy called for an act of reparation. The Russian army was ordered to the frontiers of the Danubian provinces. Menshikov[3] was sent to Constantinople to demand not only a settlement of the question of the Holy Places but also an explicit acceptance of a Russian protectorate over all the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire. With the strong support of the British Ambassador, Stratford Canning, the Sultan rejected the notion of a protectorate, but with Canning's advice a compromise solution to the former question was agreed upon. The replacement of the star was not to be understood to confer any new rights on the Catholics. Russia's true motives were now revealed as, far from being satisfied, she renewed and enlarged her claims for a protectorate and demanded a treaty guaranteeing to the Orthodox Church all its ancient privileges and rights as well as all the advantages accorded to other Christian bodies. Once again the Sultan rejected the Russian demand, claiming that such a treaty would allow Russia intolerable rights of interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Further negotiations proved fruitless and in October 1853 Russia invaded the Danubian provinces and was at war with Turkey.

In Jerusalem a firman was read in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in which all Orthodox Arabs present were asked to pray for the victory of the Sultan over the Tsar.[4] The war placed the Greeks of Palestine in an equivocal situation. They were consequently at pains to stress their loyalty to the Turkish cause and to deny any Russian affiliations.[5] Protestant missionaries prayed fervently for the defeat of the Tsar and took advantage of the temporary Russian embarrassment to extend their work in Palestine. Many Russians saw the war as a religious crusade to take possession of the Holy Places. The Russian army moved south through

[1] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iv. p. 311. [2] Ibid., p. 302.
[3] Prince Aleksandr Sergeevich Menshikov.
[4] *Kniga bytya moevo*, v. p. 147. According to Porfiri no Arab obeyed the request.
[5] Finn, *Stirring Times*, i. p. 33.

Armenia to threaten Erzerum[1] and occupy Bayazid. The French Consul in Jerusalem, who had served in the Caucasus, believed that the Russian advance would not be hindered by the length of the supply line down to Aleppo.[2] It was reported at the time that Russian soldiers billeted on the local peasants were inquiring how far they still were from Jerusalem.[3] Genuine apprehension was felt by the residents of the city that Jerusalem would before long be under Russian occupation. With the fall of Sevastopol these fears faded as indeed did any Russian hopes of victory.

The Treaty of Paris in 1856 marked the end of the war. Russia had been defeated, humiliated and left financially exhausted. On the eve of the peace conference the Sultan had issued his Hatt-ı Hümâyûn which recognized the rights of his non-Muslim subjects. It was designed to weaken Russia's claims of the right to protect Turkish Orthodox Christians. In the treaty itself the Powers jointly rejected any right to interfere in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Russia signed the treaty only unwillingly and was determined as soon as possible to remove its restrictions. After this reversal in the West she turned away from Europe for a time to contemplate expansion in the Near and Far East.

The defeat of 1856 marked a turning point in the history of Russia's relations with the Orthodox East. Until the war she had aimed at securing a dominant position in the Ottoman Empire. This was no longer possible and she was compelled to accept her rivals on level terms. This equally meant that she could abandon the 'hide and seek' of the first mission to Jerusalem and could now demonstrate more clearly her concern for the Church of Syria. With the end of the war and the end of an era, the political and ecclesiastical regimes in Russia changed. Tsar Nicholas I had died in 1855, disappointed and humiliated by the setbacks of the war, and his heir Alexander II (1855–81) began his reign in an atmosphere of liberalism and reform. Gorchakov[4] replaced the aged and discredited Nesselrode in 1856. He was mild and conciliatory in manner and was well aware of the dangers of isolated Russian action in the Near East. Throughout his career as Foreign Minister he pursued his famous policy of 'recueillement', that is, of avoiding foreign

[1] Thus, for a time, part of the Patriarchate of Antioch was in Russian hands.
[2] Finn, ii. p. 49. [3] Ibid., i. p. 373.
[4] Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Gorchakov 1798–1883. Ambassador to Vienna, Foreign Minister 1856–82.

adventures, although he was not averse to expansion in Central Asia during the period. The Procurator of the Synod, Protasov, had died in 1855 and after the short reign of Karasevski had been replaced by Count A. P. Tolstoi.[1] A new era and new leaders led to new policies.

Porfiri had travelled to Italy from Syria and in July 1854 had been granted an audience of the Pope. In Vienna he met Gorchakov and while discussing Church affairs he expressed doubts about the legitimacy of certain rites of the Russian church service where it differed from Greek usage.[2] These few remarks affected the whole of Porfiri's life and any future Russian achievement in Syria. They alienated Gorchakov and ensured that Porfiri did not return to Jerusalem as head of the mission. Once again his reception in St Petersburg was mixed. The ecclesiastical authorities received him coldly as one who had been with the Pope, but the Director of the Asiatic Department, Lyubimov, and Senyavin both promised him their support. The great debate now began on the next steps to be taken in Syria. The chief participants were the Tsar, the Metropolitan of St Petersburg, Tolstoi and Gorchakov. There was no lack of suggestions from other sources as to possible moves. These ideas included the establishing of a Palestine committee or society,[3] an oriental academy in Odessa to train students for service in the East[4], and missions to Athens, Constantinople, and Egypt. The principal discussion centred round a suggestion to send a second mission to Jerusalem. Agreement was quickly reached but it proved difficult to appoint a suitable director. Porfiri had many opponents in the capital. The opposition was led by Gorchakov who had turned against him after their meeting in Vienna and was determined not to 'select as representative of the Russian Church in Jerusalem a person who was not convinced of its legitimacy.'[5] The Metropolitan of St Petersburg considered that his self-esteem was intolerable,[6] but among his supporters Porfiri claimed both the Empress and Grand Duke Konstantin. The Tsar was final arbiter and in April

[1] Procurator 1856–62.

[2] *Soobshcheniya*, 16. p. 500. [3] *Kniga bytya moevo*, iii. p. 449.

[4] This was the proposal of Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich who suggested that students should study Oriental languages and then serve in the East as agents of the Odessa Steamship Company. Porfiri was to be created bishop to superintend the academy. The proposal was blocked by Gorchakov. (Ibid., vi. p. 73.)

[5] Ibid., vii. pp. 81–2. [6] Ibid., p. 155.

1857 on the recommendation of Tolstoi and Gorchakov he approved the appointment of Bishop Polikarp Radaevich,[1] a colourless and uninspiring figure. Porfiri considered him a 'nullité parfaite'.[2] Gorchakov soon regretted his choice as from his first meeting with Polikarp he concluded that the bishop would be incapable of running the mission efficiently. Porfiri was suggested as his assistant in Jerusalem but in August Polikarp contracted a diplomatic illness and resigned from his appointment. Porfiri was now suggested as his replacement but the Synod on the advice of the Tsar's confessor recommended Archimandrite Cyril Naumov to whose appointment the Tsar half-heartedly agreed in September.[3]

Cyril[4] was an inspector at the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy. After a brilliant academic career he had been appointed professor at the age of twenty eight and when the rectorship of the Academy fell vacant it was confidently expected that he would be elected.[5] He was passed over, however, in favour of one of his subordinates and subsequently found his position in the Academy untenable. He gratefully accepted the directorship of the mission as a means of escape. He was young and intelligent but had had no experience of life outside the lecture room and was totally unprepared for the world of intrigue and diplomatic struggle into which he was thrown.

The appointment of Cyril underlined the change in official Russian thinking on the Orthodox East. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs set out its reasons for founding the new mission in a report to the Tsar:

> Our political relationship with Turkey and her own position vis-à-vis the other Powers have completely changed. Now we are not concerned with the Turks but with the Europeans whose keen glance will look lightly on those measures of prudence which it was possible to use successfully with the Ottoman government. At the present time every half-measure will not only bring no benefit, but may even harm our mission in Jerusalem . . . If the circle of its activities is limited only to passive observations, then its presence in Jerusalem will be useless . . . We must define the real aim of the mission before it is sent to Jerusalem . . .

[1] Bishop of Orel, 1856–67, died 1867. [2] *Kniga bytya moevo*, vii. p. 74.

[3] On the 'Report of the Synod to the Tsar recommending the despatch of Archimandrite Cyril Naumov as bishop to Jerusalem, 26 Sept. 1857' the Tsar wrote, 'I agree, if necessary'. (Ibid., p. 93.)

[4] Vasili Nikolaevich Naumov (1823–66).

[5] Titov, *Kirill Naumov*, p. 8.

We must establish our 'presence' in the East not politically but through the church. Neither the Turks nor the Europeans, who have their patriarchs and bishops in the Holy City, can refuse us this. While our influence was still strong we could afford to conceal our activities and thus avoid envy, but now that our influence in the East has weakened we, on the contrary, must try to display ourselves so that we do not sink in the estimation of the Orthodox population who still believe in us as of old. Our mission in its previous form could hope to achieve nothing. The Ministry finds it necessary to place a bishop at the head of the Jerusalem mission instead of an archimandrite. This, in the opinion of the Ministry, would produce a strongly favourable impression not only in Jerusalem but also in Constantinople where they have seen neither a Russian bishop nor the splendid ritual of our services. A service taken by a bishop together with Slavs and Arabs would be most impressive for Greeks and Arabs. Jerusalem is the centre of the world and our mission must be there.[1]

In defining the aims of the mission the Ministry laid especial emphasis on the support to be given to the Orthodox Arabs. 'Until now we have looked at the Church of Palestine and Syria through the Greek prism.'[2] It was recognized that the Greek hierarchy had been receiving Russian alms to the exclusion of the Arab clergy and laity 'even though the entire lay element in both the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch and to some extent in Alexandria was purely Arab.' 'Services outside the towns and monasteries are conducted only in Arabic. The Greeks here, as among the Slavs of Turkey, are loved neither by the people nor the priests and, moreover, our alms are for the most part poured into the pockets of these Greeks.'[3] It was Russia's task to reconcile Greek with Arab and to 'support the Arabs so that the philanthropy of the Latins did not tempt them to apostatize to Uniatism.'[4]

This report, inviting comparison with the Nesselrode memorandum, shows clearly the revolution in thought that had taken place. It was an openly political document in which little regard was shown for Greek feelings. The Russians were now to discard subterfuge and to step in between Greek and Arab in order to raise Russian prestige. Russia, with Arab help, was to show the Greeks how to run the Church, and although the document itself stressed the

[1] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1857, no. 373. (Titov, p. 113 f.; and Dmitrievski, *Imperatorskoe Pravoslavnoe Palestinskoe Obshchestvo*, i. p. 8.)

[2] Titov, p. 115; Dmitrievski, loc. cit.

[3] Dmitrievski, p. 9. [4] Ibid.

conciliatory role which she was to play there is no doubt that such open support for the Arabs would alienate the Greek hierarchy. Nor were the difficulties of sending a bishop to Jerusalem adequately considered. The idea of an episcopal appointment came from the Foreign Ministry and was not approved of by influential members of the Church of Russia. The territorial implications of a bishopric would, they claimed, be quite unacceptable to the rightful Bishop of Jerusalem—the Orthodox Patriarch. The Metropolitan of Moscow, Filaret, argued that the appointment of a bishop without flock or see could only imply political motives and a desire to establish a Russian party in an Arab country. The Tsar was not convinced and gave his approval to the report in February 1857. The Envoy in Constantinople[1] was instructed to open negotiations with the Porte and the Greek hierarchy. The Turkish Government agreed to the founding of a mission and issued at the request of the envoy vizirial letters to the Governor of Jerusalem and to the patriarch, in which the official existence of the mission was recognized.[2] At the same time the Consul-General in Beirut, Mukhin, consulted the deputies of the patriarch in Jerusalem and came to the conclusion that, although they ostensibly welcomed the mission, they did not share its aim of edifying the Arab priesthood.[3] The consul also arranged accommodation for the mission in the 'Porfiri' house. The Russian Government consulted the Porte and the deputies of the patriarch but not the patriarch himself. He later complained to Porfiri: 'The sending of a bishop embarrassed us. We could not see why it had been decided to break the canons of the church which forbade a foreign bishop to work within the jurisdiction of the head of another church. If we accepted your mission it was because the Porte ordered us to do so.'[4]

The aims of the mission as laid down by the Foreign Ministry had been modest enough but these were now considerably enlarged in the instructions given to Cyril Naumov by the Tsar. They had been drawn up by both the Ministry and the Synod with the advice of Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow.[5] The chief concern of the mission was once again to be 'the wretched Arab clergy.' Not much hope was held out that it was going to receive large funds.

[1] A. P. Butenev, Envoy in Constantinople 1830–42, 1855–8.
[2] Titov, p. 119.
[3] Arkhiv Sinoda, 30 April 1857, Mukhin to Butenev. (Titov, p. 120.)
[4] Porfiri Uspenski, *Vtoroe puteshestvie na sv. gore Athonskoi*, pp. 12–13.
[5] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1857, no. 373. (Titov, p. 132 ff., Dmitrievski, p. 9 ff.)

With the smallest means much can be done, for the Arab churches are merely unfurnished huts. A little more beauty would attract the Arabs to their own services especially now that we have given Arab priests the opportunity of receiving training in Russia. If out of the six titular bishops living in Jerusalem even one could be elected from the Arabs, and it might be possible to persuade the patriarch to agree to this, it would be an important step forward in reviving the dignity of these people and renewing their Orthodoxy.

Cyril was to extend his activities to Alexandria and Antioch. In Syria he was to rebuild schools and distribute books and alms. More than a hint of future trouble lay in the suggestion that the Patriarch of Antioch would behave more correctly towards the Arabs if he were under the observation of the Russian bishop and the Consul-General in Beirut. Despite this Cyril was to endeavour to maintain good relations with the Greeks and with most of the other Christian sects of Syria. An interesting additional task was that of extending his goodwill towards Russian and Polish Jews 'one of the elements of the population whom we recently let slip out of our hands against all reason.'[1] Great emphasis was laid on the importance of holding magnificent Russian services in Jerusalem and especially in the Holy Places. His subsidiary tasks were to include the completion of Greek and Arab schools in Jerusalem, the founding of an Arabic press and the printing of service and dogmatic books.[2] His final duty was the 'moral supervision' of the growing numbers of Russian pilgrims who were visiting Palestine.[3]

The authors of these instructions had learned little from Porfiri's experience and the blame could not now be laid at the door of a German Protestant. Onto the political report of Gorchakov had been grafted the religious ideas of the Church leaders. The politicians saw the Syrian Church split into two elements, Greek and Arab, each susceptible of individual treatment whereas the Russian hierarchy saw the Church as a whole and aimed at reconciliation. Thus Cyril was instructed at one and the same time to behave as an autonomous bishop favouring the Arabs and yet to maintain good

[1] Many Jews living in Palestine had been refused Russian passports and had been taken under British protection. For a full account of the affair see Tibawi, *British Interests*, pp. 61–4.

[2] This was a strange proposal as the founding of these schools and the press had been Porfiri's proudest achievement.

[3] Russian pilgrims soon returned to Palestine after the Crimean War. See Finn, ii. p. 457.

relations with the Greeks. The Government was reacting in terms of Great Power politics in insisting on the necessity to raise Russian prestige. This was comprehensible in the atmosphere prevailing in St Petersburg after the defeat in the Crimea, but it was not logical to face the problems of Palestine in these terms. Nevertheless the compromise between Church and State was agreed and Cyril Naumov was created Bishop of Melitopol[1] prior to his departure for Syria. Another result of the compromise was the inadequacy of funds and staff allotted to the mission. About 11,000 roubles were assigned annually to provide for a staff of twelve. This was relatively less than the amount given to Porfiri. Several experts were also attached initially to the staff including Professor V. A. Levinson,[2] a Jewish convert to Orthodoxy who was to advise Cyril on his relations with the Jews, and Archimandrite Gregory, a Constantinople Greek who was to be intermediary in the Turkish capital between Cyril and the Patriarch of Jerusalem.[3]

The mission left St Petersburg in October 1857, arriving in Constantinople in December. Cyril's residence there represents a vital stage in the history of the mission as it was during this time that the foundations of his relationship with the Patriarch of Jerusalem were laid. The patriarch was anxious to convince the Russians that the mission was unnecessary. He promised to build new hostels for Russian pilgrims[4] and to allow Cyril freely to conduct services in the Holy Places. He made an attempt to subject the mission to the authority of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre by offering it accommodation in a Greek monastery. The real motives of the mission were constantly questioned by the patriarch and even the Ecumenical Patriarch expressed his suspicion of its political character. It was after all in its second form an entirely new phenomenon in the history of Russian relations with the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Russian envoy reported to St Petersburg that the British Embassy had sent its agents to question both patriarchs on

[1] No attempt was made to create Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem. By being styled Bishop of Melitopol he was pointedly only a Russian bishop living and working in Jerusalem.

[2] Professor of Hebrew at the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy.

[3] The patriarch had at this time returned to live in Constantinople.

[4] The patriarch stressed the difficulties of supervising the pilgrims. They were greatly given to immorality and drunkenness. When asked why he drank so much one pilgrim replied that for the same money he could drink four times as much in Jerusalem as in Russia.

the character of Cyril's mission,[1] and Butenev tried to assure the French ambassador of the mission's friendly intentions towards the Catholics of the Holy Land. St Petersburg did not wish these intentions to be too friendly however. Count Tolstoi wrote to Gorchakov in February 1858:

> [In the Holy Land] it is fitting and necessary that our priests should have reasonably polite and peaceful relations with the Latins and other non-Orthodox. But from the Latins we must fear some insolence and reluctance to have friendly relations with us . . . Although we cannot give Cyril detailed advice on how to act in these circumstances it seems that he can guard himself against suspicion by telling the Greeks that his [friendly] relationship with the non-Orthodox . . . is the only way of overting political opposition to our mission, which in reality has and can have no other aim than the strengthening of our spiritual ties with the Greek Church.[2]

Cyril himself had few pretensions to diplomacy and completely failed to win over the patriarch. Greek *amour propre* had been outraged by the appointment of the bishop and there could, it seemed, be no reconciliation.

Early in 1858 the first Russian bishop to the Arab world set foot in Palestine. He left Jaffa with an escort which included the Russian Consul-General in Beirut, Greek and Armenian monks and Russian pilgrims. At Ramla they were met by an agha and ten horsemen sent by the Governor of Jerusalem. The walls of the city were covered with people awaiting the caravan. The bishop arrived in triumph.

The Rival

Yet there were still those in Russia who believed that Russia's purposes in the East would not be achieved through the comparatively modest means of the mission. Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich,[3] working independently, had come to the conclusion that further action was needed in Syria. He had been closely concerned with the floating in August 1856 of the Russian Company of Steam Navigation and Trade. It had been formed with the object of squeezing out the Novorossiisk Steamship Expedition, which ran

[1] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1858, no. 381 (Titov, p. 169.)

[2] Ibid., p. 170.

[3] The second son of Nicholas I (1827–92). He interested himself especially in naval and marine affairs and in the Holy Land.

ships to Constantinople, and of rivalling the Société Maritime de Messageries Impériales and the Austrian Lloyd both of which operated services in the Mediterranean. The Company enjoyed imperial patronage and being heavily subsidized by the government was clearly formed for purposes of prestige and political advantage rather than for commercial profit.[1]

The French and Austrian shipping companies had been carrying annually several thousand Orthodox pilgrims to Palestine and it was hoped that the Russian Company would capture this traffic. Consequently the Company decided to establish a direct link between Russia and Palestine, and as a preliminary to a general pilgrim service it was decided to make a survey of the conditions which pilgrims were likely to meet in Palestine. On the orders of Grand Duke Konstantin, B. P. Mansurov was sent to the East 'in the guise of a private traveller' at the end of 1857 'to collect the necessary practical materials'.[2] Mansurov[3] was employed by the Admiralty and was characterized by a contemporary as 'a young man, intelligent, circumspect and quick-witted'.[4] He was a man of strong will, intolerant of opposition, who had the ability to gain approval for his ideas in St Petersburg. On his return from Palestine in December 1857 (immediately before Cyril's arrival in Jerusalem) he submitted his report[5] to Grand Duke Konstantin, of which a few secret copies[6] were printed for private circulation in the capital. It was later abridged and published under the title *Orthodox pilgrims in Palestine*[7] as a guide for visitors to the Holy Land.

The report heralded a more positive and dynamic approach to the problems which Nesselrode and Gorchakov had attempted to solve.

[1] *Morskoi Sbornik*, 1856, no. 12. pp. 60–65. [2] Dmitrievski, p. 18.

[3] Boris Pavlovich Mansurov (1828–1910). He was trained as a lawyer but in 1854 entered the Admiralty. During the Crimean War he was Director of naval hospitals.

[4] Kaminski, *Vospominaniya poklonnika Sv. Groba*, ii. pp. 37–8.

[5] It was divided into six sections: 1. On Russian pilgrims; 2. On the 1st Jerusalem mission; 3. On Catholic and Protestant propaganda; 4. On the 2nd mission and the impossibility of fulfilling its tasks; 5. On the Steamship Company; 6. On funds to guarantee Russian Church affairs in Palestine, on the form of Russian politico-religious intervention in the East and on our determination to strengthen and maintain purely Russian interests in the area.

[6] Wodehouse, the British Ambassador in St Petersburg, was able to see from a 'very secret source' a copy of Mansurov's report on the basis of which he forwarded a despatch to London. (Wodehouse to Malmsbury, 27 March 1858. FO 65/517.)

[7] *Pravoslavnye poklonniki v Palestine*, SPB, 1858.

Since Mansurov was sent out as the representative of a commercial company he was not directly responsible to a government department (although the dividing line between governmental and non-governmental activity was not clearly drawn) but to Grand Duke Konstantin and through him directly to the Tsar. Thus his recommendations could conflict with those of the Foreign Ministry and of the Synod. The British Ambassador in St Petersburg noticed that Mansurov's mission had given 'much offence to Prince Gortchakoff, who regarded it as an intrusion on the part of the Grand Duke on the foreign department.'[1]

Mansurov reported that the situation in the Near East was reaching a critical point for Russia. Syria and Palestine were a battleground for European ambitions from which Russia was almost totally absent. The Christian people of the East needed financial help and political protection which western agencies had been striving to provide.[2] The Orthodox were being converted to Catholicism so that they might gain the advantages of the West: trade, education, and protection. Palestine was being flooded with Catholic monasteries, hospitals, schools, missionaries, and teachers. 'Among the Orthodox population the European elements make more noise and impression than the local authorities and the whole of the Orthodox administration.'[3] Mansurov made the important point that 'such outward circumstance has a great significance because a little-educated people judges by external appearances, sees power where it is obvious and easily adopts beliefs which it can support without difficulty'[4]—telling words, even had they not come from the man who was to direct Russian policy in Syria for the following quarter of a century. He emphasized that although western efforts were not made by the Governments themselves, the missionaries and clergy were supported and protected by them. Russia had never played her part in the East. An occasional pilgrim had visited the Holy Places and had distributed alms. 'We have nowhere left visible and permanent reminders of the love of the Russian Church for the Eastern.'[5] 'The Greeks have been the

[1] Wodehouse to Malmsbury, 13 March 1858. (FO 65/516.)

[2] In the report, 'western' chiefly implied French but at times included English, American, and Italian, that is Roman Catholic or Protestant, while Russia is equated with Orthodoxy. Mansurov believed with justification that the Arabs regarded the Powers likewise.

[3] Mansurov, p. 100. [4] Ibid. [5] Ibid., p. 102.

masters in Jerusalem and we have been merely tolerated guests.'[1] Consequently, Catholics and Protestants alike continually demanded: Where are the signs of the compassion of the Russian people? Where are the monasteries, the Russian clergy, hostels, hospitals, and schools?

The almost entire absence of Russia from the scene was painful and humiliating and an exposure of neglect by the Church. The bishop in Jerusalem could hope to achieve little. Russia would have to work in the two areas in which the other powers had reaped most success—those of demonstrating her strength, wealth, and piety, and of supporting her co-religionaries. The ideal agent to further these ends was the Steamship Company. In the words of the British ambassador:

> It was impossible, said Mansurov, to watch passively developments in the Levant. Direct political intervention by Russia would be difficult as it would be impossible 'to deceive the sharp watchfulness of our adversaries'. But the Company of Steam Navigation and Trade would provide 'a number of useful voluntary agents to establish [the government's] influence in the East' . . . It would 'by its own commercial strength . . . labour daily for the benefit of Russia, and . . . assume a character entirely in accordance with her political wants'.[2]

To accomplish this the Company would need to establish new sources of income and then in opposition to Gorchakov's plans[3] 'introduce our intervention in the East in such a non-political manner as to disarm our opponents and abandon for the time being thoughts of political and religious propaganda.'[4]

Mansurov demanded little public money for his projects, apart from Government and Synod help in establishing Russian foundations in Palestine and 20,000 roubles a year from the Company. He would tap the 'inexhaustible source'—the offerings of the Russian peasant. Typical of the complicated nature of the report is the suggestion that money thus collected should be administered not by the Foreign Ministry or the Synod but by the Company. Russia's non-political role in the East was to be given a 'speculative' character. The Company would assume responsibility for all pilgrims and by assisting them to visit the Holy Land would be

[1] *Kniga bytya moevo*, vii. p. 126.
[2] Wodehouse to Malmsbury, 27 March 1858. (FO 65/517).
[3] Mansurov seems to have had little idea of these plans.
[4] Dmitrievski, p. 19.

furthering Government ends. The display of Russian piety would, in Mansurov's view, help to counteract the effects of western activity in the region. Moreover, Mansurov felt that Russian peasants needed surveillance when abroad. 'Our people are not such that it is possible to leave them . . . without active surveillance and without such leaders as they understand and are accustomed to respect.'[1] A consul would be sent to Jerusalem and the Company would willingly 'shoulder a proportion of the necessary expenditure' on condition that he combined the function of consul with that of agent of the Company, which would even allow him to be an undercover agent not openly concerned with commercial matters. A house would be built for the consulate using the money donated by the Russian people. The consulate would be combined with an agency and be built together with a church, pilgrim hostels, a hospital and accommodation for the mission in one compound in Jerusalem. It was the administration of this group of buildings that was to cause constant friction amongst Russian officials. Mansurov foresaw this difficulty and tried to legislate for it in advance but his very imprecision was the cause of dispute. 'Political protection and help in affairs of civil life will be the responsiblity of the consul, care of morality and religious activity will be the responsibility of the mission and care of material needs and welfare will be the joint responsibility of the mission and the Company.'[2] The representative of the Company was the consul and consequently the direction of all pilgrim affairs was to be the duty of both bishop and consul. Mansurov also proposed that agencies of the Company should be opened in Constantinople, Smyrna, Beirut, Haifa, and Alexandria together with hostels, churches, and quarters for the consul-agent. The agency in Beirut would help the government to achieve one of its aims, that 'the mission should extend its influence into the Patriarchate of Antioch.'[3] As he had earlier emphasized that western activities were not government directed he was at great pains to ensure that the Russian Government's share in his plans was completely hidden not only in the East but also in St Petersburg where the undertaking was to be given a private character, enjoying, however, official sympathy.

The Arabs were given little prominence in Mansurov's report.

[1] Wodehouse to Malmsbury. 27th March 1858 (FO65/517).
[2] Dmitrievski, p. 22.
[3] Ibid., p. 23.

They did not form an essential part of his plans and he had even suggested that their interests could be temporarily laid aside if circumstances so demanded. His recommendations for help are not cited in detail but his ideas can be gleaned from his observations on the successes of the European Powers among the Arabs. In his opinion Russia had to adopt their methods if she were to stop the flow of converts. Men and money were the two requirements. 'It is little enough on our part to love Orthodoxy and to pray for its triumph—prayer without good works is fruitless. We must demonstrate the sincerity of our feelings by real concern—and concern consists of monetary gifts and personal service because the Eastern Orthodox Church is poor in both financial resources and people.'[1]

While Mansurov had clearly recognized the shortcomings of Russia's policy in the East and the advantages being gained by the other Powers he did not see Russia's future role as clearly. Porfiri had been the agent of Government and Church and had enjoyed, at least in the beginning, their unofficial support. Cyril Naumov was their official agent. Mansurov now submitted plans which only grudgingly admitted the existence of the mission and which visualized its almost total camouflage under a commercial and speculative cloak. Its chief task was openly to support the Arab Orthodox population and yet he put forward no concrete proposals. It is not surprising that other Russians regarded the newcomer with suspicion. For Cyril the idea of a shipping agency in Jerusalem was so anomalous that he felt it was bound to be in a false position from the beginning. Metropolitan Filaret supported him, taking the view that the building of churches, hospitals, and hostels was more properly the concern of the mission. As a church official he was disturbed by the unprecedented proposal that offerings collected in Russian churches should be administered by a steamship company. He suggested also that such money would be money wasted. 'Foreign governments spend only hundreds of roubles on founding an agency in order to increase traffic and thereby make thousands of roubles profit; what if we, having spent thousands on an agency, may only make a few hundreds?'[2] Those who held opposite views maintained that more important than commercial profit was the gaining of political influence among the Arabs, but Filaret insisted that Russia should aim only at increasing their good will and exerting

[1] Mansurov, p. 104. [2] Filaret, p. 378.

a moral influence over them. Political, religious, and commercial motives were becoming confused. He foresaw difficulties and his advice was to reconcile conflicting aims and parties and thus avoid confusion and bitterness. This advice was ignored and he quickly saw his fears realized.

Grand Duke Konstantin, having read Mansurov's report and approved his plans in principle, passed it on to Porfiri with a request for his comments and recommendations.[1] Porfiri was largely in agreement with Mansurov and welcomed the proposal to send to Jerusalem a consul who would be able to protect Russian pilgrims from Greek exploitation.[2] He agreed that the hour was past for Russian action on a modest scale. 'It is time to stop being subjected to the Greeks. It is time we took over command.'[3] He expanded his views into a Dostoevskian vision of the future: 'Orthodoxy will triumph eventually. Constantinople will be ours. We must have . . . our representatives throughout the Arab East. We must have the shipping company, consuls and large amounts of money. All these are necessary to support and uplift Orthodoxy. Everything else is a half-measure.'[4]

Gorchakov too read Mansurov's report and praised it immoderately on finding that it censured Nesselrode's policy, but on reading that his own policy over the second mission was also censured he demanded its immediate suppression.[5] In February 1858 he arranged a meeting with Grand Duke Konstantin, the Procurator, Mansurov, and Brok (the Minister of Finance) at which the report was discussed. The meeting decided to collect money by subscription for further developments in Jerusalem; to found churches at the consulates of Smyrna, Beirut, and Alexandria; to send doctors to serve in the East; to increase the staff of the mission; to found a consulate in Jerusalem, and to send an expedition to Syria under the leadership of Mansurov.[6] It was also proposed to maintain all Arab priests in Palestine at Russian expense.[7] In order to co-ordinate and bring to fruition all these plans, in March 1858 the Tsar decreed the foundation of the Palestine Committee.

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 16. p. 506.

[2] Otvet na nedavnie izvestiya s Siona, December 1857. (Bezobrazov, i. p. 429.)

[3] Ibid., p. 432. [4] Ibid., p. 455. [5] *Kniga bytya moevo*, vii. p. 152.

[6] Porfiri was to go out with the expedition. Gorchakov agreed to this only on condition that he did not interfere at all with the mission in Jerusalem and that he paid due respect to Cyril. [7] A proposal which was never realized.

5

SLAVONIC DISSENSIONS

IN 1858 Russia was preparing to re-enter Syria, not, it is true, on any massive scale, but in a manner hitherto unattempted. Her re-entry coincided with a period of growth and change in the country. Better communications were being developed, opportunities for trade and education were increasing. Towns such as Damascus were growing in prosperity despite the poverty of the countryside. The impetus for these developments came largely from the opening of the country to western penetration. The earlier missionaries and teachers had been pioneers in every sense. By 1860 they had greater security and more freedom of action. Ottoman reforms had ostensibly brought greater freedom to the Christian communities among whom they worked, but they had also brought their dangers and temptations. The Muslim population resented the improvements brought about in the lives of the Christians who were not averse to flaunting their newly acquired liberties. Muslim resentment increased and manifested itself in sporadic outbreaks of violence which culminated in the Christian-Druze disturbances in Lebanon and in massacres of Christians in Damascus.

Cyril Naumov began his work full of confidence and enthusiasm and yet uneasy about the magnitude of his responsibilities.[1] Porfiri had left at a time when he had come to terms with the patriarch and accepted the limited role of his mission. He had to a large extent gained the confidence of the patriarch and both had recognized that the mission offered no conceivable threat to Greek control of the patriarchate. This same patriarch who had returned to Jerusalem[2] soon after Cyril's arrival had now to face a quite different problem. An officially recognized mission headed by a bishop was very different from Porfiri with his two students. He could either obstruct the mission with the consequent risk of losing Russian support, or co-operate and by so doing attempt to force the mission

[1] He wrote to the former Rector of the St Petersburg Academy: 'My spirit is calm . . . and I am proud to hold the appointment . . . but the responsibility is terribly great and the assignment much too wide.' (Titov, p. 10.)

[2] In July 1858.

into reliance on the Greek Brotherhood. He tried to do both. Cyril was anxious in the early days of his appointment to free himself entirely from reliance on the Greeks and even to work actively against them.

> One of our most important preliminary tasks here is to free the mission and our pilgrims (possibly pilgrims first and then the mission) from the power of the Greeks. The patriarch would very much like to crush us to his bosom and suffocate us in his embrace. That is why he is so ready not only to give up the house already occupied by the mission but also to build a house for a consul about whom there is already talk in the patriarchate.[1]

Cyril's difficulties in his relations with the Greeks were listed in his report for the following year[2] which was passed for comment to Filaret,[3] who, as a senior member of the Holy Synod, was often consulted both by the Chancellor and Procurator. Being anxious to maintain the dignity of the Church and at the same time preserve good relations with the Greeks, Filaret often disapproved of the activities of the mission. Cyril complained that the most philanthropic Russian action aroused some degree of opposition and that it was impossible to intervene directly in the internal affairs of the Greek monasteries. Comments of this nature irritated Filaret who remarked that such interference was not at all the business of the mission. The confusion over the purpose of the mission was beginning to deepen only a year or so after its re-establishment.

Greek hostility increased, especially as it was believed that the mission's work in Jerusalem was the cause of a fall in the income of the patriarchate. It was true that the amount going to the Greeks decreased, but none of this money reached Cyril. Money from collections taken in Russian churches for use in Jerusalem, instead of going directly to the patriarchate, was from 1859 onwards being used by the Palestine Committee to help to finance its building programme. The atmosphere in Jerusalem worsened and the Greeks began to suspect that Cyril was working to usurp their rights.[4] He confided in a letter to Metropolitan Nikanor in Russia: 'I watch the miserable cowardice with which they [the Greeks] follow all my observations on the local order of affairs, or rather the extreme

[1] Otchet missii, 1858. Arkhiv Sinoda, 1858, no. 389, printed by Titov.

[2] It appears that Cyril only submitted reports for 1858 and 1859 and that most of his work was accomplished during those years.

[3] Otzyv Filareta ob otchete preosvyashchennovo Kirilla, 1859. (Filaret, p. 377 ff.)

[4] Titov, p. 223.

disorder . . . It seems to be their practice to hinder me in anything that could confirm me here, make me more independent, or provide the means whereby I could offer greater help to the local Christians.'[1] Cyril was seriously contemplating a complete severance of relations with the patriarch who had been heard speaking of the 'evil mission' when the patriarch experienced a sudden change of mood and agreed to co-operate with the Russians.[2] He promised to stamp out any abuses, especially Greek exploitation of Russian pilgrims. Little came of these promises but the good relations between the two men seem to have continued until Cyril's recall. With the arrival of the Palestine Committee the bishop became more or less a non-entity in Jerusalem and so less feared by the Greeks.

Another problem which both Cyril and Porfiri had to face was the impossibility of reconciling the immensity of the task set them in St Petersburg with the means and the staff available in Palestine. Cyril complained in 1859 that it had been impossible to complete even one third of his allotted work. He asked for extra staff only three months after his arrival. Although the Procurator and Synod agreed to his request the Foreign Ministry refused to meet any further expenses. This cheeseparing on the part of Gorchakov was particularly difficult for Cyril to bear as it had been the Foreign Minister himself who had wanted the 'splendid ritual' of the Russian mass to be seen in Jerusalem. Cyril wrote to him in November 1860: 'From the very beginning of my service in Jerusalem I have been able to foresee the difficulties that the inadequacy of staff would cause . . . But the staff of the mission has not been enlarged . . . and I have had to forego services even on the days of the great festivals and celebrations.'[3] The bishop proposed a staff of eighteen, but Gorchakov declined even to consider this proposal and in 1864 Filaret was writing about the 'wretched mission with its four members.'[4] Nor could Cyril obtain from St Petersburg any clear directive on what course his work should take once he had jettisoned his original instructions. As late as 1861 he was still asking for guidance. He request was passed to Filaret.

[1] Titov, pp. 223–4.

[2] A Patriarch of Jerusalem had no security of tenure and had to work hard to maintain his position. It is probable that by this time the patriarch was already facing opposition from his Synod. This opposition grew, until 10 years later he was deposed by them.

[3] Letter to Gorchakov, 17 November 1860, Arkhiv Sinoda. (Titov, pp. 126–7.)

[4] Filaret, p. 423.

It is difficult to give Cyril the clearer instructions he expects. It is desirable that good works are undertaken in the East which are immediately useful and obvious to all and about which reliable information is spread in Russia. It is not known to what extent Cyril follows this rule. It is rumoured in Russia that large sums of money have passed through his hands, but it is not known where they go . . . and perhaps they are used in such a way that information about it would not command sympathy.[1]

Despite all obstacles Cyril's stay was not entirely fruitless but his achievements were confined to the period of his first two years in Jerusalem. 'We have done whatever it has been possible to do,' he wrote in 1858.[2] 'We have used the temporary presence in Jerusalem of Prince Obolenski[3] and General Isakov[4] as a means of persuading the patriarch not to hinder me in opening a hospital, even though it is only a small one. I threatened to reveal to them all the difficulties which the Greeks make for our pilgrims.'[5] He succeeded in opening this small hospital in rooms rented from the patriarch. He refused, however, to try to found any schools in Jerusalem but recommended that Russia should limit herself to the support of the few existing schools. During the early days he held services which were intended to impress the residents of the city. Especial prominence was given to the liturgy celebrating the name-day of the Tsar, a service which had been celebrated in the past but which had lapsed since the Crimean War. Cyril re-introduced the custom which had a great political significance and was meant as a demonstration of Russian concern for the Orthodox East. Permission was given by the Governor to hold in addition a celebration to which all foreign ecclesiastics and consuls were invited. During the reception shots were fired in honour of the Tsar—'One had to be in Jerusalem at that moment, one had to see the exultation of the people.'[6]

A seemingly trivial matter, yet one of importance for European diplomacy, was brought to light by Cyril in 1861. He wrote to Count Tolstoi, the Procurator, about the repair of the cupola of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.[7] This was a further thorny problem

[1] Filaret, p. 396. [2] Otchet missii.

[3] Prince Dmitri Aleksandrovich Obolenski (1822–81), at the time a member of the Admiralty and of the Palestine Committee.

[4] Nikolai Vasilevich Isakov (1821–91), general, and member of the Council of State. [5] Otchet missii, 1858.

[6] Report from Cyril to the Envoy in Constantinople, Arkhiv MID, 1857, no. 10. (Titov, p. 218.) [7] Filaret, p. 385.

of the type raised in the disputes over the Holy Places. Although the affair was primarily an Orthodox concern, Russia feared Catholic intervention if the Greeks attempted the repair independently. An alternative plan, and one abhorrent to Orthodox and Catholic alike, was that the Sultan should undertake the work. The solution favoured by many Russians, including the Tsar, was that of Franco-Russian co-operation, a solution which, according to Lobanov-Rostovski,[1] the Envoy in Constantinople, 'would probably have important political consequences.'[2] Lobanov feared that news of the co-operation of the Tsar with Napoleon III would be badly received by the Orthodox people. Filaret's question was: 'Is it better for a heathen sultan to work on the Sepulchre or for two Christian kings to stand aside inactive?'[3] Also there remained in St Petersburg memories of the recent consequences of Russian opposition to French diplomacy. Although the main developments took place in St Petersburg and Constantinople, the Russian Consul in Jerusalem, A. N. Kartsov, was able to smooth the path for future co-operation as he maintained friendly relations with both the French consul and the Latin patriarch.[4] Negotiations between the French and the Russians led to an agreement and in September 1862 a protocol[5] was signed by the two Powers and Turkey for the repair of the cupola. Work started in January 1867 and was completed in 1869. In August of that year the key to the cupola was handed to the Patriarch of Jerusalem by the Turkish Governor, Nazif Paṣa, in the presence of Kozhevnikov, the Russian consul.[6] This Franco-Russian association was an important step towards healing the divisions of the Crimean War.

Although Cyril had initiated the moves which culminated in the repair of the cupola, there his role ceased and the Russian consul ostentatiously debarred him from any further participation. And the obstructiveness and strength of the Greeks in Jerusalem caused him to seek more fruitful fields of activity. Significantly it was to the Patriarchate of Antioch that he turned. He made two journeys

[1] Prince Aleksei Borisovich Lobanov-Rostovski (1824–96), Envoy in Constantinople 1859–63, Ambassador 1878–9.

[2] Filaret, p. 386.

[3] Ibid. The Tsar's marginal comment was, 'This is quite correct and I do not understand how it is possible to think otherwise.'

[4] Kartsov, *Za kulisami diplomatii*, p. i.

[5] Collin, *Le problème juridique des Lieux-Saints* (Documents), p. 160, Protocole pour la restauration de la coupole du Saint-Sepulcre.

[6] Moschopoulos, *Terre Sainte*, p. 313.

to Syria and Lebanon—in the winter of 1858 and in the autumn of 1860. Like Porfiri, Cyril was impressed by the Arab Orthodox population who, although often very poor, were lively and independent with a keen desire for education. He wrote to Gorchakov that the future nursery for any national hierarchy was certainly not Jerusalem but Antioch.[1] Cyril found in the people a strong affection for Russia. 'I am not afraid to assert that all these people live only by their belief in Russia, by their hope in Russia. They are convinced that the throne of Orthodoxy is now in Russia.'[2] He was greeted in many town with enthusiasm for Russia and the Tsar. In Damascus the streets were crowded on his arrival and a solemn service of welcome was held in the cathedral. The resources of the patriarchate were considerably smaller than those of Jerusalem and the patriarch, Ierotheos, who wished to help his people, was willing to accept Russian help without which he could have hoped to accomplish little. Churches remained uncompleted, schools were disorganized and there were no hospital facilities. Cyril could offer help on Russia's behalf only in isolated cases. Small monetary gifts were sent to monasteries, churches, and schools and a plot of land was bought near Beirut for a Russo-Arab school.

Cyril returned to Syria in 1860 to find that the country had been rent by the disorders and massacres in Lebanon. Maronite-Druze tension had been rising until in 1860 great disturbances broke out. The causes were complex, it being both a religious and a social conflict between Maronite peasants and Druze landowners. Thousands of Christians were killed in various parts of Lebanon while the Turkish authorities looked on indifferently or at times gave active encouragement. The slaughter spread to Damascus where some thousands of Christians were killed by the Muslim mob. Damascus had been a more strictly orthodox Muslim city in which changes in Christian status had been resented more fiercely, and in addition the Christian population had been growing in prosperity while many of the Muslims were suffering economic hardship. The Muslims felt their traditional dominant position to be threatened. This, together with Ottoman reluctance or inability to intervene, led to increasing violence until in June 1860 full scale massacres broke out. These tragedies led to the intervention of the Powers. France wanted to intervene on behalf of the Maronites, but Russell, the British Foreign Secretary in Palmerston's

[1] Otchet missii, 1858. [2] Ibid. (Titov, p. 256.)

Government, disapproved of independent French action and wanted the proposed intervention to be regulated by a special convention. Gorchakov, deeply dissatisfied with the progress of the reforms promised in the Hatt-ı Hümâyûn, agreed to this in principle but insisted that a secret article should be inserted by which the Powers engaged to ameliorate the situation of all Ottoman Christians.[1] This England and France rejected and action agreed upon in the convention was confined to the specific case of the Lebanon. France sent out a military expedition but found that order had largely been restored by the Ottoman authorities. A large army had been sent to Syria and the country was placed under military rule. Many of the instigators of the riots were executed, other Muslims were disarmed, conscription was introduced and a special tax was imposed to compensate for Christian losses. These strict measures averted further outbreaks but did not remove the major cause of tension. At the same time an international commission was set up to investigate the causes of the disturbances and to make proposals for the re-organization of Lebanon. Russia was concerned for the Orthodox Arabs living on the Mountain and her commissioner, Nelidov, proposed that three kaimakams be appointed to govern Lebanon—a Druze, a Maronite, and an Orthodox.[2] Although this proposal was rejected and an autonomous Lebanon established under a Christian Governor, one of the six administrative districts was placed under an Orthodox Arab and the Governor was to be advised by a local administrative council of twelve elected members of whom two were to be Orthodox. The future of the country was guaranteed by a règlement signed by the Powers. In September 1860 Cyril met the Russian commissioner in Beirut. A number of Russian warships were anchored at the time in the Beirut roads and on one of them the bishop conducted a service attended by the commissioner, the ships' crews and a large number of local inhabitants.[3] After the massacres in Damascus the Patriarch of Antioch received a large indemnity from the Ottoman authorities part of which he used to open boys' and girls' schools in the city. These were subsequently supported by Russian money sent both from Cyril and from private individuals, including the Tsaritsa.

Cyril's attention was further absorbed in Syria by the question of the Uniate Christians. These were Orthodox Arabs who had

[1] Charles-Roux, *Alexandre II, Gortchakoff et Napoléon III*, p. 293.
[2] Témoin oculaire, *Souvenirs de Syrie (1860)*, p. 280. [3] Titov, p. 299.

accepted the supremacy of the Pope yet were permitted to retain their vernacular liturgy and their married priests. There were thus few external differences between Orthodox and Uniates and Cyril believed that most of the Orthodox had only accepted Uniatism as a protest against their Greek hierarchy and that if the reason for their discontent were removed Uniatism would collapse. The Uniate patriarch was working for their full conversion and wanted to introduce the Gregorian calendar. This created a division within his church which split into two parties, one of which—the 'Eastern'—opposed the new calendar and was excommunicated by the Uniate patriarch.[1] Cyril, with the Tsar's approval, was determined that they should be brought back into the Orthodox Church. The Greeks, who had shown hostility to the Arab Uniates, did not want reunion and the Uniates asked for official Russian protection. Cyril claimed that he would have to act quickly to save some tens of thousands of Uniates and possibly even to save the Patriarchate of Antioch itself.[2] Official Russian protection was unconditionally refused but Cyril took them under his private protection, paying their priests and visiting their churches. He believed there could be no reunion until the relationship of Greek with Arab was essentially changed yet he could not approve a Russian protected splinter group within the Church. Appealing to St Petersburg for guidance[3] like Porfiri he found the 'North very cold'. There was little then that he could do, but in the company of the Beirut consul he continued to meet the dissident Uniate leaders who agreed to preserve their Orthodox doctrines and to maintain contact with the Orthodox patriarch. The disturbances in Lebanon undoubtedly hindered the process of reunion.[4] In October 1860 the leaders travelled to Constantinople where they stated their conditions for reunion, the chief being that their bishops and clergy should be Arab. This was accepted by the four patriarchs on behalf of 5,000 Uniates[5] but it is probable that many of them returned to Uniatism and that by 1865 only a small minority remained excommunicated.[6]

Cyril's work for the Uniates in 1860 and 1861 was his last significant achievement for he returned to Jerusalem to find that the

[1] Fortescue, *The Uniate Eastern Churches*, p. 221.

[2] Otchet missii, 1858, Titov, p. 277.

[3] Filaret, p. 394. Otzyv Filareta 'o pis'me Kirilla . . . po delu o mel'khitakh.'

[4] Titov, p. 299, Fortescue, p. 221. [5] Titov, p. 303.

[6] Fortescue, p. 222, writes in 1923, 'I believe the whole "schism" is now ended', while Titov implies that all 5,000 returned to Orthodoxy.

advent of his rival, the Palestine Committee, had placed him in a most unfavourable position. As soon as the Tsar had approved the founding of the Committee in 1858 plans were laid for its work. Although Mansurov had stressed in his report the importance of the Company of Steam Navigation and Trade, it now played little part. The Committee itself was a semi-official body under the presidency of Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich and under the active direction of Mansurov. It also enjoyed the patronage of the Tsar and the enthusiastic support of the Tsaritsa. The first essential of the Committee's success was a sum of money large enough to finance its ambitious schemes. Grand Duke Konstantin wrote[1] that the main source of income would have to be an appeal to the Russian people. With the Tsar's permission Mansurov arranged that annual collections should be taken in the churches of the Russian Empire 'for the benefit of Russian pilgrims.'[2] The appeal proved successful and during the years 1859–64 almost 300,000 roubles were contributed by Russian congregations. Private individuals and organizations gave 200,000 roubles and an appeal to the Tsar and the treasury produced a further 500,000. This gift was made in answer to a letter from Konstantin to the Minister of Finance Knyazhevich.[3] 'I know only too well the present difficult position of the state treasury . . . but the business which we have undertaken in the East may have so many beneficial results for our church and our political influence that without any doubt it would be more useful for the government not to refuse to give a small amount.'[4] By 1864 there were in the treasury of the Committee over one million roubles and as early as 1859 Mansurov knew that he had a guaranteed income for the immediate future. In the previous year his expedition had visited Palestine and Syria with the special aim of obtaining building land in Palestine. Included in the expedition were two architects and Porfiri Uspenski who was making his final journey to the East.[5] Mansurov chose a suitable

[1] To the Procurator in 1859. (Dmitrievski, p. 25.)

[2] *Soobshcheniya*, 21. p. 449.

[3] Aleksandr Maksimovich Knyazhevich (1792–1870).

[4] 24 February 1859. (Dimitrievski, p. 26.)

[5] Porfiri landed in Palestine in February 1860 and was warmly received by the Greek monks who gave him excellent quarters. Through the window of his cell he watched Cyril Naumov entertaining his guests in the 'Porfiri' house. (*Kniga bytya moevo*, vii. p. 227.) He later had a cold and restrained meeting with Cyril. He was gratified to find in good order the printing press, the seminary and the boys' and girls' schools—'all of which were founded—he proudly noted—not

site outside the walls of Jerusalem for the main complex of Russian buildings and various subsidiary plots throughout Palestine. He also arranged temporary accommodation for Russian pilgrims by renting houses in Jerusalem and elsewhere.[1]

Conversations with the Turkish Government over the purchase of land in Palestine were protracted until in April 1859 Grand Duke Konstantin, 'the first imperial pilgrim',[2] went out at the Tsar's request to complete the negotiations. Cyril received him with a magnificent service of welcome in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Konstantin personally negotiated the purchase of the sites recommended by Mansurov. The largest purchase was the *Maidan* which dominated the city of Jerusalem from the North and derived its name from the fact that the site had been the traditional parade-ground of the Turkish garrison[3] and a favourite promenade for the citizens of Jerusalem. French writers saw it as a strategic point from which different conquerors had besieged the city.[4] Four other plots were bought in the neighbourhood of the city in addition to a small piece of land inside the city walls and adjacent to the Holy Sepulchre. A large site was acquired on the Mount of Olives together with smaller plots in other parts of Palestine.

On his return to Russia Konstantin enthusiastically supervised the drawing up of architects' plans for the projected buildings in Palestine. Local craftsmen were engaged and work was started almost immediately. Plans[5] for the *Maidan* included a cathedral, a house for the mission, a hospital and two pilgrim hostels. The work proceeded slowly and by October 1863 only the mission house, hospital and men's hostel had been completed. In December it was decided to transfer the consulate from the centre of Jerusalem into the compound but the move was delayed by lack of money. In the

without my assistance.' (Ibid.) The Arabic books printed on the press lay unused, however, as the Arabs refused to buy them. (Titov, p. 248). On his return to Russia Porfiri was created vicariate bishop of the important see of Kiev. During his residence there he did much of the scholarly work which made him famous, working on materials gathered during his journeys in the East. He died in 1885 aged 81.

[1] *Otchet o merakh prinyatykh k uluchsheniyu byta pravoslavnykh palomnikov v Palestine*, pp. 57–65.

[2] Graham, p. 99.

[3] The last important event held on the *Maidan* was a parade of Turkish troops leaving for the Crimean War.

[4] Verney and Dambmann, *Les puissances étrangères dans le Levant, en Syrie et en Palestine*, p. 77.

[5] *Otchet o merakh*, pp. 67–8.

following spring the women's hostel was finished and the shell of the cathedral had been built. By this time the Committee was rapidly coming to the end of its resources. Nevertheless the chief features of the compound had been completed. It was a compound striking in its size and impressive to all who saw it, 'tout à la fois palais, hospice et forteresse, destinées à frapper l'imagination des Orientaux et des pèlerins, et à leur montrer la puissance de la Russie.'[1] Russia could at last begin to approach Porfiri's dream of her being the mistress of her own destiny in Palestine independent of the Greeks. Her pilgrims would be sheltered in Russian property and consequently be under greater discipline and less exposed to Greek cupidity. Slavs and Arabs would be able to witness Russian services in the new cathedral. It seemed then that many of Russia's hopes were on the point of being realized when they were dashed by the persistent conflict between Church and civil authorities now to be played out in Jerusalem on a more bitter and personal level.

Cyril was the sole Russian agent in Jerusalem (for a few months only). Following Mansurov's recommendations an office for the consul-agent of the Steamship Company was opened in the city in February 1858 and the first agent, Dorogobuzhinov, arrived in August. He was a clerk in the Admirality who had 'never taken any interest in Palestine or in church or eastern affairs.'[2] Cyril, immediately the plans for the consul-agent were known, felt the chill blast of the coming crisis. 'A subject which distresses me'—he wrote to E. P. Kovalevski[3] in June 1858—'is the obscurity of my position. The dispositions of the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs], the news from the Constantinople mission, coming indirectly from the mission or from Mansurov without any prior information, without any explanation, concerning my appointment... place me in an extremely embarrassing position.'[4] Gorchakov believed that the arrival of a consul would help the bishop by taking from him the trivial routine matters more properly belonging to the consulate. But Cyril continued to be anxious and in October wrote to the Envoy in Constantinople saying that he feared clashes with the consul (or as he termed him, '*gospodin* agent of the Company, directing the consulate').[5] The consul was at first sympathetic but Cyril was

[1] Verney and Dambmann, p. 131. [2] Khitrovo, *Nedelya v Palestine*, p. 62.

[3] Egor Petrovich Kovalevski (1811–68), Director of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1856–61.

[4] Arkhiv MID, 1858, Jerusalem Mission. (Titov, p. 400.)

[5] Titov, p. 403.

unwilling to commit himself. He cautiously added to his despatch, 'I refrain for the present from final judgement on our business relations.'[1] Towards the end of 1858 he visited Syria, leaving his affairs in the city in a satisfactory state. On his return, battle was joined. He immediately noticed a change in the consul's attitude and their differences appeared on the surface. 'On my return, not only our pilgrims but Greeks and Turks rushed up to me . . . with loud complaints against the consul, claiming that he was acting against me. I could not believe my ears . . . even when he decided to refuse to take part in organizing the pilgrim caravan to the Jordan . . . because the pilgrims had not laid a humble request before him.'[2] In the close conditions of Jerusalem and in the atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust which the city seemed to foster, the common aim of advancing Russia's cause was lost sight of and the two men were soon at loggerheads. It was recognized that the root cause of their discord lay in the ambiguous nature of the consul-agent's position and Cyril recommended that the agency should be completely severed from the consulate.[3] He enclosed with his report for 1858 a private letter to Gorchakov in which he detailed his disputes with Dorogobuzhinov. The letter was passed to the Tsar whose comment was, 'I shall wait for my brother's opinion.'[4]

Konstantin was very favourably disposed towards Cyril during his visit to Jerusalem. Part of his brief was to investigate the causes and course of the quarrel between the bishop and consul. He recommended that nothing should be undertaken in Palestine without the bishop's agreement[5] and went on to define in detail their respective spheres of responsibility.[6] Mansurov believed that these instructions would prevent further misunderstandings but far from being definitive they caused greater confusion, the more especially as Cyril's role was virtually reduced to that of father-confessor to the pilgrims. He not unnaturally took exception to any erosion of his responsibilities and retaliated by waging war with the Committee over matters of precedence, while the Committee, continually hindered in its work by such interference, lost all confidence in Cyril. 'An unhappy Slavonic dissension arose in Palestine.'[7] Mansurov, who was chiefly to blame for having introduced into Palestine the tangled web of responsibilities, did nothing

[1] Titov, p. 404. [2] Arkhiv Sv. Sinoda, 1858, no. 389. (Titov, p. 406.)
[3] *Otchet missii*, 1858. [4] Dmitrievski, p. 33. [5] Ibid., p. 37.
[6] *Dela Palestinskoi Komissii*, 1884, no. 44. [7] Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie*, p. 88.

to rectify his mistakes. In fact he advanced the cause of consul and Committee whenever he was able. In August 1859 he took over the hospital which Cyril had founded and insisted that all the latter's proposals for pilgrim welfare should first be approved by the consul.

One beneficial result of Konstantin's visit was that the unfeasible combination of consul and agent in one person was discontinued and in 1860 Dorogobuzhinov was recalled. His immediate successor, Sokolov, died after a few months at his post and Kartsov, a former Consul in Roumania, was appointed in 1861. Instead of Cyril's position being eased he found that he now had to contend with a professional diplomat who was determined to tolerate no rival and who had the powerful support of Count Ignatev,[1] Director of the Asiatic Department, and during the following two years he was condemned to almost total inactivity. He took no part in the planning and building of the Russian compound although the mission house formed an important part of the scheme.

It was only a matter of time before agitation for Cyril's dismissal began. With Mansurov's support in St Petersburg Kartsov asserted that a bishop was of too exalted a rank to run the mission. Gorchakov did not agree: 'In general the Ministry does not consider it necessary from a political point of view that the mission should always have a bishop at its head and sees no obstacles to the appointment of an archimandrite, but . . . it is thought that his [Cyril's] removal at present would be inconvenient.'[2] The suitability of a bishop in the East was called into question also during discussions which took place in St Petersburg on the appropriate person to direct the new compound in Jerusalem.[3] The Procurator proposed that it should be run as a monastery with an archimandrite as abbot who would be responsible to the Synod and not to the bishop. Gorchakov suggested a layman as warden of the hostels while Filaret maintained that a bishop should take overall charge assisted by an archimandrite. Gorchakov, supported by Mansurov, finally prevailed and a layman responsible through the consul to the Synod was appointed.

Kartsov now turned to slander and in a series of reports to St Petersburg and in his personal letters criticized Cyril's private life

[1] Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatev (1832–1908). His diplomatic career began at the Congress of Paris. He was Director of the Asiatic Department from 1861–4.

[2] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1857, no. 4214. (Filaret, p. 398.)

[3] Donesenie s mneniem 'o soobrazheniyakh i proekte upravleniya bogougodnymi zavedeniyami v Palestine.' 29 April 1863. (Ibid., p. 397 ff.)

and mode of behaviour without, it appears, any justification.[1] In June 1862 he submitted a report to the Asiatic Department 'On the way of life of Bishop Cyril',[2] suggesting that Cyril was subservient to the Greeks and that it would be better to send to Jerusalem 'an archimandrite, not known for his intellectual abilities alone but for good, honourable behaviour and a strict, exemplary life.'[3] The consul descended further and he went on to describe Cyril as 'a man with actor's capabilities, an alcoholic liable to fits of delirium tremens, a buffoon who surrounds himself with Arab comedians and women.'[4] Strangely, the Tsar took the report seriously, writing to Gorchakov, 'It would be extremely sad if this were true. But even rumours would be enough to secure his dismissal.'[5] The Foreign Ministry referred the matter to the Synod which on July 3rd 1863 requested the Procurator to submit to the Tsar the following recommendations: to dismiss Cyril; to appoint him abbot of a monastery in Kazan; to select an archimandrite as director of the mission.[6] The Tsar accepted all the recommendations on the following day. Cyril received the imperial ukaz six days later and reacted by sending a long and petulant letter[7] to Akhmatov,[8] the Procurator, in which he described his dismissal as a conviction without trial. 'I have read my sentence, but I still do not know who my accusers are or of what I am accused . . . My dismissal accords to no rules, God's, Man's, civil or ecclesiastical.'[9] Akhmatov dishonestly assured Cyril that his dismissal was only the result of an administrative decision and implied no dereliction of duty. No word from St Petersburg satisfied Cyril that his dismissal had been other than the result of personal animosity, and convinced of his innocence he refused to leave Jerusalem. He received unexpected support from the Patriarch of Jerusalem who asked the Envoy in Constantinople to intercede on Cyril's behalf.[10] The Jerusalem Synod wrote to the Holy Synod requesting that Cyril be allowed to stay and even the inhabitants of the city with the *qadi* at their head wrote to Gorchakov of their friendly relations with Cyril and

[1] All historians of the second mission agree that Cyril had certain weaknesses and reacted wrongly to Mansurov's assertiveness but there is no suggestion of improper behaviour.

[2] Filaret, p. 406.

[3] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1863, section II, no. 160. (Titov, pp. 427–8.)

[4] The same Archive, printed by Dmitrievski, p. 51.

[5] Ibid., p. 52.

[6] Filaret, p. 406.

[7] Filaret, 'Ob obraze zhizni Kirilla', p. 406.

[8] Procurator 1862–5.

[9] Ibid., p. 407.

[10] Letter of Novikov to Ignatev, 27 August 1863, Arkhiv Sinoda, section III, no. 160. (Titov, p. 432.)

their respect for him.[1] The struggle between Cyril and St Petersburg became well-known in Jerusalem. The correspondent of *Le Monde*[2] reported on September 6th 1863: 'The poor Russian bishop introduced into Jerusalem four or five years ago with such triumph and noise now fulfils a most pitiable role. The most influential of his compatriots are carrying on a struggle with him. It is asserted that his opponents have succeeded in completely ruining him in St Petersburg.'

Cyril had indeed been ruined and nothing he or his supporters might do could alter the decision to dismiss him. The Synod in session ordered him to leave Jerusalem in March 1864 and by July he had arrived in Kazan to become abbot of a monastery. He was not allowed to travel to St Petersburg to plead his case. Some months later he refused the vicariate bishopric of the see of Kazan. Already a sick man on his return to Russia, his health broken by his years in the East, he had only eighteen months to live. He died in February 1866, when only forty three, believing to the end that his bitter reward for six years' endeavour in Jerusalem had been dismissal and disgrace—that he had been sacrificed to the malice of his opponents.

[1] Titov, p. 435.
[2] Published by the Union Catholique in France. (Quoted by Titov, pp. 435–6.)

6

IGNATEV AND ANTONIN KAPUSTIN

> Our people in the North only want peace and inactivity in the East (IGNATEV).

THE years from 1864, when Cyril Naumov left Syria, to 1877 are an epoch in the history of Russia's relations with the Ottoman Empire. This was the period of Count Ignatev's residence at Constantinople, until 1867 as Envoy and from then as first Russian Ambassador to the Porte. Ignatev was a man whose political and diplomatic behaviour was determined by his Panslavist beliefs. Between 1856 and 1878 there grew out of Russian Slavophilism a much more active and acute form of nationalism—Panslavism, which may be described as the application of the Slavophile ideology in the field of foreign affairs. The Panslavs were critical of Russia's foreign policy as exemplified by Nesselrode and Gorchakov, and believed in trying to utilize the growing nationalism of other Slav peoples in order to accelerate the disruption of the Ottoman Empire. Whereas the Slavophiles had no official programme or policy the Panslavs had clear objectives and were able to work towards their realization.

Just as there were shades of Slavophilism so there were shades of Panslavism. In varying degrees such different men as Katkov, Dostoevski, Aksakov, and Ignatev were Panslavs. The two main questions dividing them were whether the concept of Slavdom should include all those who spoke a Slavonic language or only those Slavs who were Orthodox, and whether Russia should have a dominant position or be an equal in the Slav world. Several writers did not hold the narrow nationalist views of the diplomats and stressed the ecumenicity of the Orthodox religion which embraced Orthodox Christians outside Slav countries. 'The Eastern world is the Orthodox-Slav world whose representative is Russia . . . To be Orthodox means to be in spiritual union with the Eastern Church, with the Greco-Slavonic world.'[1] These words were

[1] Aksakov, *Slavyanski vopros*, pp. 175–6.

written by Aksakov, a leading Panslav spokesman. But it was Dostoevski, writing during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8 when Panslav fervour was at its height, who most clearly described Russia's part in the destiny of Oriental Christians. He had rarely touched on the theme before, one of little interest to educated Russians in the nineteenth century.

> On the conquest of Constantinople the whole of the Christian East turned as a supplicant, involuntarily and suddenly, to distant Russia . . . who immediately and without hesitation accepted the banner of the East.
>
> At the same time the whole of the Russian people entirely confirmed the new role of Russia and their Tsar in the future destiny of the Eastern world. From that time onwards for the people the favourite title of the Tsar was 'the Orthodox Tsar'. Having named their Tsar thus he, as it were, accepted in this name the designation of liberator of Orthodoxy, and of all Christendom professing it, from Muslim barbarism and Western heresy. Two centuries ago, and especially from the time of Peter the Great, the beliefs and hopes of the peoples of the East began to be realised . . . Of course [they] saw in the Tsar of Russia not only a liberator but their own future Tsar. But in these two centuries there came to them European education and influence. The upper educated section of the people, the intelligentsia, as with us so in the East, little by little grew more and more indifferent to the concept of Orthodoxy . . . Moreover among the peoples of the East the ideas of nationalism began to stir in the most important way. There appeared suddenly the fear that having freed themselves from the Turkish yoke they would fall under the yoke of Russia.
>
> However, among the millions of our simple people and in their tsars the idea of freeing the East and Christ's Church never died. The movement which seized the Russian people last summer[1] proved that they have forgotten none of their ancient hopes and beliefs . . . The Russian people . . . see the Eastern question as nothing other than the liberation of Orthodox Christianity as a whole and the future unity of the Church.[2]

Although Dostoevski centred his attention on Constantinople, for him and others it was no more than a symbol. Since he believed that the second advent of Christ would occur in a country under the Russian flag it is implicit that he had in mind not only Tsargrad but also the Holy Land. Thus Dostoevski believed that one day the Arab countries of the Middle East would be under Russian hege-

[1] That is at the beginning of the Russo-Turkish war.

[2] Dostoevski *Dnevnik pisatel'ya za 1877*, pp. 74, 75.

mony. While he represented an extreme, almost mystical, position which took little account of European politics, other Panslav writers advocated a more moderate path which reckoned with European rivalries. Danilevski, in his important work *Rossiya i Evropa* (*Russia and Europe*), explained that it was only with Europe's 'permission' that Russia was able to expand in Central Asia and that any expansion conflicting with the interests of other European powers would not be tolerated.

The first important Panslav organization was the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Committee, founded in 1858, which had close connections with the Orthodox Church and with the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry. Its aims were to encourage an interest in other Slav nations and to help young Slavs to study in Russia. The Committee was founded after a petition had been sent to the Tsar, and Gorchakov noted at the time: 'I am completely convinced of the necessity of giving aid to the Orthodox churches and schools of the Turkish provinces which find themselves in most wretched conditions.'[1] The Committee was mainly interested in the Bulgarians and its chief spokesman was Ivan Aksakov. Moscow remained the centre of Panslavism in Russia. It had a following in the university, the press, and business classes. Late in 1869 a Kiev affiliate of the Moscow Committee was formed with the aim of sending funds, supplies, and books to the Orthodox churches and schools of the Slav countries. Porfiri Uspenski was the first president of the Kiev Committee and it is interesting that his Committee stressed the 'Lesser Slav' idea. They were concerned not with all Slavs but only with Orthodox Slavs. The Polish revolt of 1863 had an important effect on the Panslavs who on the whole turned away from the non-Orthodox Slavs and increasingly identified their cause with Russia, Orthodoxy, and autocracy. The liberation of only the Orthodox Slavs was a less ambitious aim and one of which the Russian Government was less suspicious. In official eyes it had two advantages: it coincided with old Russian ambitions towards Constantinople and it involved conflict only with Turkey.

During the period of Ignatev's embassy in Constantinople Panslavism was not universally favoured in Russia although it found supporters among the Imperial family (excepting the Tsar) and

[1] Quoted by Pushkarevich, *Balkanskie slavyiane i russkie osvoboditeli*, ii. p. 189. Thus Gorchakov confirmed his earlier views on the sending of Cyril Naumov's mission to Jerusalem.

among strong elements of Russian society and Government. In the Ministry of Foreign affairs there was conflict between the moderation of Gorchakov and the ambitions of Ignatev and Nelidov of the Asiatic Department. Ignatev was on bad terms officially and personally with Gorchakov, and as the latter's incapacity increased the ambassador played a larger part in the determination of foreign policy than his official position warranted. At least from the time of his appointment to the directorship of the Asiatic Department he was convinced that Russian foreign policy should have three aims: the revision of the Treaty of Paris, command of Constantinople and the Straits and the common action of the Slavs under Russia. He wished to gain mastery of the Straits to facilitate further political and economic expansion believing that the Ottoman Empire would slowly disintegrate. He assured Gorchakov:

> It is in keeping with Russian interests to energize the destructive action of the Christian populations, to create a common connection in order to prevent the movement from degenerating into an impotent attempt ending in failure. But even if we are successful we are not in a position to give the Christian rising sufficient help and support for a radical settlement of the Eastern problem. The resurrection of our Eastern brethren will have several pauses and many hindrances.[1]

Ignatev worked for the piecemeal decomposition of the Ottoman Empire. He demanded local autonomy for the Christian sects in opposition to the French desire for strong centralization. He even schemed with Khedive Isma'il of Egypt to provoke a simultaneous uprising of the Arabs of the Nile and Tigris–Euphrates valleys together with an insurrection of the Southern Slavs.[2] As Ignatev's Panslavism was political and as he was not deeply religious, interference in church affairs caused him no qualms. He felt little love for the Greeks, believing their Church to be a front for political action.[3] He accused them of working against Russia on every occasion and retaliated by encouraging the cause of Bulgarian ecclesiastical autocephaly and by supporting the Arabs of Jerusalem in their demands for a greater share in the direction of the

[1] Confidential letter to Gorchakov, December 1866, printed by Onou, The Memoirs of Count N. Ignatyev. (*Slavonic Review*, x (1931) p. 397.)

[2] Khedive Ismail and Panslavism by F. J. Cox (*Slavonic Review* xxxii, Dec. 1953, pp. 151–67.)

[3] 'L'Eglise Orthodoxe n'est qu'un drapeau politique et un moyen d'action' (Ignatev's memoirs printed in *Izvestiya ministerstva innostrannykh del*, 1915, i. pp. 164–6).

patriarchate.[1] Yet it is doubtful whether he wanted a complete break with the Greeks. 'Ma principale préoccupation dans la question . . . a toujours été de procurer aux bulgares, sans rompre avec les grecs, un corps national en les préservant des efforts de la propagande catholique et protestante et en les conservant aussi à l'orthodoxie et à notre influence.'[2]

To further his policies Ignatev strove for predominance at the Porte and did achieve a degree of success in the seventies.[3] That his influence was supreme, however, was strongly denied by Sir Henry Elliot, the British Ambassador in Constantinople. In 1872 he wrote sourly to Earl Granville, the British Foreign Secretary:

> The importance of Ignatïew has been greatly exaggerated . . . It would in fact be impossible . . . to mention a single political point of importance which he has succeeded in carrying . . . all the efforts of the Ambassador were incapable of producing the slightest effect upon the Sultan's Government . . . [All he achieved was] the displacement of some Governors of Provinces and smaller officials . . .
>
> Whether from vanity or upon calculation General Ignatïew is asserted to be fond of insinuating that he had himself been the author of nominations and removals of employés of high and low degree, and of Government acts of which he is in reality perfectly innocent.[4]

The Tsar did not approve of his ambassador's intimacy with the Turks and on one of Ignatev's despatches which mentioned the 'Sultan's attachment to us' commented, 'Je n'ai que faire de son amitié.'[5] Although Ignatev hoped for a gradual disintegration of the Ottoman Empire which would not enmesh Russia in conflict he believed that in any future war the main theatre of Russian military operations should be Asiatic Turkey where the other Powers could not intervene. He continued to press this upon the Ministry during the Balkans crisis of 1875–8. His colleague, Nelidov, went further and drew up a memorandum in the autumn of 1875 which Gorchakov refused to read but which met with the approval of the Tsarevich who was more receptive to Panslav ideas than was his father. It urged that the Straits should be occupied at the first excuse; that Constantinople should be a free city under Russian protection; that the

[1] See Chapter 11.

[2] *Izvestiya*, 1914, vi. p. 161.

[3] The Grand Vezier at the time, Mahmud Nedim, earned the nickname Mahmudov (or Nedimov).

[4] Elliot to Granville, 27 December 1872. (FO 78/2220.)

[5] Kartsov, p. 13.

Christian states of European Turkey should be given their independence, and that Syria should be given to France and Egypt to England.[1] Russia's unilateral action in declaring war on Turkey in 1877 was precipitated by strong nationalist feeling and Panslav support for the Slavs of the Ottoman Empire. Even the Tsar and Gorchakov were affected by the wave of popular anti-Turkish sentiment. Russian troops moved through the Balkans and by January 1878 were on the outskirts of Constantinople. In March Ignatev imposed on the Ottoman Empire the Treaty of San Stefano which marked the climax of his career and the realization of many of his Panslav hopes. Montenegro, Serbia, and Roumania were to gain independence, but in return for territory to the south of the Danube delta, Roumania was to give Russia southern Bessarabia. Russia was also to annex territory on the Caucasian frontier. Bosnia and Herzegovina were to remain in the Ottoman Empire but were to be granted certain reforms. A large Bulgarian state was to be created to include all Macedonia, except Salonika, and part of Thrace.

The treaty proved unacceptable to the other Powers especially Britain and France, who viewed the creation of a greater Bulgaria with serious misgivings. The terms of San Stefano were considerably revised at the Congress of Berlin in June. Russia had her way in the Caucasus and Bessarabia but Bulgaria was stripped of Macedonia and the remnant divided into two. The Panslavs were enraged and Ignatev was dismissed in semi-disgrace. In the Anglo-Turkish convention of May of the same year Britain agreed to guarantee Turkey's Asiatic provinces against Russian attack if Russia acquired territory in the Caucasus (which she did at Berlin). Although the Treaty of Berlin did not directly concern Syria and Palestine it guaranteed freedom of worship and organization to the Christian sects and protection to clergy and pilgrims travelling to Turkey in Asia. It restated the rights of consuls to protect these travellers and religious establishments in Palestine and elsewhere. The *status quo* in the Holy Places was confirmed, and 'the rights possessed by France' were 'expressly reserved.'[2]

The Jerusalem Mission under Leonid

The transition is abrupt from Dostoevski's mystical vision of the Second Advent in Palestine to the realities of the Russian situation

[1] Nelidov's memoirs in *Revue de deux mondes*, xxvii (1915), pp. 305–10.
[2] Hurewitz, i. pp. 190–1.

in Jerusalem in 1864. Cyril Naumov had left the mission after the arrival of his successor. The Consul in Jerusalem, Kartsov, had suggested that the next director of the mission should be an archimandrite known for his 'strictly exemplary life.' The Synod had recommended that any future director should above all be honourable in his way of life and able to approach simple Russian pilgrims. 'It is not necessary for him to be learned or even to know Arabic and Greek.'[1] Another volte-face now occurred in the Foreign Ministry. Gorchakov, meeting opposition from Ignatev[2] and the Asiatic Department, renounced his earlier insistence on a Russian bishop in Jerusalem and agreed that an archimandrite would be a more suitable director. The mission, no longer important to the Foreign Ministry, was reduced to the status of a mission church where all Russian pilgrims would be welcome. 'The director will be concerned exclusively with Russian pilgrims . . . All local relations with the Greek clergy and Jerusalem authorities will remain the concern of the diplomatic representative and in part of the director of the mission.'[3] These final words left the loophole over which disputes would later rage. They were the Church's last attempt to retain some significance for the mission.

Filaret recommended that Leonid Kavelin,[4] a priest who had served with both Porfiri and Cyril, should be appointed head of the mission. This was approved in November 1863 and Leonid arrived in Jerusalem in the following spring.[5] He had been given the by now customary instructions both by the Foreign Ministry,[6] which narrowly circumscribed his field of action, and by the Synod, which extended his activities and influence far beyond the limits of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. He requested verbal instructions from Mansurov who merely replied enigmatically 'that only a priest with twelve children could be head of the mission and cause peace to reign.'[7] The patriarch viewed the new appointment with disquiet and accurately prophesied that 'no good would come of it.'[8]

[1] Filaret, p. 401.

[2] Who suggested that the mission became a monastery 'following the example of other nations and sects'. (Ibid., p. 422.)

[3] Ibid., p. 401.

[4] Lev Aleksandrovich Kavelin, 1822–91.

[5] The Arabic account of the Khuriyan, although ostensibly based on Russian sources, believed that Cyril died and was succeeded by Porfiri. (p. 209.)

[6] Dela Svyateishevo Sinoda. (Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 54.)

[7] Letter of Leonid to Khitrovo. (Ibid.) Mansurov also told Filaret that the only solution to the problem in Jerusalem would be to put a pawn in charge of the mission. (Ibid., p. 58.)

[8] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1865, no. 3156. (Ibid.)

Leonid was an ex-guards captain of stubborn and decisive character who seemed to want to practise the discipline of the parade ground in the compound in Jerusalem. He attempted to subject his staff and the pilgrims to a strict regimen and to reform the Greeks by exposing their corruption. This latter idea came from the Foreign Ministry which had spoken of the 'ambition' of the Greeks and had instructed him 'to teach them discipline'.[1] He succeeded only in antagonizing all his fellow Russians in Jerusalem. The consul fanned the flames by reporting to Ignatev that Jurji Sarruf,[2] Leonid's dragoman, had 'actively been arousing the Arabs against the Greek clergy.'[3] Kartsov willingly joined the fray and with great consistency in his determination to get rid of his rivals in Jerusalem aided the patriarch who was working for Leonid's dismissal. In Russia Filaret strongly defended his appointee against the attacks of diplomats and patriarch, recommending that the consul should be dismissed and the patriarch politely admonished for interfering in the internal affairs of the Russian Church.[4] But the Church was powerless to remove the consul. Filaret warned the Procurator that 'If the consul [continued] to act in such a manner then no mission [would] be able to exist in Jerusalem,'[5] but he had reluctantly to agree to Leonid's being sent in the summer of 1865 to Constantinople to take temporary charge of the embassy church in place of Archimandrite Antonin Kapustin[6] who would go to Palestine to report on the conflict.

Filaret still felt that Leonid had been unjustly treated and refused to allow his dismissal. Leonid's experience in Jerusalem had been the bitter fruit of the mismanagement of Palestinian affairs. Moreover, he had to suffer the reaction following the upsurge of Russian activity in Palestine after the Crimean War. Far from being the 'pawn' of Mansurov's imagination he had tried determinedly to assert the authority of the Church in the face of lay

[1] Filaret, p. 450.

[2] Georgi (Jurji) Sarruf was born in Syria, the son of an Orthodox priest. After receiving his elementary education in the patriarchal school in Jerusalem he took Russian citizenship and completed the course in the St Petersburg Medical Academy (Filaret, p. 440).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid. A letter was sent in June 1865. [5] Ibid.

[6] Andrei Ivanovich Kapustin (1817–94). He was born in Baturina; graduated from the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy in 1843; 1846–50 held the Chair of Moral Theology in Kiev; 1850–9 superior of the Russian church in Athens; 1859–65 superior of the Embassy church in Constantinople.

opposition. Experience had finally shown that co-operation between diplomats and clergy in Jerusalem was virtually unattainable, which meant that a mission in the form visualized by Gorchakov was no longer possible.

The Palestine Commission

Leonid's position had been undermined by the fact that on his arrival in Jerusalem the Palestine Committee had ceased to exist. Its founder, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, had become Viceroy in Poland in 1862 which had left the Committee independent and under the care of Mansurov. In April 1864, with most of the building in Jerusalem completed, the usefulness of the Committee was at an end and the Tsar ordered its dissolution. In its place he founded the Palestine Commission which was no more than a department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The members of the Commission were three—the Director of the Asiatic Department, the Procurator and Mansurov. Obviously it could be only a minor concern of the Director and Procurator, and all effective direction lay in the hands of Mansurov. In Jerusalem the Russian consul, officials, architects and servants received their orders from him alone. Mansurov's original proposals for a consul-agent, benevolent pilgrim undertakings and strong action against foreign religious propaganda had, as a result of the bureaucratic process, been reduced to little more than the maintenance of a consular post in the Ottoman Empire.[1] The Jerusalem consulate was regarded as a routine diplomatic post not primarily concerned with religious questions and itself regarded the ecclesiastical mission as its consular church. The hand of bureaucracy lay so heavily on the Commission that it eventually lost all capacity for action. It had inherited from the Committee only 56,500 roubles with which it had to complete the interior of the cathedral. The patriarch dedicated the finished cathedral in October 1872 in the presence of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich.[2] The Commission's resources had now

[1] Even the Russian Company of Steam Navigation and Trade declared its Syrian line unprofitable and closed it down. It was re-opened only on Ignatev's orders.

[2] Nikolai travelled with much pomp to Beirut and Damascus. In Beirut the British Consul reported that 'he was received by . . . the members of the Greek Church with much enthusiasm.' (Consul-general Eldridge to Elliot, 24 October 1872, FO 78/2228.) The Consul in Damascus noted that he had demanded an

been exhausted and consequently the pilgrim hostels were left unfinished. Pilgrims were forced to seek shelter in the mission house or in Greek monasteries while hostels slowly deteriorated. By 1880 the Commission was moribund and appeared unwilling or unable to deal with any of its problems. The political climate in Russia was unfavourable for any new initiative. The impetus for new ideas created by the atmosphere of emancipation and reform in the early years of Alexander's reign had gradually slowed down to a dreary stagnation. The founding of a vigorous new body, the Palestine Society, had to wait until the accession of Alexander III in 1881.

Antonin in Jerusalem 1865–94

Antonin Kapustin had been sent to Jerusalem on Ignatev's recommendation to attempt to conciliate the patriarch and to report to St Petersburg on the advisability of Leonid's return. He was selected on the strength of fifteen years spent among Russian diplomats and the Greeks of Athens and Constantinople, for his fluent Greek and because of his intimate friendship with Ignatev[1] on whose support and advice he relied until 1877. He caused displeasure in church circles in St Petersburg by failing to establish Leonid's innocence and to condemn the patriarch's conduct. His report[2] accused Leonid of 'intemperate behaviour' but pointed to the difficulties facing the mission, claiming that the consul had been instructed to embarrass Leonid. Antonin believed that the trouble stemmed from the relationship of consulate and mission

official reception in the city. 'I have, however, observed a most unfriendly feeling to exist towards His Imperial Highness amongst Mohammedans of all classes, except those connected with the Government . . . ' (Despatch to Earl Granville, 29 October 1872, FO 78/2228).

[1] An important source for this section is a collection of letters written by Ignatev to Antonin and published by Dmitrievski under the title *Ignatev kak tserkovnopoliticheski deyatel' na pravoslavnom Vostoke*. Antonin also kept a diary which he bequeathed to the Synod to be published forty years after his death. Dmitrievski utilized these diaries in his work *Nachal'nik russkoi dukhovnoi missii v Ierusalime Antonin, kak deyatel' na pol'zu pravoslaviya na Vostoke*, but the diaries themselves were never published. It is feared they were destroyed during the revolution. (See Arkhimandrit Kiprian, *Otets Antonin Kapustin arkhimandrit i nachal'nik russkoi dukhovnoi missii v Ierusalime* (1817–94). Kipriyan was a post-revolution head of the mission and based his work largely on its archives which had been preserved in an incomplete state.

[2] Pis'mo Filareta k Tolstomu, s mneniem 'o donesenii Antonina po delu neustroistvakh v Ierusalimskoi missii', 18 October 1865. (Filaret, p. 445 ff.)

and suggested that the Russian Church should appoint to the Patriarchate of Constantinople a synodal delegate (*apokrisarios*) who would send representatives to all Orthodox patriarchs and churches.[1] Filaret disliked the report and continued to defend Leonid, insisting on a letter of apology from the patriarch.[2] Dissatisfaction was felt by others in Russia and Ignatev wrote in a letter to Antonin:

I have learned that the Synod and Procurator are indignant with me . . . for not having given you formal instructions to demand satisfaction (just as in a duel—Heaven forbid!) from the patriarch . . . They are displeased that you did not yourself think of discussing this with him and did not attempt to obtain satisfaction . . . You would be doing a great service to the Orthodox Church if you brought about a reconciliation. It would be a great scandal if the personal quarrel between him and Leonid resulted in a break between the patriarch and our Synod.[3]

Ignatev wanted no responsibility for this 'affaire de discipline ecclésiastique'[4] but decided to visit Moscow in the hope of ending the dispute in discussions with Filaret. The Procurator, Count Dmitri Tolstoi, came to the conclusion that any further correspondence with Jerusalem would only lead to 'fruitless disputes' and would show that the Church was 'powerless before the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. 'It [the Church] cannot and must not submit to the Ministry and degrade its representative in Jerusalem to an obedient subordinate of the consul. Therefore I see no other solution than to close the mission.'[5] Such a proposal was anathema to Filaret who could see the closure of the mission only as the total capitulation of the Church to the patriarch and Ministry, and a victory for Russia's rivals in Jerusalem. His own solution was to make no changes until the patriarch apologized to the Synod. The dispute was finally solved by the death of Filaret in 1868 when the Patriarch Cyril found it possible to apologize in answer to a conciliatory letter from the Tsar. Leonid had spent his time in Constantinople unhappily awaiting a permanent appointment and he gratefully accepted a summons to Russia in 1869 to

[1] This was also Porfiri's suggestion but it was never realized as it depended on the co-operation of the Synod and the Asiatic Department.

[2] Pis'mo . . . s proektom poslaniya k Ierusalimskomu patriarkhu, 25 June 1866. (Filaret, p. 456 ff.)

[3] Letter of 9 March 1866. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 43.)

[4] Ibid.

[5] Filaret, p. 463.

be superior of the New Jerusalem Monastery outside Moscow, thus finding a second home in Zion.

Antonin Kapustin was confirmed as director of the Jerusalem mission by the Synod in 1869 and was the first holder of the post not to be given a detailed directive. In fact he was more or less ignored by the Foreign Ministry which now carried on all its business with Jerusalem through the Palestine Commission. Neither Ignatev nor Antonin himself was pleased with the appointment and each tried to contrive his return to Constantinople. Nevertheless, once Antonin had become reconciled to his position Ignatev took it upon himself to become his unofficial patron and defender. He considered himself Antonin's 'advocate' before the Asiatic Department and the spiritual authorities in St Petersburg, writing in September 1869: 'During my last visit to St Petersburg I quarrelled about you with the Asiatic Department which accused me of continual connivance with you in trying to lower the dignity of the consul in Jerusalem.'[1] He advised Antonin to carry on the struggle in Jerusalem, if necessary without any support from St Petersburg. 'Be wide awake in Jerusalem, do your duties with caution and tact for the situation will not alter because of us. If you have no money, the more's the pity, but I can tell you that I am not given any either, yet that does not hinder me from carrying on the struggle without relying on anybody's help, for our people in the North only want peace and inactivity in the East.'[2]

The situation in Jerusalem did not change, as Ignatev had correctly prophesied, and was in the end complicated by the consul's move from the city into the compound. The consul, Kozhevnikov, continued with all the determination of his predecessor to try to demonstrate to St Petersburg the futility of the mission and pressed for its conversion into a consular church. He was encouraged by Mansurov but neither of them was strong enough to overcome the opposition of Ignatev who had no love for the Palestine Commission. 'I fully commiserate with you'—the Ambassador wrote—'You know that it was my idea to found a monastery and it is not my fault that there exists a special department—the Palestine Commission—which arranges everything and allows no outside interference.'[3] Antonin had no doubts about the dignity of his position and felt

[1] Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 40.
[2] Letter of 4 March 1870. (Ibid., p. 41.)
[3] Letter of 8 November 1873. (Ibid., p. 55.)

himself to be the true representative of Russia in Palestine, but the fate of the mission hung for a time in the balance. Only Ignatev kept it alive as he felt that 'its closure would be interpreted by the wild Greeks as a victory'[1] and would be a personal defeat.

Antonin had aroused the opposition of all the relevant authorities in St Petersburg who tried to dismiss this 'troublesome man'[2] from their minds. Various suggestions were made for his removal but as long as Ignatev was in Constantinople his position was secure. During the height of his influence at the Porte he found it possible to have the Pasha of Jerusalem, Ali Bey, removed, as Antonin considered him unfavourable to Russian interests.

I demanded at a well-chosen moment the transfer of Ali Bey[3] in order to finish at once with the unbearable difficulties in Palestine. The Grand Vezier agreed to my request and Kamil Pasha has been named as Ali's successor. He is the former kaimakam of Beirut with whom our consul was on good terms and who does not love the French. With the new governor you should be able to reconcile your differences with Kozhevnikov . . . You can ask no more of me or of the Porte. It is up to you to gather the fruits of our victory.[4]

Ignatev's attempt to achieve political predominance at the Porte and to establish Russian supremacy in the Ottoman Empire led him inevitably into religious disputes with the other Powers. An important aspect of the politics of the Holy Land was the visits of heads of State and other notabilities. That of the Empress Eugénie of France to Palestine in 1869 (she was also visiting Egypt for the opening of the Suez Canal) caused Ignatev some misgivings. He confided to Antonin: 'In secret . . . I can tell you that the Empress asked the Papal nuncio . . . what she could demand for the Latin Church from the Sultan during her visit to the East. It is said . . . he suggested 82 points. I myself am thinking of 82 points to lay before the Sultan . . . If only ten of her demands succeeded it would give us trouble . . . I am against the slightest concession to the Catholics, that is the French.'[5] Nothing came of the 82 points—'we were rather afraid of the journey . . . of the Empress, but everything fell to pieces. The Catholics gained nothing.' The visit of the Austrian Emperor

[1] Letter of 10 December 1874. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 57.)

[2] Antonin's obituary in *Soobshcheniya*, 5. p. 307.

[3] The British Ambassador conceded that Ignatev had probably been responsible for the removal of some local Governors.

[4] Letter, 7 December 1871. (Ibid., p. 62.)

[5] Letter, 12 September 1869. (Ibid., p. 70.)

Franz-Josef and the Prussian Prince Albert to Palestine was also regarded with apprehension by Ignatev as they too demanded concessions of the Sultan.[1] He so consistently opposed any concession that the Turks withdrew promises already made. 'The Franciscans are receiving only the smallest part of what they wanted . . . [the Austrian Ambassador and even the French] are very disgruntled that I smelled out the secret affair before they succeeded in obtaining firmans for the Catholics and that I opened the eyes of the foolish Turks who were about to let a wolf into the sheepfold.'[2]

Antonin spent the period of the Russo-Turkish war in Athens[3] and on his return found his 'advocate' no longer in Constantinople. Opponents of the mission saw in this new situation the opportunity to launch a full-scale attack which they did to such effect that the decision was taken in St Petersburg to lower the status of the mission to that of a domestic church for the consulate, now raised to a consulate-general. The consul forestalled any opposition from Antonin by ordering the consular kavasses to arrest him. In his despatches he described Antonin in such current terms of abuse as 'a freethinker, a liberal and neoterist, a dangerous fantast'[4]—terms which could not be ignored in the reactionary atmosphere of 1880. Antonin was regarded in Russia as a man *s dushkom*[5]—a tainted man, a freak. In the same year, however, Count Putyatin,[6] a firm friend of both Palestine and Antonin, defended the mission before the Tsaritsa Mariya Aleksandrovna[7] who had a deep love for the Holy Land, and at her insistence the decision to close the mission was reversed. The conflict did not cease but moved into print, the attackers accusing Antonin in ā series of articles in the *Tserkovno-obshchestvenny Vestnik* of inertia in pilgrim affairs, indifference to his duties and Arabophilism.[8] Antonin replied in the pages of *Grazhdanin*,[9] laying all blame for the failures in Jerusalem on 'some Palestine Commission or other, known to no-one and not

[1] The dispute this time centred round the site of the 'house of the Virgin Mary' which the Austrians (Catholics) claimed from the Greeks.

[2] Letter, 4 March 1870. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 72.)

[3] During the war all Russian property was placed under German protection.

[4] Kiprian, p. 145.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Count Evthimi Vasilevich Putyatin (1803–83), admiral, general-adjutant; he took part in important expeditions to Persia, Japan, and China. In 1861 he was Minister of National Education.

[7] The mother of Grand Duke Sergei, the future president of the Palestine Society.

[8] Kiprian, p. 146.

[9] *Grazhdanin*, 1878, 22–5. p. 455.

to be found anywhere.' He also wrote to Mansurov complaining of his persistent opposition. 'What has hindered the success [of the mission]? Once again forgive me, but nothing other than your personal antipathy.'[1] A turning point was reached in 1881 when a visitor to Palestine continuing the denigration, published in St Petersburg a satirical novel about Antonin under the title *Curly-locks Pasha*[2] *and his consorts; mosaics, cameos and miniatures from curious excavations in the slums of the Holy Land.* Its author wrote under the pseudonym of Y. Dobrynin and his real identity is not known. The book was withdrawn by the censor only after a number of copies had been distributed and not before it had wounded Antonin who confided to Khitrovo: 'The book has deeply troubled the quiet and clear course of my life . . . The shameless attacks on me of this human devil have disturbed my peace.'[3]

Although the Tsaritsa's support kept Antonin in Palestine he felt unable to continue the fight against what he termed the 'system' and withdrew from the controversy. He decided to represent no-one and nothing, to claim no authority and to live a sequestered life devoting himself to archaeology and study. He lived to see the Palestine Commission absorbed by its new rival the Palestine Society.

During Antonin's residence in Jerusalem there were no fewer then five changes of patriarch. His initial relations with Patriarch Cyril had been strained as he had been sent to Palestine to investigate Cyril's criticism of Leonid. To Antonin, who at first found the patriarch's behaviour 'overweening',[4] fell the delicate task of persuading him to apologize to the Synod. When the death of Filaret removed the obstacles to a reconciliation, Cyril turned to Antonin and Ignatev as a haven in the storm that was breaking over his head. Opposition to his Synod and to the other patriarchs over the question of autocephaly for the Bulgarian Church led to his eventual deposition in 1872. To the Greeks of the Brotherhood, Antonin with his intimate knowledge of the Greek language and Greek manners was an embarrassment as he too readily perceived their weaknesses. He worked hard to protect Russian pilgrims from their abuses and in view of his energy and determined character

[1] Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 104.
[2] Peis Pasha—a reference to Antonin's long curled hair.
[3] Letter, 24 March 1881. (Kiprian, p. 147.)
[4] Filaret, p. 454.

the Greeks abandoned the unequal struggle and waited for his early demise.[1]

If, during twenty eight and a half years in Palestine, Antonin had concerned himself only with personal prestige and his official position his name would not have been honoured by students of Palestine as it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The secretary of the Palestine Society would not have been able to write that 'Ignatev's greatest service to the Orthodox Church in general and to Russia in particular was his sending of Antonin to Jerusalem.'[2] Antonin's energetic nature did not allow him to spend his time in the Holy Land unproductively. Other sects were acquiring land throughout Palestine and erecting hostels, schools, and churches. Although Antonin received only fourteen and a half thousand roubles a year[3] and had no official support in Russia he embarked on an ambitious scheme of land purchase and building. He received considerable sums in good will offerings from private people and in 1889 gave to the mission land and property worth well over one million roubles.[4] This remarkable result was achieved only in the face of great opposition. He was obliged to rely on irregular gifts as the consul forbade him to take collections in the Russian cathedral. Moreover, Turkish law did not facilitate the purchase of land by non-Ottomans. Although by the reforms of 1867 foreigners were allowed for the first time to hold landed property in the Ottoman Empire it was on condition of their being assimilated to Ottoman subjects, which meant that they abandoned their right to protection by their own authorities in connection with such property. Under Ignatov's lead the Russian Government refused to sign the protocol accepting the new dispensation until 1873.[5] Since Antonin made his purchases in the period 1866–70 he resorted to the established practice of buying in the name of an Ottoman subject—in his case, Ya'qub Halabi, the dragoman of the mission from 1865 until his death in 1900. Ignatev could not sympathize with these purchases as they brought no political benefits to Russia, only political complications.

Do you really think us so naive as to believe that all obstacles are overcome when you buy land in someone else's name? Nothing is easier in

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 5. p. 308. [2] Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 37.

[3] This was raised to 30,000 roubles (and the staff to 25) paid by the Palestine Society. [4] *Soobshcheniya*, 2. p. 52.

[5] Letter of Ignatev to Antonin, 20 November 1873. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 66.)

Palestine and Syria than the purchase of property . . . but the chief problem is government permission for the purchase . . . According to a despatch received from the Asiatic Department it is clear that they are worried in the Ministry by your purchases . . . and even oppose altogether territorial acquisitions by the mission.[1]

The ambassador claimed that such purchases in addition to being unnecessary served only to arouse the envy of others.

You chase odd bits of land . . . and by so doing rouse the jealousy of our opponents, who suppose that we have some deeply thought out state and church plan of action in Palestine, and encourage the Catholics and Protestants to redouble their efforts . . . Your wish [to buy land] arbitrarily involves the Russian government . . . and obliges us to use our influence over Turkey—gained for other higher reasons—to make the Porte recognize as legal your secret purchases and illegal deals.[2]

In 1874 all the plots bought by Antonin were transferred to his own name and he eventually made a *waqf* of them for the benefit of poor Orthodox pilgrims.

In 1868 Antonin bought from its Muslim owner the famous oak tree in the vicinity of Hebron (al-Khalil) on the plains of Mamre under which Abraham was reputed to have been sitting when he received the three strangers who foretold the birth of Isaac.[3] Local opposition was immediately aroused and the Turkish authorities refused to approve the transaction, claiming that the purchase of the tree would be 'a disruption of the established status quo in Palestine.'[4] The local *wali* feared Muslim reaction as the oak had as much significance for Muslims as for Christians.[5] Yet Ignatev, much against his better judgement and with no sympathy for the biblical importance of the acquisition, induced the Porte to ratify the purchase. Antonin built in Mamre a hostel and bell tower and the oak became a place of Russian pilgrimage.[6] In 1907 the head of the mission, Leonid Sentsov, began to build a church there which was consecrated in 1925.[7]

[1] Letter to Antonin, 9 February 1872. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 65.)
[2] Letter, 7 December 1871. (Ibid., pp. 61–2.)
[3] Genesis xviii.
[4] Letter of Ignatev to Antonin, 12 September 1869. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 59.)
[5] Ibid.
[6] Graham, p. 257. It was unfortunate that in 1874 'the oak noticeably faded away and began to dry up.' (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 67.)
[7] Kiprian, p. 163.

In Bait Jala, a village near Bethlehem with a large Orthodox population and a centre of Catholic missionary activity, Antonin bought in 1866 a large plot of land with money given by the Tsaritsa. There he built a boarding school for Orthodox Arab girls, the first truly Russian school in Syria. A Russian schoolmistress was its director and by 1880 there were some sixty pupils. In 1886 it became a women's teacher training college under the Palestine Society.

The Russian colony in 'Ain Karim was another of Antonin's notable achievements. The village of 'Ain Karim was the reputed meeting place of the Virgin Mary with her cousin Elizabeth,[1] and another Catholic centre. A firm supporter of the Russian mission, P. P. Mel'nikov, collected money in St Petersburg with which Antonin bought land previously refused by the Catholics from the dragoman of the French Consulate in Jerusalem.[2] A Russo-Arab church, hostels, a school and many houses were built, and vineyards and gardens planted. Antonin established a semi-monastic community to which Russians could retire to end their lives in the Holy Land.

Antonin was attracted by hill sites in Palestine and the combination of altitude and biblical association was irresistible—hence the Byzantine church of the Ascension and bell tower on the Mount of Olives, also the church on a hill in Jaffa on the site of the death of Tabitha.[3] By 1872 he had bought thirteen sites in Palestine when the Russian Government, concerned about foreign reaction to these purchases, called a halt. In an ukaz of December 1872 the Synod spoke of the 'undesirability of further acquistion of land, in order to preserve the established state of affairs and in order not to violate that political principle, which we first enunciated, that is of permitting neither the Orthodox nor the Catholics to extend the limits of those possessions which they at present enjoy.'[4]

Although after 1872 he could no longer buy, he could still continue to build. His church in Jaffa was consecrated only two months before his death. He died in March 1894 after giving twenty-eight and a half years of his life to the service of Russia in

[1] Luke i, 39.

[2] D'Alonzo, *Russie en Palestine*, p. 87. The Arab dragoman was found poisoned in his home on the day after the sale. (Kiprian, p. 168.)

[3] Acts ix, 36.

[4] Ukaz Sinoda 2596. (Kiprian, p. 178.)

Syria. He had written in 1879: 'I have abandoned all ambition in life and have followed with all my being one end—that of confirming and strengthening Russia's name in the Holy Land so that we should not be merely guests there but to a certain extent rightful owners...'[1] Certainly the most energetic and attractive Russian figure in nineteenth century Palestine, Antonin was buried near the tower he had built on the Mount of Olives.

[1] Letter to Khitrovo. (Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, pp. 74–5.)

PART III

The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, 1882–1917

7

THE RISE OF THE SOCIETY

In March 1881 while riding through St Petersburg Tsar Alexander II was assassinated by socialist revolutionaries of the People's Will. The 'Tsar Liberator' was succeeded by his son, Alexander III, a convinced autocrat and an extreme conservative who disapproved of his father's reformist leanings. He was opposed to concessions to liberal opinion and was determined to maintain the supremacy of Orthodoxy and of Russians over others in the Empire. Although brought up in an atmosphere sympathetic to Panslavism he could not support national separatist movements in the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian Empires without causing unrest at home. Russia's internal problems and her growing imperialism in Central Asia and the Far East distracted attention somewhat from the Slav countries of the Near East, but the Tsar continued to set his sights on Constantinople and the Straits. Alexander wrote to General Obruchev in 1885: 'In my opinion we ought to have one principal aim, the occupation of Constantinople, so that we may maintain ouselves once and for all at the Straits and know they will remain in our hands. That is in the interests of Russia and ought to be our aspiration.'[1]

Divergent attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire were by now common in Russian political thought and in opposition to the Tsar's view there were those who counselled an entente with Turkey in order to leave Russia free to expand in the East.

[1] *Krasny Arkhiv*, 46. p. 181.

During the late seventies and early eighties the internal situation in Egypt was causing concern to Britain and France. Russia had shown a certain interest in Egyptian affairs (Ignatev's flirtation with Isma'il has already been mentioned) but was not a member of the international Caisse de la Dette Publique set up to administer Egyptian foreign debts. Growing internal disruption led in 1882 to the British occupation of Egypt which was to last for over seventy years. Russian diplomacy protested strongly against the occupation and attempted to limit its duration. A convention was signed in 1887 providing for the evacuation of British troops within three years but allowing for their re-entry in certain circumstances. This convention fell through, however, when faced with the combined opposition of Russia and France. The British presence in Egypt was seen as a threat to Russia's route to the Far East, echoing British reasons for remaining there. The Russian Foreign Minister clarified his country's position to the German Ambassador in Vienna. 'The Suez canal cannot remain in English hands . . . We cannot deceive ourselves about the fact that England has to a large extent seized control of Egypt, and this threatens free passage through the canal . . . As the whole of our attention is turned to the Far East, how can we do without the canal? It is a vital issue for us.'[1]

In 1896 the urge to occupy Constantinople was once again intensified during the crisis over the Armenian massacres. The Turkish atrocities caused great revulsion in Britain and Lord Salisbury believed the time was ripe for a settlement of Turkish affairs. Russia was alarmed at the prospect of any European control over the Ottoman Empire which could undermine her influence.[2] Nelidov,[3] the Ambassador in Constantinople and a supporter of Ignatev's Panslav policies, proposed that any British naval moves against the Ottoman Empire should be countered by a Russian occupation of the Bosphorus. The plan[4] was approved by the Tsar in spite of Witte's opposition but no counter action was necessary as Britain made no further moves. Anglo-Russian tension, heightened by the Armenian crisis, continued into the twentieth

[1] Report of Eulenberg *Die grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinetten*. XI, 2747.

[2] Russia had gradually been building up a diplomatic representation in the Ottoman Empire. By 1900 there were in Asiatic Turkey (apart from the Ambassador) seventeen consuls and many consular agents.

[3] A. I. Nelidov, Ambassador 1883–97.

[4] *Krasny Arkhiv*, 1. pp. 152–62.

century in those areas in which Britain felt her imperial interests to be threatened—not so much the Mediterranean region as Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, and China. Russia had turned to France during this period and in 1894 signed the Franco-Russian agreement which remained effective until the First World War. A new element within the Ottoman Empire was the growth of German influence. The Kaiser was eager to direct Russia's attention away from the Turks and encouraged her Far Eastern adventures which culminated in the disasters of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–5.

The importance to Russia of the Straits was never lost sight of. Tsar Nicholas II could envisage Russian policy embracing the whole of the East. Kuropatkin, the Minister of War, told Witte[1] in February 1903 of the Tsar's hope of uniting Korea with Russia and of his dream of seizing Tibet, Persia, and the Straits.[2] Nicholas was one of the few people who would have been rash enough to engage Russia on so many fronts. The daily newspaper, *Novoe Vremya*, declared in 1902 that the Straits should be Russia's chief goal with the Persian Gulf second and Manchuria only a poor third.[3] Bezobrazov, the Far Eastern adventurer who had gained access to the Tsar, submitted a memorandum in 1903 in which he argued that Constantinople and the Straits should be left in the hands of the Turks.

> Our position in the Near East has been obscured by the fanciful visions of the Slavophiles. For us the question of the Turkish Christians only formed a means of achieving our real aim—seeking frontiers and a free outlet from the Black Sea. Each time we actively intervened on behalf of the Turkish Christians we received a setback because we then became less necessary to those Christians we had freed and our position in Turkey weakened. We must now halt on this path, otherwise we shall inevitably achieve results which are at variance with our real interests . . . It is desirable to leave Constantinople and the Straits in the hands of the Turks.[4]

This approach was in sharp contrast to the hopes of those Russians who looked for the speedy liberation of the Turkish Christians. According to Titov, the historian of Cyril Naumov's mission, the Ottoman Empire in 1902 was 'visibly decaying'.

[1] Count S. Y. Witte, Minister of Finance 1892–1903, Prime Minister 1905–6.
[2] Kuropatkin's diary, 16 February 1903. (*Krasny Arkhiv*, 2. pp. 31–2.)
[3] Quoted by Sumner, *Tsardom and Imperialism*, p. 21.
[4] Quoted by Shebunin, p. 92.

Is it in fact up to Russia to let others into her own affair? Did not the once powerful and widespread Ottoman Empire totter and fall under the powerful blows of Russia? Was she not the weapon of God gradually breaking the Muslim yoke which for four centuries was a heavy burden lying on the Eastern Orthodox Christians . . . ? Russia can look with satisfaction on the work which she began . . . and which is now almost completed.[1]

Germany's economic and diplomatic advance in the Near East was a complicating factor in an already delicate situation. The Kaiser's grandiloquent progress through the Ottoman Empire in 1898 was watched with apprehension by those Powers who regarded their rights in the area as traditional.[2] Russia objected to that strengthening of the Empire which Turko-German co-operation foreshadowed and opposed plans for the building of the Bagdad railway, claiming exclusive control of railway construction in Northern Anatolia.[3] She maintained that any extension of the existing Anatolian line into Syria would clash with the Russian dream of a link through Armenia with Alexandretta—a railway which would give Russian goods access throughout the year to a warm water port.[4] Although the struggle for influence in the Middle East continued in certain areas into the present century, by 1900 Britain had achieved predominance in Egypt, southern Iraq, and the Persian Gulf, while France was firmly established on the Syrian coast with her business houses, railways,[5] schools, and university. In the Syrian interior and in Palestine rivalry persisted.

The Foundation of the Orthodox Palestine Society

As after the Crimean War, so too after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–8 the time seemed ripe for a new initiative to be taken in Russia's Palestinian affairs. French Catholic progress in Syria and Palestine was watched enviously by the Russians who had succeeded only in squabbling among themselves. Meanwhile the Orthodox community continued to decline. In 1840 it had formed ninety per

[1] Titov, *Naumov*, p. 3.

[2] In Damascus Wilhelm II proclaimed himself protector 'for ever' of all Muslims.

[3] Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers and the Bagdad Railway*, p. 148.

[4] Ibid., p. 147.

[5] In 1898 an Austro-Russian syndicate proposed the building of a railway from Tripoli to the Persian Gulf but the plan was shelved in the following year. (Ibid., p. 58.)

cent of the total Christian population of Palestine and by 1880 had decreased to sixty seven per cent. During the same period the Catholic population had risen from 3,000 to 13,000.[1] Some Russians felt that in spite of an apparent increase of interest in Palestine very little had been done to match Catholic and Protestant efforts. Although Porfiri, Cyril, and Antonin had won the affection of individual Orthodox Arabs they had been unable to support the Orthodox community consistently or constructively. The Greek Brotherhood still aroused the despair and revulsion of those in Russia who had the welfare of the Orthodox Church at heart but Russian official circles had lost the power of initiative in Palestine. In 1880 after twenty-five years of Alexander's reign the government needed new ideas and new men to enable it to escape from the established habits of thought and behaviour of a quarter of a century. Gorchakov, the founder of the second mission in Jerusalem, was still Foreign Minister but could not at the age of eighty two be expected to cast around for new plans. Similarly Mansurov had grown stale as director of the Palestine Commission and was fighting, with little regard for the Church, to retain his authority. It seemed that if new ground was to be broken in Syria and Palestine the impetus would have to come from a private individual.

The Arab world, unlike the Slav, was a matter of little concern to most Russians. What interest there was in the Arabs was to some extent a by-product of the branch of Panslav philosophy which sought to free all Orthodox Slavs from foreign domination—whether by the Ottoman Turks or the Greek Church. A minority of those influenced by this philosophy were sympathetic towards the Orthodox Arabs who bore the burden of both Greek and Turkish domination. They had, however, little real knowledge of the Arabs. Muravev, Porfiri, and Mansurov had all gone to the East in ignorance of them but all on their return submitted plans for the 'support of Orthodoxy in the East.' All had envisaged the foundation of a private society which would build schools, hospitals, and churches in Palestine and identify itself with the cause of the Orthodox Arabs. Each had seen some of his proposals adopted by the Russian Government but no society had been founded. In 1871 Vasili Nikolaevich Khitrovo[2] visited Palestine and Syria for the first time and quickly discovered the low ebb to which Russian

[1] These figures and percentages can only be rough approximations.
[2] 1834–1903.

enterprise had sunk. He was disheartened by Greek neglect of the Arab Orthodox and wrote to Leonid:

I found the patriarchate to be very unattractive... The Patriarch himself [Cyril] is a good man but what surrounds him is beneath all criticism... Care for the local Orthodox population is non-existent and its position is more than dismal... I may add that it has considerably worsened since your time. There is not one school, and it is better not to speak of the churches. The only concern [of every Greek] is to obtain more money to be able to intrigue, and the purpose of the intrigue is to become patriarch.[1]

On his return to Russia Khitrovo began to study Palestinian affairs and following the example of previous visitors conceived the idea of founding a Russian society after the manner of the Palästina-Verein or the Palestine Exploration Fund 'to study the Holy Land, to spread information in Russia, to support Russian pilgrims and the Russian element in Palestine and to obtain land.'[2] Antonin, whom Khitrovo often consulted during the years prior to the inception of the Palestine Society, agreed that greater enterprise was necessary but shied away from any hint of an official undertaking. 'It's a good idea to form a Russian Palestine Committee—learned, archaeological, philanthropic. But don't you think we can arrange matters without . . . any official command?'[3] Khitrovo sought the support of those in Russia interested in Palestine, writing to Porfiri,[4] Leonid, and Mansurov. In 1879 when news of the proposed closure of the Jerusalem mission became public Antonin began to encourage Khitrovo in his plans, believing that a new society would be more likely to support the mission rather than the consul. During his second visit to Syria in 1880 Khitrovo struck up a close friendship with Antonin. Together they worked out a programme for the future Palestine Society. Khitrovo found great apathy among other Russians towards the Orthodox East, one exception being Count Putyatin who had prevented the closure of the mission and who had access to highly placed officials and members of the Imperial family. His most important acquaintance

[1] Dmitrievski, *Palestinskoe Obshchestvo*, p. 162.

[2] Letter of Khitrovo to Antonin, 1877. (Ibid., p. 125.)

[3] Letter of Antonin, March 1877. (Ibid., p. 126.)

[4] Bezobrazov, ii. p. 500. Porfiri placed all his papers at Khitrovo's disposal. 'Please come to Moscow and use them [my papers]. You will find them first class, describing my stay in the East and the useful work I did there for which the government gave me 1,000 roubles pension for life.'

proved to be Pobedonostsev[1] who had been appointed Procurator in 1880. He had been tutor to Alexander III as Tsarevich and became his most important adviser after his accession. His advice consistently favoured conservatism. Orthodox clericalism, and narrow Russian nationalism. He was opposed to all progressive and liberal movements and until his death in 1905 was the chief proponent of reaction in Russian political and religious life. He had of course a ready pupil in the future Tsar. On Pobedonostsev's recommendation the Tsarevich sent for Count Putyatin to discuss the proposed society. Further progress was hindered by the illness of the Tsaritsa, whose interest in the Holy Land worked in Khitrovo's favour, and by the appointment of E. P. Novikov as Ambassador of Constantinople in place of Saburov who was a liberal and a friend of Khitrovo. Novikov professed very little interest in Orthodoxy or in Palestine. Baron Giers,[2] who had taken over the Foreign Ministry with Gorchakov still nominally in charge, favoured a settlement of the Russian disputes in Jerusalem. The leader of the opposition to Khitrovo's plans was Mansurov[3] who, in an attempt at self-justification, pointed out: 'Everything that it is possible to do in Palestine we are doing. More than this is unnecessary.' But his opposition was to count for little once the Tsarevich had been won over. Matters moved slowly in St Petersburg and in despair Khitrovo left Russia in February 1881 to spend the following nine months in Palestine. Only weeks after his departure the situation in Russia was dramatically changed by the assassination of the Tsar. Overnight Pobedonostsev became central to the realization of Khitrovo's plans. It was paradoxical that the foundation of a society devoted to the enlightenment of a subject people should have to depend on the support of an ultra-reactionary Procurator at the opening of a reign of reaction.

Later in 1881 the Grand Dukes Sergei and Pavel Aleksandrovich visited Palestine and Syria. Khitrovo commented to Antonin at the time: 'I have heard much good about him [Sergei] and I am placing my last hopes on him... By the autumn I shall have finished the first volume of the *Palestinski Sbornik*,[4] which I shall send to

[1] Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), a former professor of constitutional law, Procurator of the Holy Synod 1880–1905.

[2] Nikolai Karlovich de Giers, Assistant Foreign Minister 1875–82, Foreign Minister 1882–95.

[3] *Soobshcheniya*, 21. p. 140.

[4] *Pravoslavie v Svyatoi Zemle* (Palestinski Sbornik i).

Sergei, and I shall try to persuade him to become head of the society.'[1] Both Dukes, according to Antonin, agreed to become members of the society. Sergei himself had been favourably impressed by his visit. 'What a pleasing impression Jerusalem and my whole journey to Palestine made on me . . . Our mission there is excellent and I liked Antonin very much—I must talk to you about him.'[2] Khitrovo sent to the Tsar, through Pobedonostsev, and to Sergei copies of the completed *Sbornik*—'Orthodoxy in the Holy Land'. In it he drew a picture of the Arab Orthodox population and its relations with the Greek Brotherhood, and traced the history of Russian policy in the area. It was a frank review of collisions and confusions and of 'Slavonic dissension'.

> These disputes will not be settled until we define our interests in Palestine. Undoubtedly one of our main concerns is the relationship of our Synod with the patriarchate of Jerusalem and the maintenance of friendly relations. No less important is the support of Orthodoxy . . . Our interests in Jerusalem are ecclesiastical and we have to assert that our most useful representative there is a member of the clergy. The presence of a layman only leads to conflict from which the patriarch draws advantage—divide et impera.[3]
>
> In Palestine we must increase our significance. Nothing has yet been done to support Orthodoxy . . . Nor must we forget those 3,000 Russian pilgrims every year through whom our influence on the local population is maintained.[4]

In January 1882 Pobedonostsev invited Khitrovo to submit the constitution of his proposed society. Putyatin forwarded a copy to Sergei who immediately agreed to accept the presidency. The Tsar gave his approval but February and March passed without progress. Discussions continued between the Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the course of which members of the Synod voiced their opposition to the entry of a lay body into the affairs of the Russian Church in Jerusalem. But the Tsar, Foreign Ministry and Procurator together overruled the Synod and Khitrovo received the final approval of the Ministry in May 1882. The Council of the Orthodox Palestine Society was then formed with Grand Duke Sergei as president. Khitrovo himself held no official position. The

[1] Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 178.

[2] Letter of Sergei to Pobedonostsev, 25 June 1881. (*Pobedonostsev i evo Korrespondenty*, i. p. 80.)

[3] Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie*, pp. 91–2.

[4] Ibid., pp. 96–7.

Society was to be a private body enjoying Imperial patronage but responsible neither to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor to the Synod. It consequently received no financial support from the Government.

The personal initiative and determination of Vasili Khitrovo had broken through the prejudice and indifference of St Petersburg at a period in Russian history most unfavourable to such an undertaking. He succeeded only with the help of the small number of people who still retained an interest in Palestine despite the failures and ineptitudes in past Russian experience. He had drawn on the knowledge of those who had worked in Jerusalem, and under Panslavist influence had modelled his society on the Moscow and Kiev Slavonic Benevolent Committees which, although concerned with the Slav provinces of the Ottoman Empire, had very similar aims. The Society, unlike the Committees, could not emphasize the ties of race and so stressed the bonds of religion. The Arabs, largely unknown in Russia, were presented as little Orthodox brothers.[1]

The Headquarters of the Society were established in St Petersburg and an inaugural meeting was held in May 1882. The Society chose for its motto a verse from Isaiah Chapter 62.

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest.

Its aims were formally stated in the constitution as the collection, study, and distribution in Russia of information on the Holy Places of the East, the helping of Orthodox pilgrims, the founding of schools, hospitals, and hostels, and the granting of material aid to the local inhabitants, churches, monasteries, and clergy. Article nine stated that the Society would supplement as much as possible the work of the Palestine Commission and would try to reconcile its activities with the advice and directives of the Russian Mission in Jerusalem and the Russian Consulate in Palestine. Membership was open to all Russians who expressed an interest in any of its aims and the Society was free to elect a number of honorary members

[1] Dostoevski stressed the fact that few Russians had any knowledge of the geography and history of Palestine knowing only that the Holy Places were under the control of non-Christians (*Diary of a Writer*, (Eng. trans.) p. 802). It is significant that Russian Zionist writers paid almost no attention to the Arabs of Palestine, believing the country to be virtually uninhabited—further proof of the ignorance of Russians in general.

who were to include most of the Imperial family, Ignatev, Mansurov,[1] Porfiri, Antonin, and Leonid. In January 1883 the three areas[2] of the Society's work were officially defined and to encourage membership Pobedonostsev instituted medals to be awarded to active members. In 1884 Sergei finally prevailed on Khitrovo to join the Council of the Society and in 1889 he accepted the post of secretary which he held until his death in 1903. For nineteen years he led the Society virtually singlehanded and gave to it the *élan* which facilitated its expansion and early successes. The need to spread information about the Society in Russia was recognized early and in 1885 permission was obtained for the establishment of branches 'in the towns of the Empire'. This idea was remarkably successful and by 1896 there were twenty such branches. By 1902 the number had risen to forty three, widely scattered throughout Russia. Each branch encouraged the study of the Holy Land by distributing books and holding readings taken from the Bible and from the works of early and contemporary Russian pilgrims. It was estimated that by 1902 these readings had been heard by five million people[3] yet the number of members rose only slowly. After twelve years' existence there were 1,300 members and the secretary admitted that 'knowledge of the Society among Russians' was small. 'We have had to move carefully and slowly, first organizing our Society here then getting a firm foothold in Jerusalem. But people in Russia will say "What concern of ours are those Orthodox Arabs while all around is poverty, need and grief?"'[4] In 1905 the total of members reached its maximum of almost five thousand.

Like many voluntary societies the Palestine Society soon found that its plans outgrew its financial resources. Khitrovo had founded it in faith with a capital of 1,000 roubles[5] and with no clear ideas about future income. 'As for money we are still in the dark and have to make do with what God sends. Next year we must ask for the patronage of the Tsar and in two years perhaps request a subsidy.'[6] Although the Tsar extended his patronage he gave no financial

[1] After working against the foundation of the Society Mansurov finally joined it and was elected to the Council. His election lasted for only two years after which he had no further official connection. He opposed its work, disputing its archaeological findings and supporting the Greeks against it. (*Soobshcheniya*, 21. p. 455.)

[2] i) help to pilgrims, ii) research, iii) support of Orthodoxy in the Holy Land.

[3] Ibid., 13, i, p. 84.

[4] Ibid., 5. p. 5. Annual Meeting.

[5] *Otchet*, 1886–7, p. 170.

[6] Letter to Leonid, 3 December 1882. (Dmitrievski, p. 221.)

help and the Society had to rely on *ad hoc* collections and gifts.[1] In 1885 the Society's report complained that its funds were insufficient for its plans. The only source remaining was the Synod and it was to this that the Society turned despite Khitrovo's desire to keep free from bureaucratic control with its attendant disadvantages. Pobedonostsev agreed that the church offerings on Palm Sunday should be set aside for the Society's use. This was an unusual concession to a private body and obviously granted only to one whose purposes aroused no misgivings in Government circles. This collection, known as the 'Palm Collection' and announced in church as 'for Palestine',[2] was first taken in 1886 and in the following year the Society's income leaped from 140,000 roubles to 350,000. Although this was now a reasonable sum it depended almost entirely on goodwill offerings and there could be little confidence that the level would be maintained in the future. It entailed reliance on the peasant income which was subject to notorious fluctuation. Thus in 1892 income dropped to 200,000 roubles because of a poor harvest and it remained depressed in 1893 following an outbreak of cholera. Fluctuating revenue made the preparation of a budget difficult until in May 1900 the treasury agreed to an annual grant of 30,000 roubles. The following year an interest free loan of half a million roubles was agreed upon to be repaid, however, out of the annual treasury grant. No open resentment was expressed at this Government chicanery but the disappointment felt was obvious in Khitrovo's report to the annual general meeting.

Khitrovo had founded the Society out of sympathy for the Arabs and work was started amongst them almost immediately. Since in formulating his plans he had drawn on the experience of others who had worked in Palestine he was fully aware of existing tensions between Russians and Greeks, yet was hardly prepared for the opposition the Society had to face. A warning note was struck in the first year. 'As soon as the Palestine Society began, Greek newspapers fell on us accusing us of being new evidence of Panslavism. It is our duty to declare that we have no political aims.'[3] The Society was in fact run by those with Panslav sympathies but this did not necessarily imply that Panslav political ambitions in

[1] *Otchet*, 1885–6, p. 125.

[2] Kiprian, p. 155. The author claims that many of the givers had no idea how the money was spent.

[3] *Otchet*, 1882–3, p. 69.

Europe had been transferred to Palestine and Syria. Nor did it imply that all the leaders of the Society were inevitably anti-Greek. The appearance of the Society in Jerusalem coincided with the election of a new Patriarch, Nikodemos, who had lived for some time in Russia and had been consecrated patriarch in St Petersburg. Many felt that he would support the Russians in Palestine, but Nelidov, the Ambassador in Constantinople, had opposed his election believing that he would prove an embarrassment to Russia. His fears were quickly justified when Nikodemos declared that he would never enter Jerusalem while Antonin was head of the mission. He also crossed swords with Khitrovo. 'Nikodemos wants in place of the Palestine Society a kind of Brotherhood . . . which would collect money and send it through him to Jerusalem. In other words the Society would become merely a collector of money for the patriarch.'[1] Khitrovo, innately cautious in his dealings with the Greeks, rejected the proposal and resigned himself to further conflict with the new patriarch.

> I am more reconciled to the idea of Nikodemos for I have come to the conclusion that sooner or later we shall have to enter into open struggle with the Greek clergy . . . And in this struggle Nikodemos is no more frightening than anyone else. It is better for him to be in Jerusalem away from St Petersburg where he influenced Mansurov.[2]

Once Nikodemos was in Jerusalem the Society found all its efforts blocked by the Greeks. The annual report for 1892 described the situation in retrospect as a choice between 'unreasoning' subjection to the Greeks and an open battle. 'We could either have renounced the local Orthodox Arabs or have worked independently. We decided on the second course. We sought reconciliation, but in vain.'[3] All attempts by the Society to found schools in Judea were opposed by the patriarch who looked upon the education of the Orthodox Arabs by the Russians as an attempt to wean them away from his authority. Although aware of this fear[4] the Society still continued to extend its system of schools. In 1883 Khitrovo was seeking someone to assume responsibility for them and his choice

[1] Letter from Khitrovo to Antonin, 30 July 1882. (Dmitrievski, p. 227.)

[2] Letter to Leonid, 1883. (Ibid., p. 229.)

[3] Annual meeting 1892. (*Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 260.)

[4] 'We realise the fears of the Greeks—that the education of the Arabs will lead to a desire for independence—and that they especially distrust us after we have helped the Bulgarians to independence.' (*Otchet*, 1885–6, pp. 127–8.)

fell on an Arab from Damascus, Aleksandr Kezma,[1] who in 1883 was a student at the Moscow Ecclesiastical Academy. The choice proved a happy one and around Kezma was to develop the whole system of Russian schools in Palestine. He continued to work for the Society until its dissolution in 1917. His duties were 'to clear his head of all national illusions', to report on the feasibility of opening schools in Orthodox villages and to take on the direction of all Russian schools. He was to be directly responsible to the Consul in Beirut, Petkovich, who was, unlike Kozhevnikov in Jerusalem, 'completely favourable to the Society and opposed to the Greeks.'[2] Kezma at once aroused suspicion in Jerusalem where the Greeks believed him to be a secret agent of the Society acting in opposition to the patriarch.[3] Nikodemos refused to allow Kezma to leave Jerusalem where he remained for a time teaching in the patriarchal school. The Porte complained to the Russian Ambassador of the suspicious nature of Kezma's mission[4] while Kozhevnikov insisted that he should completely abandon his work for the Palestine Society. Other members of the Foreign Ministry deplored the Society's imprudence in appointing Kezma. Zinovev, the Director of the Asiatic Department, warned of the dangers of rash ventures by unofficial bodies in Palestine especially as the Turks had for some time been reacting 'extremely unsympathetically to the interference of foreigners in the matter of Arab education.'[5] The Society had also acted undiplomatically, he claimed, in placing Kezma, who was to work in Palestine, under the jurisdiction of the Beirut consul. The familiar situation of discord had soon materialized and the Society had to pay for its impropriety by accepting the suffocating embrace of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[6] It agreed to act in Palestine only through an official representative whose instructions would be confirmed by the Ministry. All information gathered by the representative would be handed to the consul who would forward it through the Ministry to the Council of the Society. The Council would likewise send out its instructions through the same channels.[7] It was a sad fate but inevitable if the Society was to carry any weight at all with the patriarch.

[1] The Arabic form of the surname is Quzma, but the Russian version is used here.

[2] Dmitrievski, p. 236. [3] *Otchet*, 1885–6, p. 127. [4] Dmitrievski, p. 127.

[5] *Zhurnal zasedaniya Soveta*, 13. prilozhenie 1. (Ibid., p. 239.)

[6] *Otchet*, 1883–4, pp. 88–9.

[7] *Zhurnal*, prilozhenie 3. (Ibid., p. 89.)

The Ministry tightened its grip on Palestinian affairs some years later when the Palestine Commission was taken over by the Society. Khitrovo had not initially wanted to absorb the Commission for fear of opposition and because the Society had no resources for maintaining the buildings and facilities in Jerusalem. Mansurov, having opposed the foundation of the Society, was likely to oppose its functioning and Khitrovo suspected that it would, like the Jerusalem mission, be reduced to impotence. Personal relations between Khitrovo and Mansurov were extremely exacerbated although an outward agreement was reached in 1885 when Grand Duke Sergei—already president of the Palestine Society—was appointed president of the Palestine Commission. But co-operation between the worn out and exhausted Commission and the young and vigorous Society proved impossible. This situation had begun to disquieten the ever-attentive Procurator.

> At the present critical time when, through the kindness of Western intrigues, Russia's material power in the East has weakened, it is most important to preserve those sources of our moral strength which are not obvious but which really attract the sympathy of the local population. This cannot be achieved by the formal action of bureaucrats. That is why it seems useful to encourage those who are working in Palestine.[1]

Pobedonostsev considered any duplication of effort in Palestine to be extravagant of men and money and believed that the Society was the only body to have won any sympathy among the Russian people. He urged Alexander to dissolve the Commission and transfer its functions to the Society despite opposition from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 'Up to the present the Ministry clings so jealously to its right to supervise the Palestine Commission that it is very difficult to raise this question immediately.'[2] The question was raised and settled after only a few months. Sergei supported the union but was opposed by Mansurov and Zinovev. Giers recognized that the dispute stemmed from a clash of personalities and spoke to the Tsar on behalf of the Commission, but to no effect.[3] Sergei's influence with his brother prevailed and in March 1889 the Constitution of the Society was amended to read:

[1] Letter of Pobedonostsev to the Tsar, 4 August 1888. (*Pis'ma*, ii. pp. 188–92.)
[2] Ibid.
[3] Lamzdorf discusses these developments in his *Dnevnik*, pp. 196–7, 199–200, 202–3.

The Tsar has ordered:

(1) The closure of the Palestine Commission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the transference of its responsibilities, affairs and capital to the Council of the Orthodox Palestine Society.

(2) The addition of the following to the Constitution:

(*a*) The Society shall have the title of 'Imperial'.

(*b*) The vice-president and the representatives of the Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Council shall be appointed by the Tsar.

(*c*) The annual budget and reports shall be forwarded to the Tsar.

(*d*) The affairs of the Palestine Commission transferred to the Council of the Society may not be discussed by the General Meeting of the Society.

The council enlarged its membership, one of the new members being Count Ignatev.[1] The new relationship between the ministry and a private body began uneasily[2] but Khitrovo was determined to preserve as far as possible his original conception of the Society.

As the ministry had now taken a share in the affairs of the Society it was obliged to assist its work and offer encouragement even in the face of patriarchal hostility. Giers, who had clearly formed a good opinion of the patriarch,[3] nevertheless encouraged the efforts of the Society and urged Nelidov in Constantinople to bestow on it his official blessing. He asked the ambassador, whose initial opposition to Nikodemos had later shifted into support, to assure the Porte that Kezma was no secret agent and that the Society was not a Government institution.[4] Giers was prepared to ignore Turkish and Greek feelings over the matter of Arab education and believed that the Society could profitably open Arab schools. Nelidov passed on these opinions to Nikodemos taking care to emphasize the interest in the Society shown by the Imperial family.

[1] *Otchet*, 1889–90, prilozhenie, p. 60. Ignatev was now living in retirement after serving for one year (1881–2) as Minister of the Interior. His 'progressive' tendencies had displeased Pobedonostsev who had believed him to be a safe reactionary, and the Procurator had dismissed him.

[2] *Soobshcheniya*, 12. p. 8. Obituary of D. D. Lisovski who was the first ministry representative on the Council.

[3] He wrote in a confidential letter to Nelidov: 'There is no doubt that the personal qualities of the present patriarch are a completely reliable guarantee that if money given to the Society were put at his disposal it would be used in an entirely proper manner.' (Dmitrievski, p. 249.)

[4] Ibid., p. 250.

Your Beatitude is well acquainted with the patronage given to the Society by the Tsar and with the active participation of Grand Duke Sergei in its activities. Also it will doubtless not have escaped your notice that the sympathy of enlightened circles in Russia is given to the Society . . . The maintenance of unanimity with the Russian Imperial House and with the Russian people . . . will be useful to the Church of Jerusalem.[1]

He also requested the patriarch to receive Kezma and to allow him to work in Judea.

Khitrovo was not entirely downcast by the Society's initial setbacks in Palestine. He believed that Nikodemos was having to prove that he was not a puppet of the Russians and that he would eventually face opposition from his Synod.

'In view of this'—wrote Khitrovo to Petkovich, the Beirut consul—'he should not neglect the Palestine Society . . . I think he will eventually come to a modus vivendi with us . . . We will await our opportunity but meanwhile there is nothing we can do in Palestine. If we approach him now we invite refusal . . . Therefore the instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs . . . I consider as one of thousands of such papers composed in the Ministry which are destined to remain paper to deceive future historians.'[2]

While Khitrovo's letter was being written in Russia another was on its way to him from Antonin in Jerusalem telling of the patriarch's apparent change of heart. Only one year after his election Nikodemos was beginning to feel the threat of insubordination among his fellow Greeks, when the letter from Nelidov emphasized his isolation. In December 1884 Khitrovo decided to travel to Syria and Palestine to take advantage of the patriarch's seeming goodwill towards Russia. Nikodemos responded by welcoming Khitrovo with the words, 'I bless the Palestine Society with all my heart: may God help it in its work for the benefit of the Church,'[3] but Khitrovo was by now too experienced to be unduly optimistic.

'This outward tinsel covers the same rottenness of four years ago.'[4] The patriarch continued his show of goodwill by printing a letter of welcome to the Society in the first volume of its

[1] Letter of Nelidov, August 1884. (Dmitrievski, p. 250 f.)
[2] Letter to Petkovich, 25 June 1884. (Ibid., p. 246.)
[3] Letter of Khitrovo to Stepanov, Secretary of the Society, 23 December 1884. (Ibid., p. 265.)
[4] Ibid., p. 266.

Communications.[1] It was a defensive letter in which he detailed his own good works with the clear implication that the presence of any outside body in his patriarchate was superfluous. His favour was even extended to Kezma who had, however, left Jerusalem after abandoning his position and was teaching in Beirut.[2] Although Khitrovo and the patriarch pledged co-operation, little of material value resulted from their agreement.

In a memorial article[3] to Nikodemos in 1910 the Society still complained that he had continually obstructed their work. Towards the end of his reign in 1889 he turned in financial distress to Russia but refused to accept any conditions to a loan. Khitrovo, once again in Jerusalem, tried to save him[4] but the Synod was by now in revolt and in October 1890 he was compelled to resign.

Nikodemos' successor was Gerasimos,[5] a previous Patriarch of Antioch. With the encouragement of the Greek Brotherhood he continued to oppose the work of the Society so much so that it turned away from Judea and the immediate neighbourhood of the patriarchate to Galilee and the relative friendliness of the Metropolitan of Nazareth. In 1900 there were nineteen Russian schools in Galilee and only four in Judea. Both the Tsar and the Government had been well aware of Greek obstructiveness in Palestine, Pobedonostsev having written in detail to Alexander of the troubles facing the Society.[6] The Greeks considered the accesssion of Nicholas II in 1894 to be a favourable opportunity to renew their attack. In October 1895 they sent a memorandum to the Russian

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 1. p. 3. These *Soobshcheniya* first appeared in 1886 and continued without a break from 1890 to 1917 in 28 volumes. Volume 29 in 1926 was entitled *Soobshcheniya Rossiiskovo Palestinskovo Obshchestva* and was an isolated issue. The previous volumes with their supplements (*prilozheniya*) and reports (*otchety*) contain detailed accounts of the Society's works, its budgets, lists of members and officials, reports of the annual meetings and articles on the activities of non-Orthodox bodies.

[2] To show Russia's displeasure at the patriarch's treatment of Kezma, Pobedonostsev recommended to the Tsar that Kezma should be given a Russian decoration. (Letter of Pobedonostsev to the Tsar, 4 August 1888, *Pis'ma*, ii. p. 190.)

[3] *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 255.

[4] By asking the Treasury for an unconditional loan. Despite the trouble Nikodemos had caused, Khitrovo regarded him as the 'best patriarch available'. (Dmitrievski, p. 293, *Soobshcheniya*, 14, p. 160.)

[5] Patriarch of Jerusalem 1891–7, of Antioch 1885–91.

[6] Letter, 4 August 1888. 'The Greeks hate everything that passes by their pockets. Every new Arab School, hostel or Russian church causes scandals, slanders and complaints from the Greeks.' (*Pis'ma*, loc. cit.)

Synod in which they criticized the activities of the Palestine Society[1] and its constant bias against the Greeks. It cited speeches made at Society meetings and printed in the *Soobshcheniya* and also the diaries of Porfiri recently published by the Society. Nelidov considered the memorandum 'harsh, rash and in part unfounded,'[2] but also considered many of its criticisms justified. Despite the change of Tsar, Pobedonostsev was still at the helm and would not contemplate the Greek complaints. He replied that the Orthodox Palestine Society bore the additional title of 'Imperial' and should therefore be regarded as representing the will of the Tsar. But the Greeks ignored the Procurator's insinuations and in 1896 the patriarch severed all relations with the Society which, casting around for new fields of endeavour, welcomed approaches from the Patriarch and bishops of Antioch. The Patriarch Spiridon[3] was in financial and other difficulties and although a Greek and a member of the Brotherhood he requested the Society to support the Orthodox Church in the Patriarchate of Antioch. Although there were those in Russia who believed that the Society should work only in the area defined by its title, Khitrovo eagerly accepted the offer and from 1896 onwards it was in Syria that the Society found its fulfilment. It is no coincidence that after three years an Arab was re-elected Patriarch of Antioch and that there followed an amicable and close co-operation between Arabs and Russians until 1914.

[1] *Otchet, Usloviya deyatel'nosti*, p. 5; *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 258.
[2] *Soobshcheniya*, loc. cit.
[3] Patriarch 1891–97.

8

THE FALL

To the founders of the Society in 1882 Palestine was virgin soil. Anything was possible. Unwilling to learn the lessons of past Russian experience they were motivated by a desire to uplift Arab Orthodoxy, not primarily by an urge to assert Russian authority in the face of Greek opposition. And yet, as all their care was for the Orthodox Church, two courses of action lay open to them: to work under Greek jurisdiction or to work independently. At first the choice was not obvious and the Society opened schools and churches at random hoping for the patriarch's subsequent blessing on their work. Thus in March 1883 three schools were opened in Palestine and several churches were built or rebuilt. The patriarch protested immediately and in 1885 two of the schools were closed and work stopped on all the churches. The completed church of Mujaidil was taken over by the patriarch and permission for further work was withheld. In the past money had often been sent to Jerusalem from Russia for the repair of Palestinian churches but it had usually been appropriated by members of the Holy Sepulchre. The Greeks now insisted that all such money from the Society should be given directly to them and they claimed the right to determine its use. The Society, still young and without official patronage, reluctantly concurred and money was given to the patriarch in 1885 to rebuild churches in Rama and elsewhere. By 1889 the Greeks had done nothing and as the local pasha forbade the Russians to undertake the work themselves the Society was driven to recognize the impossibility of co-operation with the Greeks. Khitrovo reported to the Society's annual meeting of 1892: 'After the unhappy affair of the church at Rama, we have withheld from any further action . . . and so every year the number of Orthodox churches diminishes.'[1] The Society was thereby frustrated in one of the two fields in which it would have been possible to strengthen Orthodoxy. This was an area of exceptional sensitivity for the Greeks where any plan by the Russians to improve

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 137.

Arab churches was viewed merely as a ruse to take possession. Although this was constantly denied, the Greeks firmly maintained their opposition and the Society, growing in experience, turned away from barren wrangling over churches to the field of education in the natural hope that if the adults could not be influenced through their churches the children would be educated in the Orthodox faith. In the Society's reports there is no evidence that it ever again offered to help the patriarchate in maintaining its churches. This failure in the eccelesiastical field was a sad blow to the founders of the Society who had now to rethink its aims and functions. Khitrovo had not equipped it as an educational body although he could visualize no other method of helping the Arabs apart from creating an independent Russo-Arab church.[1] Russia's concern for Orthodoxy could still be shown, however, by the building of Russian churches, the most important being the Church of Gethsemane in memory of the Tsaritsa Marya Aleksandrovna. It was built on the slopes of the Mount of Olives dominating the Garden of Gethsemane and to English eyes appeared as 'one of the most remarkable modern monuments of the Jerusalem suburbs'.[2] In the heart of Jerusalem Cyril Naumov had purchased in 1859 a coveted plot of land adjoining the Holy Sepulchre on which he had intended to build a mission house, but it had remained unused until 1890. The Society acquired this land and built the 'Russki Dom'—accommodation for the Society—and the church of Aleksandr Nevski. Foreign observers saw this Russian move into the centre of the city as a preliminary to the takeover of the Sepulchre.

More important to the learned world and to some Russians were the excavations carried out beneath the site of the house. The work, initiated by Khitrovo and executed by Antonin, exposed the eastern front of the Roman 'Martyrion' basilica, part of an ancient fourth century church. The remains were carefully preserved and incorporated in the new church. The Society continued its archaeological and other researches. Scientific expeditions to Syria and Palestine were equipped or financed and many scholars received subsidies for their studies. On the Tsar's orders an expedition was sent to explore the ancient Christian and Byzantine remains of the

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 263. 'If our society were called The Russian Palestine Society then we would simply convert Orthodox Arabs into Russians as the Protestants convert them into Englishmen and the Catholics into Frenchmen, but we are called Orthodox and so we have to make them good Orthodox Arabs.'

[2] Jeffery, *The Holy Sepulchre*, p. 189.

Holy Land, and the works of N. Y. Marr, P. A. Syrku, A. I. Papadopoulos and others were published in the *Palestinski Sbornik*. This series ran to sixty-three volumes and was a major Russian contribution to Palestinology.

The Society's researches were criticized by those in Russia who believed that its first concern was the care of pilgrims. During the early years it found itself hindered in pilgrim affairs but was able to enter into agreements with several Russian railway companies and with the Society of Steam Navigation and Trade to reduce pilgrim fares to Palestine. The Palestine Commission, still in existence, was officially responsible for the welfare of pilgrims and rejected the Society's offers of help. Little could be done until 1889 when the property of the Palestine Commission was taken over. By 1891 the pilgrim hostels had been renovated and offered simple accommodation to the thousand or so pilgrims the Society expected to receive but the cheaper fares and improved facilities encouraged many more Russians to undertake the pilgrimage. During the following quarter of a century there developed the amazing Russian pilgrim traffic to the Holy Land which became so conspicuous a feature of Palestinian life before the First World War. The endless caravans of devout Russian peasants moving slowly to Nazareth or the Jordan engaged the pens of many Europeans.[1] The 'astounding faith and sincere belief' of the Russians are compared with the indifference of European 'tourists' who 'merely gape and rarely say a prayer.'[2] The Society met the pilgrims at Jaffa,[3] conducted them in caravans to Jerusalem and other Holy Places, accommodated and fed them cheaply and offered other services in the Russian compound. The pilgrims were drawn chiefly from the peasant population—'starved, illiterate and ragged'[4]—and were mostly old women. Their numbers rose to a peak of 11,000 in 1900.[5] Although nothing was offered free of charge, only very modest prices were asked yet the Society was accused of

[1] The best (and only) western account from the inside is Stephen Graham's book.

[2] *La Terre Sainte*, January 1896.

[3] In September 1892 the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem was opened, which greatly facilitated the Society's work. (*Soobshcheniya*, 4. p. 135.)

[4] Graham, p. 98.

[5] The numbers were: 1883–4—2,145; 1895–6—4,852; 1899–1900–10,909. During the years 1883–97 the division by class was: clergy—772, aristocracy—667, lower middle class—2,813, peasants—16,041.

'fleecing the pilgrims'.[1] The Society was never able to provide adequate quarters for every pilgrim to Jerusalem. The Nikolai hostel was built in 1903 and other large hostels were erected in Haifa and Nazareth but the demand continually overran the facilities. It was the Society's policy to refuse shelter to no one although it reported in 1902 that it was able to accommodate only two thirds of the 9,000 pilgrims present.[2]

Relations among the Russians in Jerusalem improved noticeably during the closing years of the nineteenth century. Although Khitrovo complained that the mission did little for the spiritual life of the pilgrims several of the consuls were favourably disposed towards the work of the Society, some actively encouraging it. The days of futile disputes seemed to have passed and the authority and prestige of Grand Duke Sergei and Pobedonostsev in St Petersburg proved sufficient to secure the removal of a consul who opposed the Society's work.[3] Graham describes the relatively tranquil atmosphere of the compound where police were considered unnecessary and where all troubles were settled by 'the consul and the representatives of the Society and the Church.'[4]

The Society had also taken over from the Palestine Commission the hospital and clinic in Jerusalem. Serious attention was now paid to improving these medical facilities which had fallen into disuse and neglect under the Commission. Doctors and nurses were looked upon as medical missionaries providing not only centres of medical care but also strong centres of Orthodoxy. These services were especially difficult to staff as in Russia itself medical provision in the late nineteenth century was of poor quality and there was a shortage of qualified doctors in many areas. Other clinics were opened in Palestine in pilgrim centres or in regions of educational activity. The hospital at Jerusalem was used chiefly by Russian pilgrims many of whom came to the city seriously or incurably ill, wishing to die in the Holy Land. The clinics were open to all except Jews[5] and were largely attended by local Arabs. The

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 4. p. 4.

[2] Ibid., 13. i, p. 88.

[3] Bukharov, Consul 1886–8, who according to Dmitrievski had orders from 'his immediate superior' (Mansurov) to oppose all the undertakings of the Society, found his opponent no longer a single powerless archimandrite but a well organized and well supported body in St Petersburg. He soon admitted defeat and was transferred to Stockholm.

[4] Graham, p. 106.

[5] The reason given in the reports is that Jews were prohibited because of bad

service provided as an important innovation in a country where there was virtually no tradition of medicine.

The Jerusalem Mission

The Palestine Society was not founded as a rival to the mission, indeed Khitrovo had regarded Antonin as the only bright spot in the dark history of his compatriots. Moreover, the Society as a lay body could not assume the functions of the archimandrite in Jerusalem. Khitrovo was eager to strengthen the mission and to support it with funds yet little was done until after Antonin's death in 1894 as he was unwilling to disturb the existing regime. In 1896 the Society took over the expenses of the mission and its internal life was reorganized on monastic lines. Khitrovo wanted to enrich the spiritual life of the pilgrims for he had reported in 1899[1] that the head of the mission, Rafael, ignored their spiritual welfare. The Society felt that it had some responsibility for the mission and it is significant that he was dismissed within the year. He had possessed neither the strength of will nor the authority of Antonin and had met an unfavourable reception from admirers of his predecessor. Aleksandr Golovin who directed the mission from 1899 until 1903 was a mild and modest man who was able to maintain good relations with the consul, the Society and the patriarch. He was 'foreign to any reformatory tendencies'[2] and co-operated with the Society by caring for the pilgrims and allowing a school to be established in the mission house. His successor Leonid Sentsov (1903–14), cast more in Antonin's mould, was an ex-architect who bought up land and built churches. He was not entirely *en rapport* with the Society which accused him of a lack of discrimination in his purchases and of buying plots with neither sacred nor material significance but which, nevertheless, on the recommendation of the consul awarded him a Society decoration in 1911—a demonstration of the comparative harmony then existing in Jerusalem. The work of the mission was brought to a halt by the outbreak of war in 1914.

behaviour. (*Otchet*, 1896, i. p. 39.) The 1890s in Russia were a period of growing antisemitism—a trend encouraged by Pobedonostsev. Jewish doctors and medical orderlies were limited to 5 per cent of the army medical staff because, it was claimed, they showed 'deficient conscientiousness' in their duties.

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 10. p. 140. Annual meeting, Secretary's report—'Ask the pilgrims if they know the head of the Russian mission in Jerusalem and they answer "No".'

[2] Ibid., 27. p. 27.

Assessments of the Society's Work

At this stage it is interesting to examine some reactions to the work of the Palestine Society in Russia and elsewhere. Annual reports slowly lost their early assurance and members their vision of unlimited horizons. Optimism became tempered with realism. Khitrovo summed up the position in 1899.

We see a growing feeling of confidence in the Society. At first not many people had this confidence in us but as the number grows we feel that we must be achieving our objective. We feel that this growing trust in us is the dawning in our sixteen years' activity. But there are certain unhappy facts. One is the lack of money . . . Our other great lack is the shortage of dedicated people. The Catholics have their nuns and missionaries who work almost for nothing. We have none willing to work abroad.[1]

He was pessimistic and even despondent, tired of apathy and obstructiveness. He was prepared to contend with the non-Orthodox, the Turks and even the Greeks but found the opposition of fellow Russians hard to bear.

I have an unending struggle. This is not imagination but reality. Eighteen years of battling have gone by and I still stand alone. Some people do not understand, others do not wish to, yet others are unable to . . . What hurts me more than anything is the quiet underground intrigue against me larded with loving words. I can say plainly that I have had to spend the whole year from last August to this in a wearying, enervating struggle doing my real work only incidentally.[2]

On another occasion Khitrovo regretted that what he termed the 'good nature' of Orthodox Russians verged on indifference, but he drew strength from the sympathy which he believed existed in Russia for the Palestine Society and from his own deep conviction in the value of its work. He was challenged in the pages of the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* by a member of the Society who considered his confidence to be ill-founded.

This conviction we feel in the virtue of our work is equalled by the conviction of the Catholics which is just as strong. Nor do I see the sympathy in Russia to which Khitrovo referred. I have been a member of the Palestine Society for a long time but a thing that discomfits me is the complete ignorance about the Society, about its aims, about its activity. This is not just in remote regions of Russia but in Moscow itself . . . A

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 10. p. 29 ff. Annual meeting, Secretary's report.

[2] Ibid., 25. p. 419.

highly placed person in St Petersburg in a position to influence affairs became angry when I told him the Society organized schools for Orthodox Syrians. 'What! Spend treasury money on Arabs? A question must be asked about this.' When I told him that the money was from private gifts—'Are there really people who give money?'[1]

This correspondent, writing to 'dispel false ideas of Russian strength', declared that after seventeen years of existence the Society ought to be well known. 'When we have one hundred not thirty branches, one million members not five thousand, an income of three million roubles and not three hundred thousand—then you can talk of sympathy in Russia.'[2] Khitrovo replied that from the time of Porfiri Russia had been moving 'uninterruptedly and consistently' towards one goal—the protection of the Orthodox from the Catholics. 'Russia relied on her pilgrims and on improving their lot in order to strengthen her position in Palestine, reckoning them to be the foundation on which to build in future.'[3]

There existed, however, a group which was working against the expansion of the Palestine Society made up of those who for one reason or another supported the Greek Church against any Russian attempt to encroach on its rights. Among these was Mansurov who ostentatiously lived in the patriarchate when in Jerusalem, and T. I. Filippov[4] who had initially been a deputy vice-president of the Society. He had endorsed Khitrovo's aims in founding the Society but believed that it had since come under the control of Panslavs who had 'shown little love for the Hellenic episcopacy.'[5] His support for 'some form of Greek autonomy'[6] led him to work against the Society by taking the part of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. When on Sergei's orders he had to resign, he took to print in the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* accusing Russia of working against the Greek hierarchy at the very time when the Anglican Church was striving to co-operate with it.[7] With the help of Prince Meshcherski, an elderly aristocrat and the extreme conservative editor of *Grazhdanin*, he opened in the paper 'a forum to exalt the patriarch and to slander Russian workers in Jerusalem.'[8] He went further by

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 9. p. 618. [2] Ibid., p. 622. [3] Ibid.

[4] Terti Ivanovich Filippov 1825–99. State Inspector.

[5] *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, vi (1901). p. 186.

[6] Mentioned by Pobedonostsev in a letter to the Tsar, 4 August 1888. (Pobedonostsev, *Pis'ma*, pp. 188–92.)

[7] *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 1892, quoted by *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 472.

[8] Pobedonostsev, loc. cit.

publishing an anonymous open letter to the Ecumenical Patriarch in which he detailed 'the systematic action pursued by Russia against the Orthodox Churches of the East.'[1] The Society was accused of fraud, self-interest, cupidity, and indifference to the welfare of the Church. Such acrimony in the Russian camp was seized upon by French Catholic polemicists and the letter was made the basis of a long article in the *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* entitled *Griefs de l'Hellènisme contre la Russie*.[2] This was only one of many such articles. Just as Russian writers attributed the basest aims and methods and inexhaustible means to Catholic and Protestant bodies, so the French believed the Palestine Society to have only one goal—the physical conquest of Palestine and Syria. M. Deplaissan of the *Echos d'Orient*, the organ of the Augustinians of the Assumption, made the comment: 'Appuyée sur les consuls en Syrie, sur l'ambassadeur à Constantinople, sur le gouvernment à Saint-Pétersburg, elle[la Société] s'est affirmée comme un instrument de conquête mis en action dans un but purement politique par des hommes d'Etat qui s'affublent du zèle religieux'.[3] He accused it of facilitating the passage of pilgrims to Palestine only in order to demonstrate Russia's power, wealth, and piety and claimed that they went in such numbers only because they were of the lowest classes.[4] One of the Society's aims, in his opinion, was the seizure of the patriarchal thrones of Antioch and Jerusalem. Following its expressed desire to found a Russian monastery in Jerusalem it would flood the country with monks and roubles and would then seat 'un des leurs sur le trône patriarchal'.[5] M. Deplaissan, reading 'between the lines' as he admitted, believed that Pobedonostsev had claimed jurisdiction over all the Eastern Patriarchs.[6]

British diplomatic observers saw the pilgrimage as a means of engendering patriotic fervour among Russian peasants: ' . . . after some time, the whole rural population of Russia will have made the pilgrimage, and by it their naturally deep devotion will be inflamed to such an extent that they will gladly die for any cause having any connexion with the Holy Land.'[7] Archbishop Dowling's comment

[1] *Orient Chrétien*, vi, p. 1. [2] Ibid., p. 1ff., 172 ff., 333 ff., 532 ff.
[3] *Echos d'Orient*, iv (1901), p. 205.
[4] Ibid., p. 278. [5] Ibid., vii (1904), p. 370. [6] Ibid., iv, 1901, p. 203.
[7] Memorandum from Third Secretary Norman of the British Embassy in Constantinople to Lord Salisbury, 27 April 1899. (FO 78/4993.)

made during a period of Anglican-Orthodox rapprochement was that the Society was a 'purely charitable' body 'giving education gratis' to the Orthodox Arabs and 'endeavouring to keep them loyal to their own religion'.[1] The attempts of the early Anglican Bishops of Jerusalem to convert Orthodox Arabs had given place to the assurances of the twentieth century that proselytizing would stop. Yet tension and bitterness between sects were inescapable in the conditions existing in the Palestine of those days and as long as the professed aim of the Society was the countering of non-Orthodox propaganda its motives would continue to be suspect to its Catholic rivals.

The Russo-Japanese War and the Revolution of 1905

In Russia the Palestine Society was approaching a crisis that was in part caused by the greater disaster that faced the country as a whole. Russia's conduct in the Far East, encouraged by Germany, had reinforced British suspicions of Russian policy. As the only Power with a land border with China, Russia had been practising the economic and military penetration of the country. When she turned her attention to Korea the fears of the Japanese were aroused who had long considered the region part of their own sphere of influence. Although an attempt was made to reach an agreement by which Russia should be dominant in Manchuria and Japan in Korea, the Government in Tokyo preferred to seek a treaty with Britain. This was signed at the beginning of 1902 and did nothing to ease Russo-Japanese tension. Further attempts were made to define to their mutual satisfaction their respective spheres, but despite French offers to mediate, no agreement was reached. The Tsar was buffeted between the positions taken up by his 'advisers'—Witte and his supporters counselling caution, Bezobrazov and others pushing him towards war. Japan was in any case making thorough military preparations and early in February 1904 her forces made a surprise attack on Russian warships in the harbour of Port Arthur. The ensuing war was a series of disasters for Russia. She sustained defeats on land and at sea and in January 1905 Port Arthur fell. The Black Sea Fleet was prevented from sailing by the Straits Convention and the Baltic fleet which arrived off the Chinese mainland in May was decisively defeated. Both sides now wished

[1] Dowling, *The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, p. 163.

to end the war—Japan because of the severe economic strain she was suffering, Russia because of the unpopularity of the war and growing revolution at home. Peace was signed in September by which Japanese rights in Korea were recognized as were also Russian interests in Northern Manchuria, but in Southern Manchuria the concession for a railway was transferred from Russia to Japan. The first stage of expansion into China had ended in defeat—the first considerable defeat sustained by Europe at the hands of an Asiatic people since the Middle Ages.

The conduct of the war and the series of reverses led to alarm and discontent in Russia. Economic hardship was widespread. Patriotic enthusiasm had at first welcomed the war but disillusion had followed and the people's thoughts turned to their own miseries. Industrial unrest expressed itself in strikes and in St Petersburg on Sunday, January 22nd, 1905 an Orthodox priest, Father Gapon, led a crowd of workers to the Winter Palace with a petition to the Tsar requesting among other things the termination of the war. Had the Tsar chosen to accept the petition the crowd would in all likelihood have dispersed peaceably but the Imperial guard was ordered to open fire on the people, killing or wounding several hundreds. The day became known as Bloody Sunday and marked the beginning of the 1905 revolution. Strikes spread through the larger cities and in February peasant revolts began in the province of Kursk. Agrarian riots broke out in the central and north-west provinces and members of the armed forces came under revolutionary influence. Leading Russians submitted demands for representational rights and in August the Tsar unwillingly introduced a limited franchise. During the summer months peasant riots increased in number and intensity. The Tsar finally bowed to the opposition and in his manifesto of October 30th provided for the election of the first Imperial Duma. The issuing of the manifesto split the opposition, the moderates feeling that some progress had been made, the radicals remaining dissatisfied. A strike called in St Petersburg in November was a failure and in December an uprising in Moscow was put down by the army with much bloodshed. This marked the end of revolution in the cities; the workers were defeated and the peasant riots died down as the winter set in. The Duma remained, however, and the country prepared for its first elections. By the middle of 1906 most Russian provinces were subject to some form of martial law and by 1907 the revolutionary

movement had been overpowered. But the regime which emerged from the troubles of the period was different from the regime against which the country had risen. It was still an autocracy but the Tsar had to some extent shared his authority. The Duma had gained some say in legislation and in the control of expenditure but the Government and its ministers were still responsible only to the Tsar.

The leading figure of this period was Stolypin who had attracted the Tsar's attention by his firm handling of agrarian riots in Saratov province. He became Minister of the Interior in 1906 and then Prime Minister until 1911. Russia's defeat at Japanese hands had put a term to her enterprises in the Further East[1] and her eyes once again turned to the familiar territory of the Balkans and the Mediterranean. She materially modified her claims to Central Asia and recognized British interests in Afghanistan. Both Russia and Britain had already agreed on non-interference in Tibet and had divided Persia between themselves. The Foreign Minister Izvolski sought by his diplomacy to realize 'Russia's historic aims in the Near East'[2] although Stolypin counselled against a resolute policy which Russia, weakened by the revolution, would be unable to pursue. He recognized, however, that she would be compelled to act if the Ottoman Empire were to collapse. At a conference on foreign policy in January 1908 he maintained that the conclusion of peace in the Far East enabled Russia to turn again to the Near East.

> Russia's historical tasks in the Turkish East and the traditions of our past place her, in the event of such complications [the collapse of the Ottoman Empire], in an especially difficult situation. If she remains aloof she risks losing at one stroke the fruits of centuries of effort, she will lose the role of a great power and will occupy the position of a nation of secondary significance whose voice is unheard.[3]

But two important factors had brought about a change in the Ottoman Empire. One was the Young Turk revolution of 1908 and the restoration by Abdülhamid of the constitution, followed by his deposition in 1909. The other was the growing influence of Germany. Some of the Young Turks welcomed German initiative in the

[1] Although Russia continued to seek gains in the area. In 1912 she established a 'protectorate' over Mongolia. She also pursued her interests in northern Manchuria.

[2] Quoted by Sumner, *Survey of Russian History* (2nd edn.), p. 285.

[3] Quoted by Shebunin, p. 95.

Empire and in 1910 agreed to the building of the Bagdad railway by the Germans. Although Russia disliked these developments she had no wish to appear anti-German and was eager to demonstrate that the Anglo-Russian convention was not directed against German interests in the East. Germany recognized Russian rights in Persia and in return Russia withdrew her diplomatic opposition to the project for the Bagdad railway. Yet under the surface of seeming agreement ran currents of hostility against the Power which was so strongly establishing itself on the Bosphorus. Although many Russians urged Russo-German friendship a crisis almost developed in 1913 when General Liman von Sanders was appointed head of the German military mission to Turkey and commander of the Constantinople district. The Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonov, objected strongly to the appointment, fearing that it threatened Russia's interests in the Straits. The crisis was avoided by relieving von Sanders of his command but leaving him as head of the mission. Russian prestige was saved but resentment remained and only a few months later Turkey was entering her final great conflict with Imperial Russia as the ally of Germany.

The War, the Revolution and the Arab World

The Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War and the revolution of 1905 set up echoes throughout the Eastern world. The defeat of a European power by an Asiatic nation gave rise to or strengthened the nationalist feeling of many Asians. Although it is sometimes difficult to disentangle the effects of the war from those of the revolution, many direct and indirect links can be traced between the events in Russia and the revolts in Turkey, Persia, and China.[1] In the Arab world the effect was twofold. There were those who, like Indian nationalists, were inspired to believe that it was now possible to throw off the imperialist yoke of Britain, France or Turkey. The majority of articulate Arab Muslim nationalists would incline towards such conclusions while the Orthodox Arabs looked with incredulity on the Russian defeat and revolution. George Hanna's autobiography *Qabl al-maghib*[2] gave an interesting account of the Orthodox Arab's point of view. He judged Russia's

[1] For the 'first attempt to interpret from the Western vantagepoint the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1905 on Asia' see Spector, *The First Russian Revolution. Its Impact on Asia*, 1962.

[2] Beirut, 1961.

reputation to be at its pinnacle in 1904 'despite the Russo-Japanese War, despite British and French efforts to put a limit to this reputation'.[1] Russia was seen, even by Catholics and Protestants, as the general and mighty defender of Orthodoxy. The Japanese War was inexplicable within their world view. 'Who is Japan who dares to fight the Tsar?'[2] was a question commonly asked, and during the war the Orthodox Arabs would accept no dispute as to the eventual victor. Their allegiance, centred round the person of the Tsar, had not been weakened by the events of 1905.

> After the revolution of 1905 we still shouted 'Long live the Tsar!' The Tsar in our opinion was Russia and nothing but the Tsar . . . In our blindness we mocked the revolutionary volcano at the heart of Russia . . . We had not heard of Lenin and if we had we would have brought down on him our curses . . . Russia was our beloved and yet we only knew her through the 'great Tsar'. We never imagined that he could be dethroned.[3]

Similar concern for Russia had been felt throughout the schools and foundations of the Palestine Society. Russians and Arabs employed by the Society gave up a portion of their salary to help the wounded.[4] There were constant prayers in the schools for a Russian victory. The headmistress of the girls' school in Beirut wrote in a letter to the Society: 'If the teachers and pupils hear any unpleasant news, all immediately gather to say prayers on their knees. Many pray with tears that victory may be given to the Tsar. Truly here is a small corner of Russia. My Arab girls even when playing during a break between classes sing the [Russian] prayer "Lord save thy people."'[5]

Such reactions were the result of the Orthodox Arab's desire to identify himself with something greater than his own impotent community. Russia's defeat was his defeat and was an uncomfortable sign that all was not well in the Russian State. For the Muslim Arab who had no personal stake in Russia's welfare the years 1904 and 1905 held quite another significance. The revolution was an indication that a nation was stirring under an oppressive despotism

[1] Hanna, p. 86.

[2] Ibid., p. 87. An Orthodox schoolboy wrote at the time a poem entitled 'Have you seen a sparrow fighting a hawk?' Atiyah tells the story of an Orthodox Arab who wept over every Russian defeat and who for years refused to ratify the peace which ended the war. (*An Arab tells his story*, p. 3.)

[3] Hanna, p. 88.

[4] *Soobshcheniya*, 15. p. 164.

[5] Letter from M. A. Cherkesova. (Ibid., p. 165.)

and that it might prove possible for even the heaviest dictatorial hand to be lifted. But this sympathy for the struggles of the Russian people was mixed with admiration for the Japanese defeat of a major European power and the one feeling did not necessarily exclude the other. Perhaps the clearest expression of this admiration was given by the Egyptian nationalist writer Mustafa Kamil who devoted a book to the subject—*Ash-shams al-mushriqa* (The rising sun). In his writings his chief concern was to stir up opposition to the British occupation of Egypt, and to strengthen his case he cited Japan as an example of an Eastern country which by it own efforts had overcome the threat posed by the Western world. Kamil wished to refute claims that the days of Eastern nations were numbered, that there could be

> no resistance to Western domination, no alternative to submitting meekly to its authority now and in the future. But the nation of Japan arose giving the lie to these assertions and demonstrating to the people of the East that it is possible for them to rise again if the requisite effort is made . . . People ask with surprise and wonder who this nation is which has come from the grave to disquiet the living with the voices of its guns . . . with the demands of its policies and with its defeat of the state which was thought invincible . . . The world has seen great things and a rising sun is illumining the world.[1]

His book was intended as an account of Japan but it also drew the contrast between Japan and Egypt. How, he asked, could a writer make fruitful comparisons between two nations 'one of which is the ally of England and the other crushed between its teeth, the one defeating Russia and rivalling the greatest of nations, the other oppressed by unbearable woe, divided in itself; [the one] is a sun which is rising [the other] a sun which has set.'[2] Although the defeat of Russia provided the starting point of the work its essential message was that the rebirth of an Eastern country by its own efforts was now possible.

Mustafa Kamil was the leader of the new nationalist movement which asserted that Egypt was capable of regeneration and self-government. Another Egyptian nationalist writer, the poet Hafiz Ibrahim, drew the same lessons from the Russo-Japanese war. Out of his natural response to tragic themes he wrote two poems on the subject, *The Japanese Maiden*[3] and the *Japanese War*.[4] In the first

[1] *Ash-shams al-mushriqa*, pp. 4–5.
[2] Ibid., pp. 8–9. [3] *Diwan* 1935, p. 68. [4] Ibid., p. 71.

he praised the bravery and patriotism of the Japanese which he constrasted despairingly with the weakness and division of his own *umma*. The war could, however, be an example to Egypt of how a nation could be led to greatness under a strong leader and it marked a turning point in the history of the Eastern peoples. It would 'summon the men of the East to triumph.'[1] In the second poem he praised the Japanese Emperor for his vision and the Japanese people for its mature understanding of national feeling (*wataniya*).

> Thus the Mikado has taught us to regard our homelands as both mother and father.[2]

The events of 1904 and 1905 attracted the attention of other Arab writers, notably the Syro-Lebanese and those who were Orthodox or who came from formerly Orthodox families—Ya'qub Sarruf, As'ad Rustum, Faris al-Khuri and Khalil Sa'ada. Sarruf, the founder of the well-known periodical *al-Muqtataf*, published in 1906 his novel *Fatat Misr*, a wide-ranging work part of which was devoted to a history of the Russo-Japanese war. The author did not appear to be concerned to draw any lesson from those events but rather to fit them into his world picture. Scenes set in the Tokyo and St Petersburg of 1904 and 1905 formed a background against which the characters discussed the course of the war.

As'ad Rustum, the Lebanese poet who emigrated to the United States in 1892, published in 1908 his *Diwan* which included a number of poems about the war. His sympathies clearly lay with Russia and on occasions he voiced his despair at the Russian defeat.

Faris al-Khuri came from a family of Orthodox origins converted to Protestantism, although Faris himself had been appointed director of an Orthodox school in Damascus by Meletios, the Patriarch of Antioch. By 1905 he was working as an interpreter in the British Consulate in Damascus and published in the Cairo journal *al-Muqtabas* a long poem, eventually published separately as *Waqa'i' al-Harb* (The events of the War), in which he traced the war in some detail. It was a factual and serious account of events to which he added his own commentary. For him it was the tyranny and corruption of Russia which led to her defeat whereas the Japanese had justice and freedom on their side.

One work was entirely devoted to the revolution: *Asrar ath-thaura ar-rusiya* (Secrets of the Russian revolution) by Khalil Sa'ada,

[1] *Diwan*, p. 73. [2] Jum'a, *Hafiz Ibrahim*, p. 163.

published in Cairo in 1905. The author was interested solely in the revolution which for him was a second French revolution—'a flame which will produce change in the condition of mankind and which will bring forth progress.' It was the natural result of centuries of Tsarist oppression and the author's purpose was to explain the causes leading to the eventual revolt of the Russian people.

Decline of the Society

The year 1905, so important in many aspects of Russian life, was the turning point in the history of the Palestine Society. Until that year, although optimism had been tempered with caution, plans had centred on the continuing growth and development of Russian schools and institutions in Palestine and Syria. 1905 proved to be the limit of expansion and during the following decade the Society was chiefly concerned with maintaining its existing facilities. The danger of stagnation or decline was real. Khitrovo had died in 1903 and the revolution touched the Society decisively when early in February 1905 Grand Duke Sergei was assassinated by a socialist revolutionary. It had thus lost its two founders and was now to be directed by men of the second generation. The presidency passed to Sergei's wife, Grand Duchess Elizaveta Fedorovna, a quiet and saintly woman unfitted to follow the active role of her energetic husband, but a suitable figurehead. Belyaev, the ex-Russian Consul in Damascus, was appointed secretary. He accepted the post on condition that he maintained his ties with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His successor in 1906 was A. A. Dmitrievski (1856–1929), a man devoted to the welfare of the Christian East and to the success of the Society. He was less hostile to the Greeks than was Khitrovo and unlike Belyaev was loathe to allow the Ministry too much say in the affairs of the Society.

The Society suffered in other ways. Father Gapon had observed among Russians a growing lack of sympathy for the Church. 'I must state frankly that if the Church does not identify itself with the people the pastor will soon remain without a flock. Already the entire intelligentsia, which exerts an influence on the people, has left the Church. If we now fail to extend help to the masses they too will abandon us.'[1] The spread of secularism led to increasing indifference to the Society's work. Although the number of branches

[1] Gapon, *Istoriya moei zhizni*, pp. 68–9.

rose to fifty one, including the important addition of Moscow, the total of members steadily dropped from the five thousand of 1904 to 3,000 in 1914. The consequent fall in income was made more serious by a decrease in the yearly church offerings given to the Society. During the Russo-Japanese War the peasants' sympathy was diverted from Palestine to the war-wounded and in the later months of 1905 the disturbances among the peasant population further reduced their offerings. An ominous note was sounded in 1906 when the Society's income was 50,000 roubles less than its expenditure. The decrease in offerings was no temporary state of affairs. As the Society had depended on the 'Palm Collection' for its chief source of income it was soon in financial straits. The report for 1906 noted: 'It is difficult to expect gifts for philanthropic work from people sowing evil or suffering from it.'[1] During the following three years expenditure exceeded income and the Society was forced to turn for aid to the Government which itself had faced formidable financial difficulties after the Russo-Japanese war. The Society now had in Syria and Lebanon some seventy five schools which constituted the largest item of expenditure, and with Stolypin's support it asked the Tsar to take over their running expenses. *Ad hoc* grants were made in the years 1908–11 until in 1912 the Tsar approved an annual grant. The Duma agreed that the treasury would support the Syrian schools with payments of 150,000 roubles annually.[2]

The stream of Russian pilgrims to the Holy Land continued after 1905 despite increasing difficulties. Ships of the Russian Company of Steam Navigation and Trade were obsolete so that pilgrims had to travel in overcrowded and unhygienic conditions. Graham describes how five hundred and sixty peasant pilgrims sailed in a vessel with accommodation for one hundred and eight. The ships' crews had often imbibed revolutionary propaganda and lectured the peasants on the futility of their pilgrimage. The Society could do nothing to improve conditions on board and with its limited resources could not make improvements to the hostel accommodation in Palestine. Even so it did not deserve the strictures of Grigori Rasputin, the mystic and debauchee who had won the confidence of the Imperial family. He visited Palestine in 1911.

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 17. p. 632.

[2] Ibid., 23. p. 381. A lump sum of 50,000 roubles was also given for the rebuilding of the Bait Jala girls' seminary.

'More attention must be paid to the pilgrims . . . They must be transported more cheaply and the mission [Society?] should ask no money for hot water and rooms and should provide food once a day—But the pilgrims are treated like cattle.'[1] Pilgrim traffic was hindered by the Italian bombardment of the Dardanelles in 1912 and the Balkans War of 1913 and was finally brought to an end by the outbreak of war in 1914.

The Society continued to work among the Orthodox Arabs combatting what it considered new threats in addition to those presented by Catholic and Protestant missionaries. It welcomed the restoration of the Turkish constitution in 1908 which promised greater freedom and equality for non-Muslim Ottomans, but feared that the Young Turk attacks on the *millet* system would disrupt the traditional way of life and cause Orthodox Arabs to question their faith. It was also disturbed by what it considered to be the spread of freemasonry among the Arabs aided by the success of the Young Turks, several of whom had espoused its cause. The Society expected these threats to be met by the Catholics and Protestants but feared that the Orthodox community possessed neither the spiritual nor financial resources, nor the personnel to offer serious resistance.

In 1907 the Society celebrated its silver jubilee at the Peterhof Palace. Special meetings and services were attended by the Tsar[2] and his family, the heads of the Russian Church, the members of the Synod and the Council of the Society together with many other eminent Russians. Its arrival as an official body recognized by the Russian hierarchy was accomplished. There was no suspicion amid the enthusiasm of the celebrations that there remained to the Society only seven more years of active existence. Even in 1913 when the Arab Patriarch of Antioch, Gregory Haddad, visited St Petersburg during the tercentenary celebrations of the Romanov dynasty plans were laid for an increase in the Society's work in Syria. Gregory and his predecessor, Meletios, had welcomed it into

[1] Rasputin, *Moi mysli i razmyshleniya*, i. pp. 52–3. The New York Public Library preserves a photograph of the manuscript of this slight work in an illiterate and barely legible hand.

[2] A message from the Tsar was read in which he summarized the activities of the Society. 'After 25 years the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society owns 2 million roubles' worth of property, 8 hostels for 10,000 pilgrims, a hospital and 6 clinics, 101 schools with 10,400 pupils and has published 347 books on Palestine.' (*Soobshcheniya*, 18. p. 398.)

their patriarchate and had encouraged the expansion of the school system. In Jerusalem the patriarch remained obstructive although he had permitted the opening of monasteries[1] and had consecrated two Russian churches. But the Society achieved little of substance after 1905.

Political Developments 1914–17

The crisis in Russo-Turkish relations brought about by the mission of Liman von Sanders to Constantinople in 1913 was in part the reason for the secret Russian conference held early in 1914 on the question of the Straits and Constantinople. Russian statesmen were seriously disquieted by von Sanders' appointment, even when at Russian insistence he was not given command of the Constantinople district but was made Inspector-General of the Turkish army with his headquarters in the capital. This empty diplomatic victory left Russia with the suspicion that von Sanders' mission was tantamount to seizure of the Straits but she concluded at the time that she would not be ready to go to war over the Straits until after 1917.

On this basis, Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, endeavoured to bring Turkey if not into alliance with Russia at least into a neutral position. Upon the outbreak of war, however, Germany scored a further success by negotiating an alliance with Turkey on August 2nd 1914. These negotiations had been in progress for some time, at least from July 23rd when Enver, the Turkish Minister of War, had offered to sign such an alliance. He told the German Ambassador that a majority of the Committee of Union and Progress was in favour of it, and especially Tal'at and Halil who stated that they 'did not wish to become vassals of Russia.' Nevertheless it is clear that Enver and Tal'at played an ambiguous role as on August 4th they offered an alliance to Russia. Sazonov was anxious to accept, but the influence of the German Ambassador in Constantinople together with British opposition, since the proposed alliance required territorial concessions from Greece, ensured that it did not materialize. Sazonov still attempted to keep Turkey neutral and offered in return for her neutrality a guarantee of territorial integrity. Russia did not at this point put forward any claims to the Straits and Constantinople. Despite Sazonov's efforts,

[1] Quénet, L'influence russe, (*Le monde slave*, xiii (1936) p. 353). *Echos d'Orient* xvii, (1914), p. 177.

early in November 1914 Turkey entered the war against the Entente Powers.

Once the traditional enemy had been engaged there was great enthusiasm among the Russian people for the war. The Tsar issued a manifesto in which he called for the fulfilment of Russia's 'historic mission on the shores of the Black Sea'. The idea of 'free access to the sea' became one of the paramount reasons for sustaining the war against the Central Powers and their allies. Britain realized the importance of the Straits to Russia and promised that their fate would be determined only in conformity with Russian interests. Although this promise reassured Sazonov he was concerned about the possible consequences of the Allied expedition to the Dardanelles and in March 1915 he circulated a memorandum which laid down Russian claims within the Ottoman Empire. 'Toute solution sera insuffisante et instable si la ville de Constantinople, la rive gauche du Bosphore, la mer de Marmara et les Dardanelles . . . ne font partie de l'empire russe.'[1] After some hesitation Britain accepted Russia's demands but found that any consideration of the future division of other areas of the Ottoman Empire—Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine—was premature. France also agreed, subject to the recognition of her claims in Syria and Cilicia. 'Le gouvernement de la République, ayant délibéré sur les conditions de paix qu'il conviendrait d'imposer à la Turquie, désire annexer la Syrie, y compris la région du golfe d'Alexandrette et les régions ciliciennes jusqu'au Taurus.'[2] Paléologue, the French Ambassador to Russia, made it clear that for the French Government the term 'Syria' included Palestine. Sazonov was prepared to accept a French claim to Syria excluding Palestine, since this was an area in which France's interests were traditionally stronger than Russia's, but Russia's emotional attachment to the Palestinian Holy Places would not permit her to surrender them exclusively to French control. 'Cette question apparaît comme essentielle, car si le gouvernement impérial est prêt à satisfaire largement le désir de la France relativement à la Syrie et à la Cilicie, en ce qui concerne les lieux saints il sera nécessaire de soumettre la question à une discussion plus approfondie.'[3] Delcassé, the French Foreign

[1] *Documents diplomatiques secrets russes*, 1914–17, p. 252.

[2] *Un livre noir*, iii. p. 83.

[3] Sazonov to Nelidov, Russian Ambassador in Paris. 3/16 March 1915. (Ibid., p. 85.)

Minister, welcomed Russia's acceptance of French claims to Cilicia and Syria but it was reported to Sazonov: 'Pour ce qui est de Palestine, il va peut-être insister sur la possession de telle ou telle région qui en fait partie, mais il partage absolument votre avis que la question des Lieux-Saints exige une délibération spéciale et plus attentive.'[1] Until this further deliberation could take place Paléologue suggested the formula (which was accepted): 'En ce qui concerne les lieux saints, les gouvernements russe et français, conviennent qu'aucune atteinte ne sera portée au régime actuel.'[2]

In the spring of 1915 it seemed that the Russian dream of centuries was about to be realized, that the Straits would be in Russian hands, that the Orthodox liturgy would once again be celebrated in Santa Sophia. In Russia itself there were discussions on the possible occupation of the Holy Land and even on a connecting corridor of territory from Jaffa to the Caucasus.[3] However, by the Sykes-Picot agreement of May 1916 the Near East was shared between France and Britain and the establishment of an international regime proposed for most of Palestine. This was accepted by Russia but, although in the following year her troops advanced deep into the area,[4] in November 1917 the Bolshevik Government in Petrograd publicly renounced the Tsarist agreements. Lenin had more pressing problems than the occupation of Constantinople, and the Palestinian Holy Places held no attraction for the new atheistic rulers of Russia.

The Fall of the Palestine Society

The spring and early summer of 1914 passed as usual for the Russians in the Holy Land. Building was in progress on new foundations in Nazareth. The Easter pilgrims had returned to Russia, schools had ended their term and parties of Russian students were visiting the Holy Places. The storm broke on a Russian colony unprepared for war. Money immediately ceased to arrive as banks had closed their transfer operations. No Arab teachers or officials could be paid. Many Russians were ill-treated by Muslims especially as Turkey had abrogated the Capitulations. All institutions and schools were closed and put under the care of Ottoman subjects

[1] *Documents russes*, p. 291. [2] *Livre noir*, iii. p. 86.
[3] Preosvyashchenny Antoni, *Slovar' k tvoreniyam Dostoevskovo*, pp. 192–3.
[4] In April 1917 Russian Cossack troops reached Qizil Ribat near Bagdad.

while the Italian consul was made responsible for the affairs of Russian subjects. The Turkish authorities ordered all Russians to cease work and return to the compound in Jerusalem. The hospital was commandeered; the men's hostel used as barracks and the women's as stables. The consuls and the monks of the mission including Leonid were allowed to leave, being escorted out of Jerusalem by the Turkish police. Finally the compound itself was seized by the German commanding officer and the remaining Russians were ignominiously hounded into the streets in their nightclothes.

In Russia the Society received news only intermittently and published its last report in 1916, the closing words being:

> The Society ends its present report with a feeling of deep grief in view of the impossibility at present of lifting a little the curtain which hides from us the secret of the future of the Holy Land and of Russia's part there. But it is imbued with an unshakable faith in the final favourable outcome of the present hard and unparalleled bloody war and hopes that on its conclusion the possibility will arise for the Society to work there for the glory of our country with greater freedom and with more fruitful and tangible results.[1]

The Palestine Society was to disappear in the holocaust of the revolution. Its president, Grand Duchess Elizaveta, suffered the same fate as her husband. She was assassinated by the Bolsheviks. Her body was taken to Jerusalem and buried in the Russian church of St Mary Magdalene.

Postscript

Perhaps all was not lost. The Jerusalem Mission was reestablished some years after the revolution under the authority of the Russian Episcopal Synod Abroad. There are still[2] Russian monks and nuns, albeit aged, guarding their churches on the Mount of Olives. In 1964 two old Russian peasant women, left behind in 1917, still paid daily visits to the Holy Sepulchre.

In January 1945 a new Patriarch of Moscow was elected and in June he toured the Middle East visiting Cairo, Alexandria, and Beirut, but not Constantinople. His enthronement in the Church

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 27. p. 169.
[2] 1967.

of the Holy Sepulchre was a symbolic act whose significance would surely have been welcomed by Porfiri Uspenski, Cyril Naumov, and Antonin. In Israeli Jerusalem the Russian mission soon became active, holding services in the cathedral attended by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the head of the mission and the Russian Ambassador. In 1964 Russian pilgrims returned to the Holy Places after an absence of fifty years.

9

INFLUENCE THROUGH EDUCATION: THE SOCIETY'S SCHOOLS

> La langue est le grand véhicule des influences étrangères en Orient (VERNEY and DAMBMANN).

> Already in Nazareth my favourite subject was literature... In the seminary [of Poltava] I soon immersed myself in Russian literature. It was as though a new world full of wonders had opened before me . . . there could hardly have been a Russian author whose works I did not read through (MIKHA'IL NU'AIMA)

THE Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society was pledged to support and maintain Orthodoxy in the Holy Land, that was, to preserve the Arabs in their faith. It was at first believed that this could be done by building and repairing churches and by training Arab priests. This policy foundered on the implacable opposition of the Greek patriarchs. The leaders of the Society had not considered education a major field of Russian activity in Palestine and were ill-prepared for such an undertaking, and yet, if they wished to continue among the Arabs, the only remaining course was to emulate other European Powers by building up and supporting a system of Arab schools.

This was no easy decision to implement. The officials of the Society were not trained educationalists nor had they a firm educational tradition of their own on which to base their policy. Education in Russia was state-controlled and legislation reflected the personal inclination of the Tsar or of his Minister of Education. The beginning of a serious system dates from the Schools Statute of Alexander I, issued in 1804, which laid down the outline of a regular system of parish and district elementary schools, secondary schools and universities, but it was under Count Dmitri Tolstoi as Minister of Education (1866–80)—a strong conservative and a champion of Orthodoxy—that Russian education made its greatest

strides. His most important innovation was in the curriculum of secondary schools. By a law of 1871 the hours devoted to Greek, Latin, mathematics, and modern languages were considerably increased. Tolstoi was a strong advocate of religious education and restored to church schools a Government grant which had been discontinued in 1818. He increased the number of secondary schools and reorganized district schools. He closed the existing teacher training colleges and by a new statute increased the number of new colleges and teachers. The existing teachers' seminaries continued to furnish the elementary schools with teachers. The education of girls made some progress under Tolstoi although it was tolerated rather than encouraged.

An interesting figure to emerge during this period and influence the educational policy of the Society was Pirogov, an army surgeon who had saved many lives during the seige of Sevastopol. In an article published in *Voprosy Zhizni* in 1856 he deplored the strictly utilitarian aims of education which under Nicholas I had largely prepared children for a profession or for entry into government service. Pirogov suggested that the true goal of education was to give children a Christian moral training which would equip them for the struggle in adult life against materialism and purely utilitarian ends—'to prepare us from childhood for this struggle means to make us human beings.'[1] He later entered government service and as an educationalist had a wide influence. Laying emphasis on the importance of classical languages as the basis of education his ideas were taken as a foundation for the new educational policy of Tolstoi.

The reactionary character of Alexander III's reign evident in most spheres of public life was felt too in education. Leadership in educational matters was transferred from the Ministry to the Synod which lay under the thumb of Pobedonostsev. Secondary schools were closed to children of the lower professions and Pobedonostsev tried to gain control of all elementary education. He wanted a national system of education centred on the Orthodox faith and closely allied to the Church and also to limit the syllabus of the elementary schools to the three R's and religious instruction. These schools had to his mind erred by introducing subjects too secular for peasant needs. In 1884 he issued a statute of church parochial schools which laid down that the aim of these schools was 'to

[1] Quoted by Hans, *History of Russian educational policy*, p. 98.

strengthen the Orthodox faith and Christian morality amongst the people and to impart useful elementary knowledge.'[1] The schools were either of one class lasting for two years or of two classes lasting for four. In the former, first place in the curriculum was given to *Zakon Bozhi* (the law of God) followed by church singing, church Slavonic, and Russian. In the latter schools the history of Russia and the Church was added. The teachers in these schools were young and inexperienced, usually having completed only the four year course, and in general the standard of the parochial schools was lower than that of the lay schools.

From 1894 to 1904 Russia experienced a second period of educational advancement. The conflict between the Ministry and the Synod, however, continued—a clash between the progressive and the traditional views of education. The Duma tried in 1908 to abolish the distinction between Government and Church schools but the parochial schools were retained. Immediately before the First World War the secondary schools were reformed and a wider curriculum—including foreign languages, science, and practical subjects—was introduced. There were also moves to introduce a broader curriculum with foreign languages into elementary schools.

Under the Ottoman system of *millets* education was the responsibility of each community and it was the patriarch's duty, as laid down in the Imperial regulations of 1875, 'to devote his attention to . . . the good administration of the . . . existing schools.'[2] A general picture has already been given of the educational situation among the Orthodox population of Syria and Palestine at the middle of the nineteenth century.[3] There were few changes during the following four decades until the foundation of the Palestine Society. In Palestine it was extremely difficult for an Orthodox Arab child to obtain an elementary education in an Orthodox school and almost impossible for him to acquire a secondary education. In Syria the position was hardly better and although the Society assumed responsibility late in the nineteenth century for over fifty existing schools, it continually complained of their poor quality and low standards. Porfiri Uspenski had optimistically reported in 1849 that there was a parish school in every village in Palestine and Syria.[4] But the parish 'school' was often no more than a small group of

[1] Hans, p. 158.
[2] Bertram and Luke, p. 243.
[3] Chapter 2.
[4] Bezobrazov, i. p. 308.

children gathered round a priest who, as he was himself uneducated, could provide little education.[1] These schools would spring up in a village on local demand and as quickly disappear. Some boasted a longer tradition and higher standards, such as those in Damascus, Tripoli, and Beirut, and in Nazareth and Jaffa. They had been opened on local initiative and were often supported by money sent from Russia.

Most Russian officials in Palestine had commented on the lack of Orthodox schools and teachers but little had been done to remedy the need. Porfiri had been active in organizing new schools but it is doubtful whether many of these survived the Crimean War. His School of the Cross had a chequered career and eventually offered very few of its places to Arab pupils. Cyril Naumov had refused to found new schools in Jerusalem but had distributed alms to several existing ones in Syria. He had complained, moreover, that the policy of sending young Arabs secretly to Russia to be educated was of no value.

> To educate Arabs in Russia appears to be beneficial but it only leads to mischief if we act secretly and independently of the Greeks. We accept young Arabs unofficially and send them home with no guarantee of anything . . . and so the majority elects to remain in Russia . . . Those who return find no shelter and do us no honour . . . It is not surprising that they become ill-wishers of Russia or that they hide dishonourably behind her name. So the hierarchy of the Eastern churches is offended by the . . . participation of Russia . . . The Turkish government in its turn looks suspiciously on our ambiguous actions, and finally the people who see only mean and useless half-measures . . . are afraid of relying on Russia, although they are even more afraid of refusing and losing all faith in her.[2]

Antonin had opened a girls' school in Bait Jala. The Arabs themselves complained not so much of the lack of Russian help as of Greek indifference to the educational welfare of their community. 'Our millet is backward compared with the others. We have no ecclesiastical school, no scientific library, even no properly organized preparatory schools . . . We have to send our children to Western schools.'[3] The greatest shortcoming in Russian eyes was not that Orthodox Arabs should remain uneducated but that they should have to seek their education in non-Orthodox schools.

[1] Neale, *Patriarchate of Antioch*, p. 224.
[2] Otchet missii. (Titov, pp. 262–3.)
[3] *Al-khulasa al-wafiya*, p. 252 f.

Vasili Khitrovo in his early eagerness to found the Society had no time to consider carefully the problems of education in Palestine. He was not an educationalist and had made no plans for the equipping of schools, the provision of textbooks, and the training of teachers. The chief aim of Russian educational policy in Palestine was to ensure at least a primary education for every Orthodox Arab child. This appeared to be a simple task. It was estimated that there were two and a half thousand Orthodox children of school age and on paper about forty schools, which implied that the Society had only to found some ten schools in order to provide universal education. But most of the forty schools claimed by the Greek patriarchate were imaginary and the Orthodox population was scattered in some seventy two localities. The Society had therefore to begin afresh and it was decided to open schools only in areas of large Orthodox population or in those Orthodox villages nearest to towns. Khitrovo wrote to Antonin in June 1882: 'We shall limit ourselves to opening two or three schools this year in order to show that we are doing something and to encourage the local population.'[1] He realized that even so modest an effort would antagonize the Greeks and felt it wiser to found his first schools away from the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem.

> We shall open schools if possible in Galilee a little further away from the patriarchate which would interfere if we were near. If we are not so close they have little interest in us and in such a way we shall move from north to south. When there are twenty to thirty such schools we can begin to think about an Orthodox gymnasium, but meanwhile we can take two or three Arabs and educate them here [in Russia].[2]

So moving cautiously, and in answer to urgent Arab appeals, he opened in December 1882 the first school in Mujaidil, a village selected because Protestant missionaries had been active there and had converted a proportion of the Orthodox population.[3] This first school, intended as a foretaste of the Russian educational system, was a dismal failure. As no trained teacher could be found an untrained Arab priest was put in charge. To a Russian visitor

> the school at Mujaidil presented a very gloomy picture in a small dark room—the teacher a priest with four pupils—two sons and two nephews.

[1] Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 221.
[2] Letter from Khitrovo to Antonin, December 1882. (Ibid).
[3] *Uchebnye zavedeniya IPPO 1893*, ii. p. 3; Tibawi *British Interests*, p. 163.

He said many were discontented with the Palestine Society but it seemed that he was the one who was discontented and said unashamedly that those parents were right who sent their children to the Protestant school.[1]

In the following years three further schools were opened in Galilee —in Rama and Kafr Yasif, both villages with Orthodox populations of over five hundred, and in Shajara. The Society could move only slowly as little money was available, there were no trained Orthodox Arab teachers and the hostility of the Patriarch of Jerusalem hindered any significant expansion. (Almost the first act of Patriarch Nikodemos, of whom great things had been confidently expected by the Russians, was the closing of a school in Jerusalem which had been opened with Russian funds.) Khitrovo was learning the hard lesson that enthusiasm alone would not run a school system and that careful and long term planning was necessary. He decided to appoint Aleksandr Kezma as the Society's agent with overall direction of the schools in Palestine. Kezma's appointment aroused hostility and he was forced to make a tactical withdrawal to Beirut where Khitrovo met him in 1884 to discuss the possible opening of a school in Nazareth. Khitrovo travelled on to Jerusalem to meet the patriarch who was showing signs of good will towards the Society. Several points were agreed upon, the patriarch conceding that the internal organization of the schools, the teachers, and their methods should be the exclusive concern of the Society, but he retained the right to inspect schools. He also gave permission for a girls' school to be opened in Nazareth and for a boys' boarding school in Ramalla. Although Khitrovo appeared to have gained concessions he mistrusted the patriarch and was prepared to seek if necessary the help of those bishops who welcomed Russian initiative.

An immediate result of the agreement was the decision to close two of the four schools in Galilee. Khitrovo had visited three of them and received a very unfavourable impression. 'Well, they exist. But the teachers are inefficient and therefore the teaching is unprofitable. In supporting these schools our money is thrown away.'[2]

It became apparent that he could not rely on the co-operation of the local population in opening schools and that the Society would either have to provide Russian teachers or itself begin to train young

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 261. [2] Ibid., p. 255.

Orthodox Arabs. At the same time the Society decided that it would concentrate in the immediate future on the education of as few girls' schools as existed even in theory. A girls' school was opened in Nazareth in March 1885 which was notable not only for being the first of its kind but also for the fact that the teacher in charge was the first Russian to work for the Society in Palestine. M. S. Savel'eva's tenure of office was a failure, due not so much to her own shortcomings as again to the Society's lack of planning and foresight. Although she knew no Arabic she was for some time the only Russian in Nazareth and as such had considerable influence over the female Orthodox population, but she had not been trained for her work among Arabs and was unable to cope with local conditions and demands. Her methods roused the female population of Nazareth against the Society and half the pupils left the school. In 1889 she was recalled for 'incompetence and excessive independence'[1] although only the previous year the Society had reported that she had been working energetically and was a beneficial influence in the district.[2]

The Nazareth Teachers' Seminary

Khitrovo's work had been restricted by the absence of competent Arab teachers and of Russian teachers able to teach in Arabic. The Arabs who studied in Russia often became naturalized, found employment and were then unwilling to return to Syria. This problem had been of concern to those Russians interested in the East for some time. As early as 1855 Grand Duke Konstantin Nikloaevich had suggested the establishment of an oriental academy in Odessa to train Russians for service in the East.[3] Other proposals were made to send young Arabs to the Kazan Ecclesiastical Seminary but it was feared that following the example of their compatriots they would 'grow away from Syria and remain in Russia.'[4] Khitrovo wrote to Antonin in 1883 of his ideas for founding a school in Odessa for between twelve and twenty Arab boys to prepare them for Russian seminaries. 'If this is successful after seven or eight years we can send out twenty boys to Syria who will

[1] *Otchet*, 1888–90, p. 125.
[2] Dmitrievski, p. 282.
[3] Porfiri was to have been the director of the proposed academy.
[4] *Uchebnye zavedeniya*, ii. p. 6.

form our spearhead. This is slow but it is not our fault.'[1] Khitrovo knew well that at that time the patriarch would have forbidden the opening of a training school in Palestine so rejected a Greek offer to run such a school themselves: 'One thing I tell you most positively—the Greeks will not see one kopek of our money.'[2] A plan for the school at Odessa was vetoed by Pobedonostsev who saw it as a vehicle for the transmission of unapproved ideas. The Society then received reports on the advantages of a school in Beirut which could be either an expanded metropolitan school or an independent body with a boarding section for Palestinians. These schemes hung fire for some time receiving only grudging support from Khitrovo whose true ambition was to justify the title of his Society by establishing the school in Palestine, if not in Jerusalem then at least in Nazareth. In 1885 the Metropolitan of Nazareth was not actively opposing the Society and the Patriarch's surprising change of heart that year gave Khitrovo his opportunity to found a small boarding school in Nazareth. Kezma was the natural and indeed the only possible choice for headmaster and in September 1886 he began to teach eleven pupils in rented accommodation. No very clear rules were drawn up for the school but it was intended that boys should be taken from the patriarchal and the Society's own schools between the ages of eleven and thirteen and trained for four years. As it was not primarily a training school for teachers it was hoped the the best pupils would be sent to Russia. In the beginning it was basically a two class Russian parochial school of the type instituted by Pobedonostsev. Both Russian and Arabic were taught—the former by A. I. Yakubovich who initially knew no Arabic and therefore taught only in Russian. This established the method followed throughout the school's history. The timetable of the first class differed little from that of the Russian parochial school and it is clear that the Society was very much influenced by Pobedonostsev and the current of thought in Russian educational circles which preferred an 'Orthodox' to a modern lay education. The second class used a broadened syllabus with the addition of Greek, geometry, history, and geography, but the two latter subjects were biblical in emphasis. Russian was taught to give the boys access to Russian literature, as modern Arabic literature, especially works by Orthodox writers, was almost non-existent. There was

[1] Letter to Antonin, December 1883. (Dmitrievski, p. 243.)
[2] Ibid.

also the practical consideration that in several subjects there were no satisfactory Arabic textbooks.

The early years of the school were difficult although it was well served by its first two teachers—Kezma,[1] who remained as headmaster during the whole of the school's life, and Yakubovich, who eventually became inspector of the Galilean and later of the Syrian schools. The first group of students to graduate from Nazareth were of poor quality but one or two continued their studies in Russia and returned to teach for the Society. The school's greatest obstacles were a lack of permanent accommodation and a shortage of teachers from Russia. It was not until 1904 that the school moved into the pilgrim hostel in Nazareth but it never obtained the permanent school buildings so much desired by Khitrovo and Yakubovich. Teachers from Russia were usually young men fresh from their training who were attracted to Palestine, as the Society freely admitted, by the high salaries. Having no vocation for work in Nazareth they quickly became disillusioned and left after one or two years' service.[2] They despised their fellow Arab teachers and their pupils. A group of five teachers decided in 1889 to return to Russia after only a few months. They were warned, however, that since they were on 'active government service'[3] no posts would be open to them on their return. A further difficulty was the absence of a scholastic tradition in Palestine. Boys were ill-disciplined and initially unused to systematic study, but although strict discipline[4] was introduced there was no attempt to transform the boys, at least externally, into little Russians. Arab food and dress were both retained despite protests by some members in Russia.[5] In such

[1] Nu'aima has left a portrait of Kezma—'al-mu'allim Iskandr'—in his autobiography. 'He had a large bald head, which the years had wrinkled, and a thick grey beard which inspired awe and reverence. But there was not that light of sympathy and compassion in his eyes which would inspire . . . intimacy and ease. He was a middle-sized man, neither fat nor thin. When he walked it was with steady measured steps, deviating neither to left nor right. When he spoke it was in a toneless voice in which there was no music, speaking without interruption or faltering but in a manner devoid of sweet phraseology. But when he was scolding or reprimanding his tongue was as sharp as a whip, his expressions of the utmost eloquence.' (*Sab'un*, i. p. 118.)

[2] It was only in 1898 that the Russian Government agreed that service in Palestine would entitle teachers to pension and other rights.

[3] *Uchebnye zavedeniya*, ii. p. 41.

[4] Corporal punishment was forbidden.

[5] Khitrovo wrote in 1890: 'For heaven's sake don't introduce European clothes or even the burnous—in our schools they must remain Arab children.' (*Trudy*

circumstances it was hard for the school to flourish and only the continuity provided by Kezma sustained it. New rules were drawn up in 1894 providing for a six year course and in 1898 the boarding school was changed into a three class teachers' seminary[1] with a staff of five Russians and four Arabs. Subjects introduced into the syllabus were optional English and Turkish, and some vocational training. Russian was allotted a large share of the timetable and all subjects in the senior classes except Arabic were taught in it. On days when a Russian teacher was on duty the pupils were obliged to speak Russian even among themselves. A primary school opened in Nazareth in 1889 was converted in 1891 into a 'model' school where pupils of the seminary spent most of their final year as student teachers. While this school was, according to Yakubovich, satisfactory as a primary school[2] it was far from being model. The student teachers were often little older than their pupils and eventually a group of parents in Nazareth handed a petition to the Society requesting that their sons be taught by 'qualified teachers and not "uneducated" boys from the seminary'.[3] An outside observer reported that of the course graduating in 1900 possibly only two would prove to be of any use to the Society.[4] By that year the Society was having to provide teachers for more than one hundred schools while at the same time courses graduated from Nazareth only once every two years.

Bait Jala

The school for girls equivalent to the Nazareth Seminary was the boarding school in Bait Jala. The education of girls in the later nineteenth century was not a matter for much enthusiasm in Russia. Pobedonostsev as an ardent sustainer of the old Orthodox order was unwilling to disturb the tradition that a woman's place was in the home. This custom was naturally more firmly established in the East where even the Christian population held to the tradition of female seclusion. The Society had not intended to depart

Petrogradskoi Komissii, 1913, p. 51.) But the boys were addressed in the Russian fashion of using the patronymic. Nu'aima, addressed only as Mikha'il Yusuf, was mildly disturbed that his family name was never used. (*Sab'un*, i. p. 118.)

[1] On Khitrovo's death it was named the V. N. Khitrovo Teachers' Seminary.

[2] 'In methods, demands and atmosphere not at all inferior to a Russian school.' (*Soobshcheniya*, 2. p. 79.)

[3] *Uchebnye zavedeniya*, ii. p. 97.

[4] Ibid., p. 95.

radically in its educational work from these traditions but by force of circumstance had begun to encourage and develop the education of girls.

The Bait Jala school had been founded privately in Jerusalem by a Russian benefactress in 1858 and had continued at the expense of the Tsarina Marya Aleksandrovna. Patriarchal opposition had compelled Antonin to transfer the school to rented premises in Bait Jala and in 1869 he had been able to provide new buildings for it. When the Society came to Palestine it quickly realized that as the Orthodox Church had no orders similar to Roman Catholic nuns or Protestant deaconesses 'who would teach anywhere for nothing'[1] and as it was impossible to attract a sufficient number of teachers from Russia it would need to train local Arab girls. In 1886 Antonin made over the school to the Society which considerably enlarged the premises and in 1890 opened it as a boarding school. The school was ideally housed in its own compound containing a clinic, sick quarters, chapel and boarding houses for teachers and pupils. The first headmistress, E. M. Tarakanova, had five pupils in 1890 but by 1895 this number had risen to thirty one while in the attached primary or 'model' school there were more than two hundred. Although teachers' reports complained of the poor behaviour and indiscipline of girls who were unaccustomed to high standards of discipline and hygiene, the school enjoyed an early success. In 1898 after the completion of only two courses, one-fifth of the eighty-two women teachers employed by the Society were graduates of Bait Jala.

The whole course lasted eight years and girls entered between the ages of ten and twelve. The syllabus was similar to that of the Nazareth Seminary. An attempt was made to introduce Russian as the language of instruction for all subjects but because of opposition from the girls this was abandoned.[2] Although visitors to the school, including the Patriarch of Jerusalem, were astonished by the girls' ability to speak Russian, an inspector criticized the academic achievement of the pupils who, he said, left the school suitably prepared for life but poorly equipped for teaching.[3] Yet there were complaints within the Society that too much money was spent on instilling unnecessarily high standards in the girls' personal lives and that after eight years at the school they were proving reluctant

[1] *Otchet*, 1888–90, p. 85. [2] *Soobshcheniya*, 3. p. 516.
[3] *Uchebnye zavedeniya*, 1901, p. 324.

to return to the much lower standards of their villages. A minor revolution was brought about in the lives of those girls who remained as teachers with the Society. They had graduated from school at eighteen and by the age of twenty-one were still unmarried in a country where the usual age of marriage was considerably lower.[1]

In 1895 the Society was providing three types of school in Palestine: boarding schools, day schools in which Russian was taught, and village schools under an Arab teacher—in all, eighteen schools in Galilee and Judea with just over a thousand pupils and some fifty teachers. The boarding schools, 'model' schools and girls' school in Nazareth were under direct Russian control and could be counted as reasonably successful. The least successful were those in the smaller villages and were usually existing Orthodox institutions adopted by the Society. Most of the village schools had only one class after the model of Pobedonostsev's parochial schools which the children entered at the age of eight for a course of three years. In the two-class schools the children remained for five years.

Various efforts were made to unify the Society's school system in Palestine. Inspectors[2] were sent out from Russia and the schools' programmes were changed three times in twelve years. Yakubovich was appointed inspector of the Palestine area with the task of ensuring that certain minimum standards were observed but the Society continued to face such apparently intractable problems as the shortage of teachers, the lack of suitable accommodation and the language difficulty.[3] It was one thing to draw up a carefully planned programme of instruction in St Petersburg[4] and quite another to

[1] The Society reported in 1901 that none of the teachers from Bait Jala had yet left to be married. (*Uchebnye zavedeniya*, p. 327.)

[2] These included P. P. Izvol'ski, a member of the Ministry of Education, and Professor Attayah. (Mikha'il 'Ataya, 1852–1924. He was born in Damascus and educated in Beirut. He taught Arabic for fifty years in the Lazarevski Institute in St Petersburg.)

[3] The Society had as yet not had to face obstruction from the Ottoman authorities although its schools had received no official recognition from the Porte. In 1887 the Porte had announced its intention of reducing the number of foreign schools in the empire and insisted that a firman be obtained before a new school was opened. Religious instruction would be forbidden and each established school would have to obtain a retrospective firman. Fortunately for the Society by 1900 the Porte had taken no further action. (See Verney and Dambmann, p. 90.)

[4] e.g. *Trudy Komissii po peresmotru programm i instruktsii dlya uchebnykh zavedenii IPPO*, 1899.

implement it in a remote Palestinian village under a teacher with sixty pupils in a single windowless room.[1] Village children were apt to attend irregularly according to the demands of the season, while a child who left school at the age of eleven could barely be considered educated. The Society was much criticized in St Petersburg for wasting valuable time in teaching Russian to children who would never use the language outside the classroom. The commission set up in 1899 to examine the school programme gave three cogent reasons for continuing to teach Russian. In Arab opinion only those schools which taught a foreign language were useful. It was a long-established custom in Syria for the language of the directors of a school to be taught and the ablest pupils needed to know Russian if they were to enter Bait Jala or Nazareth.[2] Nevertheless, the Society reported in 1896 that its school affairs in Galilee were 'fairly settled'[3] and that Nazareth was now established as the centre of its educational activity.

The exception to these developments was a small and unique group of Russian schools in Beirut. Lebanon was, strictly speaking, outside the interest of the Society but had in the past given financial support to schools of the Orthodox community in Beirut, Zahle, and Amiun. In 1887 an ex-missionary from Japan, M. A. Cherkesova, offered to serve as a teacher in Syria and Khitrovo with some slight misgivings accepted. She was a lady of exceptionally strong character who, once accepted by the Society, tolerated no interference. In September of that year she opened a girls' school in Beirut. As it was run by a missionary its syllabus emphasized the importance of an 'Orthodox' training rather than of an academic education; the girls were instructed in matters of conduct, morals and faith. Cherkesova trained her own teachers with the result that all members of her staff were Arab. Her system was approved by the local Orthodox community[4] and by 1897 there were five schools in Beirut with eight hundred pupils and twenty-three teachers in all. In spite of this success the Society never entirely approved of Cherkesova's methods nor of her determination to remain outside the 'system'. None-the-less her schools continued to flourish until the First World War while the Society reluctantly admitted that her success in bringing up children in the Arab Orthodox faith was

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 4. p. 138.
[2] *Trudy Komissii*, p. ii.
[3] *Otchet*, 1896, ii. p. 1.
[4] *Soobshcheniya*, 5. p. 14.

indisputable. Her girls were welcomed as teachers in Russian and patriarchal schools and were 'counted as desirable brides among the local population and even in the United States.'[1]

* * * *

In July 1895 the Society made a decision which seemed at the time the antidote to all its frustration in Palestine but which was eventually to prove an insupportable burden. That year saw Spiridon, the Patriarch of Antioch, sitting uneasily on his throne. He was in debt, unpopular in his patriarchate and clearly foresaw the inevitable consequences. To postpone his fall he invited the Palestine Society to assume responsibility for running the schools of his patriarchate, hoping that their efficiency and popularity would increase to his own advantage. Khitrovo welcomed the opportunity of working with the Greeks in Antioch after the years of frustration in Jerusalem and in 1895 the Society accepted responsibility for the girls' school in Damascus and for fifteen village schools. The number of these quickly multiplied and by 1900 the Society was maintaining forty one schools in Syria with five and a half thousand pupils. The move to Syria did not please all members of the Society in Russia. Grand Duke Sergei believed that it was a deviation from the original aims.[2] Even the report for 1888–90 maintained that Syria could not be counted a 'sphere of action of the Society', at least until it had completed all its tasks in Palestine.[3]

The Russians in Syria, however, looked forward hopefully to the twentieth century. In 1899 Meletios become Patriarch of Antioch, the first Arab to be elected for many years, and the Society was immediately able to increase its activity in the region. By 1905 there were seventy-seven schools in Syria and Lebanon with over nine thousand pupils. The Society was so much caught up in the enthusiasm of 1899 that it declared: 'We now realize that Syria is the area on which to concentrate, for Syria dominates Palestine, it is not Jerusalem which lays down the law to Damascus. Power lies in Syria and not in Palestine.'[4] It only gradually came to terms with the immensity of its undertaking and first had to accept that the Syrians, being culturally and materially more advanced than the

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 23. p. 86.

[2] Akhir mazhar lisiyasat Rusiya ad-diniya fi'sh-sharq al-adna, 1895–1914, by Bogolyubski and Levencq (*Mashriq*, xxxiii (1935), p. 576).

[3] *Otchet*, 1888–90, p. 67.

[4] *Soobshcheniya*, 9. p. 164.

Palestinians, made greater demands on its facilities. In Palestine pupils were largely poor *fellahin* who asked little of their education. In Syria, in addition to the children of peasants, there were those of 'the semi-independent inhabitants of the valleys, the rich inhabitants of the coastal towns and others living like feudal barons on their estates.'[1] 'We come to them with our lower parochial schools and they look on us with incredulity. One Europeanized [Orthodox] Arab told me [Khitrovo], "I have no children and I am completely with you but if I had any I would send them to a Catholic school. What can your schools give my children?—nothing. I admit that the children begin to study in your schools but where would they continue?"'[2] The ambition of these Westward looking Arabs was to learn French[3] which the Society was not willing to teach.

Each area of Syria presented its own peculiar problems.[4] In the villages around Damascus the Orthodox were small pockets among an overwhelming Muslim population, and the schools, less successful than those in towns or in the Lebanon, were full in winter and empty in summer during sowing and reaping. The Society in this region concerned itself only with preserving Orthodoxy and the schools sought no high academic standards. Schools on the eastern slopes of Mount Hermon were in an even poorer condition. Here the Orthodox lived among a Druze majority and were poverty stricken peasants working for feudal landlords. Little was achieved as there were few adequate buildings and it was difficult to attract good teachers to the area. The schools on the borders of the Syrian desert suffered from Bedouin raids but the population, although poor and illiterate, showed great independence of spirit. The best of these was in Saidnaya but the remainder were the poorest Russian schools in Syria. Another difficult area was that of Rasheiya where the Russians had to contend with unco-operative Turkish authorities and strong opposition from the local Uniates, which caused schools to remain unfinished or unoccupied.[5]

Russian schools in the larger villages and towns of Syria and Lebanon—Tripoli, Homs, Zahle, Biskinta, Shoueifat—were well attended and usually flourished. It is these that are remembered

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 9. p. 163. [2] Ibid., p. 164. [3] Ibid.

[4] The area had by 1900 been divided into two inspectorates.

[5] The Society claimed that the Uniates sided openly with the Ottoman authorities and reported every Russian action to Constantinople. (Ibid., 13, i, p. 30.)

with affection by ex-pupils. George Hanna recalls the school he attended in Shoueifat:

. . . these schools[1] established a love for Russia in the hearts of the population as they were completely free and as they accepted pupils from all sects without preference . . . The teaching was free, school books were given free. The teaching of the Arabic language was on a higher level than in the other foreign schools. All this made the Russian schools the target of pupils whose material situation did not allow them to enter other schools.[2]

Similarly Mikha'il Nu'aima describes the coming of the Russian school to his home village of Biskinta.

For the first time in its history Biskinta knew what it was possible to call an 'ideal' school and for the first time in its history its girls could go to school equally with the boys . . . we were in a school which had a syllabus and discipline . . . Special care was devoted to the Arabic language . . . The elements of Russian were also taught in the third year but only a few of those who completed the course were able to read properly and understand more than a few isolated phrases. This was different from the practice of the other foreign schools in Lebanon which devoted—and still devote—much greater attention to the teaching of their own languages than to the teaching of Arabic.[3]

The village provided the building and its head teacher was sent from the Nazareth Seminary. Its opening was greeted joyfully by the villagers. 'An intoxication of affection for our new school overtook us since we knew that behind it was a Great Power feared by the other Powers.'[4]

Krachkovski, the Russian orientalist, while visiting Syria during the years 1908–10 often called at the village schools of Lebanon.

Whenever I arrived in a small village in Lebanon I first of all got to know whether there was a 'madrasa Muskubiya' in the neighbourhood. I knew very well that I would not meet Russian teachers who usually lived only in the large towns . . . Very rarely would you see Arab teachers who had been in Russia . . . often, however, I met teachers who spoke Russian so freely that I was amazed how they could become so fluent when they had never left their own country. If they did not all speak so easily they all knew and copied out the magazine *Niva*, and in the room of each you could see volumes of Turgenev or Chekov, even the recently appearing

[1] There was a boys' and a girls' school in the village.
[2] *Qabl al-maghib*, p. 86. [3] *Sab'un*, i. p. 75. [4] Ibid., p. 76.

green fascicles of *Znaniya* and sometimes such literature as was banned in Russia itself.[1]

Yet problems not apparent to pupil or outsider held the attention of the Palestine Society which had again reconsidered its position and was half-regretting its precipitate move to Syria. The scarcity of teachers, instead of being overcome, slowly worsened. Of the two hundred and thirty-six teachers in 1908 only thirty-six had received training in Russian institutions. At least thirty teachers left Russian service annually and only fourteen pupils graduated from Nazareth and Bait Jala each year. Both Russians and Arabs quickly became bored with village life and many Arabs found an outlet in emigration. In addition, the Society was faced with a severe lack of funds so that Arab demands for higher salaries, more village schools[2] and secondary schools had to be rejected. Many Russians wanted to open secondary schools in Syria and there were even plans for a college or university[3] although others claimed that the role of the Society was to give children a basic Orthodox education in the widest sense.[4]

> In the towns it is doubtful that children who after a Russian school go to a non-Orthodox school will change their faith. Therefore it is not our policy to enlarge town schools because it is not serving our primary purpose but only satisfying the desire of the local population to prepare their children for life. Higher courses would cause a split among the local people. The only results would be higher expenditure for the Society and the satisfaction of a few richer citizens, which would gain us nothing.[5]

By 1910 the Society was spending most of its income on Syrian education to the detriment of its pilgrim affairs in Palestine and there was talk of closing the schools. Finally in 1912 it received an annual grant from the Government enabling it to preserve the system in Syria but allowing no further expansion.

The Society's difficulties in Palestine in the twentieth century were of a different nature. The Patriarch Damianos, who had once been deposed by his Synod, gave it an ambiguous welcome, permitting no new schools in Judea yet often visiting Bait Jala to

[1] Krachkovski, *Nad arabskimi rukopisyami*, pp. 49–50.

[2] The last Russian school was opened in Marj 'Uyun in 1904.

[3] No Russian college was ever opened. Bliss estimated that in 1912 40 per cent of students at the Syrian Protestant College were Orthodox. (Bliss, p. 57.)

[4] Thus echoing Pirogov's principles.

[5] *Trudy pedogogicheskovo s'ezda*, 1901, p. 14.

preside over the examinations. Photios,[1] the Metropolitan of Nazareth and the sly and careful enemy of Russia, avoided contact with the Russians but did nothing to hinder the work of the Seminary. The problem of staffing was never satisfactorily solved. Young Russians came out to Palestine to stay for only one or two years and it was difficult to establish a tradition of education. The more permanent Arab staff were despised by their Russian colleagues and there was constant friction between the two nationalities. Most Russians refused to mix socially with Arabs and the Society complained of a lack of co-operation in school affairs which it eventually ascribed to differences in 'national characteristics'.[2]

It viewed more realistically the attitude of the Palestinians towards education.

> In the clergy and population of Nazareth there is no marked friendliness if they see there is nothing especial to be gained from our organization. They value pilgrims who bring trade and offerings into the church. Also the hope of getting their sons into the Seminary inclines them towards the society. Poor Arabs see a chance of gaining something from the Russians but in general the same feeling for education is not apparent in Nazareth as it is in Syria.[3]

It closed those schools in Palestine to which children were sent only if parents were given 'bakshish'. Many parents regarded a primary school merely as a stepping stone to Nazareth or Bait Jala and withdrew their children if they were not selected for the boarding schools.

More attention was paid to the Nazareth Seminary. Practical subjects were added to the syllabus in the hope that those graduates who did not become teachers would at least have a trade to follow and would not enter foreign business firms. In the twenty-five years until 1911 ten courses of sixty-nine pupils graduated, forty-two of whom taught in Russian schools. The Society sent the best pupils to complete their studies in Russia but most of these to its deep regret did not return to Palestine but entered Russian service and took Russian nationality.[4]

The final conflict to torment the Palestine Society in its educational work had been brewing for some time and necessitated a radical

[1] Opposed by Russia as Patriarch of Jerusalem, but later Patriarch of Alexandria.

[2] *Trudy pedagogicheskovo s'ezda*, p. 15.

[3] *Uchebnye zavedeniya*, ii. p. 140.

[4] *Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 303.

reassessment of its whole policy in Syria and Palestine. In the twentieth century there had grown up a clear division within the Society between the traditionalists, Dmitrievski and those of like mind—sincere Orthodox laymen who saw the Society as a paternal organization caring for pilgrim welfare and Orthodox Arab education—and the progressives, men of the Government, officials, and diplomats who saw the Society as a weapon of Russian prestige to train Arabs in the spirit of the modern age. This dispute came to the fore during the drawing up of the syllabuses for language teaching. As early as 1902 the Society had observed a lack of success in its teaching of Russian as less than half the pupils had the opportunity even of beginning the language.[1] It was later seen in 1908 that the Syrians were dissatisfied with the Russian schools and that the numbers of pupils were falling.[2] They were demanding new courses of instruction, new trade and professional schools and the introduction of French and English into the syllabus. Russian diplomats gave their support to these demands, including the Consul in Damascus who wrote: 'Many of the pupils are leaving our schools for Lazarist and Protestant schools . . . because of their demand that English be included in the curriculum.'[3]

The traditionalists at first opposed these demands 'in the name of Holy Russia' claiming that any reform in this direction would be a concession to the spirit of the non-Orthodox West. This reaction became so marked that the idea was mooted of closing down all schools should the reforms be forced on the Society. Government pressure was exerted and Dmitrievski, the secretary of the Society, the Russian consuls in the area and a representative of the Constantinople ambassador met in Damascus in 1910 to discuss the matter. After this meeting the Damascus consul wrote to the ambassador that to close her Syrian schools would be cultural suicide for Russia in the Near East. For the Arabs these schools were a Government concern and the Porte in 1902 had officially recognized them as Russian.[4] But if it was impossible to close the schools it was also impossible to leave them unchanged. The Government

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 13. i, p. 223. [2] Ibid., 20. p. 228.

[3] Despatch of February 1906, no. 36. (Akhir mazhar, p. 578.)

[4] Until this time the Porte had regarded the schools as being run by the Orthodox community. In 1902 Khitrovo and the Ambassador in Constantinople, Zinovev, received a memorandum from the Porte which recognized eighty-four Russian schools with the same rights as other European schools in the Ottoman Empire.

was at this time in a position to impose its views since the Society was asking for money. In return for a Government grant the Society agreed to reform its methods and syallabuses.

A conference in Nazareth forwarded proposals to a commission meeting in St Petersburg at the end of 1913. A prolonged discussion took place over the value of the Russian language to Arab students. The Inspector of the Southern Syrian schools reported: 'the children refuse to learn Russian and only enter the school if Russian is excluded. In other schools the children complain of the "uselessness of Russian".'[1] The Damascus consul wanted Russian to be abandoned completely. 'The enforced learning of Russian causes great discontent as the Syrians can draw no benefit at all from it and, moreover, they never really learn the language . . . '[2] A member of the Constantinople embassy commented: 'The desire to learn English and French in the majority of cases is really caused by the insuperable needs of life and existence, not by ingratitude for Russia's philanthropy.'[3]

Dmitrievski supported the learning of Russian for its educative and literary value. Several teachers had ignored the instructions drawn up in 1902 which stipulated the teaching of Russian grammar only and he had become aware of a marked interest among young Syrians in the literary and political life of Russia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

> This interest is not just a result of the fashionable interest in Russian literature in Europe but is because of the ties between the Arab Orthodox and Russia . . . and this shows that the learning of Russian is not in vain and is a sure method of developing among the Arabs a knowledge of the culture of their benefactress. They not only need to know works showing the bright side of Russia but also those showing the negative and the tendentious.[4]

Eventually a compromise was reached and in June 1914 the Tsar approved a new programme for both the seminaries and the schools. The reformed curriculum included modern Russian literature,[5] modern history and geography, science and a choice of English or French. Nazareth was changed into a six class seminary[6] with one hundred and fifty pupils and Bait Jala into a six-class

[1] *Trudy*, p. 54. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., p. 65.

[5] Only approved novels were to be read however—*War and Peace, Notes of a hunter, Childhood*, but not *The overcoat, The Inspector General, Grief from the mind*, etc.

[6] That is with graduation every year.

school with ninety pupils. Thus the Society moved into a modern, almost secular, world but it had moved too late and the new regulations were never put into full operation. In 1914 a record number of eighteen pupils graduated from Nazareth but in the same year all Russian schools in Palestine were closed when the Ottoman Government demanded that they should be subjected to Turkish supervision. All Russian teachers returned home. Kezma as an Ottoman subject remained in Palestine and other Arab teachers were summoned to military service. The Syrian schools were handed back to the Orthodox authorities. Madame Cherkesova, who was then eighty, remained in Beirut relying on the goodwill of the Orthodox community but in 1916 the Society received news that she was in a state of extreme need.

The Orthodox Arabs and Russian literature

As Dmitrievski had mentioned, there had appeared among the graduates of the schools of the Society a deep and growing appreciation of Russian secular literature which showed itself at first in a number of translations from Russian. The earliest translator was Salim Qub'ain, a member of the first course to graduate from the Nazareth Seminary, who emigrated to Egypt where he specialized in the translation of Tolstoi's works. He published a study of Tolstoi, wrote numerous articles on Russian literary subjects and even produced a scheme for founding an agricultural community on the model of those of Tolstoi in Russia.[1] Another graduate of Nazareth and a teacher in the Russian schools of Damascus and Haifa, Khalil Ibrahim Baidas, translated Pushkin and Gogol and from 1908 to 1914 edited a monthly periodical in Jerusalem—*An-Nafa'is*[2]—devoted to translations of Russian writers. Baidas wrote of his deep interest in Russian literature:

It was not only the language of Russia which was close to my heart. Hardly had I learned to write . . . when I began to devour the Russian books of which there were large numbers in the school library. And with each book I read, the fog which was obscuring my understanding of Russia gradually dispersed and something which had been only a word,

[1] Shifman, *Lev Tolstoi i Vostok*, p. 447.

[2] It is reported that the journal had a wide circulation in Arab countries and in North and South America. (*Trudy Petrogradskoi Komissii*, p. 63, and Shifman, p. 448.)

became first a country, then an idea and finally a world—the only world in which I could live and breathe.[1]

The leaders of the Palestine Society regretted that a substantial number of those they had educated in Nazareth and elsewhere emigrated to America and were lost to the Society as future teachers. But the secretary, Dmitrievski, admitted that they often carried with them to the New World the literary influence of Russia. Three outstanding graduates of Nazareth, 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, Nasib 'Arida and Mikha'il Nu'aima helped to form the literary circle in New York—*ar-Rabita al-Qalamiya*.[2] Haddad together with 'Arida founded the newspaper *As-Sa'ih* which published many translations of Russian works. 'Arida himself edited for five years (1913–18) the journal *Al-Funun* in which the stories of Tolstoi, Lermontov, Pushkin and others were printed.[3] The member of this group most under the influence of Russian literature was Nu'aima who, unlike the others, completed his education in Russia at the Seminary of Poltava. He left Nazareth strongly impressed by the difference between the world he knew in Lebanon and the world he had come to know through his reading. 'I left Nazareth with joy in my heart. In my head were pictures, ideas, facts and visions which had not been there previously. They were my harvest from the past four years of my life and were a blessed and valuable harvest. They had opened for me the door of a new world.'[4] The interest which had been awakened in Nazareth was developed and deepened by wide reading. Russian literature became for him the keystone of his artistic development.

> In the Seminary [of Poltava] I quickly plunged into Russian literature . . . I read avidly. There was hardly an author whose works I did not read. The literary stagnation of the Arabic speaking world became very clear to me when I left Russia. This was depressing and extremely humiliating for one who had been brought up on the delicate art of Pushkin, Lermontov and Turgenev, on the 'laughter through tears' of Gogol, on the attractive realism of Tolstoi, on the literary ideals of Belinski and ultimately on the wide humanity of that most powerful and profound of writers—Dostoevski.[5]

[1] Shifman, p. 448.

[2] Other members included Khalil Jubran and Ilya Abu Madi.

[3] Although these authors concerned themselves with secular literature the Palestine Society could have taken comfort from the fact that a strong Orthodox Church was founded in New York. Brooklyn is now the seat of a Metropolitan.

[4] *Sab'un*, i. p. 156.

[5] Krachkovski, p. 53

PART IV

Russia and Orthodox Arab Nationalism

10

'THE FIRST REAL VICTORY FOR ARAB NATIONALISM': THE PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH

> The election last year to the Patriarchate of Antioch of a local Syrian in place of the creatures from Constantinople was without doubt the most notable political victory gained by the Palestine Society (V. N. KHITROVO).
>
> The election of an Arab Patriarch of Antioch was the first real victory for Arab nationalism (SATI' AL-HUSRI).

IN the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem a Greek hierarchy ruled an Arab laity. During the latter part of the nineteenth century Arab resentment increased and on several occasions exploded into open revolt. The growth of national feeling, of the desire of the Arabs to assert their independence and their own identity, was fostered by Russia who was always ready to fish in these troubled waters.

Of the two patriarchates, Antioch, although older than Jerusalem, was less important, less wealthy and almost unknown in Russia. Damascus had been closed to European influence until the mid-nineteenth century and the Russian Government and Church had been principally interested in the ports of the Levant and in Jerusalem itself. Yet it was in Antioch that the national movement triumphed.

The Greek War of Independence had disturbed the established pattern in the Church of Antioch. It had emphasized the difference in nationality between the Greek patriarch and his Arab flock. Those

whom the Arabs had regarded as fellow Ottomans now became strangers and 'enemies of the state'.[1] One of the few Russians to have a detailed knowledge of Antioch before 1850, Porfiri Uspenski had realized that it could no longer thrive under a Greek patriarch and had advised the Russian Church to press for the election of an Arab. Cyril Naumov also had wanted the throne of Antioch to be taken from the Greeks. The Russian Government, aware of the friction between Arabs and Greeks, believed that the patriarch would make concessions to the Arabs if he were under the surveillance of Naumov, the Russian Bishop in Jerusalem, and of the Russian Consul-General in Beirut. The Patriarch himself, Ierotheos, who had spent thirteen years in Russia collecting alms for the Church of Jerusalem, was unpopular both with the Russians who believed that the alms had gone no further than his own pocket and with the Arabs who wildly accused him of a number of vices and of 'working for the complete ruin of the whole church.'[2]

The first articulate Arab demands were made during the crisis over the Bulgarian Church in 1872. In the years prior to this date the growing nationalism of the Bulgarian people had led to demands for their Church to be freed from Greek control. The Bulgarian Church was directly subject to the Ecumenical Patriarch and its Greek bishops were appointed from Constantinople—a situation similar to that in Jerusalem, an Orthodox people subject to a foreign hierarchy. The Bulgarian Slavs were looked upon as brothers by Russian Panslavs and Bulgarian ecclesiastical independence was warmly supported by many Russians not the least of whom was the Russian Envoy in Constantinople, Count Ignatev. With his well known dislike of the Greeks, his desire to support Christian separatist movements and his disregard for church law he plunged into the Bulgarian dispute without any of the reserve that marked the behaviour of more cautious Russian statesmen. He believed that the Greeks were animated solely by feelings of nationalism[3] and determined to oppose them with Slav nationalism.

In 1870 the Bulgarians expelled their Greek bishops and established an autocephalous exarchate which was recognized by an

[1] *Tafasil al-azma al-batriyarkiya al-Antakiya al-Urthudhuksiya*, no author, p. 5.

[2] *Lamha ta'rikhiya*, p. 101.

[3] 'L'idée nationale subsiste seule et utilise tous les éléments subversifs qui existent en Turquie.' (Ignatev's memoirs, *Izvestiya Ministerstva Innostrannykh Del*, 1915, i. pp. 164–6.)

Imperial firman in February 1870. It was no coincidence that Russia quickly recognized the Exarch and that the Ottoman firman had been issued in the face of passionate Greek protests during the period of Ignatev's ascendency in Constantinople. The Phanar continued their opposition until the Ecumenical Patriarch called a conference of the leaders of the Eastern Churches at which it was proposed to declare the Bulgarian Church schismatic. Ignatev noted at the time:

Thanks to the wrongheadedness of the Turks and the obstinacy of the Patriarch (of Constantinople) the schism between the Bulgarians and the Greeks is now unavoidable, though, to tell the truth, I thought once that some sort of reconciliation would have taken place; but as the Patriarch would not give in, the matter got to such a pitch of animosity that Aali Pacha[1] could do nothing to reconcile the parties; so now we must work harder than we have ever yet done.[2]

What is more, the affair had rapidly moved from the ecclesiastical to the political arena, for as the British Ambassador observed: 'The majority of the Bishops seem to be more influenced by political than any other considerations, and, their passions being aroused against Russia, they see in the strong dislike to the schism felt by that Power, a sufficient reason for advocating it.'[3] The schism was declared at the beginning of October 1872 and in Constantinople it was 'attributed to Ignatiew who over-reached himself in the affair.'[4] Nevertheless, Ignatev firmly believed that the Synod and the Arabs of the Patriarchate of Antioch would disown Ierotheos who had voted to declare the Bulgarians schismatic. 'Thanks to our friendly relations with the primates and prelates of this patriarchate . . . the patriarch will be disowned by his own Synod for having gone

[1] Âlî Paşa, Grand Vezier 1867–71.

[2] Letter from Ignatev to Novikov, Ambassador in Vienna, March 1871. This despatch and others are printed in *Russian Intrigues, Secret Despatches of General Ignatieff and Consular Agents of the Great Pan-Slavic Societies*, 1877, p. 24. These documents were said to have been stolen from the Russian Embassy in Vienna by Russian employees who had been bribed by Halil Şerif Paşa an Ottoman official of supposedly anti-Slav views. It was thought at one time that the documents had been forged but Ignatev indirectly confirmed that they were not forgeries as he confessed to his intrigues in his Memoirs. The despatches are also entirely in keeping in content and in style with Ignatev's despatches printed elsewhere in Russian sources and also with his known views and policy.

[3] Elliot to Granville, 14 September 1872. (FO 78/2219.)

[4] Elliot to Granville, 2 October 1872. (FO 78/2219.) It was in British eyes 'a decided blow to Russian influence and prestige.'

against us.'[1] Although the ambassador was proved wrong, demonstrations which he urged against Ierotheos did materialize, not specifically in favour of the Russian position but about a matter much closer to Arab hearts—the manner in which the income of the patriarchate was employed. Antioch did not have the financial resources of Jerusalem but the patriarch had received a large indemnity from the Turkish Government after the massacres in Lebanon and Syria during 1860. He also received regular gifts from Russia. The Arabs had seen nothing of the indemnity and only under great pressure did Ierotheos promise to pay out 21,000 roubles—less than one-twentieth of the amount—for Arab schools and churches. This satisfied neither the Arabs nor Ignatev who decided that future Russian contributions to the patriarchate would be distributed only by the Consul-General in Beirut. Ierotheos, bowing to further pressure, agreed to establish a national commission of Orthodox Arabs to run the school affairs of Damascus.

When Khitrovo visited the patriarch some ten years later he was struck by the growing strength of the Arab movement and wrote to the secretary of the Palestine Society: 'In Antioch we were received with open arms—not as in Jerusalem. Here the Arab element is extremely powerful; of the eight bishops, six are Arab and the two Greeks are titular only. A little help and the Arab element would triumph.'[2] Russia was not yet prepared to offer that help, as Khitrovo realized,[3] and Ierotheos continued to reign until he was overtaken by senility, which in Arab opinion saved the Church from 'utter destruction'.[4]

The election of the next patriarch was the signal for an outbreak of nationalist fervour and intrigue which had the declared aim of electing an Arab patriarch. But without the presence of the Palestine Society and a Russian Consul in Damascus the Arabs were weak when opposed by the strength and wealth of the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem together with the Greek Government. The Greeks argued (and bolstered their argument with considerable sums of money), that there was no Arab fit to assume the office of patriarch and that the Arabs as a whole were under

[1] Letter of Ignatev, 13 December 1872. (*Secret Despatches*, p. 38.)

[2] Letter to Stepanov. (Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 258.)

[3] 'But will there be this help? That is the question. We are expending all our energy on Nikodemos [Patriarch of Jerusalem].' (Ibid.)

[4] *Lamha*, p. 107.

Russian influence. The Ottoman Government was convinced and in 1885 approved the election of Gerasimos, a Greek and a member of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre.

Gerasimos was a colourless figure whose reign aroused no extreme emotions. He was not accused of immorality as was his predecessor and when in 1891 he was summoned to the throne of Jerusalem by the Brotherhood, the Arab priests of Antioch telegraphed to the Porte requesting that he might remain in Damascus.[1] The Porte approved the move, however, and in 1891 the throne of Antioch was once again vacant.

Arab hopes of seeing one of their own number elected were now fully aroused. They believed that Antioch, more than Jerusalem, was in need of the attention that only an Arab could provide.[2] The Greeks refused to admit that any Arab was sufficiently competent and warned that the patriarchate in Damascus would only become a centre of Arab intrigue.[3] There was even an Arab party which opposed the election of an Arab patriarch. Composed largely of the Orthodox notables of Damascus, it feared that an Arab patriarch would no longer need to seek their support to retain office. The Arab bishops were in disarray and without strong help from outside were again unable to oppose the Brotherhood who put forward their own candidate, Spiridon, the superior of the monastery in Bethlehem. In return for his support the Patriarch of Jerusalem insisted that Spiridon should maintain complete solidarity with the Brotherhood and appoint only Greek bishops. It was reported that Spiridon offered the notables of Damascus 10,000 lire for his election—money obtained from Russian pilgrims to Bethlehem. Money prevailed and Greek newspapers triumphed in the defeat of the '"hot headed Syrians" who, actuated by pride and avarice, had tried to usurp spiritual power.'[4] But apart from his propensity to bribery, Spiridon possessed no other qualifications for office. Not having been a bishop he was inexperienced in leadership, inept in his relationships and dismayed even the Greeks who saw their position in Antioch weakening day by day. He appointed bishops and arrested clergy at whim, closed schools and gave unwise

[1] *Al-khulasa al-wafiya*, p. 8. Written by the author of the *Lamha*, Shahhada, under the pseudonym of Sulaiman ibn Da'ud al-Juhaini.

[2] Ibid., p. 12.

[3] Ibid., p. 31, quoting from a despatch of the Beirut correspondent of a Greek paper, 4 June 1891.

[4] Bliss, p. 66, quoting a Greek newspaper.

ecclesiastical decisions. He ran the Church independently of the Synod and refused to reveal the mysteries of his budget. The Arabs refused to have anything to do with him, holding their services in graveyards and burying their dead unblessed.[1] 'We opposed the election of Spiridon because we firmly believed he would bring no improvement and no benefit. He came to us at a price of 10,000 lire which confirms his lack of ability and even lack of will to raise us from our present state. Our fears have been realized. Spiridon has shown no concern for our welfare at all.'[2] All Orthodox Arabs were urged to work for his removal. 'I say to you Arabs, what is the matter with you that you allow the Greeks to take over Antioch. Where is your self-respect, your honour and national pride? Arise, arise O Orthodox sons of Syria, arise from your sleep and hasten to lift the yoke of the Brotherhood from your shoulders and from the shoulders of your brothers.'[3] Spiridon himself, feeling the wind of opposition, signed a contract at the beginning of 1893 in which he promised several concessions to the Arabs and agreed to pay 10,000 lire to the Damascus community.[4] Although some of the money was paid over, the promises remained unfulfilled and the quarrel between Arab and Greek continued to smoulder while the Arabs grew in strength and solidarity and increased their demands. A great measure of Arab confidence came from the presence of Belyaev, the first Russian consul to be appointed to Damascus. In 1893 Damascus was detached from the Consulate-General in Beirut and Belyaev, the secretary of the Jerusalem consulate, was transferred to Damascus. This was not a routine appointment as he was a man deeply interested in the affairs of the Arabs and of the Orthodox Church in Syria who later became secretary of the Palestine Society. He struck up close friendships with several Arab bishops, notably Gerasimos of Zahle whom he had known in Jerusalem and who had spent many years in Russia.[5] Belyaev saw that the consequence of the growing Arab nationalism would be

[1] Report in the Athens paper *Akropolis*, 20 February 1892. (*Khulasa*, p. 222.)

[2] *Khulasa*, p. 253.

[3] *Lamha*, p. 137.

[4] The Palestine Society watching these developments from Jerusalem expressed surprise that the Arabs who received some of this money never asked whose it was or whether Spiridon had any right to it. (*Soobshcheniya*, 6. p. 75.)

[5] He had been a student of the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy, was Rector of Pskov Academy and Riga Seminary and 'could have hoped to become a member of the Russian hierarchy' when he was transferred to Jerusalem. (Ibid, 17. p. 626.)

an Arab patriarch and this belief united him closely with the Arab bishops in their opposition to Spiridon. British diplomats who closely followed Belyaev's activities from the day of his appointment reported that he also worked actively[1] among the lay population urging them to demand the removal of Spiridon.[2] He begged the Palestine Society to take over the schools of Antioch as a further means of exerting pressure on the Greeks. The bishops wanted to tie the question of the schools with the, for them, more important question of an Arab patriarch[3] but Spiridon was happy to allow the Society into his patriarchate so that an improved school system would be to his personal credit. Once the Russians had entered Syria in any strength, Spiridon's fate was sealed; once the Arab voice was sustained by Russia in Constantinople, the Porte could no longer afford to ignore it.

The Society viewed Belyaev's influence and the Government's activity with some uneasiness. Too close an identification with the Russian Government might lead to disaffection among the Arabs and ecclesiastical independence could lead to demands for national independence.

The Arabs view the Palestine Society as the representative of the Russian State working with the blessing of the Russian Church and they therefore grossly exaggerate the means available to it. Every refusal to open a school is taken as a sign of the personal ill-will of the local representative of the Society. This feeling is especially widespread among the Arabs of the Syrian villages. In the near future this might even have harmful results. The feeling of extreme devotion could soon change to disillusion. Among the better-off sections there is noticeable a certain mistrust—even ill-will—towards the Society as a Russian foreign influence. Such malevolent danger grows in the soil of a striving for national independence. The wealthier Syrian notables under the influence of Western ideas are beginning to dream naively of the formation of an independent area with a national government. Western missionaries and the Greek press point out that Russia is the main hindrance to this.[4]

[1] Consul Richards in Damascus wrote: 'My Russian colleague has devoted himself [to the task of spreading Russian influence] *con amore*, showing an energy and enthusiasm, which, from the point of view of his Government, are beyond all praise, and of which it has shown its grateful recognition in the form of decorations and letters of approval received by M. Belaiew on several occasions.' (Richards to O'Conor, 17 January 1899, FO 78/4991.)

[2] Memorandum of Third Secretary Norman in the Constantinople Embassy, 27 April 1899. (FO 78/4993.)

[3] *Uchebnye Zavedeniya*, ii. p. 255.

[4] *Otchet: usloviya deyatel'nosti*, 1897, pp. 2–3.

But although aware of these tendencies the Society was carried along in the current of Belyaev's enthusiasm during the mounting tension in Syria. Spiridon, whose popularity had not increased, tried to regain some measure of control by informing Belyaev that he could not tolerate Russian supervision of the Orthodox schools[1] but found that he no longer had the authority to enforce his decision. He brought about a crisis by granting a non-canonical divorce to a dragoman of the Turkish Governor. The Orthodox Arabs of Damascus were incensed and gathered in the cathedral to demand Spiridon's deposition. The Governor persuaded the crowd to disperse by promising that the divorce would be annulled but the patriarch blindly pursued his own downfall by threatening to arrest two priests who had omitted his name from the liturgy. Once again the Christians of Damascus demonstrated and the Governor agreed to the bishops' request to settle the matter in Synod. In the summer of 1898 the Synod assembled and with its Arab majority deposed Spiridon who gave up the struggle and, after taking refuge in the convent of Saidnaya, fled to Constantinople. The discussions leading to the election of his successor, in which Russia was to play a prominent part, lasted for two years.

The course of the election was followed with great attention both by the British Consul in Damascus and the Ambassador in Constantinople. The third secretary of the embassy reported in April 1899:

> A large proportion of the reports addressed to this embassy by H.M. Consular Representatives in Palestine and Syria during the present year have dealt with the general question of the spread of Russian religious and educational influence in these countries and more particularly with the conflict, still in progress, between the Greek and Russian factions in the Synod of Antioch respecting the election of a Patriarch to that chair.[2]

The ambassador and his staff saw the contest as a struggle between Russians and Greeks, artificially created by Belyaev's intrigues, in which Arab national feeling played little part and in which the Arabs were being duped by Russia. The consul on the spot more accurately saw the struggle as a national one between Arab and Greek in which Russia was actively supporting the Arabs.

If the Arabs were to succeed in electing an Arab patriarch they needed external support at two important points—Damascus and Constantinople. In Damascus there was need for personal, direct

[1] Richards to O'Conor, 2 October 1897. (FO 78/4991.) [2] FO 78/4993.

support and encouragement. In Constantinople the need was for official support at the Porte in face of Greek opposition. Belyaev provided the first and the Russian ambassador and Government the second. The chief problem faced by the Orthodox community was the lack of a written constitution for the Church of Antioch. This had been unnecessary when it was customary to accept the decision of the Patriarch of Constantinople, but once outside guidance had been rejected each step taken had to be justified and fought for. A condition of the Turkish Governor's support had been that the *locum tenens* of the patriarch should be elected from among the Greeks. The Synod acting as an electoral body named Germanos, the Greek Bishop of Adana, as patriarchal vicar. Although he was now chairman of the Synod the Arab bishops were in a majority and under the leadership of Gerasimos of Zahle, the strongest supporter of Arab nationalism, were determined that the temporary Greek ascendency would not hinder their ultimate aim. Gerasimos used his close friendship with Belyaev to obtain advice and where necessary official support especially in his dealings with the Governor. Verbal advice was supplemented by financial aid from the Embassy in Constantinople.[1] The procedure to be followed during the election was discussed in Synod and on Belyaev's recommendation[2] permission was obtained from the Porte to follow the Constantinople regulations. This was an important gain for the Arabs as it allowed the laity a proportion of votes and disfranchized the two Greek Bishops of Aleppo and Diarbekr who had not been resident in their sees for the obligatory seven years.[3] Germanos strongly objected to this procedure and opposed the Arab wish to draw up a list of candidates solely from the bishops of Antioch. In this he was supported by the rest of the Greek Orthodox Church. In Jerusalem Photios sought the assurance of the British consul that the British Government would press for the election of a Greek[4] and in Constantinople the representative of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem insisted that Nâzim, the Governor of Damascus, should co-operate in drawing up a list of candidates to include

[1] Letter from the Damascus consul reporting in 1909 that this fact was well known in Syria. (Akhir mazhar, p. 579.)

[2] Memorandum by A. Block, Chief Dragoman at the British Embassy. (FO 78/4991.)

[3] *Tafasil*, p. 16.

[4] Dickson, British Consul in Jerusalem, to O'Conor, 6 December 1898. (FO 78/4991.)

Greeks from all the patriarchates, or that he should be replaced.

The conflict in Constantinople resolved itself into a battle between Abdülhamid and his ministers. First the Russian ambassador spoke to the Grand Vezier, Tevfik Paşa, seeking his support for an Arab patriarch and pointing out that 'a system of autocephalous patriarchates, independent of Constantinople, would render most difficult any combination on the part of the Orthodox Church to obtain political privileges.'[1] Tevfik and his colleagues were not impressed by Russia's arguments but Zinoveb, the Russian ambassador, tried to win over the Sultan. This he did with triumphant success[2] and once Abdülhamid had been convinced the Porte felt that 'Russian pressure was too strong to be seriously opposed.'[3] The Greeks turned to the ambassadors of Britain and France warning of the dangers of the spread of Russian political influence in the Near East. The French ambassador felt unable to intervene because of the alliance existing between France and Russia, while O'Conor had no wish to become involved in a dispute strictly outside Britain's interests. He did, however, send his dragoman to speak privately to the Sultan's chief secretary of the 'danger of giving official support to the Russian propaganda'.[4] The Grand Vezier received visits also from a deputation representing the three patriarchates and from the Ecumenical Patriarch himself. These were accompanied by a sum of 25,000 Turkish lire[5] and although the ministers could not directly oppose the Sultan they accepted the Greek case and began attempts to influence the actions of the Governor in Damascus.

The outcome of the struggle depended largely on the character of Nâzim Paşa who from the first seemed to favour the demands of the Arab party. He was placed in an embarrassing position by the conflicting orders from the Sultan and the Porte and by persistent Russian and Greek pressure in Damascus. In March, soon after Zinovev's visit to the Sultan, Nâzim summoned the Synod of Antioch to inform it that he had received instructions to depose Germanos for his opposition to the wishes of the majority of the Synod and to invite them to appoint as successor the Arab Bishop of Latakia, Meletios Dumani. This they did and Meletios was

[1] Tevfik reported his conversation with the Russian ambassador to Block. (O'Conor to Salisbury, 22 March 1899. FO 78/4992).
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.
[5] Richards to O'Conor, 27 April 1899. (FO 78/4993.)

confirmed as *locum tenens* in March 1899 by the Sultan. The Porte was driven more firmly onto the side of the Greeks and instructed Nâzim to inform the Synod that a deputation from the three patriarchates had protested against the exclusion of Greek candidates as an infringement of their rights.[1] The Arabs refused even to consider this and outlined their reasons. 'The Orthodox Syrians speak one language, namely Arabic, and it is their sacred right that their spiritual head should be an Ottoman Arab who would work in the service of his state for the benefit of his millet.'[2] The temporary expedient of allowing outsiders into Antioch during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had in no way affected the ancient custom that the patriarch was elected only by 'the bishops of the sees and the people of the parishes'.[3] The Governor forwarded the Arab case to the capital where confusion increased. The Porte was acting in apparent defiance of the Sultan and imputed to him a change of heart. Indeed for a time he did veer towards the Greek side. At the end of April Nâzim was once again informed by the Porte that any list of candidates would have to contain names proposed by the other patriarchs and that the Sultan would recognize no patriarch who was not approved by the remaining three.[4]

The Arabs were being driven to despair by the vacillation in Constantinople and on April 28th debated at length the question of holding an election in defiance of the Porte. Belyaev was present at the meeting and promised to seek the Tsar's personal mediation on behalf of an Arab patriarch.[5] The majority of bishops and laymen present voted for an immediate election without Nâzim's approval on the grounds that time was against them therefore they must act while still sure of the Sultan's support. Consequently the Synod and the lay council of Antioch selected three bishops, Gerasimos, Meletios, and Athanasios of Homs, as candidates. All the bishops then proceeded amid a large crowd of Orthodox Arabs to the cathedral in Damascus where the election was held behind locked doors. After only a short interval the doors opened and the unanimous choice of Meletios was announced to the waiting crowd.[6]

[1] Norman to Salisbury, 27 April 1899. (FO 78/4993.)
[2] *Tafasil*, p. 3.
[3] Ibid.
[4] FO 78/4993, loc. cit.
[5] O'Conor to Salisbury, 11 May 1899. (FO 78/4993.)
[6] *Tafasil*, p. 20. Meletios was born in Damascus in 1837. He was educated in the patriarchal school there and had been secretary to Patriarch Ierotheos. In 1865 he was created Bishop of Latakia.

Rejoicing continued in the neighbourhood of the patriarchate until midnight.

Although a patriarch had been elected, in order to be officially recognized as head of his Church he had to receive the Sultan's *berat* of investiture. A protest against the election was immediately sent by the Ecumenical Patriarch to the palace. The question was debated by the Council of Ministers who decided that a fresh election was necessary and that Germanos should be reinstated as *locum tenens*.[1] Nâzim received orders to depose Meletios, yet in spite of being deceived by the Arabs he still supported their cause and took no action. The Arabs began to lose heart and tension in Damascus was increased by popular demonstrations and even outbreaks of fighting. In mid-summer the former Russian ambassador to Constantinople, Nelidov, visited Damascus.[2] Immediately afterwards Nâzim called at the Russian consulate to assure Belyaev in the presence of a number of Arab priests that there was no danger of Meletios being deposed.[3]

In Constantinople the Russian ambassador had further meetings with the Sultan where he emphasized that a refusal to recognize Meletios would create bitter enemies among the Orthodox Arabs and further strengthen the movement for national independence now growing among the Muslim Arabs.[4] The Orthodox Arabs themselves, as is shown by the *Tafasil* which was published between Meletios' election and his recognition, believed that their two main opponents were the Ecumenical Patriarch and Sir Nicholas O'Conor. 'His Excellency the Ambassador claims that an Arab patriarch would further Russian influence.'[5] It was also part of the Arab case at this time to deny strongly any subservience to Russia. 'We do not know of any connection between an Arab patriarch and Russian influence. Nothing attaches the Orthodox Arabs to Russia apart from the ties of sect which join them also to Greeks, Bulgarians and Roumanians.'[6]

[1] O'Conor to Salisbury, 25 May 1899. (FO 78/4993.)

[2] In reporting the matter to Salisbury, O'Conor believed the visit to be connected with the 'furtherance of Russian policy.' (O'Conor to Salisbury, 4 September 1899. FO 78/4995.)

[3] O'Conor to Salisbury, 28 June 1899. (FO 78/4994.)

[4] *Soobshcheniya*, 17. p. 265.

[5] *Tafasil*, p. 3. O'Conor knew of his reputation among the Arabs. 'I learn . . . that I am mistakenly credited at Damascus with having taken a very active part in bringing about the discomfiture of the Syrian candidate.' (O'Conor to Salisbury. FO 78/4994, loc. cit.)

[6] *Tafasil*, p. 4.

By mid-September no action had been taken to depose Meletios, both the Sultan and Nâzim standing firm. Meletios had received a friendly reply to his telegram congratulating the Sultan on the anniversary of his accession.[1] On being asked in November to hold a second election, the Synod of Antioch replied by re-electing Meletios and only four days later Nâzim received confirmation from both the Sultan and the Porte.[2] Meletios was enthroned on November 13th in the presence of the Arab bishops and the Russian consul and his staff. Belyaev[3] was the first to receive consecrated bread during the mass and in the evening dined with the patriarch and his bishops.

The Greek Church continued its opposition and Meletios was not recognized by the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Jerusalem or Alexandria. His 'letters of peace' were answered only by the Churches of Russia, Serbia, and Roumania and he had to obtain the chrism for his coronation in 1900 from Moscow.

Officially Russia claimed no credit for the Arab triumph in Antioch. Dmitrievski, commenting in the *Soobshcheniya* on the remarks of Photios, Patriarch of Alexandria, that 'the Palestine Society had sown the seeds of dissension between Greeks and Arabs', replied that '[the Society] had found national consciousness well developed as early as 1882 and could have done nothing to stop its course. The service of Belyaev was that at the critical moment he supported the initiative of the Arabs.'[4] The Society's attitude towards an Arab patriarch was far removed, however, from its more usual bitter comments on the obstructiveness of the Greeks. 'We must notice Meletios' sincere love for Russia. He looks on the Russian church as his support and places strong hope in further and more essential aid from Russia. The patriarch trusts the time is coming for close cultural relations with Russia.'[5] Khitrovo in a letter written in July 1900 claimed the election as the greatest 'political victory' of the Society but saw it as an event of scant importance for the majority of Russians. '[The Election] passed unnoticed by the whole of Russian society and thereby proved that the whole [Arab] affair is important merely in my imagination or that society does not understand this question or

[1] But the reply was addressed to Meletios as Bishop of Latakia.

[2] O'Conor to Salisbury, 9 November 1899. (FO 78/4996.)

[3] The *Soobshcheniya* reported that the 'grateful Arabs placed Belyaev's name second only to that of Meletios.' (18. p. 103.)

[4] Ibid. p. 664. [5] Ibid., p. 280.

has no sympathy for it.'[1] Yet Russia's essential role was recognized at least by some members of the Church of Antioch, as words spoken on an admittedly emotional occasion by the superior of the Antioch convent in Moscow show. He was delivering a funeral oration for Grand Duke Sergei. 'Our native church of Antioch . . . was deprived for two hundred years of the comfort of having as its spiritual head a fellow countryman. But then you arose, our new Moses—and there was an end to persecution and insult . . . and my native country . . . now hears God's word in its mother tongue and we see a fellow Arab as head of our church.'[2] Meletios reigned for six years until 1906 and during this time began to repair the neglect of previous patriarchs. Negib Azoury, an Arab Catholic who visited Damascus in February 1904, commented most favourably on his reign: 'j'ai été heureux de constater . . . que l'administration des Arabes était infiniment plus douce, plus loyale et plus paternelle que celle des Hellènes, malgré la pénurie du Trésor diocésain.'[3] Although his own education had been of a most elementary nature Meletios was anxious to promote a sound educational policy. He encouraged the Palestine Society to increase the number of schools from forty-one to seventy-four in five years and himself opened a number of primary schools. His greatest achievement was to refound the ecclesiastical seminary in the monastery of Balamand closed by the Patriarch Methodios. Its purpose was to train and educate future members of an Arab hierarchy. The teachers were Arab and the subjects taught included Russian, a popular subject for pupils who wished to complete their education in Russia. The standard of teaching was not high and this was only a modest attempt to solve a large problem.

A further important achievement of Meletios' reign was the drawing up in 1900 of an official written constitution for the Church which was to ensure the legality of the election of succeeding Arab patriarchs. Meletios died in Damascus in February 1906 and Athanasios of Homs was elected *locum tenens*. Although the electoral procedure was now firmly laid down, the Greek patriarchs tried to seize this opportunity of once again imposing their choice. The Ecumenical Patriarch attempted to interfere but his own Synod voted against intervention.[4] Much more virulent in his hatred of the Arab and Russian success was Photios of Alexandria

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 25. p. 416.
[2] 5 February 1905. (Ibid., 16. p. 12.)
[3] Azoury, p. 73.
[4] *Echos d'Orient*, ix (1906), p. 178.

who demanded that a Greek should be elected. In an interview with Ilya Nahhas[1] in *Al-Ahram* he claimed that no election was valid without Greek participation.[2] But he could only protest and was powerless to interfere. In the event the election proceeded without interference. Athanasios was confirmed by the Porte and a list of candidates was submitted to Constantinople for approval. This was retained for three weeks during which there was great agitation in Damascus among the Orthodox population who suspected Greek pressure, but the list returned unaltered and of the final three candidates, Gregory Haddad, Bishop of Tripoli, was elected unanimously.

Gregory was born in 1859 in Lebanon. He received a private theological training in Beirut and was ordained in 1880. For some time he edited the Arabic review *Al-Hadiya*[3] until in 1890 he was created Bishop of Tripoli. He was an active and energetic bishop, founding several schools and even an ecclesiastical seminary, but his work was hindered by lack of money. Gregory was one of the first bishops to welcome the Palestine Society into his diocese and several schools were immediately opened in Tripoli. Yet he was not a man to be Russia's passive partner and was by nature inclined to be devious in his dealings with others. Krachkovski, the Russian orientalist, learned during his visit to Syria that Gregory was universally considered to be 'crafty', and in his memoirs added his own impressions. 'He reminded me little of his predecessor of the seventeenth century; not very tall, plump, roundfaced—he represented the type I knew well of contemporary Eastern "prince of the church". His restless, flattering civility had an unpleasant effect and even the habitual Arabic phrases—"our house is your house", "we are all at your command"—somehow sounded especially false.'[4]

This Russian view of Gregory is in sharp contrast to the portrait painted by Muhammad Kurd 'Ali in his *Memoirs*.[5] Kurd 'Ali praised Gregory for his generosity, tolerance, and integrity of character.

[1] A leading member of the Syrian Orthodox community in Cairo.

[2] Quoted in *Soobshcheniya*, 17. p. 607.

[3] Published in Beirut by the Jami' at at-Ta'lim al-Masihi al-Urthudhuksiya. Gregory was editor from 1886–8. (See Tarazi, ii. p. 36.)

[4] Krachkovski, *Nad arabskimi rukopisyami*, p. 33.

[5] *Al-mudhakkirat*. English translation, *Memoirs of Muhammad Kurd 'Ali*, by K. Totah.

The patriarch was one of the most respected of religious leaders, a man of piety and uprightness . . . He was loved especially by the Muslims and was respected by those of intelligence and judgement amongst them . . . His quality of character reconciled Christianity and Islam and he drew from both religions what men needed most . . . A man of this calibre was loved by all sects because despite his great attachment to his faith he did not neglect the rights of his country and nation.[1]

The new Patriarch of Antioch opened his reign by despatching the customary 'letters of peace' and once again replies were received only from the Slav and Roumanian Churches. Despite the legal election of Gregory, the Ecumenical Patriarch refused to recognize him and vainly attempted to lay down uncompromising conditions for reconciliation. These conditions included the return of Greek bishops to Antioch and the eligibility of all Orthodox bishops for the patriarchate. In 1909 there came the crises over Damianos in Jerusalem and after discussions with the Russian ambassador the Ecumenical Patriarch agreed in April to recognize as legal patriarchs both Damianos and Gregory. The conditions of reconciliation with Antioch were still mentioned but now with no hope of their ever being accepted.[2]

Although Gregory recognized his debt to Russia and was prepared to allow the Palestine Society to work in his patriarchate, the relationship between Arab and Russian was not always easy. The Arabs were faced with the dilemma of having to rely on Russian money to finance their Church and its enterprises while wishing to maintain complete independence.

Despite these difficulties, under Gregory Ḥaddad the patriarchate of Antioch experienced what he himself called *an-nahda*[3]—revival or renewal—a revival which had only been possible with Russian aid. The only brake to expansion was the financial straits of the Palestine Society. The seminary of Balamand was furnished with textbooks translated from Russian and in 1910 the council of the patriarchate[4] decided to transfer the school to Beirut and remodel it on a Russian seminary. The patriarch opposed the change

[1] Ibid., pp. 137–9. (Eng. transl., pp. 44–6.)

[2] *Echos d'Orient*, xii (1909), p. 365.

[3] He used this term in a funeral oration for *Ilyas Qudsi* who had been trained at Athens university and had then spent 33 years teaching in the Orthodox schools of Syria. (*Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Arabi*, vi (1926), p. 371.)

[4] A mixed council responsible for educational and philanthropic affairs in Antioch.

of Russian policy which introduced English and French into the Society's schools since these languages opened the non-Orthodox world to Orthodox Arabs. He was reported to have said: 'I wish Russian Orthodox books to be read so that Russian culture may penetrate every corner of our being.'[1]

Gregory's greatest dream was to introduce a system of higher education, but in this he had little support from Russia. Financial considerations apart, the Palestine Society felt that it was not its duty to provide other than primary education in Syria. But on private initiative in 1910 a secondary school was founded in Homs in which the greater part of the teaching by an all Arab staff was in English. In 1906 the Metropolitan of Beirut, Gerasimos, planned to open a college of secondary education or even a university faculty but these plans failed largely because of the lack of money. There was a small but steady stream of boys from Syria and Lebanon to the Nazareth Seminary some of whom returned as teachers, and in 1909 the new Bishop of Sur, Ilya Dibs, had been a teacher in the Seminary.

The ties between Gregory and the Palestine Society were strengthened in 1913 during his visit to Russia when he was made an honorary member. In a speech in St Petersburg he thanked the Society for its help and hoped that future co-operation would be closer.[2]

The dilemma of the Christian Arab[3]

The success of the Orthodox Arabs in Antioch in electing one of their own number as patriarch raised almost as many problems as it solved. It was, as Sati' al-Husri pointed out, the first real victory for Arab nationalism but it was a victory for a small minority who had hardly viewed their struggle in the wider setting of the Arab World. The assertion of their 'Arabness' in face of their Greek superiors brought them out of their closed ecclesiastical circles to confront a hitherto relatively unimportant question: what role was the Christian Arab to play within the developing Muslim Arab movement for independence and unity? How could a Christian Arab remain true to his religion and heritage and yet take part with his Muslim Arab brothers in the greater affairs of his country? The problem was made more complex by the uniquely Arab

[1] *Soobshcheniya*, 28. p. 123. [2] Ibid., 23. p. 93.

[3] This section owes much to Hourani's *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*.

contribution to Islamic civilization which led to the assertion that to be Arab was in a sense to be Muslim also.

There could be only one positive response to this dilemma. The Christian Arab had to emphasize what united him with, rather than divided him from, other Arabs. This could be done in various ways: by invoking common race or nationality, by showing what Islam and Christianity had in common, or by adopting a purely secular approach.

In the wider sphere then, Orthodox Arabs participated in the Arab nationalist movement which had its beginnings in the nineteenth century. They joined with other Christians in 1875 to form a small secret society in Beirut which, although unimportant, at least showed that they were awakening to some sort of political awareness. Little was done to develop this new awareness but the idea of an independent 'Syria' spread, especially among those who had attended American schools and the Protestant College in Beirut—mainly Orthodox and Protestant Christians.

The idea of a secular state was propagated by many Christian writers, among them Shibli Shumaiyil and Farah Antun, both Lebanese, who looked to a future state in which Christians and Muslims would have equal responsibility. Religion would have an honourable role but be divorced from government. Antun was beginning to think in terms of his *umma* and no longer in terms of his own community. Although he attended a school run by the Orthodox community it was unusual in that its teachers and pupils included Muslim, Protestant, Maronite, and Orthodox. An atmosphere of religious toleration was fostered which would clearly discourage narrow sectarian attitudes. Antun saw, moreover, that it was dangerous for Christian Arabs to associate themselves too closely with the Great Powers or with Western missionaries if they were to be accepted as equals by the Muslims. These ideas represented a current of thought among the Orthodox Arab far removed from that which looked upon Russia as protector and were deplored by those Russians concerned with Syria and Palestine as they necessarily implied the breaking of the close ties linking an Orthodox Arab to his community and through it to Russia.

Antun was writing at the turn of the century and a few years later more positive expression was given to his ideas at the Arab Congress held in Paris in 1913. It was attended by some twenty-five delegates, mostly Syrians and approximately half Christian and half Muslim.

They discussed the future of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire which they believed should be autonomous with Muslims and Christians living in complete equality. One of the representatives, an Orthodox bishop from the Patriarchate of Antioch, spoke on 'The preservation of national life in the Arab Ottoman countries.' That a Christian had been chosen to speak on this topic was, he said, a demonstration of Christian-Muslim solidarity. Historically the Christians and Muslims of Syria had been one, united in language and interest. The early Christian inhabitants of Syria had welcomed the Muslim armies as Arab brothers—brothers in tongue and race who could expel the Greek intruder. The Christians facilitated the conquest of Syria and this 'Arab solidarity' (*'asabiya*) was witness to the fact that the Arabs clearly put race before religion, which is the virtue of a living people—of a people which does not want to die. It was external factors causing enmity between Muslim and Christian which must now be removed, for 'what is true of Arab Muslims is equally true of Christians because religion does not deny personal welfare nor does it replace common origins, traditions, language and patriotism.'[1] The aim of all Syrians was to develop freely their nationality under the aegis of the Ottoman Empire.

A Christian speaking on such an occasion was clearly on the defensive, aware as he was of the Arab identification with Islam, but in 1913 such problems were theoretical and although latent under the Ottoman Empire did not become acute until after the first World War when the unity sustained by the Empire disintegrated. The partition of geographical Syria into four distinct entities meant that the adherents of the two Orthodox patriarchates became citizens of new states whose loyalties were consequently confused. Membership of their *millet* had implied a certain loyalty to the Ottoman Government but now they had to be consciously Lebanese or Syrian, Palestinian or Trans-Jordanian. They had to formulate their attitudes towards the movement for greater Syrian union, the British and French mandates, and Zionism.

Syria, Lebanon and the Patriarchate of Antioch

The Orthodox Christians of the Patriarchate of Antioch were split between Syria and Lebanon while a few even found themselves in the new state of Turkey where, as 'Greek' Orthodox, they were

[1] 'Aiyadi: *Al-masihiya wal-qaumiya al-'arabiya* p. 131. *Al-mu'tamar al-'arabi al-auwal*, pp. 54–61.

caught up in the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey. They protested bitterly that their religion in no way affected their nationality and that they were Arab, not Greek.

Those Orthodox Arabs living in the area that became the state of Syria had no difficulty in discovering where their sympathies lay. Being a small minority they chose to swim with the tide, to be Arab nationalists supporting together with the Muslims the formation of Greater Syria or of a Sharifian Empire under Faisal. In Lebanon the position was more complex. The Maronites and Greek Catholics firmly opposed the incorporation of Lebanon into a larger Arab state, looking rather toward the creation of a Christian Lebanese state under French protection. The Orthodox were still attracted by the ideas of nineteenth century Arab nationalism but many suspected that their position would be easier in a Lebanon with a Christian majority than in a Syria with an overwhelming Muslim majority, however secular that majority might claim to be. Nevertheless they resented the privileged position of the Maronites under the French mandate and support for union with Syria continued for several years.

These differences in political opinions among the Orthodox Arabs eventually had their repercussions in the affairs of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Gregory Haddad by a combination of tact, strong leadership and a detachment from politics caused by illness managed to keep most differences submerged. He was, however, the first Christian prelate to recognize Amir Faisal as King of Syria and this espousal of the Greater Syrian nationalist cause continued to manifest itself in patriarchal affairs. The death of Gregory in 1928 was the signal for the latent rift between Lebanese and Syrians to come into the open. By this time Greater Lebanon had been recognized by the French as the Lebanese Republic and Charles Dabbas, an Orthodox lawyer, had been elected first president. At the end of 1928 a group of Orthodox Lebanese presented a petition to the French High Commissioner demanding the independence of their church. An autocephalous church, they claimed, citing the example of Bulgaria, was the logical sequel to political independence. The French welcomed in theory an independent Lebanese Church juridically separated from Damascus but the project foundered on the absolute opposition of the Syrian members who had no wish to see the authority of the patriarch weakened. Discussions were held in Beirut and Zahleh in 1929 to draw up new

regulations for the election of a patriarch. It was agreed to retain the patriarchal seat in Damascus and preparations were made for an election in November which because of disturbances in the Syrian capital was transferred to Beirut. It was not until February 1931 that Arsenios Haddad, the candidate of the Lebanese party, was elected patriarch. The Syrians disputed the election and retaliated by electing their own candidate Alexander Tahhan. Both patriarchs were consecrated, Arsenios in Latakia and Alexander in Damascus, but by the end of April arbitration had recognized Alexander as patriarch to which Arsenios agreed. His supporters disagreed and as a result he continued to act as patriarch in Lebanon until his death in 1933. The French delayed recognition of Alexander until he was driven to protest to the President of the Chamber of Deputies accusing the French High Commission of deliberate obstruction. On the death of Arsenios all parties reluctantly agreed to accept Alexander who reigned until his death in June 1958 at the age of 89. He followed the policy of his predecessor, Gregory Haddad, in his pro-Russian sympathy and his support for Arab nationalism. He was especially strong in his promotion of the Arab cause in Palestine, which was for him 'a question of family and not of politics',[1] and in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury prophetically saw the inevitable result of Jewish immigration as a 'bloody war between Jew and Arab.'[2] He spoke fluent Russian and had been educated in a seminary in Kiev. In 1957 during the period of the Russo-Syrian honeymoon he visited the Soviet Union, met Kruschev and other Soviet leaders and attended the fortieth anniversary celebrations of the Russian Revolution. He discussed with Kruschev the Arab struggle against imperialism and returned to Syria declaring that in Russia there was no religious oppression. In his sympathy for Arab nationalism he was close to Abdul Nasser[3] of Egypt and further alienated the Lebanese bishops who together with the majority of Lebanese Christians opposed Egyptian policy.

Alexander's successor was Theodosios Abu Rijaili, Bishop of Tripoli—significantly a bishop from Lebanon and on good terms with the Lebanese premier Rashid Karami. At his enthronement Theodosios expressed his conviction that the Orthodox sect was 'an integral part of the Arab nation'.

[1] Message from Alexander to the Congress of Bludan, 1937. (*Oriente Moderno*, xvii, p. 497.) [2] Sifri, *Filastin 'arabiya*, 2, pp. 64–5. [3] 'Abd an-Nasir.

11

A 'QUANTITÉ NÉGLIGEABLE': THE ORTHODOX ARABS OF JERUSALEM

> The parochial clergy and laity subject to the Fraternity [of the Holy Sepulchre] are for all practical purposes a *quantité négligeable* (BERTRAM and LUKE, 1921).

THE relationship between Orthodox patriarchs in the Middle East was in law one of equality. The Ecumenical Patriarch, however, being close to the centre of power and in Ottoman days the head of his *millet* had always exercised more authority than his colleagues. It became customary in the seventeenth century for him to nominate his colleague in Jerusalem who had ceased to wield real authority in his patriarchate and had become merely a member of the patriarchal court in Constantinople. Jerusalem rarely saw her patriarch and the voice of the Orthodox Arabs was not heard in the capital. Until the mid-nineteenth century no-one had questioned this practice nor had anyone taken up the cause of the Arabs. Although Russia had long been the chief source of revenue for the patriarchate she had not tried to exert any control over the spending of the money nor had she attempted to influence the actions of the patriarchs.

The harbinger of a change in Russian policy was Porfiri Uspenski. His return to Constantinople in 1844 from his first visit to Syria coincided with the death of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Athanasios. After his death the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Greek party of the Phanar worked for the election of one of their own. They claimed a legal right to do so, protesting that the Patriarch of Jerusalem had illegally named his own successor—Ierotheos, Bishop of Tabor, 'an enemy of Turkey and a man patronized by Russia.'[1] The Russian mission under Titov decided to support Jerusalem's claim to independence. Once Russia had taken up the cause the Ottoman authorities who until then had favoured the Phanar as the stronger party agreed to allow the Jerusalem Synod to elect the patriarch.

[1] Porfiri describes the opening moves of the contest, *Kniga bytya moevo*, ii. p. 359 ff.

The Porte would not accept Ierotheos, whom they believed to be of Russian nationality, as a candidate in the election. The controversy lasted for two years during which Jerusalem was without a patriarch. Eventually Cyril, Bishop of Lydda, was elected in 1847[1] against, it is true, the wishes of the Patriarch of Constantinople, yet he was not known to be a man especially favourable towards Russia.

The election marked the end of Jerusalem's subordination to Constantinople. Cyril took up residence in Palestine where he had to begin a struggle with his own Synod which immediately found itself in a position to exert influence over him. The election did not usher in Russian domination of the patriarchate, because of Cyril's obstinacy and the Brotherhood's capacity for intrigue. The Patriarch was finally responsible to the Brotherhood and could be deposed by them.[2] A patriarch needed to tread warily with regard to Russia between the extremes of devotion and opposition. A further complicating factor was the indefinite status of any member of the Russian Church working within the jurisdiction of the Church of Jerusalem. This presented no problem to a forthright opponent of the Greeks but for a respecter of church law entailed a delicate relationship with the Greek hierarchy. Porfiri clearly recognized Cyril's authority and was able to establish a working relationship with him. Cyril Naumov, the Russian bishop in Jerusalem, exasperated by the obstinacy of the Greeks and the patriarch had stated: 'An open struggle with the Greeks is senseless and impossible. The solution is to take the patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem out of Greek hands and to do this it is necessary to have the support of the Porte. Perhaps we could persuade the Porte that it is dangerous to have one people in control of all the Orthodox inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire.'[3] Naumov did not suggest into whose hands the patriarchates should be given—Arab or Russian. Leonid and Antonin continued to have uneasy relations with the Greeks but no crisis occurred until 1872 when the conference was called to declare the Bulgarian Church schismatic.

The only dissenting voice at the conference was that of Patriarch

[1] The Greek account of the election saw Cyril elected solely 'due to the intrigues of the Russian mission.' (Papadopoulos, *Istoria*, p. 706.)

[2] It was in fact the Synod which could depose the patriarch but in Jerusalem this was composed at the time exclusively of members of the Brotherhood. Greek writers go as far as asserting that the Brotherhood and the Church of Jerusalem are one.

[3] *Otchet missii.* (Titov, p. 260 ff.)

Cyril who with strong Russian support refused to sign the protocol. The conference then turned against him and demanded his deposition by the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. 'The Phanariotes, after having forced their Patriarch to hurl the thunders of the Church against Slavonic gentiles, are now doing their utmost to get turned out of the bosom of the Church that venerable Prelate who is so worthily seated on the patriarchal throne of Jerusalem.'[1] Cyril found a natural ally in Ignatev. He returned to Jerusalem to determine the mood of his Synod and also to dedicate the Russian Holy Trinity Church in the presence of Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich. Ignatev warned the Consul in Jerusalem, Kozhevnikov, of Greek antagonism towards Russia and of the Brotherhood's desire to depose Cyril. 'I suggest that you oppose in every way these intrigues, if they exist, and support Cyril by all means at your disposal. He had been subjected here to many attacks by the Greeks but has nevertheless remained true to the promises given to us.'[2] Kozhevnikov was also urged to enlist Antonin's co-operation in supporting the patriarch. 'Try together with Father Antonin to give a brilliant reception to the Patriarch and to obtain for him the support of the Arab element against the monastery[3] which is inimically disposed.'[4] He confirmed several days later that Cyril was keeping to his agreement and opposing the schism, adding: 'His reception by us and the Arabs was brilliant.'[5]

Cyril was safe as long as the Grand Duke was in Palestine. He personally supported the patriarch and the Brotherhood was unwilling openly to oppose a member of the Imperial family. Ignatev worked feverishly in Constantinople, sending a stream of telegrams and despatches to Kozhevnikov and Antonin. In Syria the Consul-General Petkovich was urged to enlist the sympathy of the Arab clergy and to censure the Patriarch of Antioch, Ierotheos, for signing the declaration of schism. Despite Ignatev's desire to engage Arab sympathy Kozhevnikov replied on October 22nd: 'We cannot place much hope in the Arabs; conditioned by outside intrigue, they have little sympathy for Cyril.'[6] Three days later the consul noted some slight rift among the Greeks and took advantage of this to 'place the Arabs in a neutral position.'[7] The same day

[1] *Secret Despatches*, p. 25.
[2] Arkhiv Sinoda, 4028. (*Soobshcheniya*, 25. p. 200.)
[3] Ignatev's term for the Brotherhood.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., p. 204.
[6] Arkhiv Sinoda, 4028. (Ibid., p. 330.)
[7] Ibid.

Ignatev informed Jerusalem that Midhat Paşa[1] had been replaced as Grand Vezier by Mehmet Rüşdī[2] who would, he believed, be more favourable to Russia. Mehmet informed the Mutessarif in Jerusalem that the Brotherhood would not dare to intrigue against Cyril while he was entertaining the Grand Duke Nikolai on behalf of the Sultan.

At the beginning of November after Nikolai's departure the patriarch accompanied by Kozhevnikov travelled to Lydda to dedicate a church. The consul harangued the crowd of Arabs gathered for the ceremony in an effort to persuade them to support Cyril. At Russian prompting a demonstration was staged against their Greek bishop and the patriarch himself informed Constantinople: 'The whole population of Palestine protests loudly against the actions of the monastery . . . [they] acknowledge us and no-one else as Patriarch.'[3] It seemed as if the Russians had swung the Arabs round onto the side of Cyril but Ignatev had miscalculated the power of the lay population. Both Russians and Arabs were powerless to prevent the Synod from deposing the patriarch in November 1872. What Russia *had* done was to encourage the creation of a conscious national Arab Orthodox opinion and to awaken a strong desire for greater participation in the affairs of the patriarchate. The Orthodox Arab national movement dates from the deposition of Cyril.

Ignatev was shaken by the Synod's defiance but believed that they had been encouraged in their intrigues by the Turkish authorities and by the German and British consuls. The deposition had still to be confirmed by the Porte and the ambassador hoped in the interim to compel the Greeks to change their minds. He planned to do this by dividing the Turks, supporting the Arabs and making a direct attack on the Greeks. He had lost much of his influence with the Turks on the fall of the Grand Vezier Mahmud Nedim,[4] also on the appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Halil whom Ignatev considered to be an inveterate enemy of Russia—'the wretched protector'[5] of the Greeks. In memoranda to Halil

[1] Grand Vezier for two and a half months in 1872.

[2] Grand Vezier 1872–3; four months only.

[3] Arkhiv Sinoda, 1668, no. 871. (*Soobshcheniya*. 25. p. 337.)

[4] Grand Vezier 1871–2, known as Nedimov—the pawn of Ignatev. (Danişmend, *İzahli Osmanli tarihi kronolojisi*, iv. p. 507.)

[5] Letter from Ignatev to Novikov, 7 December 1872. (*Secret despatches*, p. 33.) The British ambassador also spoke of Halil's 'intense aversion to Russia.'

and the Grand Vezier he threatened to obtain the personal intervention of the Tsar and warned the British ambassador that the Porte would eventually have to pay for its intransigence.[1] He still believed that he could so intimidate the Governor in Jerusalem that he would support Cyril against his Synod. On 1 December Ignatev telegraphed to Kozhevnikov: 'Keep the Pasha well disposed to us, promising him rewards and my protection . . . If he behaves foolishly we shall change him.'[2] But the German consul Alten[3] had extended his protection to the Governor, Nazif Paşa, and Kozhevnikov reported that he was no longer susceptible to Russian influence and 'on the advice of the German and British consuls had informed the Porte that in the interest of Turkey it was necessary to depose the Patriarch Cyril.'[4] Once Ignatev knew of Alten's role he protested to Berlin through the German Minister in Constantinople. In conversations in April of the following year between the privy-councillor Stremoukhov and Bismarck, the Russian representative complained that 'In fact Alten had done a great deal of irreparable harm; the refractory bishops had acted not without some irresolution, while the Turkish Governor had been more inclined to support the legal authority of the Patriarch, but at that critical moment the interference of Alten had frightened the Pasha and encouraged the refractory [Greeks].'[5] The German Chancellor replied that all German consuls in the East had been ordered to refrain entirely from intervention in political affairs. Ignatev knew that however welcome Bismarck's prohibition might be it no longer had any relevance to immediate affairs in Jerusalem.

The ambassador's second step was to try to create the kind of public opinion among the Arabs which would force the Greeks to reconsider their policy. He described his methods to Novikov in November 1872.

As for Mgr. Cyrille his position is a much more serious one [than that of the Bulgarian Exarch]. If the Porte sanction his being relieved of his

[1] Elliot to Granville, 20 December 1872. (FO 78/2220.)

[2] Arkhiv Ministerstva Innostrannykh Del. (*Soobshcheniya*, 25. p. 350.)

[3] Kozhevnikov claimed that Alten was supported by the British consul. There is no evidence for this in the consular records although the British dragoman was an Orthodox Arab who, it was said, had spread the rumour that the Russian Synod agreed with the declaration of schism of Bulgaria and that it was thought dangerous for Cyril to be supported by Russian policy. (Despatch of Kozhevnikov, 28 November 1872. Ibid., 25. p. 360.)

[4] Arkhiv MID. (Ibid., p. 350.)

[5] *Krasny Arkhiv*, i. p. 17.

functions the Synod of Jerusalem will immediately proceed to elect a new Patriarch and we shall be done out of our rights at the Holy Sepulchre. To prevent such a misfortune as this would be, I have written to P-, C- and S-,[1] instructing them to work up carefully the population of Syria and Palestine to demand the creation of an Arab Church, separate from the Patriarchate and of which Mgr. Cyrille would be elected as spiritual chief.[2]

Although Arab opposition had not affected the Synod's original decision to depose Cyril, Kozhevnikov believed that Arab demands would carry the day for the Russians. He telegraphed to the Consul in Beirut on November 28th: 'The local Arabs are all for the Patriarch . . . If the Porte supports Cyril the opposition will fall. Inform on relations of the Patriarch to the Arabs in Syria. It is necessary to know immediately. News sent by the Synod is false.'[3] Kozhevnikov repeated to Ignatev that the Arabs were strongly behind the patriarch, but that at the same time they respected the authority of the Governor. Although the consul worked openly to foment Arab discontent[4] he received no help from the Syrian Arabs who were working for their own ends. Nor were the Turkish authorities likely to pay much heed to telegrams received from obscure Orthodox Arabs in Palestine. The Arabs began to show signs of disunity and hesitation when they realized that even with Russian support they could not hope to influence the Brotherhood.

The last weapon remaining to Ignatev was Russia's control over a major portion of the income of the patriarchate. Apart from the offerings of the Russian people to Jerusalem, a regular source of income came from estates in Bessarabia and Wallachia. These lands were situated in a part of Bessarabia which passed to Russia at the Treaty of Bucharest in 1812 and were *metokhia*, properties given to the Greek patriarchate with the intention of benefiting the Church in Jerusalem. The treaty recognized these estates as private property and this was confirmed by an ukaz of 1817. The Russian Government had on several occasions alleged the mismanagement of the *metokhia* but had resisted the urge to transform them into State property.[5] A threat of sequestration had always

[1] (P) Petkovich, Consul in Beirut, (C) Kozhevnikov, and (S) ?

[2] *Secret Despatches*, p. 30 ff.

[3] Arkhiv MID. (*Soobshcheniya*, 25. p. 349.)

[4] Ignatev complained that he had been working too openly and that news of his activities had reached the Porte.

[5] *Kniga bytya moevo*, i. p. 136.

been held above the heads of the Brotherhood yet it had remained a threat. During the crisis of 1872 Ignatev believed that the Greeks would finally come to terms if their source of income were cut off. In a despatch to Gorchakov on November 26th he advised: 'It is necessary to telegraph immediately to Kishinev [in Bessarabia] that the representative there pay all revenues from the lands into a Russian bank so that they may be kept there safe from the grasp of our opponents.'[1] He gave no legal justification for his request but pointed out that as the Holy Places belonged to all Orthodoxy the income of the Holy Sepulchre should not be the exclusive possession of a small number of Greeks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed and a sequestration order was approved by the Tsar. Stremoukhov hoped that this would prove a 'good lesson' to the Greeks and would teach them the 'utter madness of their attacks upon Russia and Bulgaria.'[2] Ignatev wrote also to the Russian Ambassador in Athens advising him to inform the Greek King of Russia's anger and warning that the Greeks could no longer count on his (Ignatev's) support in Constantinople.[3]

Ignatev had now exhausted his ammunition. The Greeks remained unrepentant. On December the 18th the Porte recognized Cyril's deposition. The Ambassador believed that he had been defeated by the combined efforts of Britain and Germany, the Arabs that Cyril's leanings towards Russia were the true cause of his downfall.[4] Kozhevnikov's position in Jerusalem became extremely delicate. The Governor and the Greek consul both accused him in letters to Constantinople of leading an Arab revolt, while the Arabs themselves continued to recognize Cyril as patriarch, fired in Kozhevnikov's view by a unanimous spirit of rebellion against the Greeks.[5] But Russia's prestige in general had suffered a blow in Palestine. There was a great disturbance in Jerusalem when news of the Porte's confirmation of the deposition was received. 'This is a great defeat for the Russians who are not able to walk through the streets because of the mockery and spitting. Russian pilgrims have been beaten by the Turkish soldiers.'[6]

[1] Arkhiv Sinoda, no. 1896, 1872. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 11.)

[2] *Secret Despatches*, p. 36. Stremoukhov to Novikov, 8 December 1872.

[3] The Greek Minister in Constantinople, Sinios, informed Elliot of Ignatev's letter. (Elliot to Granville, 11 December 1872. FO 78/2220.)

[4] Khuriyan, p. 207.

[5] Letter to Ignatev, Arkhiv MID. (*Soobshcheniya*, 25. p. 362.)

[6] Antonin's diary (Ibid., 12. p. 78.)

Ignatev advised Kozhevnikov to lie low for the time being. He hoped that Arab opposition and an empty treasury in the Holy Sepulchre would eventually compel the Brotherhood to beg for Russian help. Until that time he would wait 'calmly and silently'.[1]

The immediate consequence of the the events of December 18th was the hurried election of a successor to Cyril. Prokopios, a member of the Brotherhood, was elected after only ten days and the Sultan's *berat* received a month later. The compelling reason for this haste in a process which could last for months or even years was the desire of Greeks and Turks alike to avoid Russian pressure. Russian diplomacy now found itself in the embarrassing position of having to work with a patriarch whose election was not considered valid. Cyril, who had been escorted from Palestine by Turkish soldiers, was still for the Russians the only legal patriarch and Antonin continued to include his name in the liturgy. In Russia itself there was a clash between the extreme views of Ignatev, who under no circumstances would recognize Prokopios, and the views of the Church which was prepared to acknowledge him. In Jerusalem Antonin bore the crossfire. His close friendship with Ignatev led him to follow the ambassador's wishes but in March 1873 the Procurator Count Tolstoi informed Antonin that the Synod required him to pay due respect to the new patriarch 'officially recognized by the Turkish authorities.'[2] Ignatev, furious with this betrayal, sent a copy of Tolstoi's message to Kozhevnikov with additional instructions.

> This directive, based on the opinion of the Holy Synod and possessing a purely ecclesiastical character, applies solely to the Jerusalem mission and consequently has no relevance whatsoever for the Russian consulate. Until you receive further instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs you should, according to my former instructions, not approach Prokopios. We must show great reserve and indifference to the new patriarch giving him to understand that Russia does not approve the latest happenings in Palestine.[3]

Ignatev still exercised great influence in Russia and succeeded in reversing the Synod's decision. Only a short time after his first message Tolstoi requested Antonin to take into account the ambassador's views and in the following year Ignatev telegraphed to the

[1] Letter to Antonin, 3 February 1873. (Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 11.)
[2] Arkhiv Ierusalimskoi Missii, no. 1427. (Kiprian, p. 141.)
[3] Arkhiv MID, 1873, no. 1082. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 80.)

Consul in Jerusalem: 'Inform Antonin that as a result of our representations the Tsar has decided to postpone for the time being recognition of Prokopios, and the Synod has now agreed not to put into execution its instructions which were sent in error.'[1]

Once again the State had shown itself to be master of the Church in Palestinian affairs and both Antonin and the Consul in Jerusalem continued to avoid formal relations with Prokopios who throughout his reign received no official recognition from Russia. Ignatev was not content, however, with the non-recognition of Prokopios but, anxious to remove the stigma of political defeat, tried to depose him. The ambassador's only compensation was in the question of the Bessarabian income with which he still hoped to dominate the Greeks, but this was a long-term policy whose effects would only slowly become apparent.

The other element in the struggle in Jerusalem was the Arab population. Immediately after the election of Prokopios an Orthodox Arab delegation led by Doctor Jurji Sarruf[2] left for Constantinople to lay before the Porte complaints that no Arab had taken part in the election and that the hierarchy in the Church of Jerusalem was open only to Greeks. The first delegation was not well received by the Turkish authorities who were not prepared to entertain Arab complaints, even though after the Hatt-i Hümâyûn of 1856 the constitution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate had stipulated a preponderantly popular electoral assembly in patriarchal elections. The fact of an Arab delegation asking Constantinople to intervene between the laity and the hierarchy of a patriarchate was felt by many Syrian Arabs to set a bad precedent for future Turkish intervention.[3] The delegation returned frustrated to Jerusalem. The Turks at the instigation of Halil Paşa had been only too anxious to confirm Prokopios' election.

In Palestine itself the Arab population continued in a state of unrest, encouraged by Kozhevnikov to oppose Prokopios, but the Russian consul was apparently following Ignatev's bidding to act circumspectly. The British consul, Moore, commented in January 1873: 'On the part of the Russian Consul there is at present outward

[1] Arkhiv MID, 1875, no. 1901. (*Soobshchemiya*, 26. p. 82.)

[2] Sarruf, who had been dragoman to the Russian Mission in Jerusalem, had been dismissed by the Russians for failing to support Patriarch Cyril.

[3] This was noted by the British Consul in Beirut, Eldridge. Despatch to Elliot, 13 January 1873. (FO 78/2282.)

quiescence.'[1] Prokopios, who had sent a 'letter of peace' to the Russian Synod and a lengthy explanation of why Cyril had been deposed, was not so confident of Kozhevnikov's 'quiescence' and accompanied his letter with accusations of 'blatant interference in arousing the Arabs against the patriarch and in turning Russian pilgrims against the Greeks.'[2] The behaviour of the Arabs became more threatening—it was described by Moore as a 'revolt'—and Prokopios had fifteen of the ringleaders arrested. Ignatev, while allowing Kozhevnikov to support the Arabs financially, was reluctant to be involved in their more excessive demands and assured Stremoukhov: 'I fully share Your Excellency's opinion that, striving solely for the reconciliation of the two sides, we must not further the excessive importunities of the Arab population, but I think that conciliation can only take place and endure on the condition of preliminary concessions from the patriarchate to the just demands of the Arabs.'[3] They were demanding several things: a mixed council (*majlis mukhtalit*) of clerical and lay members to take part in patriarchal elections and to administer the finances of the patriarchate; lay participation in the election of bishops; entry to the Brotherhood; regular salaries for Arab priests and more schools. Prokopios distributed a circular in which various concessions were promised, excluding participation in patriarchal elections. He alleged that Arabs always had been accepted into the Brotherhood and the hierarchy. This was received with cynicism and the Russian consul reported that their dissatisfaction was commonly ascribed to Russia's 'unbridling'[4] of them.

Ignatev felt at this time that Russian diplomacy was being dragged too deeply into the dispute and so recalled Kozhevnikov temporarily, replacing him with Yusefovich, the Consul in Damascus. The British consul, Moore, interpreted this move correctly to the Foreign Secretary, Aberdeen, and reported that the Governor of Jerusalem, Kâmil Paşa, attributed 'the want of success [in reconciling Arab and Greek] to the continued interference of M. Kojevnikou.'[5] The new consul placed little faith in the Arabs, considering

[1] Moore to Elliot, 11 January 1873. (FO 78/2282.)

[2] Delo Arkhiva Sinoda 1868, no. 871. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 76.)

[3] Letter to Stremoukhov, Director of the Asiatic Department, 8 December 1874, Arkhiv MID, 1874. (Ibid., 26. p. 99.)

[4] Arkhiv MID, 3093, 1874. (Ibid., p. 304.)

[5] Moore to Aberdeen, 16 May 1874. (FO 78/2340.)

them 'too down-trodden and too covetous'[1] and not yet ready to take part in elections. Although Ignatev disputed this he could make no headway as long as he insisted that Cyril was the legal patriarch and should be recognized as such. Towards the autumn of 1874, however, the four parties concerned in the dispute began to reconsider their position. Yusefovich suggested that the patriarch should be a third person more universally acceptable than either Cyril or Prokopios. Ignatev agreed but insisted that Cyril should first be officially reconciled with the Brotherhood. The Greeks, now approaching bankruptcy, were willing to consider Russian requests. The Turks themselves had quickly become disillusioned with Prokopios who had shown himself to be a fanatical Hellenist. The catalyst was Kâmil Paṣa who travelled to Constantinople in the wake of a second Arab delegation.[2] There he helped to frame the 'Constitution of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem' which promised the Arab population a greater say in the election of a patriarch. On his return to Palestine he announced the new Constitution, but confirmation failed to arrive from Constantinople and the Arabs naturally suspected Turkish duplicity. At the beginning of 1875 Kâmil was replaced by Ali Bey who appeared willing to accede to Russian demands. Yusefovich telegraphed in January: 'For 3,000 lire Ali would immediately remove Prokopios. Authorize expenditure. Our other demands would be met by 5,000 more. I guarantee success: time is precious, I await an answer.'[3]

Ignatev was not prepared to trust Ali Bey and would allow Yusefovich to hand over the money only when Russian demands had been met. Prokopios' time had now run out and the Brotherhood, half hoping that his deposition would mean a return of the Bessarabian revenue, agreed to elect a new patriarch. Ignatev telegraphed on March 13th 1875 that the Porte would confirm Prokopios' deposition but he refused to settle the question of revenue until the character and inclinations of the new patriarch were known.

[1] Letter to Ignatev, June 1874, Arkhiv MID, 3093, 1874. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 296.)

[2] Consul Moore described the departure of this second delegation which was arrested outside Jerusalem by the Turkish authorities as it was believed that 'documents of a compromising character', including a 'Petition to the Emperor of Russia', were being carried. Nothing was found and the three Arabs were released. (Moore to Elliot, July 31 1874. FO 78/2340.)

[3] Arkhiv MID, 1901, 1875. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 99.)

It now seemed that the ambassador was in a position to dictate to the Brotherhood his own choice of patriarch. But Ignatev was too much of a realist to imagine that he could do more than suggest which candidates would be able to regain the Bessarabian money most quickly. The Arabs once more turned to Russia,[1] convinced that the Greeks would again make an election without them. Only seven days after the deposition, details of the long awaited Constitution arrived in Jerusalem. Ignatev admitted that Arab demands were not fully satisfied but thought that the election of a patriarch in accordance with its regulations could not be contested.

The first true pointer to Greek feeling was in the appointment of the *locum-tenens*, Iosaf—an appointment of a Hellenic subject despite Arab opposition and Turkish disapproval. Arab and Greek electors then met in Jerusalem at the end of March to submit a preliminary list of candidates. Arab priests, determined not to be open to Greek intimidation, requested money from Yusefovich to enable them to lodge elsewhere than in Greek monasteries. The request was passed to Constantinople and Ignatev in his reply began to show signs of impatience and perhaps disillusion. 'To allow any expenses by telegram is unthinkable. The Arabs have already been allotted their money[2] and they can give a portion to their priests. We cannot dole out money at random—the game is not worth the candle.'[3] The ambassador had finally agreed to Cyril's exclusion from the list of candidates[4] but insisted that a new patriarch would have to declare the schism lifted from Cyril before the revenues from Bessarabia could flow again. For the Russians and Arabs the best candidate was Nifont, Archbishop of Nazareth, but although his name was included in the preliminary list and in the final list of three, the majority of the Greek Synod voted for Ierotheos, superior of the Jerusalem *metokhion* in Smyrna. It was once again obvious that the real power lay with the Jerusalem Synod, that ties of Greek

[1] A glowing telegram was sent by the Arabs to Ignatev thanking him for his support—'the light of the support of Count Ignatev had shone more brightly than the sun and had achieved the success of deposing Prokopios . . . [we] wish to recognize the protection of the Russian government only.' (Arkhiv MID, March 1875, 1221–38. *Soobshcheniya*, 27. p. 103.)

[2] During the years 1874–7 about 30,000 roubles had been given to the Arabs from the Bessarabian revenue. (Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie* p. 67.)

[3] Arkhiv MID, 1901, 1875. (*Soobshcheniya*, 27. p. 110.)

[4] In the Russian view Cyril voluntarily abdicated in March 1875 and only then did Russia consider the throne of Jerusalem to be vacant.

nationality were stronger than Russian control of the purse strings and that the Arabs, even with Russian support, counted for nothing.

The nationalist in Ignatev demanded revenge, the diplomat conceded defeat and prepared to work with the patriarch. Ierotheos had given written promises while still in Smyrna that Cyril would be received back into the Church and that the Arabs would be appeased. Kozhevnikov, who had replaced Yusefovich after the election, had difficulty in restraining the Arabs who now knew of Ierotheos' promises but waited in vain for their fulfilment. Finally in November 1875 the patriarch sent a circular to the Orthodox Arab population in which he agreed to most of their demands. The consul reported to Ignatev on December 13th: 'Yesterday the reconciliation of the Arabs with the patriarch took place in the presence of the Governor and was signed by both sides. The Greeks recognized the rights of the Arabs expressed in the five points approved by Your Excellency.'[1] Although the patriarch had committed himself in writing, the long awaited agreement was to remain a dead letter.[2]

With the Arab question now settled at least in theory, Ignatev turned his attention to ex-Patriarch Cyril and to urging Ierotheos to carry out his promises. In a letter to Antonin in December 1875 he explained:

> It is time to remind Ierotheos of his promises concerning the reconciliation with Cyril . . . No excuse will be taken into consideration and I shall firmly demand fulfilment of the promise given in writing from Smyrna . . . Then only shall I request the Tsar to return the revenues. You know my rule of pressing on and steadfastly striving for the goal. Be assured therefore that I shall not give in until the monastery satisfies our legitimate demands.[3]

But time was running short. Cyril was gravely ill and the Russo-Turkish war was imminent. Torn between desire for the revenues and determination not to appear a Russian tool, Ierotheos temporized and drove Ignatev to despair. The ambassador was moved by a genuine concern for Cyril, considering it unjust that he should die outside the Church, and through Kozhevnikov and his successor, Ilarionov, eventually persuaded Ierotheos in February 1877 to

[1] Arkhiv MID, 1901, 1875. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 114.)

[2] This is reported by Bertram and Young, p. 30 and is borne out by the fact that similar demands were raised by the Arabs some thirty or forty years later.

[3] Dmitrievski, *Ignatev*, p. 17.

move towards Cyril's reunion. By April, however, Turkey and Russia were at war and Ignatev and Ilarianov were forced to leave their posts. Ierotheos then felt free from Russian pressure and and within seven days re-admitted the ex-patriarch into the Church of Jerusalem.[1] Cyril died only three months later. In the same year the Tsar agreed that two-fifths of the Bessarabian revenues should be given to Jerusalem and in July 1881 a decree was issued increasing this to four-fifths.

Ierotheos died in 1882 after a reign marked, according to some Russians, by 'immaturity and extreme inconsistency.'[2] The Arabs especially had no reason to honour him as despite his promises their position had remained unchanged and they had been in a constant state of unrest during his reign. He had seen his great adversary Ignatev discredited but lived to see the emergence of a new source of irritation—the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society. Ierotheos' successor was the twenty-nine-year-old Photios, a determined opponent of Russian influence, elected against the wishes of the Arab people and the Russian Government. In Constantinople the Russian ambassador pressed Abdülhamid to refuse his *berat* to Photios as the constitution of 1875 had stipulated that a patriarch should be over forty years of age. Consequently Photios was obliged to withdraw.[3] Russia now favoured the election of Nikodemos, at that time superior of the Jerusalem *metokhion* in Moscow. He had been representative of the patriarch in Bessarabia and had worked to reconcile Cyril with the Brotherhood and to regain a portion of the Bessarabian revenue. In the spring of 1881 he was consecrated Archbishop of Tabor in St Petersburg. According to Dmitrievski he had 'charmed Moscow by his courtesy, his extraordinary affability and his attractive appearance. He had tried to make friends in St Petersburg in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and even at Court.'[4] He spoke fluent Russian and was presumed to be a friend of Russia. Nelidov sounded a warning against his election, however: 'People who know Nikodemos will say that deep down he is far from being

[1] The Arabic account claims that Ignatev would have succeeded in re-establishing Cyril on the throne had it not been for the outbreak of war. (Khuriyan, p. 221.)

[2] Arkhiv MID, 61–150, 1875. (*Soobshcheniya*, 26. p. 324.)

[3] Photios later became Archbishop of Nazareth where he continued to harrass the Russians. They were pleased, therefore, when he was elected Patriarch of Alexandria in 1901 and moved to an area in which they had little interest.

[4] Dmitrievski, *Obshchestvo*, p. 225.

a friend to Russia although now he finds it useful to flatter us and give us the most generous promises, but there is no possibility of relying on him.'[1] But with Russian support and 'with the approval of the [Arab] Orthodox people'[2] Nikodemos was elected. Nelidov's fears were soon confirmed. The patriarch's initial opposition to Antonin and the Palestine Society has already been described, but he had himself to meet opposition from his Synod. He dared not obviously place Russian interests above those of his patriarchate but as the antagonism of the Brotherhood grew he occasionally turned to Russia for support. In April 1888 a Greek monk attempted to assassinate him. In August 1890 he was forced to abdicate by the Synod which accused him of being 'a mere tool in the hands of the Palestine Society . . . working to destroy the independence of the Greek Church and gradually to transfer the Holy Places to the Russians.'[3]

The Lamha Ta'rikhiya

The Greek Patriarch of Antioch, Gerasimos, had joined in the cry against Nikodemos and now ascended the throne of Jerusalem taking with him, it is said, all the belongings of the patriarchate.[4] Apart from this inauspicious beginning his conduct was beyond reproach, as even the Russians admitted, especially in his chief concern to preserve Orthodoxy, its churches and the Holy Places for the Brotherhood. Yet he remained a stranger to the Orthodox Arabs and it was during his reign that the Arab movement developed far beyond its first incoherent beginnings in the eighteen seventies. After Ignatev's retirement it had been fairly quiescent but the physical presence of the Palestine Society in Jerusalem encouraged the Arabs to restate their former claims. This they did in a provocative book—*Lamha ta'rikhiya fi akhawiya al-qabr al-muqaddas al-yunaniya* (An historical glance at the Greek Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre)—written by Shaikh 'Abd al-Ahad ash-Shafi, the pseudonym of Salim Mikha'il Shahhada (1848–1907), who had been a teacher and later the head of an Orthodox school in Beirut. He

[1] Letter to Giers, September 1882 (*Soobshcheniya*, 22. p. 258.)

[2] Khuriyan, p. 231.

[3] This was reported by a Greek monk to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, Sir William White. The monk also said that Nikodemos 'had declared in open Synod that he expected to be the last Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem.' (White to Salisbury, 22 May 1889. FO 78/4203.)

[4] Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, iii. p. 26.

succeeded his father as dragoman in the Russian Consulate in Beirut. The *Lamha* was published in Beirut in 1893, probably subsidized by Russian money. Orthodox Arabs were forbidden by the patriarchate to read the book but the ban only served to increase its circulation.[1] The author with his fluent knowledge of Russian drew on the works of several Russian writers.

The *Lamha* gave details of the history of the Brotherhood from its foundation, including its sources of revenue and its relationship with the Arabs of Jerusalem and the Church of Antioch. It was intended to prove that the Patriarchate of Jerusalem had before 1534 been predominantly Arab. When Jerusalem was ruled from Egypt the patriarchs were Arab and from that time onwards the Arabs had strengthened their authority in church affairs.[2] Under the Ottomans Greek influence had been so strong in Constantinople that the Brotherhood had been able gradually to take over the whole of the patriarchate. All the Holy Places had at one time been in Arab hands from where they had been snatched by the Greeks. The most important reason for this had been the desire to control the growing income of the Sepulchre. The Greeks shamefully abused this income. 'We ask what the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre has done for us Arabs with all the enormous sums of money which they receive yearly? We answer in the words of a Russian book written by one who lived a long time in Jerusalem. They have done nothing—materially or culturally—and this is an impartial answer.'[3] When the Arabs requested a share of the money the Greeks had retaliated by closing all primary schools, expelling poor Arabs from their *waqf* houses and accusing others of being partisans of Russia. The *Lamha* criticized the behaviour of the Brotherhood, their fleecing of Russian pilgrims and their immoral way of life. Finally the passage from Porfiri's autobiography is reproduced in which Cyril denied the Arabs all access to the hierarchy.[4] The conclusion of the *Lamha* was that the Greeks were unfit to have exclusive control of the income and properties of the Holy Sepulchre, and in this the Arabs were supported by Russian articles written at the time. An article in the *Novosti Sankt Peterburga* was devoted to the problem.

[1] Khuriyan, p. 235. A second edition was published in 1909.

[2] *Lamha*, p. 9.

[3] Ibid., p. 47. Surprisingly the income of the Sepulchre for 1890 is given in roubles and kopeks. (p. 52.)

[4] Ibid., p. 73 ff. See page 38 above.

Taken as a whole the Greek clergy has no more importance as a political element. Because of the nationalist movement and ethnic feeling created or awakened in the nineteenth century they have ceased to represent the great interests and high principles of which they were formerly although unknowingly the best guardians. The Greek clergy are far below their calling. At the heart of these august places what does one find as representatives of Orthodoxy? Loutish, lazy monks, ecclesiastics whose lives are full of idleness, vulgarity, laxity and abuses.[1]

It argued that the Arabs had therefore the right to a greater responsibility for the guardianship of the Holy Places and the Russian Government the right to determine the use made of Russian money.

The Greek reply to these accusations was that Greek supremacy had been ensured by a regulation attributed to Patriarch Germanos shortly after the conquest of Jerusalem by Selim I excluding Arabs from membership of the Brotherhood. The patriarchate was a monastical brotherhood and consequently lay Arabs and married priests could have no share in its affairs.[2] It had declined disastrously under the Arabs because of their ineptitude.[3] The Russians had no right to be in Palestine having no ties at all with the Orthodox Arabs who were of Greek descent. Finally, all Christendom owed a debt to the Brotherhood for its guardianship of the Holy Places despite the 'perplexities . . . [of] a barbarous régime and various invasions.'[4] The Arab laity was seen as no more than a 'parasitical element',[5] and so Gerasimos informed the importunate Arabs that their claims 'had been buried with Ierotheos.'[6]

After Gerasimos' death the struggle for the patriarchate broke out once more, this time between Damianos the favourite of the Greeks and Euthymos the Russian supported candidate. It lasted for almost a year until in 1898 Damianos was elected. He had been superior of the *metokhion* in Taganrog and then of the Greek church of Katis in the Caucasus where he had become the friend of Grand Duke Mikhail, the brother of Tsar Alexander III. He spoke only

[1] *Novosti*, 22–7–98.

[2] Moschopoulos, *La Terre Sainte*, p. 335.

[3] Khitrovo, *Pravoslavie*, p. 52, quoting a Greek historian. Later Greek writers went further and claimed that 'the theory as to Arab Patriarchs was intentionally manufactured by the Panslavists.' (*Refutation of the allegations put forward by Sir Anton Bertram*, p. 25.)

[4] Constantinides, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 83.

[5] Quoted by Bertram and Young (p. 36) from an Egyptian Greek newspaper.

[6] Khuriyan, p. 235.

Greek and showed no particular leaning towards Russia and the Palestine Society. His reign opened quietly and during this period little was heard of the Orthodox Arab national movement. The closing years of Abdülhamid's despotism stifled all attempts to gain greater freedom. The upheaval of the Young Turk revolution was needed to release latent Arab feelings.

The granting of the Turkish constitution in July 1908 was marked by scenes of delirious joy throughout the Ottoman Empire. Arab and Turk, Muslim and Christian embraced in the street in the belief that a new era of brotherhood and equality was about to dawn. To the Orthodox Arabs of Jerusalem, equality meant a greater share in the life of the patriarchate. A committee of forty members was formed which, basing itself on Article 111 of the constitution, produced eighteen demands[1] to be presented by Arab priests and lay notables to the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Article 111 stipulated:

'In each qaza there shall be a council of each community. To this council is assigned the supervision of

(*a*) the administration of the revenue of immovables and capital sums subject to waqfs

(*b*) the use of properties appointed for philanthropic objects. Each of these councils is composed of members selected by its own community in accordance with special regulations which *will be* drawn up.'

The patriarch regarded these demands as premature and illegal and rejected them. The Arabs held further meetings, re-issued the *lamha* and in October 1908 presented an ultimatum which demanded the formation of a mixed council and threatened a serious and even violent reaction if this were rejected. The Arab view was expressed by a young Orthodox Arab Khalil Sakakini in his diary: 'We are rid of the tyranny of the [Turkish] government, but that of the spiritual authority remains.'[2] Damianos played for time and the Orthodox community retaliated by boycotting church services, organizing processions of protest and presenting petitions. The patriarch asked the Porte to intervene on his behalf and on November 19th a telegram was received from the Grand Vezier[3] ordering a local investigation and advising Damianos to agree to some trivial concessions to the Arabs. Unrest continued, spreading to Jaffa and

[1] Published in a leaflet in the form of an open letter. (Bliss, p. 70 f.n.)

[2] *Kadha ana ya dunya*, p. 39, entry for 30 September 1908.

[3] The Grand Vezier was Kâmil Paşa who had been Governor of Jerusalem during the troubles concerning Patriarch Cyril.

Nazareth. Eventually, after explaining his point of view to the Vezier, the patriarch agreed to meet the Arabs again but made no worthwhile concessions. His Synod, on the other hand, believed that he had shown too much sympathy towards the Arabs and deposed him despite recommendations of caution from the Russian Consul Kruglov. They claimed that if the Arabs won the day it would certainly be the preliminary to the election of an Arab patriarch who would eventually have to give place to a Russian patriarch.

The deposition was immediately recognized by the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria and by the Greek Government. The Greek consul was removed from Jerusalem for having supported Damianos. In Constantinople Kâmil Paşa was about to seek his first vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies.[1] In the face of a virtually united Young Turk opposition it was essential not to alienate either the Greek or Arab deputies. To please the Greeks he would need to recognize the deposition but an Orthodox Arab delegation from Jerusalem had been canvassing support in the capital and it seemed likely that the forty-five Muslim Arab deputies[2] would support the demands of the Orthodox. Kâmil professed impartiality and asked Hilmi Paşa, the Minister of the Interior, to investigate the affair. Damianos was forbidden to attend the Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem which were conducted by the *locum tenens* under the protection of Turkish bayonets. Kruglov refused to attend the services and paid an official call on Damianos as hundreds of Russian pilgrims ostentatiously kissed the patriarch's hand. Kâmil obtained his vote of confidence and in January 1909 the Porte recognized the *locum tenens*. This was the sign for a violent Arab uprising. Kruglov sent Russian kawasses to guard the patriarch who refused to accept the deposition. The revolt spread throughout Palestine and was accompanied by murders and murderous attacks. Four Arabs and two Russians, including a member of the Jerusalem mission, were killed and a Greek archimandrite was later charged with the murder of two of the Arabs. Damianos declined a Turkish invitation to go to Constantinople and the Government dared not coerce him since the Muslims had expressed solidarity with the Orthodox and the Turkish soldiers

[1] *The Times*, 17 December 1908.

[2] There were no Orthodox Arab deputies to the parliament. The only Arab Christian was a Maronite from Beirut.

were unwilling to open fire on Arab crowds.[1] A Turkish commission of enquiry sent out under the leadership of Nazim Paşa, the Governor of Damascus, was met by large demonstrations in Jaffa and Jerusalem. It at first attempted to reach a compromise but on the death of the Greek *locum tenens* the behaviour of the Arab demonstrators became even more threatening.

Nâzim was anxious to avoid further bloodshed and supported by Kruglov urged the Brotherhood to revoke their decision. On February 16th he announced that he could not be responsible for the safety of anyone in Palestine unless the Synod recognized Damianos. The Greeks, under such pressure, reluctantly submitted, 'having considered the extraordinarily critical circumstances and the disturbances of public order amounting to positive anarchy on account of the rebellious attitude of the mobs throughout nearly the whole of Palestine, [and] the evident danger threatening not only the individual security of the Brothers but even the very ownership of the Holy Places . . . '[2] Their decision was greeted with joy in Palestine. Damianos was reinstated by his rebellious Synod and the Arabs appeared victorious. The grateful patriarch rewarded Kruglov, making him an honorary member of the Brotherhood 'for his filial disposition towards, and great love for, the apostolic and patriarchal throne, displayed many times during the unhappy circumstances and difficulties which recently afflicted the Church of Sion.'[3] A seal was set upon the reconciliation when Damianos was recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch who in May 1909 had discussed the terms of the recognition with the Russian Ambassador, Charykov. The Greek newspapers of Constantinople announced after the agreement that the Russian Government had consented to pay the patriarch six years' arrears of revenue.[4]

Although the immediate cause of Arab unrest had been removed the true basis of discontent remained. The Arabs now pressed their demands on Damianos who turned the matter over to the Turkish Government which set up a committee of arbitration. It was not until May 1910 that its decisions finally reached Jerusalem. A mixed council of six monks and six lay Arabs was to be established but a greater share in patriarchal elections was refused. Any qualified[5]

[1] Bertram and Luke, p. 260. [2] Ibid.

[3] *Soobshcheniya*, 20. p. 637.

[4] *Echos d'Orient*, xii (1909), p. 369.

[5] i.e. having received a basic education and having entered a monastery as an unmarried monk. This disqualified all priests.

Arab would be allowed entry to the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Arabs received the report with a despair and cynicism born of their experience of previous Greek and Turkish promises. A letter was straight away sent to the *mutesarrifiya* in Jerusalem complaining of its unjustice and that it was not in keeping with the spirit of the time and the new constitution.[1] The mixed council worked in halting fashion, almost continually in deadlock, with the six Greeks ranged against the six Arabs and the Arabs themselves in disagreement. But the spirit of nationalism had carried the Arabs beyond concurrence with the ineffective council which ceased to function in 1913.

Mandated Palestine[2] and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem

In December 1917 British forces under General Allenby occupied Jerusalem and two and a half years later in July 1920 the first High Commissioner under the British mandate for Palestine assumed office. Thus the country became for the first time a political entity with clearly defined frontiers. The problems faced by the Orthodox Arabs now living in this new country were of a different order from those facing other Arabs of Lebanon and Syria. For them there were no problems of identity; they were Palestinian Arabs who together with the Muslims were pledged to oppose the establishment of a Jewish National Home. Together with the Muslims they had to deal with a mandatory power often more devious and infuriating in its devotion to 'fair play' than the French with their open support for the Maronites.

Immediately after the First World War Muslim-Christian Associations were formed in Palestine to protest against the Balfour Declaration. Although the members of these Associations were the first organized Arab nationalists in Palestine their movement was an extension of Greater Syrian nationalism. Once the British civil administration was established in Palestine there was a switch from Syrian to Palestinian Arab nationalism and the local national movement took shape at the end of 1920 when the third Palestine Arab Congress was held. Muslims and Christians co-operated in the formation of an Arab executive whose avowed aim was the setting

[1] Khuriyan, pp. 275–6.

[2] Occasional reference is also made to Transjordan.

up of a national government elected by the Arabic speaking people of Palestine. This alliance between Muslims and Christians, especially the Orthodox, encouraged perhaps by expediency, nevertheless stemmed from a deep conviction on the part of the Orthodox Arabs that their 'Arabness' should transcend religious divisions. Their leaders did not deviate in any way from the line adopted by the Muslim leaders who themselves were anxious to stress their common links especially at times of friction. A prominent Muslim member of the Palestine Congress, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar, speaking in church at the time of the elections in 1923 to the Palestine Legislative Council affirmed: 'I believe in the religion of Christ, I respect it and I hope for the help of the Christians who are of our race, speak the same language, follow the same customs.'[1]

The Orthodox were prominent in the Government, in politics and in journalism. The leading Arabic newspapers were edited by Orthodox Arabs and the vice-president of the National Defence Party (one of the two main Palestinian parties) was Ya'qub Farraj, a prominent Orthodox Christian. In later years the moving force behind the reactivation in 1944 of the other party, the Palestine Arab Party, was another Orthodox, Emile al-Ghuri who had been an early and enthusiastic member in the 1930s.

It was almost inevitable that the dispute between Greek and Arab in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem which started in the nineteenth century with Russian encouragement should take on after 1918 a more overtly nationalist character and begin to involve the British authorities. For most Orthodox Arabs the attempt to displace the Greek hierarchy of the Patriarchate was now one aspect of their nationalism, no longer just a conflict within a closed religious community. Greek domination of their church affairs was as much to be resisted as was the British, or the attempted Zionist, domination of their country. But the dispute, which had lain dormant during the war, was also clearly a direct continuation of the situation as it had existed in 1914. One basic factor had changed. Both parties concerned had now to focus their attention on London rather than Constantinople, onto a British colonial secretary entirely innocent of the intrigues of a small eastern Church rather than a grand vezier with four hundred years' experience of dealing with Ottoman Christians. The British, faced with such a situation for the first time,

[1] *Oriente moderno*, ii, p. 677.

hesitated and later, predictably, appointed two commissions of inquiry.

The unfortunate Damianos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, had been arrested by the Turks in November 1917 when British troops were approaching the city. He was confined in Damascus until January 1919. During this period the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre attempted to depose him a second time. Immediately the Ottoman authorities had abandoned Jerusalem the Brotherhood turned to the Greek Government in an effort to pass on their problems. In their serious financial position they found it expedient to lay the blame on Damianos. In addition, using language that could be said to justify the view that the Holy City encourages extremes of love and hatred, they accused him of treating 'with contempt the Holy Synod, of corrupting the Arab laity in order to kindle their enmity and antagonism' and of deliberately encouraging 'the slackness of life of the Brotherhood . . . never punishing those who had slipped and himself often affording an example of the transgression of those who stand in slippery places.'[1]

These charges were passed on to Ronald Storrs, Military Governor of Jerusalem, and to Lord Allenby. They must have fallen strangely on the ears of British soldiers. Storrs wrote in 1918 of the affairs of the communities in Jerusalem. 'The pettiness, the poignancy, the passion, the mediaeval agony of the atmosphere are exemplified a dozen times in the course of every day's work.'[2] The Greeks, however, believed that the British Government would give them its full support but Allenby decided otherwise and in January 1919 Damianos was allowed to return to Jerusalem. The Brotherhood, face to face with their Patriarch, capitulated and confessed that they were not 'entitled to depose the Patriarch when it seems proper to do so, without any canonical reason.'[3] Accustomed to four hundred years of Ottoman rule they accepted that Britain should have a voice in the affairs of their Church. It is also likely that his opponents later lost heart when the Venizelos Government in Greece was defeated in November 1920. The Venizelist Metropolitan of Athens, who had been an active supporter of the anti-patriarch party, was deposed on the return of King Constantine. Damianos brooked no further opposition and retained his position

[1] Bertram and Luke, pp. 279–83.
[2] Storrs, *Orientations*, p. 469.
[3] Bertram and Luke, p. 278.

until his death in 1931. In gratitude perhaps, and in spite of British strictures upon his financial mismanagement[1] of the affairs of his patriarchate, Damianos continued to support the Mandate authorities often to the disgust of the Arab laity. The Orthodox Arabs had rallied to Damianos during the attempted depositions, wrongly supposing that since he was so hated by the Greeks he must be pro-Arab. To their disillusion they quickly discovered that he was as firmly Hellenist as the Brotherhood and reacted by once again demanding greater Arab participation in the patriarchate. They now had the interest and support of Muslim Palestinians and at the 6th Arab Palestine Congress in June 1923 there was discussion on the subject of the Greek hierarchy and the affairs of the Orthodox community, especially the sale of Church land to the Jews. Muslims took part in the debate, recognizing the problems to be of more than sectarian importance. As an offshoot of the Palestine Congress an Orthodox Arab Congress was established. Its first meeting was in Haifa in July 1923 under the presidency of Iskandr Kassab of Haifa. Among the fifty-three delegates was a representative of the Orthodox Arabs in the United States. The resolutions adopted by the Congress were a restatement of those put forward previously in 1873 and 1908 with additions to meet the changed political situation. The mixed council was to be recalled and further local councils were to be formed to manage Orthodox affairs. Only monks of Arab nationality were to be admitted to the Brotherhood and non-titular bishops were to be Palestinian Arabs. The patriarch should not have the right to represent the community before the British authorities in any political, economic or administrative affair without the consent of the mixed council. An interesting recommendation was that the local councils should act as tribunals in matters of personal status and inheritance, basing their decisions on the Muslim *Shari'a* until the provision of a new code.

Damianos protested that the Congress had no legal existence and himself circulated a petition to be signed by those more moderate Arabs who had little desire to disrupt the status quo in the patriarchate. It repeated those points acceptable to the Greeks, in particular the recalling of the mixed council. More surprisingly it called for an improvement in the morals and conduct of the monks.

[1] He contracted debts of up to £600,000. The British were forced to set up a Commission to inquire into the affairs of the Patriarchate. A report was published in 1921.

The newspaper *Filastin* (owned by a leading Orthodox Arab 'Isa al-'Isa) commented sourly that this recognition by the patriarch of the rights of the Arabs had come rather late and that the Government had taken no account of the petition.[1] Damianos refused to meet the members of the Executive Committee of the Orthodox Arab Congress and instituted his own 'pseudo' Congress which voted to change nothing. He could not ignore, however, the requests of the other party as it had transmitted its resolutions officially to the Governor of Jerusalem, Ronald Storrs, and his assistant, Harry Luke, both of whom viewed them with some favour. The Greek solution was to invite bishops from Constantinople and the Patriarch of Alexandria to discuss the matter in Jerusalem.

The British solution was the setting up in 1925 of a second Commission of Inquiry[2] whose members, although viewing with great sympathy the Arab case, felt unable to recommend any fundamental changes in the organization of the patriarchate. They recognized that its unique character derived from the historic Greek guardianship of the Holy Places. The Brotherhood would continue to draw its membership from the Greeks who would have to adopt Palestinian nationality. Arabs would be admitted to membership but there could be no question of an Arab patriarch or hierarchy. Arab demands should be met by the reforming of the mixed council as the constitutional organ for making representations on their behalf, administering schools and looking after the welfare of the clergy. The patriarch was not to be deposed without Arab consent. In general the report lamely advised the Arab community to become more self-sufficient and more self-reliant.

The Commission's acknowledgement of the Greeks' right to the patriarchate and the guardianship of the Holy Places was met with violent protests from the Orthodox Arabs. Ronald Storrs wrote of their 'increasing . . . bitterness', admitting that it was 'no wonder . . . that the Orthodox Arabs seemed to pass from protest to protest, from conference to conference.'[3]

They moved on from protests to a second Congress held in Ramallah in June 1926 under the presidency of 'Isa al-'Isa. Their resolutions were now almost exclusively nationalist calling for the

[1] *Filastin*, 7–8–1923.

[2] Bertram and Young. *Report of the Commission . . . to Inquire upon Certain Controversies . . .* London, 1926.

[3] *Orientations*. p. 473.

election of an Arab patriarch and the rejection of anyone elected without the participation of the Arab people.[1]

Arab demands now far outstripped any concessions the Greeks were likely to make and even the recommendations of the Commission. An Orthodox People's Party[2] was founded in November 1927 which pledged itself 'to restore the Arabs' national rights usurped by the Greeks.' It demanded the immediate application of the Bertram–Young report and the summoning of the mixed council.

The Orthodox Arabs continued to press their claims during the years 1928 to 1930—a period of great Arab-Jewish tension in Palestine—but matters came to a head in August 1931 when Damianos died after thirty-three turbulent years as patriarch. This was the signal for renewed activity, for appeals to boycott any election not held in accordance with the Commission's report. An angry editorial in the newspaper *Filastin* summed up the Arab position. 'Palestine is oppressed not only by the British mandate but also by those of the Zionists and Greeks which are no less severe. These three mandatories have aided one another in depriving Palestinian Arabs of their rights. The Greek patriarchate supports the Zionists against the Arabs . . . All Palestinian Arabs have a duty to combat these three foreign mandates.'[3]

There now began once more the tortuous proceedings of a patriarchal election lasting until July 1935. Arab claims to participate were ignored from the beginning by the Greeks who precipitately nominated an electoral college and the preliminary three candidates. The Arabs at once reacted by instructing three lawyers —a Muslim, a Jew, and a Christian Arab—to petition the Supreme Court to nullify these moves. The Supreme Court found for the Arabs, to their great jubilation, and reprimanded the civil authorities for ignoring the Bertram–Young recommendations. London upheld the objection and consultations continued while the Synod held stormy meetings and closed down all Arab Orthodox schools. In January 1934 the High Commissioner declared that no patriarch would be recognized until he had satisfied Arab demands.

The Arabs had as mediator George Antonius, the historian of the Arab awakening and a member of the Orthodox Church, who

[1] Sifri, *Filastin al-'arabiya*, p. 189.
[2] *Hizb ash-sha'b al-urthudhuksi.*
[3] *Filastin* 16–10–1931.

was at the time living in Jerusalem as an associate of the Institute of Current World Affairs. He was consulted by both the Arabs and the British Authorities, neither of whom took his advice. He attempted to put the Arab point of view to the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, but found the response discouraging 'all the more so as the responsible leaders of the community have displayed a remarkable moderation and a real willingness to discuss the questions at issue in a spirit of conciliation.'[1] He was equally discouraged by the Arab refusal to countenance the candidature of Meletios, Patriarch of Alexandria, who although 'an ardent Hellene' would, he felt, bring 'good order, discipline and financial soundness' to the patriarchate.[2]

The British had by April 1934 got as far as promulgating an ordinance for the election which satisfied neither side. The Arabs began to talk in terms of electing an Arab patriarch in defiance of the Greek Synod. The Patriarch of Antioch, torn between the ties of Arab nationalism and the canons of the Church, was reluctant to be associated with such a proposal but Amir Abdullah of Transjordan promised his support and a residence in Amman. The Arabs of Transjordan felt, and with justification, that as a portion of the patriarchate lay within their country the Amir deserved some part in the election.

By July 1935 the British authorities had come round to the view that it was time for an election since the patriarchal throne had been vacant for four years. Accordingly Timotheos, the Greek Archbishop of Jordan who had been educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, was elected. He invited the Arabs to discuss their problems but they preferred to petition the Supreme Court once again. This time the Court declared itself incompetent to annul the election but the patriarch had still to receive ratification from London. This did not arrive until late in 1939 when the patriarch received the exequatur (*berat*) from the Colonial Secretary. In the interval between the election and its ratification a new statute[3] had been promulgated (July 1938) which adhered to most of the recommendations of the Bertram–Young report, notably in giving no validity to Arab claims to the patriarchate. Consequently Timotheos remained unrecognized by most Arabs and young Orthodox

[1] Letter to Sir Anton Bertram, 10–2–32. [2] Ibid.
[3] *Palestine Official Gazette*, 21 July 1938.

Palestinians swore to boycott his authority until their rights had been recognized.[1]

The Arab Orthodox Congress was suspended during the Second World War and the subsequent creation of the State of Israel split the patriarchate even more violently into two. The Metropolitan of Nazareth became head of the Orthodox Community in Israel while the patriarch's temporal superior became the Hashimite family of Jordan. However, in January 1957 Benedictos succeeded Timotheos after an election in which Greeks and Arabs, Jordanians and Israelis took part. No tension disturbed the election and the patriarch, enthroned with a letter of investiture from King Husain, expressed his desire for a complete reconciliation between Greek and Arab. In January 1960 an Arab was appointed Archbishop of Jerasa and became a member of the Synod. The movement begun in 1870 and nurtured by Russia had started to bear fruit ninety years later.

[1] Oath of members of Conference of Orthodox Youth. *Filastin al-'arabiya*, p. 192.

CONCLUSION

THIS study had been concerned primarily with a twofold process. The Russian attempt to establish some kind of presence and influence in Syria and Palestine is one aspect of the process, the effect of this attempt on the local Arab Orthodox population is the other. The relationship established between Imperial Russia and the Arabs was cut short by the outbreak of the First World War and the revolution of 1917. The relationship was broken but the movements set in motion to a large extent by Russia continued and gained momentum after the fall of the Tsars.

Palestine had held a unique place in Russian thought but despite an emotional attachment to the Holy Land and the pilgrimages of thousands of peasants Russia did little in the nineteenth century to establish herself in the area. Most of her achievements came about in spite of rather than because of the Russian Government and Church. Porfiri Uspenski on personal initiative alone gained the goodwill of a handful of Arabs and Greeks. Antonin Kapustin achieved most when the Church and Government had virtually rejected him. The foundation of the Palestine Society was the result of the energies of one man who complained continually and bitterly of the opposition and obstructiveness of St Petersburg. The schemes concocted by the Government were either too mean or too grandiose and despite the unique position of Jerusalem were drawn up without the active participation of the Church.

The root of this trouble was that the Church in its position of subjection to the State could not clearly and consistently make its voice heard. Church leaders were asked for advice which, if it conflicted with the plans thought up by statesmen (who showed great ignorance of things Orthodox), was rejected. Moreover, clerics appointed by the Government were always anxious to assert their independence of their employers. This led to the ceaseless wrangling between the consul and the head of the mission in Jerusalem. The situation was further complicated by the undefined nature of the Russian Church's relationship with the Church of Jerusalem whereby an archimandrite could be sent to 'spy' on the Greeks and a Russian bishop be despatched uncanonically into the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The precise function of these men

was never made clear, nor were they supported by a consistent policy in St Petersburg. Cyril Naumov saw Russian policy in the East 'overexerting itself at one moment, falling flat at the next'. Antonin Kapustin tried to discern Russian motives in Palestine:

> What are do doing? We send to Palestine a few clerics; to something weak we add something weak. In what way can our mission help these people . . . ? If the mission is a monastery it is too small and unimportant. If it is a hostel for pilgrims it is too big and important. If it is a counterweight to the Armenian and Latin Patriarchs and the Protestant Bishop then it should dispose of large funds . . . otherwise it will only harm our reputation. If it is supposed to exert secret control over the patriarchate, then it will be harmful to all Orthodoxy.[1]

The dilemma which Antonin recognized remained unsolved. The Greeks never accepted Russians into the patriarchate other than as intruders and strongly resented Russian attempts to influence patriarchal elections. The confusion was deepened by the split within Russia between those who wished to see Greek influence strengthened and those who supported the Slavs and Arabs. Those with a certain view of Orthodoxy upheld the Greeks as canonical leaders of the Church. The tragedy was that there were so few Greeks worthy of support. For a man such as Ignatev the Church was merely a front for his political plans and his failure to influence decisively the affairs of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was entirely due to his misjudgement of the strength and solidarity of the Greek Synod of Jerusalem.

But what Cyril judged to be the fluctuations of Russian policy and Khitrovo to be indifference to Palestine and the Orthodox Arabs was in part the result of Russia's involvement as a Great Power in the wider aspects of international diplomacy. Palestine and Syria came only at intervals to the foreground of Russia's foreign policy. Moreover, no Great Power was able or willing to put the interests of a small minority before its own national interests. Russian statesmen had to fit Palestine and Syria into the overall pattern of foreign relations. For Khitrovo and his colleagues the pressing and all-engaging concern was the welfare of the Orthodox Arabs, and the absence of similar enthusiasm on the part of St Petersburg he interpreted as deliberate obstruction.

The Russians entered Syria for a variety of reasons, expressed and implicit. The statesmen were drawn in by Great Power politics,

[1] Kiprian, *Antonin*, p. 156.

believing that Russian prestige would be enhanced by establishing a Russian Orthodox presence in Jerusalem. Russian churchmen, both lay and clerical, hoped on the other hand that by their activities the Orthodox Arabs would be strengthened in their faith, that conversions to Roman Catholicism and Protestantism would cease and that the Greek hierarchy would perhaps begin to pay greater heed to its duties. Despite the faltering policy of St Petersburg and the lack of unity among official Russians the political aim of fostering Russian prestige was fairly achieved. Although resources were stretched to a limit in maintaining schools and sheltering pilgrims the French and British looked with envy on what they considered inexhaustible funds and with suspicion on what they assumed to be a Russian plot to subvert the Orthodox population. Several Catholic observers believed that Russian domination of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem was imminent.[1] It is reported that the Turks themselves feared a *coup d'ètat* during the visits to Jerusalem of the crews of Russian warships and thousands of Russian pilgrims. However exaggerated these fears may have been, the fact of their existence was evidence that the state of affairs which Mansurov criticized during his first visit to Palestine in 1858 no longer held during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Russia was certainly viewed by Britain and France as a serious rival in Syria.

The churchmen were less successful. Although the election of an Arab patriarch in Antioch was a great ecclesiastical and political triumph they had much to contend with, and their actions, especially in Jerusalem which was the true focus of their ambitions, were always inhibited by the presence of the Greek hierarchy. The Russians were anxious to prevent Catholic and Protestant missionary activity amongst the Orthodox of Palestine and Syria but could not themselves work openly as missionaries in a country which they already recognized as Orthodox.[2] Nor could they exercise any true authority over the Orthodox Arabs since the Russian Church had no official standing in Syria. The French Catholics representing on the other hand the universal Catholic Church could exercise greater influence among the Maronite community whose patriarch and clergy recognized the ultimate authority of Rome. Moreover,

[1] Fortescue, *The Orthodox Church*, and writers in *Echos d'Orient* and *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*.

[2] Syria and Palestine were often referred to in Russian as the 'Orthodox East'.

the Maronites with the centre of their cultural and political life in North Lebanon formed a fairly compact community within which it was easier to work than among the scattered communities of the Orthodox Arabs. The Protestants' position was not complicated by a delicate relationship with the local ecclesiastical authorities[1] and they could work openly as missionaries. Their converts came largely from the Orthodox Church. As late as 1912 the Palestine Society admitted that it had failed to stop the drift away from Orthodoxy, and Catholic activity in the missionary field was termed 'ruinous'[2]. Nor did the Russians carry out their declared intention of strengthening the faith of those Arabs who remained Orthodox. In 1910 the *Soobshcheniya* were complaining of the 'decline in the religious and moral life'[3] of the Orthodox community, the lack of good priests and the shortage of theological training colleges.

But the Russians were aware not only of a weakening of religious life but also of a definite turning away from religion to secularism, and Russia was instrumental in strengthening this trend in two ways. By breaking into the established order of the Church, and especially by encouraging Arab demands for more participation in the affairs of the patriarchate, she helped to dislocate the traditional way of life. Dissatisfaction with the Greek hierarchy led to dissatisfaction with the Church itself and if an Orthodox Arab threw off the ties of religion it followed that he began to examine his traditional association with his *millet*. By fostering education Russia involuntarily stimulated an interest in Western secular civilization among the Orthodox Arabs. It was the works of Gogol, Gorki, Chekov, and Dostoevski[4] that were read in the Russian schools in preference to works on church history. This interest in the secular world was clearly demonstrated by growing demands in the twentieth century for the introduction into the syllabus of English and French. The Palestine Society thus came to the painful conclusion that the spread of education was encouraging those very ideas which were beginning to weaken the Orthodox Church. Whereas the Orthodox *millet* could seek and welcome Russian protection,

[1] There were those, however, in England who protested against the appointment of an Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem as intruding on the rights of *the* Bishop of Jerusalem—the Orthodox Patriarch.

[2] *Soobshcheniya*, 23. p. 105.

[3] Ibid., 21. p. 125.

[4] Krachkovski, p. 50. He even found books which were banned in Russia being read in these schools.

those Orthodox Arabs who looked forward to the establishment of an Arab national state had no desire at all to be considered Russian protégés.

It would be wrong, however, to imply that the Russians in Syria alienated all those they came to help. Most Christians in the Levant looked upon one of the Great Powers as their protector and the Orthodox believed that it was Russia who had their interests at heart. Their attachment was often more than a mere feeling of gratitude for material aid, for an Orthodox Arab would identify himself with Russia and take pride in the power of the Tsar. This attachment compensated somewhat for the feeling of humiliation experienced by a Christian Arab living amongst a ruling Muslim majority. An Orthodox Arab's self-identification with Russia could be expressed in several ways. He would hang a portrait of the Tsar in his home,[1] or weep over Russian military defeats[2] or quarrel with neighbours who insulted the name of Russia.[3] Nu'aima observed that attendance at a Russian school gave the pupils a 'tremendous feeling of pride.'[4] The Russians themselves believed that such affection often became an 'illness',[5] an Arab stated that it verged on 'worship',[6] while the British Consul in Damascus commented in 1899 that in his opinion the majority of Orthodox Arabs allowed 'their feelings of gratitude [towards Russia] . . . to override other sentiments' and that only a minority 'consisting very often of the most intelligent members of the community' resented 'Russian intrusion'.[7] The final word must go to a Syrian graduate of Moscow University.

> Only when Russian trade spreads throughout Syria will Russian be a useful language. Then Russian will be living and vital in the sense intended by the Arab population. That will be a day of triumph for the Russian schools, for Russian science and culture in Syria and all Turkey. Such are the real results desired by every Russian—Russian by blood or in soul . . . Let our ill-wishers know that in Russia, which we love for ever, exists a culture which is not inferior to that of Europe, that the future belongs to the great Russian people.[8]

[1] Hanna, p. 88. [2] Atiyah, *An Arab Tells His Story*, p. 2.
[3] *Soobshcheniya*, 6. p. 154. [4] *Sab'un*, i. p. 76.
[5] Ibid.
[6] As'ad Daghir, Al-madaris ar-Rusiya fi Suriya. (*Al-Muqtataf* October 1901, pp. 901–4.)
[7] Richards to O'Conor, 17 January 1899. (FO 78/4991.)
[8] A speech given by Yulian Halabi welcoming Dmitrievski to Homs in 1910. (*Trudy Petrogradskoi Komissii*, p. 59.)

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