

# Anglican-Romanian Orthodox Relations

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Relations between Anglicans and Orthodox have played an important part in the movement towards Christian unity which has gathered such momentum in the present century. True, Anglicans were not the first to attempt to bring together Christians of East and West: it was the Lutherans who first tried to reach an understanding with the Orthodox. They, like Anglicans, had had no direct involvement in the division between East and West, usually dated to 1054, though in reality not complete until rather later. That separation was the product of a complex of cultural, doctrinal and political causes. But Anglicans, though western in origin and mentality, had a certain affinity with Orthodox Christians. They laid claim to the Greek patristic tradition of which the Orthodox were the living heirs. With them they claimed to be catholic, while rejecting the claims of the medieval papacy. No legacy of doctrinal controversy or attempted proselytisation placed a psychological barrier in the way of friendly contact and theological discussion.

Contacts between Anglicans and Orthodox at the end of the 16th century, and during the 17th century took place in the context of English political and commercial interests in the Turkish Empire. English chaplains, and the ambassadors and merchants they served, often took an interest in their local Christian neighbours. Archbishops of Canterbury and Eastern patriarchs occasionally exchanged correspondence. Some Greeks came to study in England. In the course of the 17th and 18th centuries the first tentative enquiries about mutual recognition were made by Anglicans. Later in the 18th century Anglican interest in Orthodoxy waned, and nothing came of the personal and scholarly contacts through which leading members of each church had begun to learn about the other.

Romanian Orthodox contributed to these early Anglican-Orthodox contacts. There was no independent Romanian church at this stage: the metropolitanates of the Romanian lands were within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. These

metropolitanates, however, had certain distinctive characteristics, which, since they are of some importance in contemporary relations, deserve mention.

### *Evolution of the Romanian Orthodox Church*

The territory of present-day Romania was conquered by Trajan in 106 and incorporated into the Roman Empire under the name of Dacia. A good many colonists were settled there, to reinforce the Danube frontier. Roman occupation lasted only until 274, but the Latin language remained to form the basis of the Romanian language. Romanian survived the influx and settlement of Slav peoples from the 6th century, although quite a number of words of Slav origin found their way into its vocabulary. The Romanian Orthodox Church is the only Orthodox Church of a Latin-speaking people, worshipping in a Latin language.

The use of the vernacular has not, however, been unbroken. From the 9th to the 11th centuries the Romanian lands were within the first Bulgarian Empire, and their church under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Patriarchate, with its seat first at Preslav, and later at Ohrid. In 1020 the Byzantine Emperor Basil II — the Bulgar-Slayer — who had overthrown the Bulgarian Empire and abolished the Patriarchate, put the Vlaxhs, as the Romanians were known, under the Archbishop of Ohrid. In the 13th and 14th centuries, during the second Bulgarian Empire, the Orthodox in the Romanian lands were under the jurisdiction of the revived Bulgarian Patriarchate with its seat at Trnovo. The Vlaxhs north of the Danube had their own bishops in the 13th century, and in the course of the 14th and early 15th centuries acquired their own metropolitan sees: at Arges in Muntenia (Wallachia) in 1359, and at Iasi, in Moldavia in 1401. Transylvania, with a significant Romanian Orthodox population, had been part of Hungary since the 10th century, and its Orthodox Church was dependent on the metropolitan see of Muntenia called Ungrovlakhia.

Wallachia and Moldavia played an important part in the defence of Central Europe against Turkish attacks in the latter part of the 15th century, and after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 their ruling princes inherited something of the Emperor's role as protectors of Orthodoxy. The Romanian principalities were never incorporated into the Ottoman Empire, although they were under Turkish suzerainty and paid tribute, and their princes depended on the Sublime Porte in Constantinople for their thrones. But their relative independence and strength made them a centre for Orthodoxy in South-East Europe,

and the Eastern Patriarchates, including Constantinople, maintained establishments — *metohia* — there, where their incumbents could stay. Cyril Lukaris, Patriarch of Constantinople several times between 1620 and 1638, and Metrophanes Critopoulos, who very briefly succeeded him, both spent some time in the Principalities. Critopoulos<sup>1</sup> had studied in England from 1617 to 1624, and had commended himself to Archbishop Abbott, who wrote approvingly of him to Cyril Lukaris. He had conducted a dialogue with the Anglican theologian Thomas Goad on divine revelation. The links between the Principalities and Constantinople enabled the Romanian Orthodox apologist Nicolae Milescu (1638-1708) to cultivate the acquaintance of Thomas Smith, chaplain to the English Ambassador, and to exchange with him information about their respective churches.<sup>2</sup>

Relations between Romanian Orthodox and Anglicans went hand in hand with contacts between England and the Principalities. In the latter part of the 17th and early years of the 18th centuries, the Princes of Moldavia Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723) and his son Antioh (1709-44) became known in England as statesmen and scholars. Dimitrie was a theologian and historian, whose works, including his famous *History of the Ottoman Empire*, were published in England, while Antioh became Russian Ambassador in London, and helped to foster contacts between Anglicans and Russian Orthodox. There were contacts, too, with Wallachia: the murder of the Wallachian Prince Constantine Brâncoveanu and his sons in Constantinople in 1714 at the hands of the Turks attracted widespread sympathy in England, as throughout Europe.

It was not until 1859 that Moldavia and Wallachia were united by both of them electing the same prince, Alexander Cuza. At the same time the two metropolitanates were united into one national church, of which the Archbishop of Bucharest and Metropolitan of Ungrovlakhia became the Primate. The Holy Synod, established in 1872, was still dependent on the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The final independence of Romania from Turkish suzerainty, achieved after the War of Independence and the Congress of Berlin in 1877-78, encouraged a movement for the independence of the church, and autocephaly was granted by the Ecumenical Patriarch in 1885. Only in 1918, with the union of Transylvania with Romania, were all the Romanian Orthodox united in one national church, with a Patriarchate established in 1925.

<sup>1</sup>For Metrophanes Critopoulos and a detailed study of Anglican-Orthodox relations at the time see Colin Davey, *Pioneer for Unity* (British Council of Churches: London, 1987).

<sup>2</sup>For a review of Romanian Orthodox-Anglican contacts in the 17th and 18th centuries see Deacon P.I. David, *Premise ale Dialogului Anglicano-Ortodox Dialogue* (The Bible and Orthodox Missionary Institute: Bucharest, 1977).

*Development of Orthodox-Anglican Relations*

By this time the personal and official contacts between Anglicans and Orthodox which had developed particularly in the latter part of the 19th century had born fruit in positive steps taken by both churches to promote closer relations. The help which English Anglicans and American Episcopalians had been able to give members of Orthodox churches adversely affected by wartime conditions had further strengthened the friendship between the two churches. Romanian Orthodox representatives took part in unofficial discussions which preceded the formation in 1920 in America, England and Greece of official committees on Orthodox-Anglican relations. The inability of the Russian Orthodox Church for some years after the bolshevik revolution to resume its pre-war contacts with Anglicans gave added importance to the Orthodox churches of South-East Europe in ecumenical developments. The Ecumenical Patriarchate took an important initiative in 1920 when it addressed an Encyclical to all the Christian churches,<sup>3</sup> urging them to undertake a programme of activities to strengthen their mutual relations. During the brief Patriarchate of Meletios Metaxakis (1921-23) Constantinople made a determined contribution to the nascent official ecumenical movement, which Meletios himself continued as Patriarch of Alexandria (1926-35).

Meanwhile the Ecumenical Patriarchate had been invited to send a delegation to the Lambeth Conference of 1920. Its members met the Conference's Committee on Unity, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Council on Eastern Churches. A wide range of topics was discussed. The issues the Anglicans were most anxious to pursue were intercommunion and the recognition of Anglican orders. The Orthodox viewed both from a different perspective. For them the former could only be the consequence of reaching doctrinal agreement on all essential matters, while the latter could not be considered in isolation from its context in Anglican beliefs in general and sacramental doctrine in particular. Nevertheless the presence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's delegation marked an important step forward in Anglican-Orthodox relations, while the *Appeal to All Christian People*<sup>4</sup> issued by the Conference gave a further impetus to the general movement towards Christian unity.

In 1921, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Eastern Churches Committee published a document entitled *Terms of Intercommunion suggested between the Church of England and the Churches in*

<sup>3</sup>English translation in G.K.A. Bell (editor), *Documents on Christian Unity 1920-1930* (2nd edition, Oxford University Press, 1930), pp. 44-48.

<sup>4</sup>*op. cit.*, pp. 1-5.

*Communion with her and the Eastern Orthodox Church*<sup>5</sup>. Written jointly by Arthur Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester, and F.E. Brightman, the *Terms* set out what they believed to be the Anglican reply to the questions raised by the Orthodox participants in recent discussions. They dealt with scripture and tradition, creeds and councils, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the *filioque*, the eucharist and sacraments in general, the legitimacy of variety in some customs, holy orders, and icons. They went some way towards satisfying Orthodox theologians on a number of points, leaving other issues still to be resolved. By bringing together the various topics which earlier discussion had shown to be at issue between the two churches, the *Terms of Intercommunion* performed a valuable service, and constituted the basis for subsequent talks between Anglicans and Orthodox until the beginning of the official Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions in 1973.

In 1922 the Ecumenical Patriarchate took what seemed at the time the important step of recognising the same validity in Anglican orders as it acknowledged in those of the Roman Catholic, Old Catholic and Armenian churches. It was not therefore an absolute recognition, but meant that if the two churches reached full dogmatic agreement and entered into communion with each other, Anglican clergy would not be ordained again by the Orthodox Church. The decision had been influenced partly by a favourable trend in some Orthodox theological opinion, and partly by a Declaration of Faith sent to Patriarch Meletios by the English Church Union. Signed by Bishop Charles Gore and some sixty clergy, it reflected a degree of Anglo-Catholic agreement with Orthodox teaching on points discussed by the two churches, but was hardly representative of Anglicanism as a whole. In 1923 the churches of Jerusalem and Cyprus followed the lead of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The positive attitude of the Orthodox churches towards Anglicans was clearly expressed at a meeting in 1930 of an Inter-Orthodox Committee representing all the churches except that of Russia. Gathered to prepare the agenda for an Orthodox Pro-Synod, the delegates included an item on the relations between the Orthodox and other Christians. Anglicans were included among those churches which were closest to Orthodoxy and which did not proselytise among the Orthodox.

### *Joint Doctrinal Commission*

At the sixth Lambeth Conference which began the following month, the Orthodox were represented by a pan-Orthodox delegation, from

<sup>5</sup>*op. cit.*, pp. 77-89.

which only the Russian Orthodox Church was, unavoidably, absent. Metropolitan Nectarios of Bucovina represented the Romanian Orthodox Church. The delegation had several meetings with a special sub-committee of the Conference, chaired by Bishop Headlam. The Conference endorsed their most important recommendation, that a Joint Doctrinal Commission should be formed to consider the questions needing resolution before the two churches could come closer together. A further consequence of these talks was the recognition of Anglican orders later that year by the Patriarchate of Alexandria. The step was taken on the basis of the Conference's acceptance of the Summary of the Anglican-Orthodox discussions during the Conference "as a sufficient account of the teaching and practice of the Church of England and of the churches in communion with it, in relation to those subjects" which had been discussed.

Metropolitan Nectarios represented the Romanian Orthodox Church on the Orthodox Commission which in 1931 met the Anglican Commission appointed in accordance with the Lambeth Conference's resolution on Anglican-Orthodox relations. The Joint Doctrinal Commission based its discussions on the *Terms of Intercommunion*. Its task was to draw up for the two churches a survey of those points of doctrine on which they had reached agreement and to note those on which significant divergences remained. Its final document<sup>6</sup> included sections on revelation, scripture and tradition, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan and other creeds, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, variety of customs and usages in the church, and the sacraments. Much underlying agreement was recorded, with a recognition of some differences. The Orthodox were more cautious than they had been the previous year at the Lambeth Conference, when the willingness of the Orthodox delegation to recognise the ministrations of Anglican clergy to Orthodox believers under certain circumstances provoked a good deal of criticism in some Orthodox circles.

### *Bucharest Conference*

While the Romanian Orthodox Church had taken part in these discussions, its representative had taken his place as the delegate of a relatively young autocephalous church. In the next significant meeting between Anglican and Orthodox theologians, the Romanian Church made its own distinct contribution to the developing dialogue. In 1933 Miron Cristea, the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, appointed a commission to examine the question of Anglican orders.

<sup>6</sup>Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-43.

Bishop Lucian of Roman was president of the twelve-member body. Canon J.A. Douglas, Secretary of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations — as the Council on Eastern Churches had become — had devoted much time and energy to building up good relations with the Romanian and other South-East European Orthodox churches. At his suggestion, Patriarch Miron invited an Anglican delegation to go to Bucharest to help the Commission with its work. Led by the Bishop of Lincoln, Nugent Hicks, a delegation from the Church of England met the Romanians for a week. The Conference was instructed “to consider the statements exchanged between the Orthodox delegation to the Lambeth Conference of 1930 and the Committee on Unity of that Conference”. The Anglican Commission included an evangelical representative, although most of its members came from the catholic tradition.

In addition to the statements of 1930 the Conference considered some of the questions which had been raised at the meeting of the Joint Doctrinal Commission in 1931. Anticipating the procedure of the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions begun in 1973, issues were first introduced by papers read by representatives of each church, and then discussed. The Report of the Conference indicated the scope of its work.<sup>7</sup> It began with an Anglican statement on the Thirty-Nine Articles, in response to an enquiry from the Romanians, which affirmed that the Book of Common Prayer was the authoritative expression of Anglican doctrine and that the Articles had to be interpreted in the light of that Book, to which they were secondary.

The second section dealt with the Holy Eucharist. The Anglican delegation accepted unanimously a statement submitted by the Romanians. It ran:

1. At the Last Supper, our Lord Jesus Christ anticipated the sacrifice of His death by giving Himself to the Apostles in the form of bread blessed by Him as meat and in the form of wine blessed by Him as drink.
2. The sacrifice offered by our Lord on Calvary was offered once for all, expiates the sins as well of the living as of the dead, and reconciles us with God. Our Lord Jesus Christ does not need to sacrifice himself again.
3. The sacrifice on Calvary is perpetually presented in the Holy Eucharist in a bloodless fashion under the form (Romanian *sub chipul*) of bread and wine through the consecrating priest and through the work of the Holy Ghost in order that the fruits of the sacrifice of the Cross may be partaken of by those who offer the

<sup>7</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 43-48

Eucharistic Sacrifice, by those for whom it is offered, and by those who receive worthily the Body and Blood of the Lord.

4. In the Eucharist the bread and wine become by consecration the Body and Blood of our Lord. How? This is a mystery.

5. The Eucharistic bread and wine remain the Body and Blood of our Lord as long as these Eucharistic elements exist.

6. Those who receive the Eucharistic bread and wine truly partake of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

This statement was included in *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Moscow Agreed Statement* published after the 1976 meeting in Moscow of the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission.<sup>8</sup> The Agreed Statement, in its section on The Church as the Eucharistic Community, had referred to the "considerable agreement between representatives of our two churches regarding the doctrine of the Eucharist" which had already been reached in the past, and noted particularly the six points of the Bucharest Conference of 1935 quoted above. When the Orthodox members of the Commission met in Thessaloniki in 1977 to discuss the publication of the Moscow Agreed Statement, they expressed the wish that the Statement itself should be accompanied by "the decisions concerning the Holy Eucharist of the Theological Commission at Bucharest in 1935 between the Orthodox (Romanians) and Anglicans which clarify the viewpoints concerning the Holy Eucharist contained in the Agreed Declaration of Moscow in which the Orthodox and Anglicans expressed teaching about the Holy Eucharist in a way which was accepted by Orthodox and Anglicans alike". Some of the Anglicans at the Moscow meeting, however, were not altogether happy about the wording of the Bucharest agreement, and, since the Commission as a whole had not formally expressed a view on its contents, regarded its inclusion in the published Agreed Statement as for purposes of information only.

The 1935 Report went on to consider Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. The Conference had begun with the statement unanimously accepted by the Joint Doctrinal Commission in 1931. The Romanians proposed some emendations and, in its new form, it was unanimously approved by the Anglicans. In the text which follows, the additions made in 1935 are in italics, and the words omitted from the 1931 text are in brackets:

*The Revelation of God is transmitted through the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Tradition.* Everything necessary for salvation can be founded upon Holy Scripture, as completed, explained, interpreted, and understood in Holy Tradition, by the guidance

<sup>8</sup> Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and the Rev. Colin Davey (editors), *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Moscow Agreed Statement* (S.P.C.K., London, 1977).

of the Holy Spirit residing in the Church. We agree that by Holy Tradition we mean the truths which come down from our Lord and the Apostles, *and have been defined by the Holy Councils or are taught by the Fathers* (through the Fathers), which are confessed unanimously and continuously in the Undivided Church and are taught by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We agree that nothing contained in Tradition is contrary to the Scriptures. Though these two may be logically defined and distinguished, yet they cannot be separated from each other nor from the Church.

In its section on "Divine Mysteries", the Report first quoted the Statements made respectively by the Orthodox and Anglican members of the Joint Doctrinal Commission of 1931. The Orthodox statement had emphasised the equal value and necessity of all seven sacraments, acknowledging them all as "Holy Services of Divine foundation in which through an outward visible sign the invisible grace of Christ is conveyed". The Anglican statement had ascribed preeminence to the two sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, and pointed out that it is only of these that the Book of Common Prayer uses the word sacrament. But it acknowledged that "it is recognised also in the Anglican Communion that in other Rites there is an outward and visible sign and an inward and visible grace, and in that sense they may be considered to have the character of Sacraments and are commonly called Sacraments". The Anglican delegation in Bucharest was reluctant to modify the 1931 statement and thought another conference on the subject desirable. Nevertheless its members agreed to recommend for consideration this formula:

We agree that Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, the first as introducing us into the Church, the second as uniting us with Christ and through him with the Invisible Church, are preeminent among the Divine Mysteries. We agree that because Holy Scripture and Tradition witness to their origin, Confirmation, Absolution, the Marriage Blessing, Holy Orders, and the Unction of the Sick are also Mysteries in which, an outward visible sign being administered, an inward spiritual grace is received.

The Romanian participants agreed to recommend this formula to their Holy Synod.

The final section entitled "Justification" contained this agreed statement which, Bishop Hicks later explained to the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, really dealt with sanctification:

By the redeeming action of our Lord Jesus Christ, mankind has become reconciled to God. Man partakes of the redeeming grace

through faith and good works, and reaches through the working of the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, sanctification by means of the Church and the Holy Sacraments.

The Report concluded with a Declaration on the part of the Romanian Commission on the Validity of Anglican Orders:

Having considered the conclusions of the papers on the Apostolic Succession, Holy Orders, Holy Eucharist, Holy Mysteries in general, and Tradition and Justification, and having considered the declarations of the Anglican Delegation on these questions, which declarations are in accordance with the Doctrine of the Orthodox Church, the Romanian Orthodox Commission unanimously recommends the Holy Synod (of the Romanian Orthodox Church) to recognise the validity of the Anglican Orders.

The Synod had already examined the question in 1925, in response to a request from the Patriarch of Constantinople. Its reply gave as its view:

- (a) That from the historical point of view no obstacle exists to the recognition of the Apostolic succession of Anglican orders.
- (b) That from the dogmatic point of view the validity of Anglican orders depends upon the Anglican Church itself and especially upon whether or not that church recognises Holy Orders to be a Mystery (Sacrament).

The year after the Bucharest Conference, in 1936, the Holy Synod resolved to adopt the recommendation of the Romanian Commission. It stated that its resolution on the subject would become definitive "as soon as the final authority of the Anglican Church ratifies all the statements of its delegation concerning the Mystery of Holy Orders in regard to the points of importance comprised in the doctrine of the Orthodox Church". The decision was communicated to the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Report of the Bucharest Conference was not without its critics in the Church of England. Nevertheless, the Convocation of York unanimously "accepted and endorsed" it in May 1936, just in time for the official visit paid by the Romanian Patriarch Miron Cristea to the Archbishop of Canterbury Cosmo Gordon Lang in June. The visit consolidated the warm relations which the Conference had engendered. In January 1937 the Convocation of Canterbury accepted the Report as "consonant with the Anglican formularies and a legitimate interpretation of the faith of the Church as held by the Anglican Communion". The decisions of the Convocations were communicated by Archbishop Lang to the Romanian Holy Synod in February

1937. The Synod expressed its satisfaction and looked forward to hearing the judgment not only of the Church of England but of the whole Anglican Church. The Romanian Orthodox recognition of Anglican orders, in the same terms as that of other autocephalous churches, was also a provisional recognition, based on "economy" and awaiting the verdict of the whole of Orthodoxy before it could become final.

The Bucharest agreements were never submitted for consideration to the Anglican Communion as a whole. The cautious verdict of the Convocation of Canterbury was a fair assessment. The Conference had continued the earlier theological discussions between Anglicans and Orthodox, taking agreement perhaps a little further. It had certainly laid a firm foundation for the subsequent development of particularly warm relations between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion, especially the Church of England. In more recent Anglican-Orthodox dialogue the Romanian Orthodox Church has insisted on the permanent value for that dialogue of the Bucharest Conference of 1935.

### *Personal Contacts*

Meanwhile personal contacts between the two churches were increasing. Soon after the First World War the Church of the Resurrection was built in the centre of Bucharest to serve the British community, and several Anglican congregations were formed in other centres. Romanian Orthodox had the opportunity of personal acquaintance with Anglicans and Anglican worship. Bishops of Gibraltar, in whose jurisdiction the chaplaincy lay, paid regular visits. There were exchanges of theological students and visits by clergy. The Second World War temporarily severed these important links, and forced the closure of the church in Bucharest.

With the end of the war came a change in Romania's political life, and for some years after the foundation of the People's Republic of Romania — later to become the Socialist Republic of Romania — it proved impossible to re-establish a regular chaplaincy at the Church of the Resurrection. But gradually personal links were renewed, and the entry of the Romanian Orthodox Church, along with a number of other Orthodox Churches, into the World Council of Churches at New Delhi in 1961 enabled it to develop official links with other churches within the ecumenical movement. Since then the Romanian Orthodox Church has made an important contribution to the official ecumenical movement, not least through its representatives who have served on the various bodies and agencies of the World Council of Churches.

The process of renewing the relationship between the Anglican and Romanian Orthodox Churches culminated in the exchange of visits in 1965 and 1966 between Archbishop Michael Ramsey and Patriarch Justinian. Visits of heads of churches have come to play an important part in maintaining close relations among the Orthodox churches themselves, and they have made an important contribution to the growth of good relations between separated churches in the ecumenical movement. Archbishop Ramsey's visit to Romania in June 1965 was one of a number of ecumenical visits he made during his archiepiscopate, of which the most notable was that paid to Pope Paul VI in Rome. Such visits did much to create an atmosphere of friendship and mutual sympathy in which theological discussions could more helpfully be conducted. In Romania the Archbishop attended a number of services, met religious and political leaders at various receptions, and visited monasteries. Everywhere the Romanians gave him their traditional warm welcome. He addressed a meeting of the Holy Synod, and did not fail to observe that his visit coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the Bucharest Conference. The visit enabled the two heads of churches and their advisers to exchange views on the development of relations between their two churches, as well as on matters of general Christian concern. The importance of resuming the theological dialogue between Orthodox and Anglicans was affirmed on both sides.

#### *Formation of Theological Commissions*

The resumption of that dialogue, initiated in 1931, had already been agreed in 1962 when Archbishop Ramsey paid an official visit to the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I. The metropolitans of the Anglican Communion had agreed to the formation of an Anglican Theological Commission for the purpose, and in 1964 the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference held on the island of Rhodes decided to set up an Inter-Orthodox Theological Commission representing all the Orthodox churches to pursue the theological dialogue with the Anglicans. Each Commission was to hold a series of separate meetings in the next few years, in order to clarify the questions each considered important to the dialogue and to coordinate its own attitude to them. The Romanian Orthodox Church took part in the first meeting of the Orthodox Commission in Belgrade in September 1966. Metropolitan Justin of Moldavia suggested that the Commission should review the topics which earlier theological conversations had dealt with, and divide them into two categories. The first would include those topics about which some churches, or even all of them, had already come to

a decision. Among them would be the question of Anglican orders. These topics would not form part of the agenda of the dialogue to begin with, although those Orthodox churches which had not yet come to a decision about them might do so if they wished. Meanwhile, the agenda should consist of issues in the second category, which had either not yet been examined, or on which no conclusions had yet been reached. There might be a third category of new issues which had not been raised at earlier conversations.

Metropolitan Justin's advice was broadly followed. The Report of the Conference proposed four categories of subjects. The first, of those "on which agreement has been reached between the Anglicans and some Orthodox churches", included Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, Justification, the Mysteries (Sacraments) in general, the Holy Eucharist, the Mystery of Priesthood, Apostolic Succession, and the Validity of Anglican Orders. Into a second category, of subjects "which have already been examined but on which no full agreement has been reached", came the Procession of the Holy Spirit (*filioque*), the veneration of the Mother of God and of the saints, the veneration of the holy icons and relics, the autocephaly of the churches and Unity of Faith in the Church, the variety of customs in the Church, memorial services for the dead, and the offering of the sacraments in cases of necessity. A third category, of subjects "that have not been fully examined", included Ecclesiology (the Mystery of the Church and her essential marks, the Ecumenical Councils, Branch Theory, Establishment, the Supreme Authority in the Anglican Church), and Unity of Faith and the limits of liberty in the definition of Faith (Dogma, Theologoumena, Comprehensiveness). Closely linked with these central questions were those included in a fourth category, "which must be examined at the opening of the dialogue with the Anglicans". They were: the possibility of union with Anglicans after their Intercommunion with the Old Catholics, the Lutherans in Sweden, and perhaps with the Methodists; how the Anglican Church understands its union in faith with the Orthodox Church; how the decisions that will be reached on the subject of the dialogue will bind the whole Anglican Communion; and the validity of the Thirty-Nine Articles in the Anglican Communion.

Meanwhile in June 1966 Patriarch Justinian and a Romanian Orthodox delegation paid an official visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of England.<sup>9</sup> They took part in a full programme of services, receptions and visits which enabled them to see a good deal of the life of the Church of England, and to meet a

<sup>9</sup>See the illustrated booklet *The Church of England and the Rumanian Orthodox Church* published after the visit by The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association and The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius.

large number of people in all walks of life and belonging to different denominations. Speaking in Westminster Abbey the Patriarch affirmed his church's "determination to work with all her strength alongside all the churches of the world. . . She is particularly determined to cooperate in full brotherhood with the Anglican Church from which the whole of Orthodoxy finds the least doctrinal and spiritual difference." The lasting significance of the Bucharest Agreement of 1935 was reaffirmed, and in the same month the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church once again "entirely adopted" its Report.

While he was in London the Patriarch paid a visit to the newly-founded Romanian Orthodox parish there. Early in 1965 Fr Vintila Popescu, who had taken part as a lay theologian in the 1935 Conference, had been sent to London to organise a parish for expatriate Romanians. In the church of St Dunstan-in-the-West, a Guild church at that time linked with the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, he was given the use of one of the apses as a sanctuary. It was soon to be provided with an iconostasis from the Antim Monastery in Bucharest. The Patriarch celebrated the Liturgy in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Greek and Russian Archbishops in London, and the Apostolic Delegate. Fr Popescu and subsequent parish priests in London have been the representatives of the Patriarch to successive Archbishops of Canterbury, and have been important personal links between the two churches.

In Bucharest a similar role has been fulfilled by the chaplains at the Church of the Resurrection. It became possible, as a result of the exchange of visits of the heads of churches, once again to send an Anglican priest to the Church of the Resurrection, and since 1967 a succession of priests from various parts of the Anglican Communion have ministered to the largely diplomatic congregation, and at the same time have made an important contribution to maintaining close relations between the churches. Some have also been students at the Theological Institute in Bucharest. At the same time Romanian Orthodox theological students have come to England and Ireland, forging still more personal links, and gradually forming a body of theologians with direct knowledge of Anglicanism, matching their Anglican brothers who have studied and lived in Romania. Exchanges of visits between members of monastic communities in both churches have also contributed to strengthening the bonds both of affection and of prayer linking the two churches. At an official level both the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs maintain regular contacts with the Patriarchate in Bucharest.

*The Joint Doctrinal Discussions of 1973*

In 1973 the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions began in Oxford. Few theological dialogues can have been so thoroughly prepared, by conversations held over the previous fifty years, and by the immediate preparation undertaken by the respective sides.

After the initial plenary meeting, the Discussions were pursued in 1974 and 1975 by three sub-committees. The second of them met in 1974 at Rîmnicu Vîlcea in Romania and discussed the authority of the ecumenical councils. The work of the sub-committees was brought together in Moscow in 1976, when the Commission produced its first Agreed Statement. Its seven sections dealt with "The Knowledge of God", "The Inspiration and Authority of Holy Scripture", "Scripture and Tradition", "The Authority of the Councils", "The Filioque Clause", "The Church as the Eucharistic Community", and "The Invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist". The sixth section, as we have seen, referred to the Bucharest agreement on the Eucharist, though only noting it, and refraining from presenting it as adequately representative of Anglican views over thirty years later. At the wish of the Orthodox Commission it was included in final publication of the Agreed Statement, along with much other valuable material on the history of Anglican-Orthodox dialogue in general, and the work of the Joint Doctrinal Discussions in particular.

Since the Moscow meeting the progress of Anglican-Orthodox dialogue has not been smooth. To existing known differences, towards whose resolution some progress was being made, have been added two new difficulties: the ordination of women to the priesthood in some Anglican provinces, and the alleged doctrinal unorthodoxy of some Anglican bishops. Nevertheless both churches have remained committed to the dialogue and to the pursuit of eventual unity. The continuing work of the Commission resulted in a second Agreed Statement, drawn up in Dublin in 1984, recording the progress of the dialogue in its second phase.<sup>10</sup> Concerned in its three main sections with "The Mystery of the Church", "Faith in the Trinity, Prayer and Holiness", and "Worship and Tradition", it marks further progress in understanding, while an "Epilogue" helpfully catalogues points of agreement and disagreement, as well as those requiring further exploration. The Romanian Orthodox Church has demonstrated its own commitment to the dialogue, despite the new obstacles which have arisen, by appointing Bishop Nifon of Ploiesti to replace Professor Nicolae Chitescu when the latter retired from the Commission. There has been, and can be, no question of the

<sup>10</sup> *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984* (S.P.C.K., London, 1984).

Romanian Orthodox Church being other than completely loyal to the Orthodox tradition, and working fully within the framework of pan-Orthodox ecumenical endeavour. But its distinctive character as the only Orthodox Church speaking a Latin language, with the many cultural ties Romania and its Church have had with the West, have perhaps given it a distinctive understanding of the western Christian mind in general, and of Anglicanism in particular. The continuing firm friendship between the Anglican and Romanian Orthodox Churches has its own specific contribution to make to the development of Anglican-Orthodox relations.