THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE INDIAN CHURCH OF THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS

PLACID J. PODIPARA CMI



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(Nos. 31)

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FOREWORD

The Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating towards Malabar and was also one in faith and rite. It rose to its highest before the 16th century, and then began to decline owing to interference from without. As a consequence, it has been split up into several Churches, Catholic and non-catholic, belonging to several rites. Of these the Catholic Church of the Chaldeo-Malabar (or the Syro-Malabar) rite is the lenial heir of the ancient Indian Church of the Thomas Christians. We have, therefore, concentrated our attention on this Church while dealing with the post 16th century period. The last chapter is a description of the decline that is actually taking place within this Church. If the little leaven that is still in it will not leaven the whole mass, there will be left nothing of its past except a caricature. A caricature, in so far as it is a caricature, will have no right to exist at all as the heir of a glorious past. We shall be happy if this short treatise will any way contribute towards the renewal of this apostolic Church in line with its past with its Chaldeo-Malabar expression of Christianity that will be an asset to the Catholic Church, and an apology for Christianity in the India of today. Great also will be the effect such a resurrection will produce on the non-Catholic Thomas Christians of different rites, not to speak of the other non-Catholic Oriental rite Christians.

We are grateful to those who have copied or photographed for us from the several Roman archives many of the documents that are cited herein and to the Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, India (St. Thomas Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala, 686010), for having kindly taken up the publication.

This was written in 1977; to the original a few additions have been made now.

Rome, July 3, 1979 THE AUTHOR

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CHAPTER ONE

Rise-Not a sui juris Unit

SECTION I

PRELIMINARY NOTIONS

1

The most ancient in India

The Indian Church of the Thomas Christians is the most ancient Church in the whole of India. At one time it extended from the river Indus to the Cape of Comorin[1] with authority even outside India,[2] and was also one in faith and rite. It is composed of Christians who take their name from the Apostle St. Thomas. There were in the past Thomas Christians in several parts of India. Only those of Malabar, in the south west coast of India, have come down to us. They are now spreading out to the other parts of India and to some places outside India.

2

The Thomas Christians

According to tradition the Apostle St. Thomas evangelised India, particularly Malabar, and met with his death on the south east coast of India where his tomb is still venerated at Mylapore. Malabar is even today, as ever before, the stronghold of the Thomas Christians although they now belong to several Churches, Catholic and non-Catholic, and also to several rites.

3

One of the "Thomite Churches"

The Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was one of the four great "Thomite Churches" of the East. The three others were "the Edessan", "the Chaldean" (of Mesopotamia or Iraq) with Seleucia-Ctesiphon as its centre, and "the Persian" (of Persia proper or Iran). All these four Churches were "Thomite" in the sense that they looked to St. Thomas as to their direct or indirect Apostle:

> The Edessan Church possessed the greater portion of the Apostle's relics which it had acquired from India, while it held that St. Thomas had founded it through his disciple Addai. Addai's disciple Mari was

believed to have preached in Seleucia-Ctesiphon, the capital of the Persian Empire and the head-quarters of the Chaldean Church before the 9th C. The Persian Church (of Persia proper or Iran) contended that St. Thomas was its first Apostle. The Indian Church with the Thomas Christians, especially with those of Malabar, and with the Apostle's tomb at Mylapore, always stood for its direct evangelisation by St. Thomas.

4

Commercio-Cultural relations

Commercial and consequently cultural relations had brought together the countries in which were flourishing the above-mentioned Churches which were spiritually associated together with the Apostle St. Thomas. It is superfluous to deal with these relations in the case of Edessa, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia proper (Iran). Regarding India Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias says:

> "The commercial relations between Chaldea and Malabar go back at least to the VIIIth century B. C. It is evident from the teak beams etc. found in the ruins of Chaldean Ur. This intercourse continued down the century; for the "Periplus" (written circ A. D. 90) still reports that "at the mouth of the Euphrates was the harbour Apologus, where sandal wood, teak and ebony is imported from Barygaza (Broach) (Sec. Rawlinson's *Intercourse between India and the Western World,* Cambridge, 1916, p. 133)" (3)

5

Aramaic/Syriac-Chaldean

Until the rise of Islam, Aramaic (Syriac) was the commercial language throughout the East including India. The Jews who spoke this language were very powerful in India,[4] and according to tradition, there were Jewish influence in Malabar in the first century A. D. Aramaic was also the vehicle of evangelisation in the Churches to which the Indian Church was spiritually related through the Apostle St. Thomas. In the Lion Handbook to the Bible we read:

> "The Aramaic language is closely related to Hebrew. Used for diplomacy as early as Senacherib's time (750–681 B. C.), it became the official language of the Persian Empire after about 550 B. C. The book of Daniel contains passages in Aramaic. In the New Testament times Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, was the ordinary language of Palestine. It is still spoken today by the villagers of Malloula in Syria"[5]

To quote Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias again,

> The region that extended "from the Aegean to the Indus. . . .was the extent of the Persian Empire founded by Cyrus (558–530 B. C.)" and "Aramaic was the common language of commerce, *lingua franca,* which linked the middle man of Peshawar with the merchant-prince of Antioch."[6]

Aramaic came to be called Syriac (after Syrus(?) who ruled over Mesopotamia)[7]. Christ Our Lord spoke and made His revelation in one of the forms (not exactly dialect as we understand dialect today) of Aramaic or Syriac. In Edessa Aramaic or Syriac developed its classical form. Later, after the 5th century, this classical form began to be written in two kinds of letters, and pronounced in two ways, and this gave rise to West Syriac, and East Syriac or Chaldean (Chaldaic) called also Syro-Chaldean (Syro-Chaldaic). The latter retains the old form of pronunciation which agrees with that of Christ's time as can be ascertained from such expressions as *talitha qumi, raqa, Eli Eli lama sabaqthani, haqel dama, Aba, Maran atha* etc. that are seen in the Bible in their original forms. Christ's language was the form of Aramaic which the Jews had learnt in the land of captivity and had brought to Palestine. It became so Jewish that it was called *Hebrew* and the Jews employed its letters for writing the real Hebrew. Some call it *Chaldaic* (Chaldean or Chaldee) and even Syro-Chaldaic, *Syro* (Syriac) being a common epithet used for some other forms of Aramiac also. We have said above that Aramaic was called Syriac. In 1952 *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* "Chaldee" is "biblical Syriac or Aramaic". *Chaldee,* we may say, is "Jewish Aramaic", while the classical form of Aramaic that developed in Edessa is "Christian Aramaic" which latter generally goes by the name of Syriac (West, and East or Chaldean). It is, therefore, a matter of legitimate pride for a Church to have (Syro) Chaldean as its liturgical language, and to be called *Chaldean* after the same language.

6

The Chaldean Liturgy

We now come to the Chaldean liturgy, i. e., to the liturgy in the Aramaic East Syriac language, which had its home probably in Edessa. It is Judeo-Christian in its origin, and was used by all the Churches mentioned above, the probability being that India (Malabar) shared it with the other Churches from the beginning. This probability has its basis on their spiritual, commercial and cultural relations mentioned above, and on the presence of the Jews from whom, the Malabar tradition says, St. Thomas had made some converts to Christianity[8]. We have to remember that the language of the Jews was Aramaic, and that Aramaic was the commercial language throughout the East in those days. Moreover, there was Jewish influence in the seven places where, the Malabar tradition says, the Apostle St. Thomas established churches or communities[9]. In fact there is no shred of evidence that an Indian liturgy developed and took shape anywhere in India in any Indian language.

The Thomas Christians of Malabar loved the Chaldean liturgy very much, and believed that St. Thomas himself had given them

their prayers in (East) Syriac or Chaldean. Three of their lay representatives wrote to the Pope in 1578 saying:

> "Our prayers are in Syriac or the Chaldean language which was handed over to us by our lord St. Thomas, and we and our predecessors have been taught this language."[10]

No doubt, by "prayers" they meant chiefly the liturgy or the liturgical prayers.

Says Joseph Andreas Jungmann:

> "During the early days of Christianity the three languages used in the inscription on the cross, Hebrew (Syriac), Greek and Latin, were of primary importance. With these one could make himself understood in any part of the world of the time."[11]

It is Jungmann himself that has put the word "Syriac" in brackets after the word "Hebrew".

The spoken language of Malabar (India) was not Syriac, as Greek was not the spoken language of Rome. Still, until the 4th century the liturgical language of Rome was Greek. Could not something similar happen in Malabar (India)? Syriac was one of the three languages with which one could make himself understood in any part of the world of the time, as Jungmann says.

The Chaldean liturgy with the Christianised socio-religious customs of the non-Christians of Malabar was considered by the Thomas Christians of Malabar as "The Law of Thomas."[12]

In the light of all that has been mentioned above, we have to say that the Chaldeo-Malabar expression of Christianity which gave the apostolic Church of India (Malabar) its identity, was not in any way imposed from without upon that Church.

7

Sumerio-(Chaldeo) Dravidian

It will be useful to speak here a little about the *probable* ethnical relationship between the Sumerians (Chaldeans) and the Thomas Christians of Malabar. Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias whom we quoted above, relying on E. B. Havell, says:

> ". . . . it is quite likely that the Sumerian founders of Babylon were themselves of the Dravidian stock (Vide E. B. Havell, *History of Aryan Rule in India*, London, 1918, p. 129"[13]

The Indus valley civilization which goes back to the 2nd half of the 3rd millenium B. C. was most probably Dravidian as revealed by the picto-scripts of Harappa, Mohanjadaro and Chanbu, and hence probably *Sumerian* at least remotely. This civilization, as recent excavations show, had extended to the south also.[14]

William Foxwell Albright, the famous Biblical archaeologist has the following about the Indus valley civilization:

> "In 1921 the existence of a highly developed civilization in the early Indus valley was discovered; subsequent excavation at Harappa, Mohanjadaro and Chanbu, done by Sir John Marshall and Ernest Mackay has accumulated a mass of detail and has clarified a chronological picture showing that the Indus culture culminated during the second half of the third millenium B. C., and disappeared well before the end of the same millenium. Strictly speaking this early civilization of India was no less dependent on the West than was the later Aryan culture, since there is close parallelism, and there are many specific points of identity between it and the contemporary culture of Mesopotamia and Susiana."[15]

Werner Keller says:

> "Ur emerged from the shady past as the capital city of the Sumerians, one of the oldest civilizations in Mesopotamia. As we know the Sumerians are not Semites like the Hebrews."[16]

The inhabitants of Malabar as a whole, including the Thomas Christians, are fundamentally of the Dravidian stock, as their bodily features and languages indicate, and hence their probable ethnical relationship with the Sumerians (Chaldeans). In illustration of this we may take the Ur mentioned above by Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias and Werner Keller. Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias refers "to the teak beams etc. found in the ruins of Chaldean Ur " supposing their provenance to be from Malabar. We have here the Biblical Ur that was connected with Patriarch Abraham (Gen. XI, 27 sq.). Ur may mean town, or village, or place, or habitation. Thus Urmia v. g. (in Persia—Iran) means 'town of water'. Ur has this meaning in Tamil and Malayalam, two Dravidian languages, the latter being the spoken language of the Thomas Christians of Malabar and of their neighbours. Malabar in fact is dotted with places and towns with the suffix Ur, i. e. place or town so and so. In Malabar, moreover, there were villages or places generally under the government of the authorities of the local Hindu temples—"temple states" as some call them. This kind of government was called *Uralma* i. e. government of an Ur, and the authorities who exercised this government were called *Uralmakar* i. e. those who govern the Ur.[17]

The probable ethical relationship, therefore, between the Thomas Christians of Malabar and the Sumerians (Chaldeans)—not to speak of the other relations—may not be set aside while dealing with the afore-said Thomite spiritual relationship that existed between the Indian (Malabar) Church of the Thomas Christians and the Churches of the Middle East mentioned above. Could not the Chaldean liturgy too be included in this spiritual relationship? At any rate, as we saw, the Thomas Christians of Malabar connected this liturgy with St. Thomas.

NOTA: *Malabar*

In this section we have given importance to Malabar and to the Thomas Christians of Malabar since, as we shall see below, the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians gravitated towards Malabar.

SECTION II

HIERARCHICAL ORGANISATION[1]—PRIVILEGED STATUS

1

Successive Subordination

The Indian Church of the Thomas Christians in course of time was hierarchically subordinated to the Church of Persia proper (Iran) first, and then to the Chaldean Church which before the 9th C. had its headquarters in Seleucia-Ctesiphon, the capital of the Persian Empire. This latter subordination lasted until the end of the 16th century.

In treating of the subordination in question we have to bear in mind what we have already said about the spiritual, commercial, cultural (and ethnical?) relations that existed between India (Malabar) and the countries of the Middle East. We have to bear in mind also the influence of the Jews and of the Aramaic (Syriac) language in India (Malabar).

2

Groupings of Bishoprics

The hierarchical organisation, or the groupings of bishoprics into provinces under Metropolitans, and still higher dignitaries had its beginning in the Roman Empire. Since ecclesiastical provinces in their groupings generally coincided with civil provinces, the important city of a civil province became also the Metropolis, i. e. the seat or see of the Metropolitan of the corresponding ecclesiastical province with the bishops of that province as his suffragans. Many such cities were already the seats or sees of bishops who by virtue of the groupings in question became Metropolitans. This made Churches of greater ecclesiastical importance subordinated to Churches of lesser ecclesiastical importance. We have v. g. the case of the Church of Jerusalem. Though the Church of Jerusalem was ecclesiastically very important, still, it was subordinated to the Church of Caesarea which had not any such importance. Therefore, in order to honour the Church of Jerusalem, the Council of Nicaea of 325 gave its Prelate precedence over the Metropolitan of Caesarea, though the subordination mentioned above, was not abolished. Jerusalem fought for its autonomy and obtained it after some years.

3

In the Persian Empire

Seleucia-Ctesiphon was the capital of the Persian Empire that comprised Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia proper (Iran). In the 4th century, Papa, the bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, tried to organize the Churches of the Persian Empire after the model of those of the Roman Empire. He wanted himself to be the head of all, since he was the bishop of the capital city of the Persian Empire. There was strong opposition, especially on the part of the bishops of Persia proper. These latter contended that the Church of Persia proper, since it was founded by the Apostle St. Thomas, could not be under the Church of Seleucia-Ctesiphon which had as its founder Mari who was the disciple of Addai, another disciple of the Apostle St. Thomas[2]. But in the synod of Seleucia-Ctesiphon of 410 the bishops, even those of Persia proper, yielded, and the bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was acknowledged as head of all the Churches of the Persian Empire. He was called "Great Metropolitan", and then "Catholicos", and finally "Catholicos Patriarch", or simply "Patriarch"—the Patriarch of the East—the Patriarch of Babylon—the Chaldean Patriarch. By 424 he had given up his "dependence" on "the Western Fathers" (of Edessa and Antioch).

Here we see the Church of Persia proper, in spite of its contention that it was directly apostolic in origin, was subordinated to another Church of lesser ecclesiastical importance, and this because of organizational reasons.

The Church of Persia proper continued to offer resistance to the Chaldean Patriarch (of Seleucia-Ctesiphon). Peace, however was established between the two as the result of a compromise which carried with it a kind of autonomy to the Church of Persia proper under its Metropolitan.

4

India under Persia proper

Church organisation as said above had become more or less normal in the Roman and in the Persian Empires[3]. India does not seem to have set its hand to any such organisation[4].

India's relations with the Middle East mentioned above, especially with Persia proper which was its nearest neighbour, the Metropolitan prestige of Persia proper, and the belief that the Apostle St. Thomas was the founder also of the Church of Persia proper, might have made India (Malabar) accept the headship of the Metropolitan of Persia proper. We cannot say when this happened. Certainly it existed before the time of the Chaldean Patriarch Iso-Yahb of

Seleucia-Ctesiphon (650–660). For, when Simon, Metropolitan of Persia proper, was in a state of revolt, Iso-Yahb wrote to him saying that because of his resistance

> "sacerdotal succession was interrupted not only *in India* which extends from the border of Persia to the country called Qalah—a distance of 1,200 parasangs" (but also in Persia proper).[5]

Although it is difficult to identify Qalah, the distance, of 1,200 parasangs (i. e. of 3,900–4000 miles) covered India including Malabar.

It goes without saying that through Persia proper India (Malabar) was indirectly subordinated to the Chaldean Church and to its Patriarch.

5

India's Privileged Status

India seems to have profited by the resistance of Persia proper. The Chaldean Patriarch Iso-Yahb mentioned above , or S-liba Z-cha, another Chaldean Patriarch (8th c.) raised the Indian Church to Metropolitan status[6], and the Chaldean Patriarch Timothy I (8th/9th c.) took India away from under Persia proper, and placed it directly under him.[7] Thus the directly apostolic Church of India (Malabar) which was indirectly subordinated to the Chaldean Church and to the Chaldean Patriarch was directly subordinated to the same Church and to the same Patriarch, though the latter Church was only indirectly apostolic. India does not seem to have offered resistance as did Jerusalem against Caesarea, and Persia proper against Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Why? Might be because India was already subordinated, though indirectly, to the Chaldean Church, or because India was raised to the Metropolitan status with high prerogatives, as we shall see, or because India could not cope with the Chaldean Church in the progress the Chaldean Church had made in matters liturgical, theological and canonical which all might have had their resonance in India by reason of the relations India had with the Middle East (see above I). Moreover, the special Patron of the Chaldean Church is the Apostle St. Thomas whom it invokes as such twice a day in the Divine Office, after the invocation of *all* the Apostles.

The Chaldean Patriarch Theodosius (852–858) decreed that the Indian Church was obliged only once in six years to send to the Chaldean Patriarch the letter of communion and the cathedraticum together with mention of matters to which an opportune remedy was to be applied[8].

The Metropolitan of India had the title "The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India"[9]. He had suffragans in Socotra and Masin (=Maha Cina=Great China).[10]

At the time of Timothy I (8th/9th c.) the Metropolitan of India and his suffragans in India were, it seems, Indians. Timothy I's letter to the Christians of India says that in the election of the Metropolitan (who was elected by the people in the presence of the suffragans,) the Christians of India were to consult the Patriarch, but not the king, and also were to get the approbation of the Patriarch. This letter is reproduced by Ibn-Attib in his "Law of Christians"[11]. Until the time of Timothy I the bishops of India were ordaining the Metropolitan by placing the letters of the Patriarch over his head[12]. All these are indications that the Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India and his Indian suffragans were Indians. But what is of particular interest to us is the title "The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India". This title speaks of *the privileged status* acquired by the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians as a consequence, so to say, of the hierarchical organisation that had taken place in the Churches that were outside the *limes romanus*. These Churches, as we have seen, had a common liturgical patrimony and a common spiritual Father in the person of the Apostle St. Thomas to whom the Thomas Christians of Malabar connected the liturgical patrimony also.

The next section will be devoted to the relatively full-fledged form of the privileged status just mentioned.

The next section and the following chapters will deal almost entirely with Malabar towards which the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating as was said above. Moreover, very little is our present knowledge about the Thomas Christians who were outside Malabar. We know, however, that there was a bishop (Metropolitan?)[13] and a monastery of monks in Mylapore outside Malabar on the south east coast of India where the tomb of the Apostle St. Thomas has always been venerated.

NOTA-The Chaldean Church

Some time after the Council of Ephesus of 431, the Chaldean Church because of misunderstandings, condemned this Council with St. Cyril of Alexandria, and venerated as saints Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus. This made this Church and its members to be termed Nestorian. But the Christology and the Ecclesiology of this Church deserve our special attention.

Christ, it held, is man Jesus united to the Word, the Eternal Son of God; Jesus had no human filiation, but only the Divine Filiation; hence, Christ is One, One Divine Son, and this Son *is born twice,* eternally from God the Father, and in time from the ever Virgin Mary; Mary, therefore, is Mother of God the Son. The expression "Mother of God" is avoided, since the word 'God' used without qualification, may signify the Trinity, or any Person of the Trinity. Jesus, moreover, never existed without being united to the Eternal Son, and Jesus is Creator, born without beginning.[14]

The Church in question unhesitatingly believed in and professed openly and also officially, the Supreme Petrine Roman Divine authority, although it had no contact with Rome until the time of the crusades.[15]

In 1552 a part of those who composed the Chaldean Church, in order to do away with the hereditary succession of its Patriarchs, elected one Sulaqa, and had him ordained in Rome, and also installed as Patriarch by the Roman Pontiff. But the Patriarchs of the hereditary line, though they did not deny the Supreme Roman authority mentioned above,[16] stood, nevertheless, against Sulaqa and his successors who were regularly being confirmed in office by the Roman Pontiff. Some time after the 16th century the Patriarchs of the line of Sulaqa abandoned the Roman Communion and formed the present Nestorian Church which is now divided into two. The Prelates of the other line began to contact Rome and thus was formed the (Catholic) Chaldean Church with its Patriarch of Babylon.

The term 'Nestorian' often stood for nationality, rather than for heresy.

SECTION III

RISES TO ITS HIGHEST

1

The Gate of All-India

We have said that the title "The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India" is of special interest to us. *Gate* among the Orientals signifies "sublime power" or "sublime authority". And *Gate* in our case was of All-India (Kollah Hendo), or of entire India. Hence the privileged status of the Metropolitan in question.

After the time of the Chaldean Patriarch Timothy I (When?), the indigenous Prelates of India (of whom we made allusion in the previous section) gave place to Chaldean Prelates who were brought down from, or, for the most part, sent by the Chaldean Patriarchs. We say "for the most part", since there are indications that the Catholicos under the Greek Melkite Patriarch of Antioch (or this Patriarch) also was sometimes sending Prelates (Bishops or Metropolitans) to India before the 14th century.[1]

The Chaldean Metropolitans, since they were 'external' (to the Chaldean Church) had no right to take part in the synods for the election of the Chaldean Patriarchs[2]. It does not also seem that they were elected in any synod and then sent to India. The same has to be said of the Chaldean bishops who were in India. All were sent to India without the assistance of any synod, often at the request of the Indians. Is this a probable indication of some kind of autonomy of the Indian Church, although the Chaldean canonist Abdiso Sobensis speaks of India as a Province of the Chaldean Church?[3]

2

Gravitated towards Malabar

We have said that the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating towards Malabar. This will be clear from what follow.

(a) Vatican Syriac Codex XXII written in Scengala, i. e. Cranganore, Malabar,[4] in 1301, by a deacon Zacharias, one of the disciples of the then Prelate Mar Jacob, designates this Mar Jacob as

> "Mar Jacob, bishop Metropolitan, Prelate and Ruler of the Holy See of the Apostle St. Thomas, namely, *our Ruler* and (the Ruler) of the *Entire Holy Church of the Christians of India*".

Here we have the expression "Holy See of the Apostle St. Thomas" which is very important since the See of the Chaldean Patriarch was not the See of the Apostle St. Thomas. Yes, there seems to be here something similar to the case of the Church of Jerusalem, and of its subordination to the Church of Caesarea.

Again, the expression "Ruler of the Entire Holy Church of the Christians of India", agrees in substance with the signification of "The Gate of All-India".

The expression "our Ruler" seems to signify that Mar Jacob was residing in Scengala, i. e. in Cranganore, the place where the Codex was written by a disciple of Mar Jacob. Scengala or Cranganore was known to the Greeks and to the Romans as Muziris. It was a sea port and a royal city where, Malabar tradition says, the Apostle St. Thomas landed and began preaching the Gospel.

(b) Campori, SJ., who was in Malabar, testified at the beginning of the 17th century saying.

> "According to the information gathered from several books and well-known facts, the bishop of the Serra (i. e. Malabar) was always an Archbishop, and *is the oldest in India.* Its Archbishops and Prelates were always called Archbishop Metropolitan *of All-India* and *of its confines"*[5]

Note here that the Archbishop of Malabar *was the oldest in India* and that he *was always called* Archbishop Metropolitan *of All-India* and *of its confines,* and that all this was according to the information gathered from several books and well-known facts.

About the extension of India, Roz SJ., contemporary to Campori, SJ., and the first Latin Prelate of the Thomas Christians

> "relying on the authority of an author who lived centuries ago" says that "Hendo, which signifies the same as India, extends from the river Indus to the Cape of Comorin."[6]

We may remark that the "confines" (of India) of Campori may signify "the neighbouring", or "the adjacent" countries of India, and so may mean the suffragan Sees of the Metropolitan in question (in Socotra and in Great China).

All that we have said above show that the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating towards Malabar, and also how extensive and exalted was the authority of its Metropolitan whose See was "the Holy See of the Apostle St. Thomas".[7]

The last Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India was Mar Abraham (+1597). The Chaldean Patriarch Abdiso "dividing the flock of our Syrians *in India"* in 1567, between Mar Abraham and Mar Joseph, made Mar Abraham "Superior *of all the bishops and Metropolitans"*[8]

Mar Abraham's residence was Angamale in Malabar which was also the title of the diocese or archdiocese over which he ruled as v. g. a Patriarch rules over a particular diocese or archdiocese like the other Prelates of his Patriarchate. Mar Abraham as "Superior of all the bishops and Metropolitans" was The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India. In fact in his letters addressed to his Patriarch he was using the title of "All-India."[9] It seems that he and his Patriarch did not use this title for fear of the Portuguese who were claiming that their archbishop of Goa was the Prelate of All-India.

3

Government and Christian Life

Let us now come to the mode of government of the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians and to the Christian life of the Thomas Christians.

(a) The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India had Archdeacons who were priests. Campori, SJ., whom we quoted above says that

> these Archdeacons "were *always* called Archdeacons *of All-India* and *of its confines.*"[10]

In the Chaldean Church each bishop or metropolitan had an archdeacon for his diocese. But here we find that the Archdeacon was for the whole of India and for its confines. Hence he was Archdeacon of the Metropolitan in the capacity of the latter's office as "The Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India and of its confines".

We do not know when or how the office of the Archdeacon in question was instituted. The Chaldean Patriarch Timothy I's letter sent to the Christians of India (as cited by Ibn-Attib)[11] refers to "ARKN (= Arkadiakon = Archdeacon) of India" "head of the faithful of India".

In fact the government of the Church was in the hands of the Archdeacon. Cardinal Gesuald in 1599 treating of the Church of Angamale, after the death of Mar Abraham mentioned above, says

> "In the said city of Angamale there is an archiepiscopal Church which has an Archdeacon, and the *jurisdiction* of the Archbishop used to be exercised by the Archdeacon."[12]

All the Archdeacons who are historically known to us were from Malabar, and were from the same family—a family believed to have received baptism from the Apostle St. Thomas[13].

While the Metropolitan led an ascetical life exercising for the most part the powers only of the episcopal order, the Archdeacon governed the whole people who were dispersed in several kingdoms that were ruled over by non-Christian kings. He was as Joseph

Sebastiani, OCD., Apostolic Commissary in Malabar (1657–1662) says

> "The prince and head of the Christianity of St. Thomas".[14] He enjoyed "royal privileges" also.[15]

There were "parish" assemblies (yogam) consisting of adult males and priests attached to the parish church. This assembly looked after the good of all those who were ascribed to the church with power even to excommunicate public delinquents and to decide about their re-admission into the community[16].

> Incidentally we may say that priests were ordained for each parish church. The assembly of each church presented to the Prelate candidates for the ordination with the implicit promise that it would maintain them.[17] These candidates were taught by learned priests called Malpans who were very careful to train them in the traditions of the Church.

Matters that concerned more than one church of a region were dealt with by the representatives of these churches, while matters of a general interest (social, political and religious) were decided by the General Assembly of the represntatives of all the churches (pothuyogam)[18]. The Archdeacon played his part in these General Assemblies in a special manner. Hence,the Thomas Christians, as Paulinus of St. Bartholomaeus, OCD. observed at the end of the 18th century, formed "a Christian Republic".[19]

(b) We now come to the christian life of the Thomas Christians. In addition to almost all Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, the Thomas Christians kept abstinence during the holy seasons which covered almost half of the year, and this latter abstinence went along with fasting. Abstinence, especially abstinence on fast days was abstinence from all kinds of food except vegetarian, from intoxicating or alcoholic drinks, from even chewing an aromatic leaf (betal) which they used to chew always, and from conjugal life. On days of fast they took only one full meal, and that was a little before sunset. Days of fast were days of special prayers and of almsgiving. All this show that they were practising Christians. The Portuguese who were in Malabar in the 16th century could not imitate, but only admire them in all this[20]. It has to be observed that the obligation to keep the abstinence and fast just mentioned was not an obligation under mortal sin as it was the case among the Latins. In addition to the obligatory fasting just mentioned, there were more than 70 optional fast days, and many observed them also.

> One of these optional fasts was the fast of "eight days" (which is still observed) preceding the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady in September. This fast was and is peculiar to Malabar alone. Those who keep the fast would go to the neighbouring church early morning and would spend the whole time in prayer until noon. In some places those who live in the neighbourhood of the church would

bring edibles (all vegetable) and leave them at the door of the church. Those who fast would divide these among themselves, and each would take his or her portion and eat it at home, if possible with the principal meal of the day. If in a family there are those who observe this fast, the principal meal of the day is served to them first and then only the others would take their meals. In olden days before those who fasted left the church, the edibles mentioned above were cooked and all ate of them as agape. Although this fast is generally considered as one meant for women, still, in some places men also observe it. In certain places even non-Christians observe this fast even today, and they remain and pray outside the church.

The non-Catholic Jacobite Thomas Christians as a whole even today keep fast and abstinence as said above. On Sundays, not to say during the Holy Week, as far as possible, they do not make journey, do not play nor read anything except the Bible or some other spiritual book. Their priests, according to the old custom, do not speak with non-Christians before the celebration of Mass on days they celebrate Mass. The Latin juridical system has made all this disappear from among the Catholic Thomas Christaians. We have met with some Latins who think that all this is Old Testament piety or even superstition.

There were among them monks. Paulinus of St. Bartholomaeus OCD., at the end of the 18th century found in Malabar ruins of monasteries at Angamale, Mylacomp (and Edappally)[21]. Priests, moreover, were of two classes. One class led a retired life and practised asceticism without eating meat and drinking wine[22]. Laymen in their advanced age led a kind of solitary life in prayer and penance. Vestiges of this could still be seen among the non-Catholic Thomas Christians.

Though not in great numbers, still, they were making converts to Christianity from among their non-Christian brethren. A report about Malabar for the year 1606, speaks of four families in Malabar, namely, Cotur, Cadavil, Onamthuruth and Narimattam, which from before the arrival in Malabar of the foreigner Thomas Cana (4th or 9th c.) were helping new converts through the centuries[23]. The families mentioned here were existing when the report was written. No doubt, their greatest evangelisation was bearing testimony to Christ in the midst of the all-absorbing Hinduism.

(a) From all that has been said above, it has become clear, we think,

that the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating towards Malabar,

that with its Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India and of its confines together with the Archdeacon of All-India and of its confines, it was a *sui generis* (not *sui juris*) Unit, or a relatively autonomous Church, and

that, though it was not a Patriarchate, or Major Archiepiscopate, or Catholicate, it was in some sense all this, except for its dependence

on the Chaldean Patriarch for its Metropolitans and bishops, even though once these Metropolitans and bishops were in India (Malabar) their dependence on the Chaldean Patriarch was only nominal, except in matters very extra-ordinary as v. g. the ordination of bishops.[24]

The Church in question rose in this way to its highest before the 16th century with its Prelates, priests and monks, and with a community of faithful who were practising their faith in great fervour. This, however, does not mean there were no defects, or evils, or errors, or superstitious beliefs and practice among them.

(b) It is remarkable that the Indian (Indo-Malabar) Church of the Thomas Christians in spite of the height it had attained to, never thought of constituting itself independent of the Chaldean Church. The different political powers under which the Chaldean Church was successively constituted had *no influence* at all over the Indian (Indo-Malabar) Church to make it keep up its allegiance to the Chaldean Church. This is a very important point for consideration in this context, since the Rite (not liturgy alone, but liturgy with the other items of Christian life) of the Indian (Indo-Malabar) Church that gave it its identity was different from the Rite of the Chaldean Church, and above all, since the Indian (Indo-Malabar) Church was directly Apostolic in origin. If the Indo-Malabarians had asked for independence on the basis of their Rite and distinct identity or for bishops of their own, and if the Chaldeans had refused it, their attachment to the Chaldeans would not have been so cordial as it was during the Chaldean rule, which rule, as we saw, was only nominal because of the presence of the Archdeacon of All-India and of its confines. The position of the Archdeacon, the socio-political conditions of the times and the socio-political status of the Thomas Christians might give an explanation to the situation.

NOTA—The Socio-Political Status

The Thomas Christians of Malabar enjoyed many social privileges which were granted to them, or were recognised to them by the kings of the country. They had christianised all the christianisable customs of the non-Christian nobility. The touch of a Thomas Christian was considered by the non-Christian nobility, by their priests (Brahmins) and also by the kings, sufficient to purify objects, even habitations, that were thought to have been defiled by the touch or by the near approach of low caste people[25]. They were entitled to use for their social functions and in their churches certain paraphernalia (v. g. a kind of umbrella) which could be used only by kings and in non-Christian temples. There were 17 (18?) non-Christian communities whose protectors the Thomas Christians were and men of these communities would court even death to vindicate the rights of their protectors and of their churches, and this even before kings. They would obey the Thomas Christians in all things, but would not become Christians.[26] The Thomas Christians had the right to kill any (except the Brahmins who were the priests of kings) if they were denied precedence in public roads.[27]

All the Thomas Christian males were trained in the military art; going about they always carried arms about them which would be left in the porch of the church during the liturgical functions. They could muster at any time some 20 to 30 thousand soldiers. They obeyed the kings directly with no considereation for the intermediary

officers.[28] All their civil cases (at one time even criminal cases) were decided by the ecclesiastical authority. In Cranganore there was a plot of land where they had the right to inflict even capital punishment. Since that plot was usurped by others, their Prelate Mar Jacob tried to get it back in 1523.[29] They could mint their own money, and they had a king who was a Christian himself according to some, or was their protector. When his kingdom was annexed to the kingdom of Cochin, the(non-Christian) king of Cochin became their protector.[30] We have already spoken of the princely status and royal privileges of the Archdeacon. Going about in state he used to be escorted by soldiers.

Agriculture and commerce were their chief occupations. In 1348 John Marignoli, one of Pope's envoys to the Khan of Cathay, arrived at Columbam (=Quilon in Malabar') and stayed there 16 months in the church of St. George "of the Latin communion". He says that "the Christians of St. Thomas" were "the proprietors of pepper and the masters of the public weighing office (qui habent stateram ponderis totius mundi) from which I derived as perquisite of my office as Pope's legate (pro meo officio tamquam legatus Papae habebam) every month a hundred gold fanams (Malabar money) and a thousand when I left valedicentibus fratribus."[31]

Some of their privileges were written down on copper plates, and a few of these plates have come down to us. They are now in the possession of the non-Catholic Thomas Christians.[32]

The short description given above, we hope, will give an idea of the high socio-political status of the Thomas Christians of the past.

CHAPTER TWO

Decline Caused from Without

1

The Portuguese Padroado wins

From the beginning of the 16th century the Portuguese began to exercise their power in India. They baptised several thousands of non-Christians in the Latin rite. Cochin in Malabar, and Goa, outside Malabar, were their politico-ecclesiastical centres. Goa became a bishopric in 1534, and a metropolis in 1558 with Cochin as its suffragan see erected in the same year. Both these sees were under the Padroado (= Patronage) of the Portuguese crown. With certain obligations the Portuguese crown had the privilege to nominate Prelates for these sees.

For the Portuguese in general the ideal of a true Catholic was to be of the Latin rite. The *Padroado* was their idol. They, therefore, tried every means, even illegal and unjust, to latinise the Thomas Christians and to reduce them under their Padroado jurisdiction. They trained some Thomas Christian youths in their seminary at Cranganore according to the Latin rite, and sent two to Portugal.

In the beginning there was some mutual understanding[2]. But gradually, step by step, the Portuguese became aggressive. They had by then with them some Thomas Christian priests who were trained in their seminary at Cranganore, and who were ordained in the Latin rite. These priests sided with them. They contended that the Prelate of Goa was the Prelate of All-India in opposition to the All-India of the Metropolitan of the Thomas Christians[3]. They could not suffer the existence in India of the jurisdiction of the Chaldean Patriarch. The Thomas Christians however, would not part with the 'Law of Thomas', i. e. the Chaldean liturgy and rite with the christianised Indo-Malabar customs, nor would they give up their Chaldean Patriarch and the Chaldean Prelates[4].

The Portuguese smelt Nestorian heresy and schism in everything, even in the liturgical and social peculiarities of the Thomas Christians, while the Chaldean Prelates became their special target. The division of the Chaldean Church under the Patriarchs of the line of Sulaqa, and under those of the line of Sulaqa's rival (See Chapter One, Nota under Section I) worsened the situation in favour of the Portuguese. The Thomas Christians were legally under the

Prelates who were sent by the Patriarchs of the line of Sulaqa who had Roman confirmation. But there appeared in Malabar some Prelates who were from under the Patriarchs of the other line. This and books that contained passages dealing with St. Cyril, Nestorius etc. as well as with Christological doctrine which they did not under stand properly, gave the Portuguese ample matter for self justification. The Chaldean Prelates in spite of explicit or equivalent Papal recommendations, were imprisoned, or expelled from Malabar as Nestorian heretics. The Portuguese exerted all their influence in Rome and by the end of the 16th century, and by the beginning of the 17th century they gained much of what they were trying for. They created everywhere, even in Rome, the wrong impression that they had converted the Thomas Christians from the Nestorian heresy and schism.

We leave out mention of their Councils of Goa and of the details of their accusations against Mar Abraham, the last Chaldean Metropolitan of the Thomas Christians. Suffice it to say that their accusations against Mar Abraham was the immediate cause for Rome to take the decision to appoint directly Prelates to govern the Thomas Christians. The authority of the Chaldean Patriarch over the Thomas Christians was in this way set aside. The Portuguese archbishop of Goa was asked by Rome to prevent Chaldean Prelates from governing the Thomas Christians, and to appoint a Vicar Apostolic after the death of Mar Abraham and before the appointment of his successor, to govern the Thomas Christians. Mar Abraham died in 1597. Then Dom Menezes, the Portugusese archbishop of Goa, and the *ex officio* political ruler during the absence of the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, entered Malabar, claimed he had authority from the Pope and visited the churches of the Thomas Christians exercising jurisdiction in them even conferring orders. Threatening the non-Christian kings with his political status mentioned above, he gained them to his side against the Archdeacon of All-India. Under pain of excommunication *latae sententiae* he made the Thomas Christians assemble at Diamper in June 1599, made them condemn the Chaldean Patriarch as a heretic and schismatic, made them swear they would accept as their Prelates those only who were appointed by Rome etc. etc. The Patriarch who was condemned as a heretic and schismatic was Simon Denha who was in explicit Roman communion honoured also with the sacred Pallium.[5] All this happened before Rome appointed Mar Abraham's successor.

2

Under the Padroado—Revolt

At the end of the 16th century Roz, SJ. was appointed successor to Mar Abraham "of good memory who had died extra Romanam curiam". The Thomas Christians were thus placed under the Latin jurisdiction over which was extended soon the "Portuguese"

Padroado. Angamale, the Metropolitan see of the Thomas Christians was reduced to a simple diocese and made suffragan to Goa. At their complaints, however, (Roz SJ. favoured them, not without self interest), the Metropolitan status was restored to Angamale "as if its supression had not taken place". But the residence and title of Angamale were transferred to Cranganore where there was a Portuguese fortress. Cranganore though it was a transformation of Angamale, had no All-India authority as Angamale had. The All-India authority in the case of Cranganore was restricted to a part of Malabar, to some isolated churches and to certain regions outside Malabar. The Portuguese Prelate of Goa began to nominate Administrators to Cranganore during its vacancy as he was doing for his suffragan sees. The Thomas Christians were also divided between the Padroado sees of Cranganore and Cochin under both of which there were also faithful of the Latin rite.

If Roz, S. J., had respected and kept intact the liturgy of the Thomas Christians, and had left the Archdeacon to govern the Archdiocese according to the 'Law of Thomas', things would have proceeded peacefully. But, retaining the Chaldean language, he latinised and mutilated the liturgy adding to it translations from the Latin liturgy. He curtailed the time-honoured powers of the Archdeacon treating him as a Vicar General of the Latin Church. Quarrels and unrest, excommunication and absolution of the Archdeacon etc. were the consequences. The Franciscans at times favoured the Archdeacon.

The two immediate successors of Roz, SJ. were also Jesuits, and they too, for the most part followed the policy of Roz, SJ. The Jesuits would not allow non-Jesuit religious to work in the Archdiocese of Cranganore. A religious institute for men, begun under the first successor of Roz, SJ., had and also created, its own difficulties, since its members were Thomas Christians. The Dominicans who favoured the Thomas Christians, and who had opened a seminary in the territory of the Archdiocese were made to go away. Complaints made to the Portuguese authorities both in Portugal and India had not the desired effect. The Archdeacon and the priests tried to get Dominican as coadjutor to the Jesuit archbishop.

In 1652, as a result of the efforts of Thomas who was then Archdeacon, on Ahattallah (a Jacobite convert to Catholicism, but sent by the Coptic Patriarch) arrived in Mylapore. He informed the Thomas Christians that he had all power given him by the Pope. The Portuguese deported him to Goa *via* Cochin. At the false rumour that the Portuguese (the Jesuits) had drowned him off the sea of Cochin, the Thomas Christians who had gone to Cochin headed by the Archdeacon, took an oath that they would not be under the Jesuit archbishop. Relying on a false letter said to have

been written by Ahattallah, twelve priests laid their hands on the Archdeacon Thomas and proclaimed him Metropolitan. They then announced that the Jesuits were their enemies and the enemies of the Catholic Church and that Ahattallah had come to them by the order of Rome. Erroneously believing that everything had been done under Papal approval, all the Thomas Christians, except a few, stood with the Archdeacon. But gradually many deserted him including three of his four counsellors. The leaders were in bad faith; but even they were invoking the authority of the Roman Pontiff to justify their stand[6].

3

The Propaganda enters—Carmelite

To reconcile the malcontents with their Jesuit archbishop of Cranganore, two Discalced Carmelite Apostolic Commissaries were sent by the Pope under the S. Propaganda Congregation. Many who followed the Carmelites were unwilling to be under the Jesuit archbishop of Cranganore (Padroado). Joseph Sebastiani, one of the Apostolic Commissaries, was afterwards made Administrator Ap. of Cranganore *sede plena* or *vacante*. Joseph Sebastiani was asked by the Propaganda Congregation to induce the Thomas Christians insensibly to take the Latin rite (!)[7] Any how the majority being disillusioned left the Archdeacon.

4

Propaganda Thomas Christian—Padroado—Schism

By this time the Dutch had captured Cochin and had established their power in many places on the Malabar coast. Sebastiani, therefore, had to leave Malabar. Using the faculty he had had, he ordained in 1662 Mar Alexander Parampil, a Thomas Christian, as Vicar Ap. to succeed him under the Propaganda. This Propaganda jurisdiction which had begun with Sebastiani, was exercised over what became known as the Vicariate Ap. of Malabar which with some readjustments was called after 1845, the Vicariate Ap. of Verapoly. The Padroado Archdiocese of Cranganore was not suppressed, and so the Catholic Thomas Christians were divided between the Padroado and the Propaganda jurisdictions. The Padroado jurisdiction comprised Cranganore and Cochin. Since the Dutch were powerful in Cochin and on the coast from Chettuvai down to Quilon, the bishop of Cochin could not be in Cochin and in the neighbourhood. The Catholic Thomas Christians, therefore, who were under the Padroado in Cochin came under the Propaganda.

The Archdeacon and the minority (almost half) of the Thomas Christians became Jacobites ('Monophysites') and in course of time adopted the West Syrian liturgy[8]. They have been divided

and subdivided into several Churches. When these Jacobites were under one Metropolitan, this Metropolitan used to designate himself by the ancient title of "All-India" or of "Gate of India," or of "Head of India," or of "Metropolitan of India," and had authority over his adherents wherever they were. They were and are still known as "the new party" (*Puthankuttukar*) while those who kept the old faith were and are still known as "the old party" (*Pazhayakuttukar*). We, therefore, continue with this latter.

5

Propaganda: non-Carmelites and Carmelites

Mar Alexander, though only a bishop-Vicar Apostolic, designated himself as "Metropolitan of All-India."[9] He applied for a Coadjutor to succeed him. The Carmelites who had come to Malabar with the special permission of the Dutch, were commissioned by the Propaganda Congregation, to elect the Coadjutor. The Coadjutor was to be the Archdeacon (?), or the Thomas Christian vicar of the church of Muttam; if any of these could not be elected, an Indian was to be elected. The electors found none else except Raphael Figueredo who was a Portuguese, born in India.

Mar Alexander was not pleased with this election. Although he had a Vicar General, he appointed his nephew Matthew as "Archdeacon and Gate of All-India".

Mar Alexander died in 1687. Raphael Figueredo then by right became the Vicar Apostolic. He had already caused much grief to Mar Alexander whose Vicar General he had excommunicated, and also to the Carmelites who had elected him. After an inquiry made into his case by Custodius de Pinho, a Goan Indian and Vicar Apostolic of Great Mughal, the Propaganda Congregation suspended him from holding the office. He died in 1695. Custodius de Pinho was nominated successor to Raphael Figueredo, but he did not go to Malabar. The next one nominated was the Carmelite Peter Paul. He was not in Malabar then, and died in Surat. During this vacancy (1695–1700) Archdeacon Matthew administered the Vicariate Ap. (of Malabar) under Propaganda. The Carmelite Angelus Francis was then appointed Vicar Ap. for the time being (interim) until the Padroado Portuguese Prelates (of Cranganore and Cochin) could be personally in their Churches. This shows that at that time the Vicariate Ap. of Malabar was not a Unit distinct from Cranganore and Cochin, though it soon became such a Unit.

6

Padroado asserts itself

The Portuguese government was nominating archbishops to the Padroado see of Cranganore. One Didacus (Diego) who accepted

the nomination, remaining in Portugal, appointed Archdeacon Matthew as his Vicar General to govern the archdiocese of Cranganore under the Padroado. Matthew governed the archdiocese until 1704 when Ribeiro SJ who was in Malabar, personally in his Church, but outside the Dutch influence, became the archbishop of Cranganore.

7

Propaganda Carmelite—Mar Simon Padroado—Mar Gabriel

There were continuous quarrels between the Padroado and the Propaganda Prelates. In 1700, as we have seen above, the Carmelite Angelus Francis was appointed Vicar Ap. of Malabar under the Propaganda. No Padroado Prelate would give him episcopal ordination. Just then there arrived in Malabar Mar Simon, a Chaldean Prelate, who was brought down by the Catholic and non-Catholic Thomas Christians. Angelus Francis received episcopal ordination from him. Then Mar Simon went, or was sent away to Pondicherry where, one morning, he was found dead in a well. The Capuchin Father Spirito de Tours who buried him on Aug. 6, 1720, has recorded that he fell into the well while drawing water because his servant boy was asleep, who, even if awake, could not have been of help, and that he could not be in Malabar "because of the obstacles they caused him through the government of Cochin."[10] The government of Cochin was wielded by the Dutch, and the Carmelites were their friends.

The departure and death of Mar Simon widened the breach between the Catholic Thomas Christians and the Carmelites. The breach had become open at the election of Raphael Figueredo.

The appointment of Angelus Francis, as we saw, was an interim arrangement until the arrival of the Padroado Prelate of Cranganore (and Cochin) in his Church. The Presence, therefore, of Ribeiro, SJ, in Malabar in his Church, as the Padroado Prelate of Cranganore, made Angelus Francis resign his office. But (also) because of the request of some Catholic Thomas Christians, the office was again conferred on him for places under the Dutch influence. In other places the Thomas Christians were free to choose between the Padroado and the Propaganda jurisdictions. This was the cause of great troubles in some places where in the same parish the faithful were divided between the two jurisdictions.

Between 1709 and 1720, a Chaldean Mar Gabriel who had come at the invitation of the non-Catholic Thomas Christians, caused a schism by governing a few Catholic and non-Catholic Thomas Christians. Ernest Hanxleden, SJ, who was then in Malabar says

that the Carmelites had favoured Gabriel when he arrived, and that Angelus Francis was again confirmed in office because of false reports.[11]

8

Sufferings under Propaganda Carmelites

The Catholic Thomas Christians had to suffer much from their Propaganda Carmelite Prelates. Msgr Florence, the Vicar Ap. died in 1773. Since they were not permitted to bury him according to their rite, the Thomas Christians held a General Assembly at Angamale, and there they made the Carmelites promise that they would be permitted in future to bury the Vicar Ap., that the Vicar Ap. would not make indigeneous Latin priests go about in the dress of Thomas Christian priests, that the Vicar Ap. would not give ordination to those to whom the Archbishop (of Padroado Cranganore) had denied ordination, that the Carmelites would not monopolise the right to conduct processions of feasts, that punishments would not be inflicted without having had heard the accused. They did not gain their demand that their seminarians were not to be taught together with the Latin seminarians in the seminary of Verapoly—the seminary which was started as inter-ritual in the very place where the Carmelites were running a seminary for the Thomas Christians. The Propaganda Congregation virtually approved all the above-mentioned demands, and suggested that in the case of the seminary some means was to be found out not to offend the Thomas Christians. The means found out was to assign separate quarters for their seminarians with a separate dormitory and a separate kitchen. A seminary which the Carmelites had started at Alangat for the Thomas Christians was thus closed down.

In 1774 the Propaganda Congregation through an Instruction gave a severe scolding to the Carmelite Vicar Ap. and to his missionaries since the Thomas Christians had complained that their priests were chained, flogged and imprisoned. The Congregation ordered the Vicar Ap. and his missionaries to abstain from perpetrating such cruelties and to conduct themselves "as loving Fathers, not as authoritative dominators."[12]

The Thomas Christians had not to suffer great things from the Padroado Prelates.

9

Padroado alone, Thomas Christian

To treat chiefly of the reunion of Mar Thomas VI, Alias Mar Dionysius I, the then Prelate of the Jacobite non-Catholic Thomas Christians, two Catholic Thomas Christian priests, Cariattil Joseph and Paremmakal Thomman, went to Rome *via* Lisbon. The

Propaganda Congregation was against them because of reports of the Carmelite missionaries, but at the order of the Pope it made inquiries about Mar Thomas VI. On their return journey Cariattil was ordained Padroado archbishop of Cranganore in Lisbon in 1782, his rite having been changed into the Latin.[13] But he was performing sacred functions in his original rite also. There was then in Lisbon a Chaldean translation of the Latin Ceremonials of bishops. Paremmakal adjusted it for Cariattil's use. It was Codex 39 of the Chaldean library, Mardin (now dispersed). In its preface as seen in Msgr A. Scher's catalogue, Paremmakal says he readjusted it out of necessity, but not to change the rite, and prays Cariattil and his successors to go back to the Chaldean rite. Before the episcopal ordination of Cariattil the Portuguese contended that Cranganore was an archbishoporic only *ad honorem*, but Cariattil and Paremmakal stoutly contradicted them.

With faculties and instructions given him by the Propaganda Congregation to receive Mar Thomas VI into the Catholic Church, Cariattil returned to Malabar with Paremmakal. But on his way he died in Goa. The Thomas Christians believed "he was done to death by deceit", although the death might have been a natural one.

Paremmakal was then made Administrator of Cranganore. In an assembly held at Angamale he published all that the Carmelites had written against Cariattil and Mar Thomas VI. He instituted a chapter of 12 Canons to assist him in the government of the Archdiocese.

During his regime a delegation went to the Catholic Chaldean Patriarch to get a Chaldean bishop. The Administrator of the vacant Patriarchal see ordained as bishop Paul Pandari who was on the delegation. Paremmakal did not permit Pandari to perform episcopal functions.

Paremmakal died in 1799. The Canons then elected one from among them, Kattakkayam, as Administrator, though the archbishop of Goa had nominated another. Thus there arose a faction. Pandari joined the faction and even gave ordination to some. The faction subsided by the nomination of George Sankurikal, a Thomas Christian, as Administrator, in 1800. Sankurikal died in 1801.

Pandari left Malabar for Mesopotamia and thence went to Constantinople where he died.

10

Padroado and Propaganda—
Propaganda alone—The C. M. I. —Roccos

The Catholic Thomas Christians who were all under the Padroado after the nomination of Cariattil as Archbishop of Cranganore,

were now divided between the Padroado and the Propaganda. In 1838 when the Padroado sees of Cranganore and Cochin were suppressed, they all came under the Propaganda. At their request the then Vicar Ap. was made ardchbishop *ad honorem* in consideration of his merits also. The title continued to be given to his successors also.

Under the Propaganda was formally started in 1855 a religious Congregation for men which is now known as "Carmelites of Mary Immaculate" (CMI). The first Fathers were trained in the Carmelite spirit by the Carmelite missionaries. The CMI Fathers were conducting seminaries attached to some of their houses, while there was the seminary at Verapoly mentioned above, and another at Alwaye under the Padroado (which was started circa 1868 and which ceased to function after 1886). The system of learned priests teaching candidates to priesthood was still in force.

A religious house of the Oriental type begun about this time by a diocesan priest did not thrive long. The founder got into difficulties with the Vicar Ap. and with some others he approached the Catholic Chaldean Patriarch for a Chaldean bishop. Although he died his followers continued the effort. Antony Thondanat, a Thomas Christian priest, took the lead.

In 1861 Antony Thondanat brought down from the Patriarch (against the prohibition of Rome) one Mar Roccos. The great majority of the Catholic Thomas Christians followed Roccos since he claimed he was sent by the Patriarch by order of the Pope.[14] The Carmelite Vicar Ap. realising his own weakness nominated a Vicar General for his Thomas Christian subjects to fight against Roccos. The Vicar General was the Servant of God Fr. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, the Superior of the CMI. Roccos being excommunicated returned to his Patriarch and the troubles came to an end.

Antony Thondanat accompanied Roccos. He returned as Mar Abdiso, ordained bishop by the "Nestorian" Patriarch. He was converted by the efforts of the above-mentioned Vicar General, but relapsed and joined the Chaldean Mar Mellus of whom we shall speak below.

When the Propaganda Congregation asked the Carmelite Vicar Ap. whether the Vicar General for the Thomas Christians could not be a bishop, the answer was in the negative. Even the one who had courageously fought against Roccos was depicted as a man of no great merit.[15]

11

Padroado and Propaganda

When the Padroado sees of Cranganore and Cochin were restored in 1857/64, the Catholic Thomas Christians were again divided

between the Padroado and the Propaganda jurisdictions. Under the Propaganda Carmelite Vicar Ap. was started a religious Congregation for women which is now known as "Congregation of the Mother of Carmel" (CMC).

12

Mellus—'Nestorians'

In 1874 at the request of some Thomas Christians the Chaldean Patriarch (against the prohibition of Rome) sent Mar Mellus to Malabar. He did not get a great following. One Mar Jacob who was brought down by him was converted and sent back by the efforts chiefly of Emmanuel Nidhiry, a Thomas Christian priest. Abdiso (see above) joined Mellus. When Mar Mellus was recalled he entrusted his followers to Abdiso and to Augustine, a Chaldean Corepiscopus. Abdiso died in 1900. After some vicissitudes his followers got down a "Nestorian" Prelate. They were then divided, and the majority eventually became Catholic. The rest, about 1500 families, are now "Nestorian" and are divided into two parties. They follow the Chaldean rite as practised by the "Nestorians." Their Metropolitan styles himself as "Metropolitan of Malabar and India," and exercises authority over his subjects wherever they are found in India.

13

Petitions and Visitors

While yet Mar Mellus was in Malabar, the Catholic Thomas Christians directly wrote to Rome to get a separate bishop. The Carmelite Vicar Ap. seriously dealt with the petitioners, and expelled from the CMI Congregation seven Fathers who were the leaders of the movement. To write to Rome, the Vicar Ap. declared, was a 'reserved sin', and to absolve penitents from this sin, he declared, the confessors had to get a special faculty.[16]

The then Superior of the CMI (called Prior) also had his difficulties. Pressure was exerted on him by Fr. Marcelline Berardi, a Carmelite (missionary), to sign a letter addressed to the Pope in defence of the Vicar Ap. and against the petitioners. He then, in 1876, sent the following cable directly to the Pope:

> "....His Holiness the Pope Rome—Reply prepayed—Ten Words—Vicars Monks Priests and People Forward Serveral Petitions For Separate Bishop—Therefore Archbishop ruins Our Convents Persecute Us Severely—Can't Suffer—Appoint Us Any Bishop Except Verapoly And Quilon Till Decision – +Prior."[17]

Archbishop here stands for the Vicar Ap. who was archbishop *ad honorem;* Verapoly was his residence as Vicar Ap. of Verapoly

(Verapoly being a transformation of the ancient Vicariate Ap. of Malabar); Verapoly and Quilon were Carmelite; the ancient Vicariate Ap. of Malabar was in 1845 divided into the Vicariates Ap. of Quilon, Verapoly and Mangalore.

The Propaganda Congregation sent two Apostolic Visitors successively in the persons of Leo Meurin, SJ (Vicar Ap. of Bombay) and Ignatius Persico, OFM cap. The conversion of Mar Jacob mentioned above took place while Leo Meurin, SJ, was in Malabar. Leo Meurin was against, Ignatius Persico for, the continuation in some way of the Carmelite rule. The Thomas Christians had requested Leo Meurin to recommend for a European Jesuit bishop and a Thomas Christian Coadjutor.

During this crisis the Carmelite Vicar Ap. founded a religious Congregation with the title of St. Philip Neri for men. It, however, soon ceased to function.

14

The last Propaganda Carmelites— The State of the Church

In 1877 the Propaganda Congregation appointed Fr. Marcelline Berardi a Carmelite (see above) as Coadjutor to the Carmelite Vicar Ap. with *the exclusive* charge of the Thomas Christians. The Vicar Ap. could not do anything regarding the Thomas Christians without the consent of the Coadjutor. The Coadjutor was asked by the Propaganda Congregation to take a Vicar General and four Counsellers from among the Thomas Christian priests which, however, he did not do.[18] The Carmelite rule over the Thomas Christians ended with him. All the Carmelites who ruled over the Thomas Christians were Discalced Carmelites except Miles Prendergast (1821–1827) who was a Calced Carmelite.

The following taken from the reports of the Apostolic Delegates in India will give a general idea about the state of the Thomas Christians under the Carmelite rule:

> "Their system has been that of giving a very slender (tenuissimo) instruction in Theology to the indigenous clergy, and this on principle that it is better that these priests be in everything and entirely (in tutto e per tutto) inferior to the European missionaries. Thus they are not taught anything except a miserable manual of Moral Theology, while the Dogmatic part is absolutely nothing, or at the most the catechism"
>
> The missionaries were saying "....knowledge is not for them, and also, if we teach them anything, they, after having learnt it, may become inflated and proud, and may not respect us. *A good reason indeed*" (underline Delegate's)

> Among them "there are priests who in knowledge acquired by private studies, in good manners, and in the ecclesiastical spirit stand above many of the Carmelite Fathers who are now in the Vicariate.... some Carmelite religious imprudently say even in public that the mission of Verapoly belongs to their Order, and that it (the Order) will never give it up."[19]

We have nothing to say special about the Thomas Christians who were under the Padroado Cranganore. After Paremmakal's death the Padroado was only vegetating. The Thomas Christians who were under the Padroado Cochin diocese were for the most part looked after by the Propaganda Carmelites.

15

Propaganda alone—
Two non-Carmelites

The Thomas Christians continued to make efforts to get a separate bishop, and even clearly asked for one of their own rite and nationality. In 1886 the Padroado archdiocese of Cranganore was suppressed and all the Thomas Christians came under the Propaganda Vicar Ap. who was already archbishop of Verapoly.

When the Padroado Cranganore was suppressed, its title "archbishop of Cranganore" was given *ad honorem* to the Portuguese bishop of Damuan, and then to the Portuguese archbishop of Goa who was already "Patriarch of the East Indies". Was not Cranganore the transformation of Angamale, and Angamale the title and residence of the last Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India of the Thomas Christians? And was not "East Indies" the title of the Portuguese Patriarch, the All-India of the Thomas Christians, though in a different way?

In 1887, as a first step, the Propaganda Congregation made a ritual division between the Latins and the Thomas Christians both of whom were under the Carmelite Prelate (who was then archbishop of Verapoly), and placed the Thomas Christians under Msgr. Lavigne, SJ., and Msgr. Medlycot, in two Vicariates Ap. In place of these two most probably two Carmelites would have been nominated if the Apostolic Delegate in India had not intervened by sending the following cable to the Propaganda Congregation:

> "For goodness' sake (per carita) impede before (presso) His Holiness execution nomination Vicars for Syrians Marcelline, Polycarp, Otherwise schism certain."

Marcelline seen here is the Coadjutor who was in exclusive charge of the Thomas Christians. The Propaganda Congregation replied:

"You are authorised to declare that the Holy Father has not nominated any Carmelite as Vicar Apostolic of the Syrians."[20]

The two Vicars Ap. gave a great impetus to English education. Msgr. Lavigne, SJ. excommunicated a priest for his Protestant doctrines. He joined the followers of Mellus and became their Archdeacon. Some of those who had followed him joined the non-Catholic denominations that were in their place.

Under Msgr. Lavigne, SJ. were started two religious Congregations for women, the "Clarist" and the Visitation. During this period the CMI seminaries were closed down, while the system of learned priests teaching candidates to priesthood had already been suppressed.

16

Propaganda alone—Their own

Finally, in 1896, the Catholic Thomas Christians were given three Vicars Ap. under the Propaganda, and the three were of their own rite and nationality. Fr. Gille, SJ, says:

"For three centuries the European missionaries were footling and blundering and worrying the poor Syrians (i. e. the Catholic Thomas Christians) with their Latin bishops until Leo XIII got enough of it, and in the face of strong opposition appointed three Indian Syrian bishops."[21]

Fr. Gille, SJ., does not seem to have heard of the chaining flogging and imprisoning of priests mentioned above.

Here we have to record with gratitude that among the Latin Prelates and missionaries whether of Padroado or of Propaganda, there were several who were very good towards the Thomas Christians.

17

Training of the Clergy

The facts narrated hitherto in this chapter clearly indicate how great was the post-15th century decline of the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians. Before passing on to the concluding remarks we have to speak of something that had a far reaching consequence on the further decline of the Church in question—of the Church namely of the Catholic Thomas Christians. It is the training of the Thomas Christian clergy together with the Latin clergy by the Carmelites, even after the end of the Carmelite rule, in the common seminary of Puthanpally (which is the seminary of Verapoly—see above—transferred to Puthanpally). With this arrangement the system of learned priests teaching candidates to priesthood was suppressed. Later on, as we saw, the CMI seminaries also were

suppressed in favour of the seminary of Puthanpally. The effect of all this was the fatal blow to the preservation of the ancestral traditions of the Thomas Christians. In the next chapter we shall have to speak of this more. Under Msgr. Lavigne and Msgr. Medlycot a few students were sent to kandy (Ceylon). Of this also we shall speak in the next chapter.

Under the Carmelite rule a few were sent to the Propaganda College, Rome. It would seem strange today that they all were lovers of their Church and rite. Cariattil v. g. who became the Padroado Archbishop of Cranganore and who had joined the Propaganda College while he was only 12 years old, was a great lover of his rite and Church. Today, however, things have taken a different turn as we shall see in the next chapter.

Concluding remarks

The Latin Prelates in general procured much good for the Thomas Christians, but all at the sacrifice of their Chaldeo-Oriental patrimony. These Prelates do not seem to have realised that they were set over a people who were Christians from the Apostolic times, who had their own traditions and their own mentality, and who had come under them because of the troubles caused by the illegal stand taken by the Portuguese conquerors. They judged everything according to their European mentality treating their Thomas Christian subjects almost like new converts with no respect for their liturgical and other traditions. Their liturgy was latinised and mutilated, while their spirituality and ecclesiastical discipline were made entirely Latin. Any effort on the part of the Thomas Christians to go back to their ancestral traditions was judged heresy and schism. A Thomas Christian Bishop would lead them to schism was the report of some of those of Propaganda gave to the Propaganda Congregation.

The Padroado Prelates had the support of the Portuguese government, while the Propaganda Prelates in general enjoyed the full confidence of the Propaganda Congregation. Poor Thomas Christians! Although there were Visitors in the past, it was only after the visit of Leo Meurin and Ignatius Persico that the Propaganda Congregation seems to have known a little about them objectively. Here is what we read in the Congregation's *Ponenza* of Dec. 1886, N. 23, f. 12:

> "Until 1865 the Sacred Congregation showed itself, if not opposed, certainly hesitant, in favouring the demands of the Malabar Syrians for a native bishop, but it is meet to say that up to that time there had not been obtained any information except that which was based on the reports of the Carmelite Fathers and of the Vicar Apostolic. It was Msgr Meurin and then Msgr Persico that for the first time made known the state of the case in a manner independently of the Carmelites."[22]

Then came the Apostolic Delegates Agliardi and Ajuti who whole-heartedly supported the Thomas Christians.

All the misfortunes, divisions and schisms that took place in the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians and caused its decline under the Latin rule had their root cause in the violence done to its traditions and in the denial of the legitimate demands of the Thomas Christians for bishops of their own rite. We do not hide that the Thomas Christians to at times behaved themselves improperly and dishonestly. Often they were driven to despair.

During the period of the decline of their Church caused from without under the Latin rule, the Catholic Thomas Christians, both priests and laymen, with a few exceptions, fought strenuously for the good of their rite and Church. They achieved something really great *which could contribute towards a real renewal of their Church* which, though greatly weakened and miserably disfigured, was, still, the lineal heir of the ancient Indian Church of the Thomas Christians. This is why we concentrated our attention on this Church in this chapter. The next chapter is, for the same reason, devoted entirely to this Church.

CHAPTER THREE

Rise—Real or Deceptive?

1

Rise—Oriental Congregation Syro-Malabar

As mentioned in the last chapter, the Catholic Thomas Christians were given in 1896 three Vicars Ap. of their own rite and nationality under the Propaganda Congregation. They were titular bishops set over the Vicariates Ap. of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry. The one set over Ernakulam was the most prominent among the seven who were expelled from the CMI Congregation for having written to Rome for a separate bishop. In 1911 the Vicariate Ap. of Kottayam was added to the three.[1] In 1917 they came under the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches. In 1923 a Hierarchy was erected with Ernakulam as Metropolis and the other Vicariates Ap. as suffragan dioceses. The Hierarchy was called "The Syro-Malabar Hierarchy" or "The Syro-Malabar Church", and as pointed out above in the last chapter, it is the lineal heir of the ancient Indian Church of the Thomas Christians.

> Incidentally we have to mention that because of the fear of the Chaldeans the name *Syro-Malabar* was applied to the Catholic Thomas Christians, and the name *Chaldean* was shelved. But now *Chaldean* has come up again (ratione liturgiae, not ratione jurisdictionis), and both *Syro-Malabar* and *Chaldeo-Malabar* are used in the same sense. In the following lines we use *Syro-Malabar* in order not to create confusion in the minds of those who are accustomed to use it always. See Chapter One, Section I, 5 about the designation *Chaldean*.

In 1956 the Syro-Malabar Church was constituted under two Metropolitans, the one of the old Ernakulam, and the other of Changanacherry. Under these two Metropolitans there are now 9 residential bishops, a sufficient number of priests many of whom hold ecclesiastical and secular degrees, and more than 2 million faithful. There are 7 mission dioceses in North and Central India under 7 bishops who are suffragans to the corresponding regional Latin archbishops. The Latin faithful in the territory of these missions are under the jurisdiction of these missionary bishops.

The territory at home, though it had become restricted to a third of Malabar, now extends to the whole of Malabar and to some regions outside, but contiguous to Malabar.

In addition to the religious Congregations that had come into existence during the Latin rule, there have been founded several others, including Secular Institutes, both for men and women. All are of the Latin type. Some are of Pontifical right while the CMI enjoys Pontifical exemption.

Vocations to priesthood and religious life are abundant among the Syro-Malabarians. They have a Cardinal and priests in the diplomatic service of the Holy See. They conduct schools of all grades including University Colleges and also hospitals and other charitable institutions of different kinds. The lay people keep a very high standard of education, though it all is after the Western model.

2

Rise—Real?

We witness here a Rise of extraordinary magnitude in the case of the Church we are dealing with. This rise is in itself praise worthy and gives the lie to all that the European Latins were saying and writing against the Syro-Malabarians.

But is this Rise real, i. e. is it in line with the past? Is this Rise Real in the sense that it is as it ought to have been? In other words, is this Rise *a real progress* that has kept the identity with the past, and has stood rooted in it while adapting it to the needs of the times? The exposition we give below contains the answer.

(a) Suicidal ideas

"One rite for the whole of India"
"No further extension of the territory and jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church with the exception of its missions and its jurisdiction therein."
"Why should we remain separatists with our rite?"
"Should we not feel at home with the Latins?"
"There is no meaning in speaking of Oriental or Syrian spirituality."
"What good is there in specialising in Oriental subjects?"
"Is there any use in learning Syriac or Chaldean?"
"What is needed is an Indian liturgy formulated in tune with Hindu worship and with Hindu thought patterns".
"Why not read the Hindu sacred books in the liturgy?"

These and similar ideas are heard explicitly or in equivalent terms from some of the Syro-Malabar Prelates. Certainly such ideas are fatal to the development and even to the very existence of the Syro-Malabar Church in line with the past. And this leads straight to what the enemies of the apostolic, Oriental, Syro-Malabar Church have always been desiring and trying to procure. Now they can congratulate themselves since they have Syro-Malabar Prelates also on their side.

(b) **Latin mentality**

The clergy, not excluding the Prelates, with a few exceptions, are Latin in mind and outlook, and in general they cannot see anything except through the Latin glass which they are reluctant to put away. It goes without saying that this strikes at the very root of an Oriental Church which the Syro-Malabar Church ought to be if it should remain faithful to its past.

All this is mainly, if not solely, due to the training the clergy get in the seminaries. We will, therefore, pass on to the training of the Syro-Malabar clergy, and then will deal with some other things which are a consequence of this training.

(c) **Training of the clergy**

The Clergy, until 1962, were all trained by Latins together with the Latin clergy. Alwaye (the common seminary of Puthanpally—see chapter two—transferred to Alwaye) was the central seminary for the Oriental and the Latin rites. The Syro-Malabarians were taught there a little Chaldean and the liturgical rubrics with liturgical songs. There was no real coaching in their history, traditions, liturgy, customs, ancient ecclesiastical discipline and ancient spirituality which all ought to form the basis of the training of the Syro-Malabar clergy. This seminary which was under the Carmelites, is a faculty now, and is under the Hierarchies of the Oriental and Latin rites of Kerala (Kerala comprises the greater part of Malabar). It was depending on the S. Oriental Congregation; but now it depends on the Oriental and the erstwhile Propaganda Congregation. The studies there from the Syro-Malabar point of view have only deteriorated. Still, some Syro-Malabar Prelates prefer this seminary to their own of Vadavathoor of which we shall speak below.

Seminarians who are supposed to be cleverer in studies were (and are) sent to Kandy, Ceylon (now Poona), or to the Propaganda College, Rome, or elsewhere. But they were not (and are not) getting even that which those of Alwaye were (and are) getting. Nevertheless, they are considered the elite and have, as a rule, preference everywhere and in everything. Will not this hasten the decline of the Church they represent?

In 1962 was started at Vadavathoor, in the newly extended part of the town of Kottayam, a seminary for the Syro-Malabarians under the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy. It depends on the S. Oriental Congregation. Though its first directors and professors were priests who had been trained as said above, still, some of them were able to give a Syro-Malabar orientation to the students and the effect continues to some extent, though contrary winds have begun to blow. "The more Latin, the more Catholic" is the idea that has begun to invade

the seminary. One of the professors of Moral Theology was a Latin priest until 1977. One that teaches Moral Theology in a Syro-Malabar seminary must be well versed in the Syro-Malabar ecclesiastical discipline that is based on traditions and customs. This kind of ecclesiastical discipline has a great part to play in Moral Theology. The idea seems to be that Moral Theology has not much to do with the traditions and customs of a Rite or Ritual Church, although such traditions and customs are to be revived according to Vatican II. This seminary is aggregated to the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome. But without knowing anything of the Chaldean language Syro-Malabar students have come out of it with the B. D. degree. After 1962, since the vernacular Malayalam is used in liturgy, the learning of the Chaldean (Syriac) language is almost neglected, and in some places even banned. In some minor seminaries it is taught, though not with the seriousness and thoroughness it requires. This is something strange and at the same time deplorable since many in the West ardently learn the Syriac language in order to have access to the treasures contained in its literature. No wonder, we are face to face with a Church that has lost the sense of its sound traditions, and seems to be bent on destroying even the little of the past that has remained in it. Kottayam being a centre of the non-Catholic Thomas Christians, the seminary in question can attract their clerics if the Syriac language and literature, Syriac theology and ascetics etc. are duly taught there. But as things stand at present there is no possibility at all for this. When Latin students too were admitted in the seminary recently, it was reported to have saidthat the seminary had thereby become Catholic!

The CMI who had their study house in Malabar, have it now in Bangalore, though a few of their students are in Poona. Formerly some of their students attended the Latin seminary of Mangalore and also the faculty at Kandy (now Poona). The study house in Bangalore is a faculty. In the programme of the degree courses Chaldean (Syriac) language, Syrian Theology etc. are seen included. But how many do take all these seriously? The fad in the house is for Indianisation. The nature of the trend of Indianisation can be understood from one single fact alone, namely, a few there formulated an "Indian Mass" which was even used there though without due approbation.

About the students of the other religious institutes there is nothing special to be said, since they are all trained like the diocesan seminarians or like the CMI students. Some are in the CMI faculty mentioned above, while some are in certain Latin seminaries outside Malabar, as it is the case of some students of the Syro-Malabar Mission dioceses.

Priests, diocesan and religious, make their post-Ordination studies in Rome and elsewhere. Some are in the Pontifical Oriental

Institute, Rome. But how many in their mind become real Oriental Syro-Malabarians? It is curious that not a few who make their post-Ordination studies in Rome and elsewhere become anti-Oriental even feeling shy to reveal their Oriental identity among the Latins.

The effect of the training and studies mentioned above is deplorable. Many have developed a kind of "universal outlook" *of their own*, and condemn the idea of Particular rites and Particular liturgies. As a whole they despise things Oriental as antiquated and as of no value. Things Latin, though they do not know them sufficiently, are their ideal, though in theory only. Some hold that the Chaldean language and liturgy are to be given up since they are foreign. They, however, hold fast to many things which are entirely foreign. Some say that since the Chaldeans in the past did not ordain Malabarians as bishops, their language and liturgy are to be boycotted. But will they boycott the English language, the English system of education, medical training etc.? Were not the English unwilling to give independence to India? Are the Chaldean language and Chaldean liturgy foreign to them as they think? (See chapter one). The predecessors of the present Syro-Malabarians considered the Chaldean language as something divine, and would not believe anything that was not proposed to them in Chaldean[2]. They considered it as something divine because Christ spoke a form of this language and made His revelation in it. As for the Chaldean liturgy, we have seen how they loved it connecting it with the Apostle St. Thomas. We may add here that it is directly derived from the diction and form in which Christ made His revelation. What a prestige it would be for the Syro-Malabarians if they had duly cultivated this language and liturgy! But who has the patience to think of all this?

> We may remark that it was the affairs of Roccos and Mellus that has created the anti-Chaldean feeling among the Syro-Malabarians. But were not some of the Syro-Malabarians the prime movers to get down Roccos and Mellus?

Let us now speak of some other things that are a consequence mainly of the training of the clergy we have dealt with above.

(d) **Liturgy**

The Syro-Malabar Prelates were not for restoring the Chaldean liturgy to its genuine form though their Latin predecessors had latinised and mutilated it miserably. In 1929 they submitted to the Holy See for approbation a Chaldean translation of the Latin Pontificals which latter they were then using in Latin. But Pope Pius XI on Dec. 1, 1934, denied approbation saying:

> "Latinism ought not to be encouraged among the Orientals. The Holy See does not wish to latinise, but to catholicise. Half measures are neither generous nor fruitful. Let a Commission be nominated with the task of revising the most ancient Pontifical...."

As a result of the Papal intervention, the revised ancient Chaldean Pontificals were given to the Syro-Malabar Prelates. Then the S. Oriental Congregation restored the Mass to its genuine form with its accessories (calendar, Propria, sacred vestments etc.) which were all approved by Pope Pius XII (after they were discussed in the Plenary meeting of the Cardinals of the S. Oriental Congregation who took into consideration the suggestions of the Syro-Malabar Prelates also), and were partially put into execution in 1962 with the vernacular Malayalam translation. Directions for the restoration of the other liturgical items too were given by the S. Oriental Congregation. All this was a return to the ancestral traditions as Vatican II afterwards wanted all the Catholic Orientals to do if they had illegitimately fallen away from those traditions. But after 1967, everything including actions (such as v. g. making the sign of the cross on one's self), symbols, gestures etc. have been latinised and mutilated even with changes of theological texts that were all approved by the Pope[3]. At least two Prelates have said openly that they made these changes on the basis of the observations of a learned layman. But certainly he was not learned in liturgy! The passages that have been changed were in use for centuries and there were Latin, English and Malayalam translations of the same in Malabar. It is to be regretted that the need for changing them was noted only after the Pope had approved them and after they began to be said in the Mass in Malayalam.

Latin ceremonies (such as anointing) have been introduced (though not everywhere) into the Ordination services. But it was precisely while rejecting approbation for the Chaldean translation of the *Latin* Pontificals that Pope Pius XI declared "Latinism ought not to be encouraged among the Orientals" (see above). It would seem that the bishops are for reserving to themselves the administration of the sacrament of "Confirmation".

New compositions—Indian Mass, Mini-Mass, Ritual, Divine Office etc.—which have no coherence with the past and are full of latinism, have appeared, and to a greater or lesser extent are in use. In some places Gothic or Gothic-like and other Latin vestments are in use instead of the restored Oriental ones while celebration of the Mass facing the people too is taking place. Some even prefer the Latin Breviary though they be the promoters of new compositions in the vernacular Malayalam. No wonder. To appreciate the richness of the Chaldean Divine Office one must know the Chaldean language sufficiently well. The Syriac Pscitta version of the Bible which has largely entered into the composition of the Chaldean liturgy is simply being ignored, although both this version and the Chaldean liturgy form part of the Syro-Malabar Patrimony.

Why is it that the Syro-Malabarians who stand for encouraging Holy Communion on Good Friday, are not arguing for celebrating Mass on Good Friday?

The Chaldean liturgy is Biblical or Semitic in its thought-patterns and diction. Under the pretext that its thought-patterns and diction, since they are Semitic, are foreign and archaic, some argue that a liturgy should be formulated in Indian thought-patterns and diction so as to suit the emerging culture of India. In this case the Bible too will have to be rewritten in Indian thought-patterns and diction, because the Bible has been written in Semitic thought-patterns and diction, or the reading of the Bible will have to be given up.

To come again to new compositions. It is said in the preface of the Divine Office for the great Lent (published with the necessary approbation) that the translation of the Psalms are based on the Syriac Pscitta version, while in truth it is not. This is how things are being done. A Church that rests on its healthy traditions can never tolerate such things as this. Not only this. Liturgical compositions appear overnight, and often they are a one-man show. To make them accepted round about means too are employed, though the promoters are not very enthusiastic about them for their personal use. The little that had remained of the past is being banned from circulation. Commissions work for the reform of all the liturgical items, even of those that were approved by the Pope. The active members of the Commissions are for the most part ecclesiastics who have been trained as said above. Even those who know their traditions and the Chaldean language are not able to do much in the company of the others. We have here a Church that does not respect the Law of prayer as the Law of Faith, the liturgy being the Law of Prayer and of Faith. Since the liturgy is the Law of Prayer, and hence the the Law of Faith, it cannot be treated as social customs and usages that change with the change of time. Nothing of all that we have just mentioned is a return to the ancient traditions enjoined by Vatican II. But when things have become a question of prestige, even though they be against Vatican II and the injunctions of Rome, it is difficult to get them corrected. It is a healthy sign, however, that a few strongly protest against these innovations. And this gives the hope (?) that in the future there may take place a genuine revival by way of a return to the ancestral traditions.

> Here we may add that neither the sacredness of ecclesiastical architecture, nor anything regarding the requisites of the rite, is attended to in the building of new churches, while complaints are heard that cenema tunes have begun to inavde the sanctuary in the execution of sacred music.

(e) Fast and Abstinence

The old idea about the nature of the obligation of fast and abstinence has been given up, and so the faithful are not educated accordingly. The acceptance of the Latin juridical idea of precept under mortal sin has necessitated dispensation to the effect that dispensation has made of fasting and abstinence a formality that has

adversely affected the sense of the need for mortification and penance. In fact fast and abstinence have all been reduced to the minimum and made just like those of the Latins with no regard even for contradiction in the liturgical sense... Mortification, penance, vegetarian diet, moderately long prayers, simplicity in life etc. touch the heart of India in a very special manner while all these are characteristic of the orthodox Hindus. The material outlook that prevails in some places of Europe and America is unduly exerting its influence on the Syro-Malabar clergy, both diocesan and religious. In this foreign money too is not without its share. Some religious in their enthusiasm for "renewal" and "progress" seem to have forgotten their identity and the place they ought to have in the Syro-Malabar Church; they insist on external activities without due consideration for mortification and penance, though many of them are for Indianisation[4]; as a body they seem to forget that Indians hold mortification and penance in the highest esteem. One has to remark that after Vatican II religious life has not to become easy and easy-going. The Council has not relaxed the obligations of religious vows nor of the safeguards thereof.

The Jacobite non-Catholic Thomas Christians as a whole, as we said, keep fast and abstinence as their forefathers were doing. Their bishops pray seven times a day, and never eat meat or drink wine.

Two Orthodox Russian publications, *A Lenten Cook-book for the Orthodox Christians*, and *Lenten Favourites for Orthodox Christians* (St. Nectarios Press, Washington, U. S. A.) bear witness that the Orthodox Russians, in the midst of the western way of life, can and do keep Lent as their Church prescribes.

Those who are for making fast and abstinence exactly like those of the Latins are heard to ask "Are we not living with the Latins?" But should not the Orientals keep their distinct identity even when they live with the Latins? Otherwise why should there be Oriental jurisdiction where there is Latin jurisdiction ? Do the Latins who live with the Orientals imitate the Orientals? It seems difficult to foster the spirit of penance and mortification among the laity if bishops' houses and ecclesiastics are the foremost in making use of the dispensations from fast and abstinence.

(f) **Bi-ritualism**

Bi-ritualism and also Tri-ritualism which is freely given, is more freely accepted. It is the Syro-Malabar priests who use or abuse it more than the Latin priests[5]. Concelebration by priests of different rites takes place "to promote union and charity." The question is whether this always takes place with sufficient reason. If there is no sufficient reason for this, why cannot one priest celebrate in his

rite and those of the other rite or rites assist at this celebration and communicate from the same bread and chalice? This will make the participants know better and appreciate the rites other than theirs.

(g) **Exodus into the Latin rite**

Hundreds of Syro-Malabarians following the Latin rite work in the Latin missions, dioceses and religious institutes of India, even in Malabar. According to *Servizio Informazioni per Le Chiese Orientali*, N. 365, Febr-March, 1976 (34 Via della Conciliazione, Roma), from 1935 until March 1976, there were about 2,000 Priests, 8,000 Sisters, 700 Brothers without counting the numerous Seminarians and Postulants, who have thus gone out into the Latin rite. There are several bishops and religious superiors from among them. As a whole those who go out thus into the Latin rite are against the spread and progress of the Syro-Malabar Church. Naturally all these, especially the bishops and the religious superiors, have the sympathy of their relatives and friends at home, and can thereby procure more followers and several other kinds of help. Latins run in Malabar itself centres for recruiting vocations for their missions, and in this the Syro-Malabarians liberally help them. The Syro-Malabarians do the same for similar efforts that are conducted outside Malabar. This is not generosity, nor real catholicity, but a remote preparation for suicide. Here we have the strange and unique case of a Particular Ritual Church that has been made and has become the servile feeder of another Particular Ritual Church. Will a Church of a particular rite which is conscious of its identity and mission in the Catholic Church slavishly make of itself the vocation market for all sorts of persons and religious institutes of another rite? Why should the Syro-Malabarians including the bishops follow the Latin rite to do mission work in their own country? Cannot they do it in their own rite? It is strange to see in India mission dioceses, some of which are Syro-Malabarian in rite with Syro-Malabarian bishops while some are Latin in rite with bishops who are Syro-Malabarians by origin, but who follow the Latin rite. Can such things be encouraged in the bosom of the Catholic Church? If then the Syro-Malabarians can do mission work in their own rite, why should they follow the Latin rite to do the same, and this too in the same place? Will not this attract the Syro-Malabar young men *of today* to prefer the Latin missions *of today?* One hesitates to affirm that evangelical zeal is at work here.

They speak of "surplus vocations". But could not these vocations be utilised for the growth of the Syro-Malabar Church? If the Latin missions are short of vocations let these missions be handed over to the Syro-Malabarians. This is logical and more catholic. Mission is not latinisation, nor the aggrandizement of the Latin Church at the expense of an Oriental Church. Have not both equal

rights in the Catholic Church in the matter of evangelisation? Let no Syro-Malabarian be deceived by the Latins who stress on the equal distribution of vocations. Let the Latins distribute the missions according to the number of vocations without absorbing the Syro-Malabar vocations into the Latin rite.

Cannot Latin religious institutes form Syro-Malabar *mission* provinces? Some open houses in Malabar and elsewhere in India or "Provinces" in Malabar. But this is a means to procure more vocations for the Latin rite. Which rite do they follow in their houses in Malabar? Some answer, "the Syro-Malabar rite". But are they able to train their recruits properly in the Syro-Malabar rite? Oh, what is the condition of the Syro-Malabar rite at present! The result will be a mixture of undesirable elements and the predominance of the Latin rite. The Syro-Malabarians who admit Latin religious to open houses in Malabar may have their own reasons to do so, although they are thereby causing a great harm to their own Church.

> (Some Syro-Malabar religious men and women follow the Latin rite and work under Latin Ordinaries in India and outside India. Some of these have their own houses there. They do not seem to have any concern at all for their Oriental patrimony. One wonders if all this be motivated by evangelical zeal).

All this brings us to the great number of girls (we pass over the few boys) who are sent abroad to Europe to become Sisters in European convents. With some of these girls (and boys) European institutes open houses in Malabar and elsewhere in India. But who thinks of the mental anguish a good many of the girls suffer in Europe? Many have left the convents and have succeeded with difficulty to remain in Europe to acquire some job and money, or to make some studies, so that they can go back home (?) honourably. That so many girls from the country sides of Malabar are thrown in the midst of the modern urban way of life in Europe is something that cannot be passed over without serious consideration. But who in Malabar thinks of this!

Those who send and those who accept these girls (and boys) consider them as *Indians* rather than also as members of an Oriental Rite or Church. No doubt, these recruits might have passed through the dry formality of obtaining (often without their own knowledge) the indult of practising, or passing over to, the Latin rite. But this makes no impression or feeling in them, nor in those who send them, since all are ignorant of the importance given by the Catholic Church to the difference of rites, and to the need of preserving and practising the Oriental rites everywhere (ubique terrarum) in the bosom of the Catholic Church. This their ignorance is advantageous to those who accept the candidates in question to mould them as they like, and to open houses anywhere in India, or to introduce the Latin rite

into the houses opened under the Syro-Malabar bishops. Those who send them are not at all sorry at this. The same may be said of those Syro-Malabarians who are received into the Latin dioceses, missions and religious institutes in India. They go by the name of *Malayalees* or *Keralites,* and suppress their Oriental rite identity. In all this it is the poor Syro-Malabar Church that suffers and is made to suffer.

What about the parents, relatives and friends of the Syro-Malabarians who go out into the Latin rite? It is immaterial to them whether those who go out are in this or in that rite. They know nothing of their own history and rite, and are also ignorant of the necessity and importance of preserving and developing Oriental Rites or Oriental Churches according to Vatican II's decree on the Catholic Oriental Churches (n. 4) which enjoins that "attention should everywhere (ubique terrarum) be given to the preservation and growth of Particular Churches" (of different rites), even by the erection of parishes and hierarchy, if necessary. Those who are to instruct them in this important matter are the ecclesiastics. But we have seen above what kind of mentality the ecclesiastics have. Clever propaganda from the other side and attraction towards a higher standard of life are a bait in the case of not a few, not to speak of financial relief of parents in some cases. The money that is lavishly but unnecessarily spent in Malabar on buildings and for all sorts of celebrations can very well be utilised to help those who are in financial difficulty. But who thinks of all this in Malabar! The result, as said above, is a drain on the Syro-Malabar Church.

(h) **Immigrants**

Thousands of Syro-Malabarians are found in India outside the limited boundary of the Syro-Malabar Church, especially in such cities as Bombay, Madras, Bangalore.[6] In Bombay itself their number is estimated to be (not officially) between 20 to 30 thousand. They are under the local Latin jurisdiction. Two priests have been recently sent to Bombay. But what can these two do for the thousands even if the local Latin Ordinary is sympathetic with them? What about those who are elsewhere? Since laymen at home know nothing of their rite, and since their ecclesiastical discipline and spirituality are Latin while their practice of faith consists in exercising Latin devotions, assisting at Mass on Sundays and receiving the Sacraments, they find no difficulty to feel at home in the Latin churches and under the Latin priests. The consequence is thorough latinisation with the loss even of that little of their traditions which could bind them with those at home where it may revive and flourish at some future time(?).

Those who do not frequent churches may lose their faith altogether. If there were their own priests and bishops to look after them, even the lukewarm would be morally forced to frequent churches.

No doubt the Latin bishops are not in favour of this, especially for the exercising of the Oriental jurisdiction in their territories, although Vatican II and Pope Paul VI have given clear rulings in favour of the Orientals who are in the Latin territories, even insisting on the creation, if necessary of Oriental dioceses there.[7] As a matter of fact the proper care of these Oriental immigrants by their own priests and bishops is more important than the missions among the non-Christians. The idea of the Latin bishops seems to be that just as Latins in the Syro-Malabar mission dioceses are under the Syro-Malabar jurisdiction, so the Syro-Malabarians in question must be under the Latin jurisdiction. Recall here what we said above, namely, that there is voiced from among the Syro-Malabar Prelates the idea "No further extension of the territory and jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Church with the exception of its mission territories and its jurisdiction therein." Has there been some kind of mutual understanding between the Prelates of both the rites? Suppose the Latin faithful in the Syro-Malabar mission dioceses are treated like the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Latin dioceses; what will be the reaction of Latin India? Having in mind the good of their immigrants, the Syro-Malabarians ought to beware of the equality offered them by "the exclusive territorial jurisdiction" in their mission dioceses.

We may mention that the Jacobite and other non-Catholic Thomas Christians who are in several parts of India and outside India (in Quwait, Malaysia....) have their own priests and bishops to look after them. Since they are trained in their rite at home they hold together and do all they can to keep it—an example to the Syro-Malabarians. The long Latin rule and the Latin mentality of their ecclesiastics have made the Syro-Malabar laity as a whole (especially the elite who have immigrated to other places) take little or no interest in their Rite and in the affairs of their Church. How different were their forefathers! The very few who know a little of their traditions and love the same, may give a little hope for the revival of the same.

> (That the non-Catholic Thomas Christians exercises authority over their immigrants outside the home territory, is judged by some as an act of "schismatical liberty" that gives illegal licence to roam about anywhere. But the non-Catholics in question do not think and act like this. Their idea is that the pastor should go after the sheep and feed it with the food congenial to it).

"One territory, One jurisdiction" is what dominates the mind of the Latin and of some Syro-Malabar Prelates. This is the result of the Latin idea that ecclesiastical law is *per se* territorial. According to the Oriental conception ecclesiastical law is *per se* personal, and so, communities of different rites or customs can and must live each under its jurisdiction in the same territory. When a community is too numerous or too widely distributed for one man to look after, or when there is some other reason, then that community is divided

nto different units on the basis of territory and is entrusted to Prelates of its own. Thus the idea of territory comes in secondarily with regard, not to all the different communities that live together, but to one single community face to face with the members of the same community. Shall we take in this sense what Pope Paul VI said about dioceses in the General Audience on Aug. 18, 1976? As reported in the Weekly Italian Edition of the *Osservatore Romano* of Aug. 19, 1976, His Holiness said that a diocese is "an ethnico-geographical circumscription". Eugenius Pacelli (afterwards Pope Pius XII) in his treatise on the personal and territorial character of ecclesiastical laws has shown that the territorial concept of ecclesiastical laws is an impact of feudalism.[8] Of this topic we shall speak more in the NOTA at the end of this chapter.

We have to note here that the Syro-Malabar immigrants in question are "immigrants" in their own fatherland, the whole of which was their ecclesiastical territory at one time, and that it was the illegal policy followed by the Latin missionaries that restricted this territory to a corner of South India. The Syro-Malabar Hierarchy has a grave obligation regarding the proper care of these immigrants. The Latin Hierarchy has a corresponsibility. The Latin Hierarchy should at least abstain from ignoring the rights of the Orientals, the more so since these rights have been confirmed by Vatican II and by Pope Paul VI. Bi-ritualism is not a solution. Rite is not the Mass alone. Rite comprises the whole liturgical cult, ecclesiastical discipline, spirituality with its practical way of life and institutions, theological system etc. In short Rite is the *Religious Culture* of a Particular (Ritual) Church, or is the same as that Church.

> (What we have said here are to be applied *servatis servandis* to the Syro-Malabar immigrants outside India. As in India, so also outside India, they have the inalienable right to practise their Rite, and no where can any one in any way induce them to change into another Rite. They retain their Rite even if they live for generations in the midst of those of another Rite.)

(i) Inter-ritual affairs

Some Syro-Malabarians cause detriment to the interests of their own Rite or Church while they take part in inter-ritual enterprises not excluding the running of inter-ritual seminaries. Actually they are being exploited wittingly or unwittingly and are sometimes flattered and honoured. Those, however, who are difficult to exploit, or are careful about the interests of their own Rite or Church, are branded as die-hards and narrow-minded, and are cautiously kept aloof. This makes the others more "large minded", and more "generous", and more "Catholic". The result is gain for the Latins and loss for the Syro-Malabarians. In joint efforts the stronger always survives the weaker.

(j) **Socio-religious customs**

The present Syro-Malabarians have given up almost all the christianised Indo-Malabar socio-religious customs and usages. These were a part of "the Law of Thomas" for their predecessors, a factor of their identity, a sign of their nobility and a living proof that Christianity does not destroy, but does elevate and ennoble the good things that are found among different peoples. The pity is that Latin usages are being accepted in the place of usages that have been given up. The old things can very well be kept up by the Syro-Malabarians at least symbolically if they care.

(k) **Liturgy in the Mission dioceses**

We have to wait and see what shape and form the liturgy is going to assume in several of the Syro-Malabar missions. Will the new converts be trained in the genuine form of the Chaldean liturgy with its theology and spirituality? If this is not done one wonders why there should be Syro-Malabar missions at all. What is special to Malabar v. g. the christianised socio-religious customs and usages are not to be taken to the missions; instead, the similar customs and usages of the places could be christianised. In this way "Chaldean" (or "Chaldeo") will be common to the different cultural traits of India. The more intelligent ecclesiastics in the missions should be given the opportunity to learn the Chaldean language and literature, although the languages of the places are used in the liturgy. See Chapter One, Section I, 5, 6.

> Under the Syro-Malabar missionary bishops there are also faithful of the Latin rite. These bishops have to attend to the ritual needs of these faithful and to satisfy them in all things. If then they are Latin-minded, will they not latinise the new converts even openly? In this connection it is a matter for serious consideration that these bishops are suffragans to the Latin archbishops of their respective regions.

Rise, not real—Faint hope?

The exposition we have just made about the present state of the Syro-Malabar Church seems to give the answer to the question we posed above, i. e. whether the Rise this Church now presents with its Prelates, priests, religious, missions, institutions, vocations etc. is in reality a renewal *in line with the past,* namely, is this renewal a real progress that has kept the identity with the past, and has stood rooted in it adapting it to the needs of the times by way of a real progress? It seems to us that it is not real; it is not in line with the past; it is not as it ought to have been; it has lost, or is losing completely its identity with the past; it is a deceptive appearance that dazzles the eyes of those who do not know the history of the Syro-Malabar Church. In truth it hides for the moment a Decline that is taking place within this Church. The loss of the traditions that had

made of this Church what it was, or had given it its identity, and the inroad of ideas entirely foreign to it account for this Decline that is taking place within it—we are not speaking of faith.

When the decline of this Church was caused from without under the Latin rule, there was strong resistance from within, but now that the Decline is being caused from within, there is no such resistance, but there is only a little ferment of the past left with a few of its members. Will this leaven the whole mass? In default of this, there will be left in it almost nothing of the ancient Chaldeo-Malabar expression of the Christian faith except a caricature. This caricature of a Church will have no right to exist as the proud heir of the ancient apostolic Indian Church of the Thomas Christians. But it seems it will exist for some time (how long?) as something distinct by holding fast to its jurisdiction. This may, let us hope (?) give rise to men who will lead it back to its pristine glory for a real renewal in line with the past, recapturing its identity and adapting it to the needs of the times by way of a real progress. Otherwise there will be a great loss to the Catholic Church which promotes Unity in Diversity and Diversity in Unity. India too will lose an ancient Church with its Chalde-Malabar expression of Christianity that can be by itself an apology for Christianity in the India of today. Everything depends on the training of the clergy. The clergy must be taught to love and practise the ancient traditions, and to give them vigour to grow homogeneously by the assimilation of new ideas, discarding all that loses its real utility with the flow of time. Incidentally we may say that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to do this in an inter-ritual seminary. At least the elite among the clergy should not be strangers to the Chaldean (Syriac) language and literature. Provision should be made for this during the seminary studies.

The courses in the ancient traditions could be begun in Sunday Schools which are the nursery of vocations to priesthood and religious life. The same could be continued in the Religion classes of schools and universities. In this way educated laymen also can be made to take interest in the matter. Their community pride can be profitably exploited for this purpose.

The Syro-Malabar Church must have a religious catechism of its own to teach its students its history, liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spirituality. Liturgical or pastoral centre common to the Orientals and the Latins will be harmful to both, or, as experience has taught us, will end in the latinisation of the Orientals.

Should not the Syro-Malabarians have a special concern for their non-Catholic Thomas Christian brethren? Will they, seeing the present state of the Syro-Malabar Church, approach the Catholic Church with confidence that in the Catholic Church they will be able

to preserve their traditions? Again, have not the Syro-Malabarians a grave obligation to maintain the good name of the Catholic Church which stands for the preservation and development of all the Oriental Rites? The Syro-Malabarians are now giving occasion to all the non-Catholic Oriental Christians to accuse the Popes of hypocrisy regarding their promises to preserve and protect the traditions of the Catholic Oriental Christians.

We make our own the following words of Archpriest John J. Mowatt, Editor and Director of *Looking East* (Review of the The Byzantine Center, Fatima, Portugal). In Vol. 9, No. 15, 1974 of *Looking East* he wrote (pp. 4, 5):

> "All the Roman Pontiffs, from Leo XIII to Paul VI, have spoken out in defence of the rights of the Eastern Churches and have spoken out against latinization. Even the documents of Vatican II ask for a "return to the authentic ways" if in the past they have been abandoned. Are all these words and documents mere meaningless formulas, or are they serious in contents? Eastern hierarchs, even if of western style education, are bound in conscience to see that the rites and rights of their churches are protected and safeguarded, and should they fail, then they have betrayed their God-entrusted mission to see that the Universal Church, God's gift to man, is a "Harbour of Unity", "House of salvation" in which all, in the fulness of their variety, are true and equal brothers. Those, be they Eastern or Western, who seek to latinize, ritually or structurally, do not bring reconciliation but destruction; they do not unite, but only absorb; they do not serve, but dominate. All these, be they priests or bishops, do not work as apostles of union, but as sowers and agents of discord, and as such are a real and painful obstacle to the unity of Christianity."

What shall we say if together with ritual and structural latinisation even the very foundations of ancient traditions are being substituted with new structures and compositions of an arbitrary nature?

New arrival

Before coming to the NOTA at the end of this chapter, we have to record an event that has been of immense joy to the Syro-Malabarians. In 1930 two Jacobite non-Catholic Thomas Christian Prelates, archbishop Mar Ivanios and bishop Mar Theophilos, embraced the Catholic Church. They and their followers were constituted into the Syro-Malankara Church with the West Syriac liturgy and rite they brought with them to the Catholic Church. Their Church, their Hierarchy and their liturgical rite are called 'Malankara' or 'Syro-Malankara', Malankara being another name for Malabar. There were individual reunions in the past. Until 1921 the re-uniting priests and faithful were received into the Syro-Malabar rite; after 1921 re-uniting priests began to be received with the Syro-Malankara rite. Now there is the Church and Hierarchy of the Syro-Malankara rite.[9]

NOTA: **One territory, One jurisdiction**

The Latin and some Syro-Malabar Prelates of India hold that, with the exception of the present territory of the Syro-Malabar Church at home, there should be only one jurisdiction in one diocese or in one diocesan territory in India. Multi-jurisdiction, they fear, will give cause for quarrels among bishops, especially regarding the erection of churches of one rite in the vicinity of those of another rite. But if the Latins and the Orientals are educated each in the theology and in the spirituality of the rite of each, and are taught to pray according to the same, the fear in question (which in some cases is a reality though exaggerated) will gradually vanish by itself. The Latins will then be glad to frequent their churches and pray in them, and the Orientals in their churches. Now on the other hand, since the faithful, because of the lack of the above-mentioned education and training, are indifferent as to whether they frequent this or that church on Sundays and Feast days for fulfilling the obligation to assist at Mass. This again makes some Latins get attached to an Oriental church, and some Orientals to a Latin church. The tactics of the authorities of the churches also play their part in this. Hence the cause of the fear mentioned above and the rivalry to shorten the services.

Often we hear also of the overlapping of educational and charitable institutions. But this is not to be taken seriously. There is in fact no such institution in a given place that is in any way weakened by the presence of another institution of the same kind in the same place.

All the above-mentioned are reasons for Latin bishops in the other parts of India for not allowing Oriental priests and bishops to minister to their immigrants, in their rite in those places. But if all concerned endeavour to do as said above there will be a real charity and diversity, and this is what the Catholic Church insists upon. Of course, human nature being what it is, it is impossible to do away with some kind of quarrels and misunderstandings. This will be the case even if there is only one jurisdiction in one diocesan territory. What if the faithful of a diocese though of the same rite and under the same jurisdiction, belong to different communities? In truth quarrels among these are more accute then those among faithful of different rites and jurisdictions. Can India have dioceses in which there is only one community in the whole of its territory under the same jurisdiction? The erstwhile Latin diocese of Cochin in Malabar is a typical example. It had in it two powerful communities besides the minor ones. Though these two communities were of the same rite and were under the same jurisdiction for more than three centuries, still, when the diocese was Indianised, it was divided into Alleppey and Cochin on the basis of these communities, and each bishop was given even cross-jurisdiction over the churches of

his community that are in the territory of the diocese of the other community. This must give matter for thought to those who advocate one rite and one jurisdiction in one territory, or in India. It is a mystery that Europeans who are accustomed to similar (not exactly on caste-shaped community basis as in India) differences in Europe cannot understand, or pretend not to understand, the situation in India. Not a few European trained Indians too seem to be of this type.

> God Triune must be the model for different rites and jurisdictions that exist in the same place. Each of the Persons of the Trinity is distinct One from the Other, but there is only One God, since the three Persons have one and the same Divinity or Divine Nature. Again, the distinction of Persons being kept intact, each Person is in each of the other two. The different rites in the same territory can in like manner be united among themselves. Each must keep its distinction with its priests, bishop, jurisdiction, churches etc. insisting on its identity cultivating the theology, spirituality and so on, proper to each. Keeping their distinction in this way, they can be many, put One in Faith and Charity under the Supreme Authority of the Roman Pontiff.

In the light of what we have just said let us read N. 44 of the Apostolic Constitution "Regiminis Ecclesiae Universae" dated Aug. 15, 1967, of Pope Paul VI. It lays down that the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

"....*in the very Latin territories,* with assiduous care, also through a Visitor, looks after the not-yet-organised nuclei of the faithful of the Oriental Rites, and also, as far as possible, takes care of their spiritual needs by the creation also of a hierarchy, if the number of the faithful and the circumstances require it."

In Europe, England, the United States of America, Canada, South America and Australia, certain Catholic Oriental immigrants have their own priests and bishops although the Latin bishops there in general were and are against this arrangement. Shall India be an exemption in the case of the Orientals, although India is their mother country, and was in the past under their Metropolitan and Gate of All-India? Vatican II and Pope Paul VI have not made any distinction between Orientals and Orientals, or between countries and countries. Is there any *secret* in the de-orientalisation of the Syro-Malabarians that is now being promoted by some Prelates in Malabar? If they are de-orientalised, the question of Oriental rite and jurisdiction will by itself cease to be.

Do not Italians in Italy including Ecclesiastics, try to keep up cultural solidarity with their immigrants in North America and in other places? In the case of the Syro-Malabar "immigrants" the question is of ritual and ecclesial solidarity. This solidarity is much more important than cultural solidarity—OPUS JUSTITIAE PAX.

FOOT NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

Section I

1 Jesuit Archives, Rome, *Goa* 65, f. 45 (Statement of Roz, SJ,. 17th. c.)

2 The Metropolitan of this Church had suffragans in Socotra and Great China.

3 H. C. E. Zacharias, Article, *The Church of Saints Thomas and Bartholomew in Malabar,* "Pax", Spring, 1928, Caldey, p. 19.

4 Marshall, *Guide to Taxilla,* Delhi, 1936, pp. 78, 79, and XXXIII (a); Burnet, *Aramaic Inscriptions from Taxilla,* "Journal of Asiatic History", 1915, pp. 340, 342; Couley, *First Aramaic Inscriptions from Taxilla,* Ibid. pp. 342–347; Herezfeld, *New Asokan Inscriptions from Taxilla,* "Epigraphia Indiana", XIX, pp. 251–253; Miller Innes, J, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire,* Oxford, 1969, pp. 90, 91.

5 *The LionHandbook to the Bible,* p. 87 of 1916, Reprint—Lion Publishing, 121, High St. Berkhamsted, Herts, England. The Aramaic of Malloula has been much corrupted by the Turkish and Arabic languages as we have been able to ascertain from a priest of that village.

6 H. C. E. Zacharias, *l. c.* p. 12

7 Pyne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus,* 2 Vols. Oxonii, 1879–1901, Vol. I, p. 389.

8 *Rabban Pattu* in Bernard TOCD's *St. Thomas Christians* (Malayalam) Vol. I, Palai, 1913.

9 Puthiakunnel T, *Jewish Colonies in India paved the way for St. Thomas,* in "Orientalia Christiana", N. 186, Romae, 1970, pp. 187 sq.

10 Giamil S, *Genuinae Relationes Inter Sedem Apostolicam et Assyriorum Orientalium seu Chaldaeorum Ecclesiam,* Romae, 1902, Document XXII.

11 Jungmann, J. A., Article, *Liturgy* in "Encyclopedia of Theology", Burns and Oates, London, 1975, p. 855.

12 Penteado (1516/17) wrote to the king of Portugal saying:
"The Christians of St. Thomas do not care for the communion with the Portuguese, not because they were not happy they are Christians as we are, but we are among them as the English and the Germans are among us. As regards their *National customs* their will is corrupted by their priests who say that just as there were *twelve Apostles,* even so they founded *twelve customs"* (underlines ours)—Mundandan A. M., Article, *The Eastern Church, 16th and 17th Centuries,* in "Christianity in India", Alleppey, 1973, pp. 86, 87.

13 H. C. E. Zacharias, *l. c.* p. 19.

14 K. M. Panikar, Article, *History of India* in "Fodor's 1975 Guide to India", Hodder and Stoughton, p. 114.

15 William Foxwell Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity,* Doubleday Anchor Books, Double Day & Company Inc., Garden City, New York, 2nd ed. 1957, p. 30.

16 Werner Keller, *The Bible History* translated by William Neil, D. D., Hodder and Stoughton, London, Sydney, Aukland, Toronto, 1914 edition, ISBN o340, 190450, p. 43, 44.

17 The Thomas Christians of Malabar who are fundamentally of the Dravidian stock are heirs of the ancient Dravidian culture. Malayalam, their everyday language, is Dravidian, and is a sister (or according to some the daughter) of Tamil, another Dravidian language. The Dravidian culture in India is pre-Aryan. Still, even those of the Dravidian stock are fascinated by the fruits of the Aryan culture, so much so that they neglect their own rich patrimony which to the Thomas Christians of Malabar is easily accessible in the Tamil classics. Now-a-days Indian culture is almost always identified with the Aryan though the Dravidian too is Indian and more ancient at least in India.

Section II

1 We speak here of organisation, not of divine, but of ecclesiastical origin. The Church of Christ by virtue of Christ's institution is a divine organisation (or organism) directed by the Apostles (Bishops) with Peter (the Roman Pontiff) as the Supreme authority.

2 Mingana A., *The Early Spread of Christianity in India,* "Bulletin of John Reynald's Library, Manchester, July 1926, p. 33

3 In Egypt there were no Metropolitan provinces, but only the Patriarch with bishops (and 'titular metropolitans') under him. Somewhat similar was the development in some other Churches.

4 We doubt about the accuracy of the statement of Peter du Jarric, S. J., according to whom the Apostle St. Thomas instituted in the East eight archiepiscopal sees of which one was Malabar—*Thesaurus Rerum Indicarum,* 1a ed. Colonia, Tom. 3, Pars 2, p. 339, cited by Mackenzie, G. T., in *Christianity in Travancore,* Trivandrum, 1904, p. 4.

5 Giamil S, *op. cit.,* pp. 579–581.

6 Assemani J. S., *Bibliotheca Orientalis,* III, 346

7 Idem, *Ibid.,* II, 433

8 Mackenzie G. T., *op. cit.,* pp. 5, 6.

9 Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo, OCD., *India Orientalis Christiana,* Romae, 1794, p. 88.

10 Raulin J. F., *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Synodo Diamperitana,* Romae, 1795, p. 10

11 *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium,* Textus 167, pp. 119, 118, Versio 168, pp. 121, 120.

12 One Gonsalves in his *La Triple Courenne dela Bienheurouse Vierge Mere de Dieu* published before 1648 says: "And the bishop of Japan affirms having found in the records of Mylapore, that more than thousand years before, preachers had been sent from thence to China to announce the Christian faith. From authentic witnesses it is known that from the days of St. Thomas churches were established in China"—quoted in "Tercentenary of the diocese of Mylapore", Price Current Press, Madras, 1906, p. 1.

13 About the monastery, see Giamil S, *op. cit.,* p. 592. As late as 1533 (circa) there was a Chaldean bishop in Mylapore whom the Portuguese called *Abuna*— Mundadan A. M., *Traditions of the St. Thomas Christians,* Dharmaram College, Bangalore, 1970, pp. 106, 107, 90, 91.

14 See 'Nestorian' Divine Office, passim, specially the Office for Christmas. Cf. also Scipioni L, *Ricerca sulla Cristologia del "Libro di Eraclide di Nestorio"*, Friburgo (Sivz), 1956;
Idem, *Nestorio e il concilio di Efeso*, Milano, 1974.

15 Khayyath F, *Syri Orientales seu Chaldaei Nestoriani et Romanorum Pontificum Primatus*, Romae, 1870.

16 See the letters they sent to Rome, Giamil S, *op. cit.*

Section III

1 Le Quien M, *Oriens Christianus in quatuor Patriarchatus digestus*....Paris, 1740, 3 Vols., II, 1086–1088.

2 Dauvillier J, *Les Provinces Chaldeennes de l'Exterient*, "Melanges F. Cavelera", Toulouse, 1948, pp. 270–272.

3 Ebedjesus (Abdiso) Sobensis , (*Collectio Canonum Synodicorum* (ed. Mai, "Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio E Vaticanis Codicibus Edita", Romae, 1833), Tract. VIII, cap. 15.

4 Scengala was another name for Cranganore, or for an important part of Cranganore. Even today the Cranganore estuary is called Scengal azhi i. e. Scengal estuary.

5 Jesuit Archives, Rome, *Goa* 65, f. 4. The Portuguese called Malabar *Serra*.

6 Ibid. f. 43

7 Joseph the Indian, a Thomas Christian from Malabar who was in Rome and Venice in the beginning of the 16th century spoke of his Prelate and of the one of Cataya as "Patriarchs", of course in a wide sense—Schurhammer G, *The Malabar Church and Rome during the early Portuguese period and* before, Trichinopoly, 1934, p. 8

8 Jesuit Archives, Rome, *Gall.* 95 I 197 (decree in the original Chaldean); Beltrami G, *La Chiesa caldea nel secolo dell 'Unione*, Roma, 1933, p. 96 (Italian translation of the decree).

9 Jesuit Archives, Rome, *Goa* 65, f. 5.

10 *Ibid.*

11 *l. c.* Note that Timothy I says here: "obedience is to be rendered by all to the Roman Patriarch since he holds the place of Simon Kepa". This Tomothy I transferred the Patriarchal residence of the Chaldean Church from Seleucia-Ctesiphon to Baghdad. Later on it was shifted successively to other places.

12 Beltrami G, *op. cit.*, p. 246

13 This is also an indication that the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians was gravitating towards Malabar.

14 Propaganda Archives, Rome, *Scritture rifer. Congr. Gener.* Vol. 233, f. 111.

15 *Ibid. Scritture rifer. Congr. Part. dell'India e Cina*, Vol. 56, ff. 429, 430.

16 Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo, OCD., *Viaggio Alle Indie Orientali*, Roma, 1796, p. 80.

17 This practice is still kept up among the non-Catholic Thomas Christians.

18 *Istoria della Missione di Malabar,* (c. 1750) Propaganda Archives, Rome, *Congr. Part.* Vol. 109, f. 90.

19 Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo, OCD., *Viaggio. . . .(op. cit.)* p. 137.

20 Letter of Fr. Jerome, SJ., Rector, College, Cochin, Malabar, 1590, Jesuit Archives, Rome, *Goa-Mal.* 14, ff. 1, 2.

21 Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo, OCD., *Viaggio. . . .(op. cit.),* 'p. 80.

22 Vicenzo Maria di S. Caterina di Sienna, OCD., *Viaggio Alle Indie Orientali,* Roma, 1672, II, c. v.

23 British Museum, London, Add. MS., 9853.
It is often heard now-a-days that the Thomas Christians of old were converting to Christianity high caste people only! Yes, they were not as enthusiastic in converting low castes as they were in converting high castes. But we have to take into consideration the socio-political conditions of the times. It was their high socio-political status that helped them convert the high castes. If they had turned their attention equally to the low castes, they would have *in those days* lost their high status in society, and would not have been able to approach the high castes and convert them. In olden days to convert the high castes was also more conducive to the good of the Church. We do not deny they had become a kind of caste-shaped community. But we should not measure the past with the standard of the present. At present there is no difficulty in converting the low castes, and they do it. In olden days their caste-shaped way of life in one way helped them conserve their faith in the midst of the all-absorbing Hinduism.

24 This is why Mar Abraham the last Metropolitan and the Gate of All-India of the Thomas Christians made the Patriarchal Synod elect George of Christ, his Archdeacon, as bishop of Palayur (Palur) and his suffragan (Beltrami G, *op. cit.,* pp. 196, 197). Then with the Patriarch's permission he proposed the same one to the Pope as his Coadjutor and successor (Giamil S, *op. cit.,* p. 100). This George was not ordained bishop. His successor was Archdeacon George of the Cross. With the consent of the Patriarch Mar Abraham proposed this one also to the Pope as his successor. He got no reply. (Thaliath J., TOCD., *The Synod of Diamper,* Rome, 1958, p. 77).

25 The present writer in his younger days knew some who had done this service to their non-Christian brethren.

26 Vincenzo Maria di S. Caterina di Sienna, OCD., *op. cit.,* l. c.

27 Idem, *Ibid.*

28 Idem, *Ibid.*

29 Schurhammer G, SJ., *op. cit.,* p. 14.

30 Report of Peter Paul, OCD., Propaganda Archives, Rome, *Scritture rifer. Congr. Part. dell'Indiae Cina,* 496, f. 115.

31 Colubovich G, OFM,. *Bibliografica della Terra Santa,* IV, Quarachis, 1923, p. 274.
Marignoli says that the proprietors of Pepper (domini) were "Christian chiefs" "called Modilial" (Ibid. p. 289). The descendants of these are still to be found near Quilon.

Some 20 years earlier (1328) Pope John XXII wrote a letter to the "Nastarini, Nascorini, Nascarini, Nastoriani (all these forms are in the letter) chief of Columbam and to the Christians under him, stressing on the need of unity of faith to be kept up by the baptised "quorumlibet schismatum pulsis erroribus" (Mackenzie G. T., *op. cit.,* p. 8). This letter was sent through Jordan Catalani who was made bishop of Columbam.

Neither Jordan Catalani nor the letter seems to have reached Columbam. Jordan Catalani had been to Columbam and had baptised a few before he went to the Pope. The Pope's letter certainly contains the idea Jordan Catalani had informed him of. But Marignoli did not find any heresy or schism among the Thomas Christians (if the Pope had meant the Thomas Christians). It seems that the St. George Church "of the Latin communion" where Marignoli stayed was built by Jordan Catalani or by Venetian merchants who were trading with Quilon . The Latins who were then in Quilon have not come down to us.

32 Joseph T. K., *The Malabar Christian Copper Plates* (*Malayalam*), Trivandrum, 1925; Idem, *The Malabar Christians and their ancient Documents*, Trivandrum, 1924.

CHAPTER TWO

1 This chapter is a summary of chapters VI–XVI of our book *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Prakasam Publications, Alleppey, Kerala, India, 1976). We, therefore, give notes for some important points only.

2 The Portuguese who were in Cannanore (Malabar) kindly treated the four Chaldean Prelates who stayed with them for two and a half months in 1504; they admitted them to say Mass in their Oratory; gave them presents and afterwards financial help to restore their church. One of them acted as chaplain to the Portuguese in Cranganore saying Mass in Latin. Another Chaldean bishop (one of the four just mentioned?) got into difficulties with them and was accused of heresy though he "repented" and "went to confession". Even the one who acted as chaplain had to defend the validity of baptism conferred by him in the Chaldean rite. This he did let us note, as one "deputed and sent by the Patriarch of Babylon" to rule over the "people of the Indians".

Wicki J. SJ., *Epistolae Sancti Francisci Xaverii*, II, Romae, 1951, p. 62, nota 9; Schurhammer G, SJ., *op. cit.* pp. 8–24.

3 Beltrami G., *op. cit.*, p. 43 (nota 9 from p. 10). The letter of Antonio do Porto to the King of Portugal, Nov. 20, 1557.

4 When the Portuguese and the Thomas Christian priests whom they had trained in their seminary compelled the Thomas Christians to begin Lent only on Ashwednesday, to eat fish and eggs and drink wine during Lent, not to celebrate Mass except with unleavened bread prohibiting married priests from celebrating Mass, the Thomas Christians ran away from Portuguese settlements. The Thomas Christian youths who were taught and ordained priests in the Latin rite were not allowed even by their parents to say Mass in Latin in their churches....

British Museum, *Add. Ms.* 9853, f. 90.

Schurhammer G, SJ., *op. cit.*, p. 22

Jesuit Archives, Rome *Goa* 65, ff. 35–46

Goveas A de, *Jornada do Arcebispo de Dom Alexio de Menezes Primas de Oriental religioso da Ordem de S. Agostino*, Coimbra, 1606, pp. 6, 7, 3.

5 See our book cited above, Chapters VIII, IX. The assembly held at Diamper Dom Menezes called "a diocesan synod according to the sacred canons".

6 All this is clearly mentioned by the Jesuit archbishop of the time (Garcia, SJ) of the Thomas Christians in his letter sent to the Propaganda Congregation,

Rome, on Janu. 30, 1659—Propaganda Archives, Rome *Scritture riferit. Congr. Gener.* Vol. 232, ff. 297 sq.

7 Ibid. *Scritture riferit. Origin.* Vol. 233, f. 29.
Sebastiani was asked by the Propaganda Congregation to make use of the request the Thomas Christian teachers had made to teach them Latin, and thus to change their rite into the Latin (Ibid.)

8 They keep this liturgy with all diligence and care. Their translation of this liturgy into the vernacular also is faithful.

9 Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo, OCD., *India Orientalis Christiana,* (op. cit.), p. 263. Roz, SJ., and his successor Britto, SJ., also used this title.

10 Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual,* Vol. II, Trivandrum, 1906, pp. 190, 191.

11 Ferroli D., SJ., *The Jesuits in Malabar,* Vol. II, Bangalore, 1951, pp. 324, 325.

12 Ambrosius a S. Theresa, OCD., *Hierarchia Carmelitana,* IV, Romae, 1934, pp. 277 sq.
Here are given all these in some detail with the text of the Instruction. This book is a reprint of the articles published in the *Analecta OCD.*

The Thomas Christians had complained that a priest accused of theft was made to be flogged by low caste converts, was shut up in a room and condemned to die of starvation, the last Sacraments being denied him though he had asked for them. The case was heard by a non-Christian judge to whom the Carmelite missionaries had taken it. The Vicar Ap. and the Carmelite missionaries in their letter sent to the Propaganda Congregation admitted that the death of this priest "was attributed (by the judge) to the Vicar Ap., to the Fathers and to the Christians themselves" (Ambrosius a S. Theresa, OCD., *op. cit.,* pp. 287 sq.). Francis Sales, the missionary who was thought of having had a hand in this, went to Rome and returned as Vicar Ap. to the grief of the other missionaries and of the Thomas Christians. Another missionary John of St. Margaret after causing many troubles went to Rome where he was nominated Vicar Ap. by the Propaganda Congregation. The nomination was then revoked. The Thomas Christian priests Cariattil and Paremmakal who were then in Rome (see below) tried much to make the Propaganda Congregation revoke the nomination. All this and many other things can be seen in Paremmakal's book *Varthamanappusthakam* an English translation of which is published from the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome as "Orientalia Christiana Analecta, N. 190", 1971. We ourselves made the translation.

13 "Is promoted with the indult that he can use the Latin rite and can remain in it licitly. . . . but all return to his original Syro 'Chaldean rite is prohibited." (Archiv. Vatican. *Acta Camerarii Sacri Collegii Cardinalium,* 39, f. 238). The idea at that time was that Orientals could not be bishops of Latins, or of dioceses in which there were Latins also (as Cranganore was). Paremmakal in his book mentioned above says he was performing functions in both the rites. What will be the Latin reaction if Latins were disqualified to be bishops of Latin dioceses where there are Orientals? Cranganore, a transformation of Angamale, was Oriental.

14 Pope Pius IX, Encyclical letter to the Chaldeans "Verum haud".

15 Archives of the S. Oriental Congregation, Rome *Ponenza,* Dec. 1886, N. 26; *Scritture riferit. nei Congr. Caldei,* 1862–1866, Vol. I, ff. 738–743; *Scritture riferit. Malabaresi,* 1862–1877, ff. 38 sq. See also *Scritture Origin.* 1865–1866, ff. 596–597 where we see that the Vicar Ap. had written in praise of the merits of this Vicar General saying that he was worthy to be made

bishop in case his dignity as Vicar General would not be sufficient to make Roccos go back.

16 Ibid. *Scritture riferit. Malabariesi,* 1878–1889, f. 143.

17 Ibid. *Scritture riferit. Malabaresi,* 1862–1877, f. 400.

18 Ibid. *Ponenza,* Dec. 1886, N. 26.

19 Ibid. *Scritture riferit. Malabaresi,* Vol. II, f. 663 *Lettere dei Delegati Ap.;* Ibid. *Lettere Dei Delegati Ap.* f. 1428; Ibid. *Ponenza* Dec. 1886; also Ibid. *Acta* Vol. 17/1885, f. 551; Vol. 20/1889 f. 91.

20 Ibid. *Acta* Vol. 18/1887, f. 259; *Lettere Dei Delegati Ap.* Vol. 20/1877, f. 316. The *Ponenza* cited above of Dec. 1886, N. 26 says of Msgr. Marcelline: ". . . . Not only did he not execute the command to nominate a Vicar General and four Counsellors, but because of the dependence of the Coadjutor on Msgr. Mellano (the Vicar Ap.), his ministry has become suspect to the Syrians, and so his influence at present is nothing and is of no advantage to that people."

21 *Catholic Herald of India,* Calcutta, Janu. 30, 1924 We quote below what Leo Meurin, SJ., who was Visitor Ap. of Thomas Christians, reported on Dec. 23, 1878. He reported:

> "The custom which prohibited priests from sitting down with the missionaries who were seated, or from taking meals with the bishop has again been introduced after having been given up for some time." Archives of the S. Oriental Congregation, Rome, *Scritture riferit. Malabare,* 1878–1899, f. 867.

The Thomas Christian priests had the same experience from the Jesuit missionaries. This is seen in their vernacular (Malayalam) petition of 1645 which they submitted to the Portuguese Viceroy. A copy of this petition is kept in the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana, Milan, *MS. Y* 116 *sup.*

22 Archives of the S. Oriental Congregation, Rome, *Ponenza,* 1886, N. 23.

CHAPTER THREE

1 This fourth one was for *the Southists* who are a minority and are an endogamous community now, and whose origin traditionally goes back to the 4th century. Of the two Vicars General of Msgr. Lavigne, SJ., (last chapter) one was for the Southists. Likewise the Visitation religious Congregation that was founded under Msgr. Lavigne, SJ., was for Southist women. The Southists do not evangelise the non-Christians, nor non-Southist non-Catholic Christians. There are Southists among the non-Catholics also. The first Vicar Ap. of Changanacherry was a Southist, and so there was great unrest among his subjects the great majority of whom was non-Southists (Northists). Hence he was transferred to the newly erected Vicariate Ap. of Kottayam (pro gente suddistica) in 1911.

2 Nunes Baretto, SJ., Dec. 1, 1561—Wichi J, SJ., *Documenta Indica,* Vol. II, Romae, 1964, p. 416.

3 We will give a few examples: (In the Mass) the Latin form (predominantly) of *Pater Noster* and the baptismal *Credo* of the Roman rite have been intro duced; order of prayers and of certain items changed; the idea that Christ accepts the Sacrifice (endorsed by St. Ephrem for whom Christ offers and

accepts) has been given up. Christ who is "the peace of the heavenly ones" (according to St. Paul) is made "the joy of the heavenly ones"; In and "And with you and with your spirit" which is the answer to the Celebrant's salutation "peace be with you", the second part, i. e. "and with your spirit" has been omitted, though according to the Chaldean tradition it denotes the sacerdotal office of the celebrant; the exclamation "One is the Father Holy, One is the Son Holy, One is the Spirit Holy" has been changed into the arbitrary formula "One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit alone is Holy", etc. We have to remark only that all the expressions that have been changed were all approved by Pope Pius XII after they were discussed in the Plenary meeting of the Cardinals of the S. Oriental Congregation.

The post-Vatican II—freedom, if any, of the bishops, is not for pulling down and destroying, but for taking back and organically developing the ancient liturgical and other traditions of their Church—(Vatican II, *Decree on the Catholic Oriental Churches*, N. 6)

About the corrections and changes the Portuguese introduced into the liturgy of the Thomas Christians, Le Quien M, OP., more than 200 years ago had remarked; "....among the learned it is agreed today that not a few have interpreted ignorantly those rites of their since they were entirely strangers to the theological language and beliefs of the Oriental Churches", *op. cit.*, Vol. II, col. 1098. The Portuguese, however, do not seem to have changed liturgical texts that were approved by any Pope.

The Mass with the changes and corrections and latinisations just mentioned is in general use now in place of the one which was approved by the Pope as said above. The Syro-Malabar bishop who took the Malayalam text of this Mass to the S. Oriental Congregation for approbation, openly said that the then Cardinal Prefect of the S. Congregation (in 1968) approved it *ad experimentum* without having had it examined by any one. Although there followed protests the Cardinal Prefect did not change his stand. The Syro-Malabar Prelates prepared the text of this Mass after a group of laymen had made their complaints to the Cardinal Prefect against the Mass that was approved by the Pope. There are Syro-Malabar Prelates who praise and defend the text of the Mass approved by the Cardinal Prefect. The priests and people in general do not know anything of all this. To those who know nothing of their traditions anything is palatable if it is coated in the Malayalam language. Nevertheless, those who hold the authority have to put things aright.

4 But which "Indian" is meant by them is difficult to grasp. There is Malabar Indian, Tamil Indian, Andhra Indian, Karnataka Indian, Gujarat Indian, Konkana Indian, Bengali Indian etc. etc. All these are Indian, but none is typically Indian. Could anyone easily find out the factor that is common to all, and then begin Indianisation on the basis of that? But such an Indian liturgy will do away with the individuality of an Apostolic Church as the Syro-Malabar Church.

5 Liturgy ought to be a "formation" of those who practise it. One that is "formed" in one's own liturgy will find it difficult to use another liturgy at any time or moment. This will be for him something mechanical and like the changing of clothes. Think of one who is "formed" v. g. as a Dominican. How can such a one act a Franciscan except by putting on the Franciscan habit and externally behaving himself as a Franciscan? What about the spirit he imbibed in during his Dominican "Formation"?

6 We here leave out those who are outside India. But they too should be duly cared for by priests and bishops of their own Rite.

7 Vatican II: *Decree on the Catholic Oriental Churches,* N. 4; *Decree on the Pastoral Office of bishops,* 23/3

Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution, *Regiminis Ecclesiae Universae,* dated Aug. 15, 1967, N. 44.

8 E. Pacelli, *La Personalita E la Territorialita Delle Leggi Specialmente Nel Diritto Canonico,* "Studio Storico-Giuridico," Roma, 1912, p. 6.

9 We have seen in Chapter two, N. 9, that to treat of the re-union with the Catholic Church, of the Jacobite Thomas Christian Prelate Mar Thomas VI, two Catholic Thomas Christian priests, Cariattil and Paremmakal, had been to Rome. Cariattil being made Archbishop of Cranganore returned to Malabar with faculty to receive Mar Thomas VI into the Catholic Church. But on the way he died at Goa. Then Paremmakal became the Administrator of Cranganore. In 1799, after the death of Paremmakal, Mar Thomas VI embraced the Catholic Church in the presence of bishop Paul Pandari and his supporters who were then involved in a faction. Hence there was no one who was duly authorised to receive Mar Thomas VI into the Catholic Church. He, therefore, returned to the Jacobite Church after some six months. Several of his predecessors and successors had tried to become Catholic. But it was Mar Ivanios and Mar Theophilos who succeeded in their attempts.

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Fr. Placid J. Podipara CMI, perhaps the greatest ecclesiatical luminary of the present century in the Syro- Malabar Church, was born on October 3, 1899 at Arpookara in Kerala. He entered the CMI Congregation and was ordained priest in 1927. In 1928 he went to Rome for his higher studies and took a tripple doctorate in Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law. After returning home, he was professor for a long period of 24 years in the CMI seminary at Chethipuzha. In 1952 he was appointed Consultor of the Sacred Oriental Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome. In 1954 he was called to Rome to work as the backbone of the Liturgical Committee which really worked out the restoration of the liturgical and ritual identity of the Syro-Malabar Church. He was also the Rector of the Malabar College in Rome as long as it existed. He has written numerous articles and books analysing the various problems and prospects of the ecclesial life of the Thomas Christians of India. His book *The Church and the Pope* is generally considered a classic in ecclesiology. He is also a pioneer in the field of the Reunion Movement and in the building up of the Syro-Malankara Church. In connection with the 50th Anniversary of his Priestly Ordination in 1977 the Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies in Rome has started a series of 10 lectures every year on Eastern Christianity under the title *'Placid Lectures'*. Even today as Professor he gives lectures in the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome. Moreover he is a member of the commissions both of the Fundamental Law and Oriental Canon Law. This present work is an eye-opening one to every member of the Syro-Malabar Church. Every word in this work symbolizes the throbbing of one who has dedicated himself completely to his Mother Church—The Church of the Thomas Christians.

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