

**Thomas Vellilamthadam**

# **AFRICAN PAYAL**

**Towards a Mental Breakthrough in the  
Latin Connection of Indian Catholicism**

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## Prefatory Note

This is an enlarged version of a talk given at a Symposium on the Identity of the Oriental Churches, held at Paurastya Vidyāpitham (Pont. Oriental Institute of Religious Studies), Kottayam, on April 2, 1984.

The ideas expressed here are meant for those who know very well the history of what can be called the Latin Connection of Indian Catholicism.

'African Payal' is a kind of water hyacinth which is said to have reached India from abroad. It has now become an ubiquitous nuisance in tropical lagoons and canals.

Kottayam  
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T. V.



## African Payal

There is a need for an attitudinal change in the Church in India. The Orientals need much courage to reverse the historical coup, carried out by the Latin Church acting as the agent of the universal Church. A growth of an assertive religious consciousness in the Oriental Church vis-à-vis the Latin Church was begun by archbishop Joseph Kariattil and Thomas Paremmakkal, two great sons of the Oriental Church in India.

We must take into account the historical background to the Orientals' unquestioning acceptance of Latin dominance in the religio-liturgical spheres for a long time. First of all, there was the centuries-old hangover of the superiority once associated with the Europeans who colonized the Orientals and left their imprint on life and traditions of the people. The two-way process begun by the cultural and religious fusion of the colonization period still continues: Orientals provide missionaries but leaders come mostly from the Latins.

The Latin Church had the aura of imperial authority. The issues of moral, religious and liturgical spheres were decided elsewhere. There was not much change in the Oriental-Latin relationship even after 300 years. The Orientals continue to look up to faraway capitals for religious wisdom and guidelines of action, because the Latin Church continues to hold the whole world and all other sister-churches hostage to its dread. In a display of religious arrogance and selfish unconcern for the framework of global Christian cooperation, the Latin Church in India turns down all the major demands of the Oriental Churches. Thus the tortoise of Latin-Oriental negotiations does not

move at all. The Latin-Oriental relationship in India cannot be seen in isolation from the global domination of the Latin Church. By coincidence or by design, this domination happens to be under a general freeze now.

It is our opinion that the latinized oriental psyche should liberate itself from its gigantic pathological Latin obsession. Due to the presence of troikas and Ettuveetil pillamars, the churches in India are getting locked into an unchristian conflict syndrome. The Latin empire is still world wide, despite the rise of world conscience and of Vatican II. The world has become a jungle pure and simple and in it the Latins have assumed the role of the panthers. It is time to get the animals off the road. Let us recall the story based on the puranic characters Bhima and Hanuman. In a dramatic moment of Bhima's meeting with Hanuman, Bhima says in a satirical tone —

O look here, damned monkey  
 Who blocks my way, get away hence!  
 What is your reason for lying  
 Here to obstruct my passage?  
 You are a wild old monkey,  
 You don't know how to behave towards  
 men of status.  
 You were born in a species that lacks  
 discrimination;  
 Did your jump go wrong and make you fall ?  
 Why is there no compassion for you ?  
 Immediately clear the way, or  
 You will have to pay the penalty\*

(‘നോക്കോ! നമ്മുടെ മാറ്റേ കിടക്കുന്ന  
 മക്കോ! നിയങ്ങു മാറിക്കിടാ ശാ!  
 ഒപ്പം സ്ഥാനത്തു വന്നു ശയിപ്പാൻ നി-  
 നക്കോ! തോന്നുവാണെന്തോ! സംഗതി?  
 നാട്ടിൽ പ്രഭുക്കളെക്കണ്ടാലറിയാത്ത

\* quoted in V. S. Sharma, "Kalyanasaugandhikam", *Malayalam Literary Survey* 7, 2 (1983), 20.

കാട്ടിൽക്കിടക്കുന്ന മുളിക്കരങ്ങു നീ,  
 ഒട്ടം വകതിരിവില്ലാത്ത വല്ലാത്ത  
 കൂട്ടത്തിൽ വന്നു പിറന്നു വളർന്നു നീ,  
 ചാട്ടത്തിൽ നിന്നു പിഴച്ചു പോയോ നിന്റെ  
 കൂട്ടത്തിൽ മററാരുമില്ലാത്തതെന്തെടോ ?  
 പെട്ടെന്നെഴുന്നേറ്റു പോകായ്കിലാപത്തു  
 പെട്ടീടുമെന്നു ധരിക്കു നീ വാനരാ!"

Though the Oriental Church has withstood severe onslaughts for almost half a millennium, it did suffer considerable decline. The lowest point was reached when the Latin conquistadors took over the priestly training in the 19th century and started destroying even the vestiges of glory for which Malabar Church had been known throughout history. However, the inner spirit and strength of Malabar ethos asserted once again and a time came when a galaxy of priests, historians and theologians transformed a dispirited people into fearless fighters for their respect, rights and values. Their exertions and exhortations resulted in the theological emancipation of the Malabar Church. The climax was reached in 1962 when the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, now known as Paurastya Vidyapitham (Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies), Kottayam, was started. This is a period of religious awakening that can rightly be called the Malabar Renaissance.

The Orientals seem to sense in the Latins a tendency to assume an unusual measure of authority and domination. The Latin factor played a decisive rôle to mutilate the peace which the Indian Catholicism enjoyed since the apostolic times. The Latin tornado hit the Indian subcontinent 400 years ago. It was a real tornado, for it appeared all of a sudden by the advent of the Portuguese traders. A cyclone can be located but a tornado cannot be, for it develops all of a sudden out of a thunderstorm. Moreover, this Latin tornado was struck in a country which was highly prone to foreign invasion and domination. Now there is little that the posterity can do except clean up the debris.

Let us look straight at this problem. If we want to change this established violence (of the Latin Church in India), this cannot be achieved through prayer alone. We have to identify all the obstacles to peace, justice and reconciliation<sup>1</sup> and tackle them simultaneously.

Once called the community of the ancient Christians, the Malabar Church has become the guinea pig for the Latins (universal and local) to exhibit their religious sadism. The younger generation of the Malabar Church feels the Latins have to be warned that their time of unresisted adventuring and domination in the Oriental Churches in India is over. The Oriental Churches are on the point of making important decisions about their future policy. These are to deal with a necessity which is disputed by nobody.

The serious latinisation began with the Synod of Diamper in 1599, convoked by the Goan Archbishop Menezes. It brought the Orientals under Latin control. The canons<sup>2</sup> of Diamper prohibited contact with the Hindu culture, creating anti-Indian indoctrination in the Indian Catholicism<sup>3</sup>.

De-latinisation drive is an urgent task to erase the Latin imprint on history. There must be a good reason why a vast majority of the Orientals are Latin addicts. Orientals have not evolved a theological culture and it is a fact that they are not terribly oriental-minded. How many Orientals read and study the history of their Church? Authentic eastern ideas are not easily understood or imbibed by the majority of the Orientals, especially when their minds are crowded and intoxicated with myths and blind faith in the Latin way of salvation. A majority of the Orientals have become the victims of the cargo mentality<sup>3</sup>.

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1. See the important study of V. F. Vineeth, *Justice and Reconciliation. The Sad but Living Story of a Church in Fetters*, Bangalore: 1983.
  2. Cf. C. Choondal, *Christian Folksongs*, Trichur: 1983, 27; Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians*, Bombay: 1970; A. M. Mundadan, *Traditions of St Thomas Christians*, Bangalore: 1970
  3. T. Vellilamthadam, *Maya Safari*, Kottayam: 1983, 36-37

It is good to recall the fact that time and again down the centuries Orientals have been looted, robbed and dispoiled in all manners and ways by the Latins. Such a massive oppression requires the setting up and operating of a vast legal and oppressive machine - a two-tiered machine in which the universal network, which both directs and implements, works together with the Latin elements. Still now the Orientals are being suffocated under this two-tiered oppressive machine. Thus the Orientals have to fight two religious battles at the same time: one at home and the other in the international arena. Hence there is a dual role for the Oriental theologians.

An unresolved Indian issue is of dual advantage to the universal Church. The fact that the Orientals resist the Latinisation process helps the Latins raise the 'Oriental danger' cry for the benefit of the 'true Catholic faith'. This in turn serves as a useful cement for the pastoral unemployment of the troika groups<sup>4</sup>. Sir Thomas More in his famous book *Utopia* expresses a similar idea about the princes: "Most princes apply themselves to warlike pursuits...rather than to useful arts of peace. They are generally set on acquiring new kingdoms rightly or wrongly, than, on governing well those that they already have."<sup>5</sup>

There is violence in the Church, as there is violence at home, in the school, in the society. What might be called religious violence is ugly. Its peculiar horror and ugliness stem from its violations of the trust and love upon which human and church relations depend. Wars and murders can be easily tackled but domination of a Church by another Church is not easily identified. For centuries Latins have raided Orientals' wardrobes for their own clothing, appropriating everything from territory to personnel.<sup>6</sup>

4. For this term, see T. Vellilamthadam and J. Naduvilezham, "Unethical Toleration" *Christian Orient*, 4, 4 (1983), 172, n.2.

5. Thomas More, *Utopia*, New York: 1949, 6.

6. Orientals in India were enjoying the whole of India. Their chief bishop's title was "The Metropolitan and the Gate of all India" (Cf,

All those people who, over the past centuries, have tackled the problem of the oppressed Oriental Churches have trodden a well-worn route. These oppressed Churches start by recognizing the sorry fact that they are ill-treated and now they examine the ways in which they are ill-treated, trying to prevent the same things happening again in the history of Christianity. To combat the trends of established violence in the Catholic Church, we have to determine the nature and direction of the steps that need to be taken. The more we know about this unchristian problem, the easier it will be to detect its effects and identify its many victims.

It is not easy to accept that the Latin Church does not commit acts of violence against the sister Churches to the point where their liturgical development, pastoral duties and sometimes even their Christian faith are jeopardized. This seems to be quite contrary to what we regard as man's innate religious trust, and contrary even to the elementary human laws of love towards fellowmen.

It is still harder to a Church to recognize that such acts of religious and pastoral violence take place even at the last quarter of the 20th century. An unwritten law of silence has long surrounded, and still surrounds, the problem of domination of the Latin Church over the Oriental Churches in India. Even today the attitude of 'not interfering' and hence of doing nothing when Oriental Churches are oppressed and cruelly mistreated within the universal Church is widespread. Cruelties perpetrated against the

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Paulinus a S. Bartholomaeo OCD, *India Orientalis Christiana*, Rome: 1794, 88; P. J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, Alleppey: 1976, 32 ff; P. J. Podipara, "Introduction" to T. Paremmakkal, *The Varthamanappustakam*, Rome: 1971, 3; X. Koodapuzha, "The Indian Church of the Thomas Christians", *Christian Orient*, I,1 (1980), 28; G. Chediath and T. Vellilamthadam, "One Territory, One Bishop, One Jurisdiction. Solution to the Problem?" *Ibid.*, 4, 1 (1983), 12-30; Also A Vallavanthara, *India in 1500 AD. The Narratives of Joseph the Indian*, Kottayam; 1984, 97, E. R. Hambye, *St. Thomas the Apostle of India*, Kottayam; 1984.

Oriental Churches form part of the history of Christianity. The situation seems to be improving if we look at it on the time-scale of a millennium. If we set aside our feelings of shame and study the facts objectively, it soon becomes clear that it is always the Orientals who suffer most.

There is more than mere religious violence in the Latin domination. The current wave of Latin violence which seems to be obstinately persisting in India constitutes only a link, and in all probability not the least one, in the long chain of religious violence which have been rocking mankind periodically. The current tide of religious violence cannot be dismissed as an exception in the otherwise peaceful religion. So we need to have a perspective which can explain the phenomenon so that any step to contain or prevent future violence becomes a viable prospect.

To begin with, let us recognize that the religious actors in the present Indian context are religious collectivities, Latins and Orientals. Latin exclusivism and arrogance are partly a product of European colonialism. Latin expansionism and domination tend to claim that the Latin Church is the true Church, thereby denying the distinct identity of the Orientals. The Orientals in India who are the ancient Christian community resist this claim most vociferously. They have not merely pastoral strength but also sociological strength, given their religious cultural and historical significance. But the Latins have a territorial and material strength, acquired through political and colonial expansion since 6th century.

The territorial domination of the Latins in India has become the leading socio-religious evil in the Catholic Church in India. One has to understand the reasons for it. These reasons are not merely local or regional, isolated or separated. They involve virtually the whole development and expansion of Western Christianity over a period which has clear beginnings in the 16th century. Sociologists can

try to isolate some of these reasons: Roman legal systems colonialism, inadequate knowledge of non-Christian religions, centralisation of Roman Curia, inadequate knowledge of the Eastern spiritual traditions.

Latin Church has got immense material security, political power and organisational strength. So some of the Latin Prelates in India — the troika — began to identify politics and religion, political domination and spiritual domination. They began to identify Catholicism with Latin Catholicism, causing spiritual emptiness and breakdown of Christianity.

The Latin Church in India is now obsessed with a territorial control. This-worldly obsession of the troika has become a world scandal. To possess a territory means to possess land. In primitive times, when the main profession was agriculture, man needed land. Land-ownership was then linked to power and status. 'Latifundia' was a source of economic power in ancient Rome<sup>7</sup>. The Church has become identified with a territory and therefore identified with hierarchy of unequal wealth and power. The Latin domination is a part of a larger whole, measured vaguely in terms of land. Until recent times, the main criterion of power and authority in family and State was land-ownership. But modernization and monetization have made important changes in the attitude towards land and land-ownership.

The greed for the territorial aggrandizement is only a continuation of the animal instinct in man. It is achieved through mere muscle power. Latins in India have the crude muscle power as well as economic power to consolidate the previously acquired territory. Animals occupy a specified territory. Their survival depends to a certain extent on the possession of the territory. For example,

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7. T. Vellilamthadam, "Jerusalem or Rome", *Jeevadhara* 58 (1980), 314



lions are territorial predators<sup>8</sup>. An adult male lion establishes his own dominion over 'home range' and marks out limits of his territory by establishing 'scent posts'. He urinates over bushes and other selected land marks. Urine and odour constitutes a territorial barrier to other animals<sup>9</sup>. In order to proclaim exclusive right to a piece of property the male lions produce blood-curdling roars. A pair of cranes often issues a unison call as a territorial warning<sup>10</sup>.

It is sad to note that in man animal instincts continue to dominate. Yes, man is still a brute. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says: "In spite of our great advances in science and technology, we are not far removed from the brute. Animals squabble occasionally and fight ferociously at the mating season but they do not periodically destroy each other"<sup>11</sup>.

So far, the concrete facts of the territorial domination were hidden. In the middle ages and during missionary conquests, savage physical torture was used in the Latin Church<sup>12</sup>. In the modern times, rude psychological torture

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8. In the 19th century, there existed the metaphor of the lion and the mice to describe the domination of the Latin Church over the Orientals in India. Bishop Pareparampil who was the bishop of Ernakulam from 1896 to 1919, makes us know the prevalent attitude. Latin Church, especially "Verapoly is a lion". Orientals "are only mice". It is futile to fight against a lion: "Can you fight against the mighty lion? The lion will, with a gentle strike of his paw crush the mice". Cf. A Pareparampil, *An Account of the very important period of the History of the Catholic Syrian Christians of Malabar*, Puthenpally: 1920, 79

9. Cf. *Science in USSR*, 4 (1983), 84-95; T. Vellilamthadam, *The Spectre of Being*, Kottayam: 1982, 41 and 34

10. Cf. *National Geographic*, Oct. 1983, 555

11. S. Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Culture*, New Delhi: 1968, 78

12. The episode of the killing of a Malabar priest shows the cruelty of the Latin 'conquerors'. Cf. T. Paremmakkal, *op. cit.* 40. The Instruction of the Propaganda Congregation to the Vicar Apostolic of Malabar and to his missionaries in 1774 commanded that "they should abstain from practising such cruelties" (*Ibid.* 41). But "Between dove and vulture, does the aboriginal hunter, whose way is to kill, differentiate?"

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is systematically used against the Oriental Churches in India<sup>13</sup>. The tendency in the troika group to dominate through territorial domination shows the existence of sadistic elements in them. They have not successfully solved the anal phase of their psycho-sexual development as Freud's psychoanalytic theory clearly postulates.

Territorial domination or topographical domination is situated in a sub-human level of phylogenetic development, for the rational human beings are capable of going beyond the *topos*, space. In fact, territorial domination is the remnant of a 'jungle' domination - rule of jungle, beast-like domination. It is the sphere of *dandaniti*, cult of power. Chandogya Upanishad says: 'Power is superior

(വ്യാപാരമേ ഹനനമാം വനവേടനങ്ങളോ

വ്യാപനമായ" കഴുകനെന്നും കപോതമെന്നും?) as poet Kumaran Asan in his 'Fallen Flower' says. Cf. P. K. Narayana Pillai (ed), *Thus Spake the Poetic Trio*, Trivandrum: 1979, 41.

During the period of the missionary conquest, there were regular inquisitions in Goa: "A Goa funzionava regolarmente l'inquisizione" Cf. G. Beltrami, *La Chiesa Caldea nel secolo dell'unione*. Rome: 1933, 39. Thus the Malabar Christians had to suffer a lot from the Portuguese terror. So Pope Gregory XIII, in a letter dated 29th Nov. 1578, tells Mar Abraham, Abp of Angamaly, to go to Goa without fear of oppression, injury or molestation by the Portuguese. C. J. George, *The Orthodoxy of the St Thomas Christians*, Kottayam: 1904, v

13. During the 19th century, false reports and inadequate translations were frequent: "The Syrian priests did not know the mother tongue of their European superiors. They had therefore to employ an interpreter, a Latin priest, who did not sometimes faithfully translate what was told him" (A. Pareparampil, *op. cit.* 75. In the year 1876 a cable sent to the Pope from Alleppey was falsely translated into Italian, cf. P. J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy.... 177-78*

Quite recently while the dialogue between the Latins and the Orientals were going on, the Latin bishops in India sent a memorandum to the Pope in december 1982. And quietly another one was submitted in Sept. 1983, as an 'internal' (?) document of the C. B. C. I. !! It should be noted that already in January 1954, just after the visit of Card. Tisserant to Kerala, the Latin Catholics (of Malabar) sent a memorandum to Pope Pius XII, in which they affirmed that the fundamental rite of Malabar is the Latin rite!

to knowledge. One powerful man can defeat a hundred men of knowledge. If a man is powerful, he triumphs. By power the world stands firm"<sup>14</sup>.

Acquiescing in both *artha* and *kama*, the Latins aspire to gain *dharma*. But they conveniently forget that the worldly powers and pleasures do not necessarily lead to the attainment of a spiritual order. They remain the guardians or agents of all material wealth, hoping that the material goods would be transformed into religious goods and values! They are materially the masters in the Indian Church, while the Orientals remain materially and spiritually dependent and subordinate slaves.

In this peculiar situation, religion is absorbed into a territory: *dharma* into *artha* and *kama*. In other words, through territorial domination, the Latins identify both the secular law and power with the sacred law and power. Ethics and religion are eclipsed in this process. There is no place for ethical behaviour in a Latin universe of thinking and acting. There are no human values and human rights. Social doctrine of the Church based on human dignity and equality cannot be practised in the Indian Church !!

Holders of vast territory are ipso facto holders of temporal power. Temporal power is indispensable for those who equate God's kingdom with earthly kingdom. Those who have no security over other world cling to this-worldly power. Formerly kings were the rulers of vast lands and territory. They conquered everything. But now the troikas are eager to follow the example of worldly rulers. The

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There is a lot of instances where there are manipulations, lack of basic honesty and ill-will, thus systematically disregarding the principles of Vatican II and the teachings of Popes. Many a time, some of the Latin Hierarchs jeopardized the functioning of the C. B. C. I. by avoiding the proper representation of the three Individual Churches among the Office Bearers of the C. B. C. I. and in the C. B. C. I. Secretariate. Under this peculiar unchristian atmosphere in the present-day catholicism in India, the futility of dialogue has become very clear,

14. Quoted in R. Lannoy, *The Speaking Tree*, New York: 1975, 320

myth, 'The Story of King Aama'<sup>15</sup>, describes the story of the conversion of king Aama to a heretical sect and his refusal to protect the grants given to the Brahmins, because they (1) were indulging in the mastery over the land, (2) were full of greed, (3) were slaves to sensuous pleasures and (4) were practising violence. The myth shows how ownership of land and hence of villages and towns is conducive to the other three vices: greed, sensual pleasure and violence.

The territorial domination should be abolished in Indian Catholicism, because

- a) it impedes the general Christian life and evangelical precepts;
- b) the territorial possessions of the Latins "impede the general prosperity because they are extensive, unused or poorly used, or because they bring hardship to the peoples or are detrimental to the interests of the country"<sup>16</sup>. Moreover, "private property does not constitute for any one an absolute and unconditional right. No one is justified in keeping for his exclusive use what he does not need"<sup>17</sup>... and "if there should arise a conflict between acquired private rights and primary community exigencies, it is the responsibility of public authorities to look for a solution..."<sup>18</sup>.
- c) territorial domination is detrimental to the Christian fellowship<sup>19</sup>

15. Cf. Veena Das, *Structures and Cognition. Aspects of Hindu Caste and Ritual*, New Delhi: 1982, 52ff.

16. Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, n. 24

17. *Ibid*, no. 23

18. *Ibid*. Latin Bishops in India have to comply with the New Latin Canon Law (1983). Canon 372 says: "If...it is thought to be helpful, there may be established in a given territory particular Churches, distinguished by the rite of the faithful or by some other similar quality". Thus with *The Code of Canon Law*, Latins in India can no longer call India "a Latin territory".

19. William Logan who was the collector of Malabar at the end of 19th century has noted that the idea of the right of territory was foreign to Malayalees and that no permission was needed to hunt in any territory. Cf. his *Malabar Manual*, Trivandrum: 1981 (first published 1887), 204; cf. T. Vellilamthadam, *Maya Satari*, Kottayam: 1984, 6

d) territorial domination is a structural sin which perpetuates the atrocities of a sinful society<sup>20</sup>.

e) territorial domination is misappropriation of the earth. It is quite strange that divine mission in India is being limited territorially. Oriental Churches in India were chained and not allowed to go beyond the river Bharatapuzha in the north of Kerala<sup>21</sup>. How can the kingdom of God be territorially limited by the Latin power in the Catholic Church? In 1854, the White Chief in Washington, USA, made an offer for a large area of Red Indian land and promised a 'reservation' for the native Red Indians in America. Then the native chief's reply would echo deep human feeling against territorial oppression: "How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? ... If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories ... Our dead never forget this beautiful earth, for it

20. T. Vellilamthadam, *Man and Social Problems*, Kottayam: 1984, 34. At the 10th General Congregation of the 1983 Synod of Bishops in Rome, Abp Henry D'Souza, of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar, pointed out the existence of 'structural' sin and 'structural' injustices and told the bishops that the Indian bishops were working for equality of people by working against discrimination and subordination (Cf. *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng. Edition) Oct. 31, 1983, 4. But it is a plain fact that Abp Henry D'Souza is the chief protagonist of the perpetuation of the unchristian Latin domination over the 'Oriental Church' in India. By his 'Doublespeak' and 'Doublethink' the Orwellian vision of an inhuman world has been fulfilled in the Latin Church in India! By his outdated pre-Vatican theology, structural injustices continue to exist in the Indian Church and reconciliation becomes a futile effort! Let it be clear that unless and until the Latin Church in India abandons its territorial domination, there is no hope for reconciliation in the Catholic Church.

21. Cf. X. Koodapuzha, *art cit.* 50. J. Vellian, "A Church on Fire", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, XXVII, 4 (1971), 286



your reason for existing. .  
 Man, however,  
 — forgive me! —  
 is something rather more  
 than a mere tree''<sup>23</sup>.

A Christian must see that "buildings, no matter how magnificent exteriors and how sumptuous their decorated interiors, are not, and never shall be, the Church. This is as true of the Churches of Jerusalem as of the local Churches anywhere else in the world. It is living communities which form the People of God, the Church''<sup>24</sup>.

Territory has neither immediate nor eschatological value. It has, it should be admitted, a political value. For brown sahibs and troika groups, religion is politics or rather they prefer to act as political than religious leaders or pastors. As long as the Latin domination over the Orientals in India prevails, there is no question of a 'christian community' in India. For the Orientals, the problem is religious and pastoral; for the Latins, the problem is political. The future of the Indian Church cannot be chained by the Latin territorial restrictions. Now the vast 'Latin areas' can be used only for Wild-Life Preservation! Living Christian communities are not found in these wild jungle areas which are kept unused, poorly managed and inadequately administered pastorally. It is a well known fact that the Oriental Churches are suffering from all kinds of territorial restrictions which are crippling the growth of their Churches. Troikas want to continue to impose further restrictions in the name of 'particular Indian context''<sup>25</sup>.

23. H. Camara, *A Thousand Reasons for living*, London: 1981, 21

24. J.F. Long, "Editorial" *Diakonia* 17, 3 (1982), 190

25. Cf. "Latin-Oriental Relations and the mission of the Church in India", a document submitted by a group of the Latin bishops of India to Pope John Paul II in 1982.

C.A. Abraham in his "The Indian Reality -- A Church at Risk" (*Christian Orient* 5, 3 (Sept. 1984), 122-33) analyses the dangerous consequences of the illogical claims of the Latin Church in India.

One of the main tasks of today is to inform us all - laymen and clergy - about the ethical aspects of religious utterances and life. Now one feels the need for frequent deliberation on topics such as medical trials of drugs or other chemicals, use of human embryos and surrogate mothers. We are forced to look into the ethics of human utterances and behaviour as well as the theological research in general. Let us have time to reflect, time to discuss and time to appraise the moral issues.

The subject of unethical behaviour in religious leaders is an unpleasant matter. Most of the things happening in the third world is not very pleasant. But the unethical behaviour of domination of the troika group is the most unpleasant thing one can imagine. Religion is not a question of relating to God alone but it all the more is a question of relating to man. It is a fact that the gap between the first world and the third world is increasing in the field of life-style as well as in the field of implementation of human rights. In the developing world, there is a tolerance towards unjust socio-religious situation. What is recognized as universally valid and right cannot be applied to India, according to the troika group. They simply exploit the lack of awareness from the part of the Indians.

Doctors, lawyers and teachers have their norms. Hippocrates' oath is well known to the world since the ancient times. In 1982 about 450 journalists gathered in Agra and uttered what was later called the Agra Declaration. In it they declared: "We shall endeavour to report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty and shall not suppress essential facts ... We shall not let ourselves be exploited, by others, nor shall we exploit our status for personal ends. Personal matters shall not be allowed to influence professional conduct"<sup>26</sup>. But the troika groups easily deviate from the elementary human behaviour. The troika groups have become a group of pundits, a corps

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26. Cf. Indian Express, Oct. 11, 1982



d'elite. Their normal occupation is manipulation of official texts<sup>27</sup> and preparation of memoranda. These pundits are extremely vigilant to keep the Latin colonial structure of the Indian Catholicism. They are the defenders of the bygone colonial religion of the mediterranean region. In 1876 a cable sent to the Pope from Alleppey was falsely translated into Italian<sup>28</sup>. Quite recently while the dialogue between the Latins and the Orientals was going on, the Latin bishops gave a memorandum to the Holy Father in december 1982. And quietly another one was submitted in September 1983, as an 'internal' (?) document of the C. B. C. I. !!

There is a lot of instances where there are manipulations, lack of basic honesty and ill-will, thus systematically disregarding the principles of Vatican II and the teachings of the Popes. Many a time, the troika jeopardized the functioning of the C. B. C. I. by avoiding the proper representation of the three Individual Churches among the Office Bearers of the C. B. C. I. and in the C. B. C. I. Secretariate. Under this peculiar unchristian atmosphere in the present-day catholicism in India, the futility of dialogue has become very clear.

A beautiful narration with fictitious additions is an art. It is something beautiful. But pure lying is not only ugly but unethical and unbecoming a prelate<sup>29</sup>. In India there are cases of fake doctors who without a medical degree work for years, fake lawyers, fake teachers. There are 'experts' in forgery, theft and false swearing. But the case of pure lying from a hierarch is something unheard of:

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27. Cf. *Christian Orient* 4, 1 (1983), 47; also A. Vallavanthara, *A Catalogue of the Malayalam Manuscripts in the Vatican Library*, Kottayam: 1984, 61. It is known that the documents of the dialogue meeting in Bombay in Aug. 1983 were manipulated . . . .

28. For the original text and its false translation, see P. J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy* . . . , 177-78

29. For the false ideas given by Abp Henry d'Souza, cf. *Christian Orient* 3, 1-2 (1982), 36-49; these ideas were refuted by Fr. Robert CST. cf. *Ibid.* 4, 1 (1983), 31-33

"There are three sorts of people my soul hates, whose existence I consider an outrage: a poor man swollen with pride, a rich man who is a liar and an adulterous old man who has no sense"<sup>30</sup>. The great Tamil poet Ilamko Adikal in his epic *Cilapatikaram* speaks clearly:

"Seek God and serve those who are near him.  
Do not tell lies"<sup>31</sup>.

Also the great Oriya poet Radhanath Ray (1848-1904) condemns openly the liars, back-biters, dacoits and princes<sup>32</sup>.

The *Bhagavadgita* prohibits low acts such as falsehood, deception, fraud, oppression, wrong-doing and violence. Yet the troikas seem to follow the morality of the Brahmins at the end of 18th century, as Abbé Dubois notes: "Are their morals irreproachable? Oh, far from it! My pen would refuse to describe all their wrong-doings...I think that we may take as their greatest vices the untrustworthiness, deceit and double-dealings..." (quoted in N. C. Chaudhuri, *Hinduism*, New Delhi: 1979, 170)

Arthur Koestler (1905-83) shows in his novels *The Gladiators*, *Darkness at Noon* and *Arrival and Departure* the fate of the helpless individuals caught up in the conflict between collective necessity and individual morality. He shows how the love of mankind in abstract can engender contempt for man in the flesh. The *Gladiators* tell the story of the abortive revolt of the Roman slaves led by Spartacus. The Roman slaves achieve a series of victories and are on the brink of capturing the capital. But final success eludes them and a barbaric hedonism and inner corruption bring about their downfall. This story seems to show the impossibility of combining power with righteousness.

30. *Ecclesiasticus* 25: 3-4; also 27:1-5, 22

31. Quoted in K.K.K.N. Kurup, *Aspects of Kerala History and Culture*, Trivandrum: 1977, 7

32. Cf. G. Mohanty, *Radhanath Ray*. New Delhi: 1978, 41

It seems that the power which came to the troika through religion resembles the power of those who have it in political sphere. Thus the troika can be regarded both as the counterpart of a secular ruling order and the vestigial remnant of the colonial regime. One can note with surprise how easy it is for any average member of the troika to become an oppressor. It is easy to acquire and keep the power obtained through manipulation and did not require any help from an army or officials to maintain this power, because the religious realm enjoyed unlimited power without real pastoral responsibility. Besides, the power once obtained was never lost or abandoned. Any one who is familiar with the unlimited power over territory and extravaganza by which day to day affairs are handled, will understand the worldly grandeur and the power of domination. Thus the Latin Church offers a real attraction to power. In its apparent unworldliness the power maintains a connection between religion and power.

Furthermore, the troikas enjoy freedom from all pastoral constraints. Once they attained power to dominate the sister Churches, they would not even think about their humble origin. With their arrogance and deceit they impress even the political leaders who practise occasional arrogance.

History has testified the existence of state terror and its brutalities in the world. It seems that the ethical ideals are a luxury which the troikas cannot afford, their business being to seek only advantage and containment of the Orientals. We are living in a peculiar world where religion has become politics.

Early Christianity has attempted to merge religious and ethical ideals. The present set-up in the Latin catholicism shows a trend which is mere politics, both religion and ethics set aside. It is time to show that the world still needs ethical principles. That is as true in religion as it is true in politics. Without ethico-religious principles, a sense of human life is lost. Human relations and dialogue meetings are reduced to making pious exhortations and exercise in futility.

Catholicism in India would undoubtedly suffer from such tricks and manoeuvres. The future of Indian catholicism in this perspective will not be very bright. Where ethical principles are neglected, nothing better can be expected — only savage fighting and immoral domination of man by man.

Tolerance can be a great virtue. When what is tolerated is inhuman and unchristian domination of man by man tolerance itself can become an evil. One can of course make light of all this with the excuse that domination is as old as humanity and is a global phenomenon. It is true that domination occurs in the secular field too. Can an authentic christianity afford to let loose the tiger of domination? Can the Christian leaders tolerate the rule of jungle of a few *kuppayakars*, *toppas*, *parankis*<sup>33</sup> or brown sahibs?<sup>34</sup> *Yatha Raja Tatha Praja*, so goes a Sanskrit saying. To tolerate the Latin domination as inevitable in the Indian Church at the end of the 20th century is to give a certain legitimacy to it. Orientals in India know that the established reality can change. They are determined to see that it must change.

Pope John Paul II affirms that "this century has so far been a century of calamities for man, of great devastations, not only material ones but also moral ones, indeed perhaps above all moral ones. Admittedly it is not easy to compare one age or one century with another under this aspect, since that depends also on changing historical standards. Nevertheless without applying these comparisons, one still cannot fail to see that this century has so far been one in which people have provided many injustices and sufferings for themselves"<sup>35</sup>. Moreover, he affirms that "after all, peace comes down to respect for man's inviolable rights — *opus justitiae pax* — while war

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33. For these terms, see T. Paremmakkal, *op.cit.* 66-8

34. Cf. T. Vellilamthadam, *From the Burning sands*, Kottayam: 1982, 16

35. John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, no. 17

springs from the violation of these rights and brings with it still graver violations of them. If human rights are violated in times of peace, this is particularly painful and from the point of view of progress it represents an incomprehensible manifestation of activity directed against man which can in no way be reconciled with any programme"<sup>36</sup>. Again he observes that "human rights are being violated in various ways ... We see before us concentration camps, violence, torture, terrorism, and discrimination in many forms ... Human life is, even in time of peace, condemned to various sufferings and, along with these sufferings, there is a development of various forms of domination, totalitarianism, neo-colonialism and imperialism, which are a threat also to the harmonious living together"<sup>37</sup>.

Therefore the main concern should be clearly with the wider issue of human rights in the Catholic Church in India. In *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII states that "in our day ... it is required, first of all, that there be written in concise and limpid phraseology, a charter of fundamental human rights"<sup>38</sup>. Now the freedom to propagate Gospel in India is being restricted by the Latin Church. "Every being has the right to honour God according to the dictates of an upright conscience and therefore the right to worship God privately and publicly"<sup>39</sup>.

Orientalists should be ready to oppose the annoying habits of destroying the Gospel values by the troika group, for every violation of human rights in the Church is an invi-

36. *Ibid*

37. *Ibid*

38. *Pacem in Terris*, no. 75

39. *Ibid.*, no. 14; also *Rerum Novarum*, no. 32; *Mater et Magistra*, no. 248-53; *Redemptor Hominis* no. 17; also T. Vellilamthadam. *Man and Social Problems*...36-45; also nos 37 and 38 of *The Church and Human Rights* (the paper of the Pont. Commission Justice and Peace, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948-73)

tation for yet another. There are enough people in the Oriental Churches alive today who have seen the horrors of the Latin domination.

The tendency of domination in man has been having the upper hand and the Latin Church in India has become impervious to right and wrong, immunised to the pains and sorrows of the victimised Oriental Churches. Domination is a global phenomenon. We know that there is no absolute increase in domination: only more human beings are coming forward these days to speak about this. Because our theological thinking has shown that we have not been content to glory in the past but have wanted to renew these glories in the present and to produce a really living Christian community in the future.

Orientalists do not expect that the oppressors would change their attitude overnight. But they are convinced that a dominating and oppressing catholicism is superfluous to the modern India and modern Indian culture. It has no future. It is only an unnecessary addition to a country where there are many world religions.

Scientists can fix anything — kidney, heart, bone, eyes. History has shown that Latins too could fix anything — faith, prayers, ideas, devotions. Actually an Oriental is 99% transplant! This religious emasculation is not only a religious problem but also an ethical problem. Orientalists can bring suits for damages, for there is a growing evidence that the Latin obsession with domination of sister churches is not subsiding.

As always, the Orientalists have more to lose in the global phenomenon of Latin domination: they are left with unwanted frustration, unnecessary devotions, unchristian authoritarianism and a heavy psychological damage from the historical malpractices of the conquistadors.

The powerful Latin lobby now overshadows all the existing political lobbies! With its tentacles spread so wide since 1599, the Indian Latin lobby has become a law unto

itself, making a mockery of the Council and Papal teachings. The Latin lobby has created a parallel religious system in India and there are enough loopholes in the catholic Church for them to get away with it. The universal Church's attempts to control them have so far been in the sphere of pious exhortations.

Troika's falsification is not out of ignorance. It is deliberate. Troika knows fully well that. It wants to continue the protective custody of the Orientals in India till the end of the world, *saecula saeculorum!* Objectivity is sacrificed for prejudice and arrogance. There is no possibility for a dialogue even among well-meaning people. It may be worthwhile remembering Betolt Brecht's words:

Even hatred against baseness  
Distorts the features.  
Even wrath at injustice  
Makes the voice hoarse. Oh, we  
Who wanted to prepare the ground  
For friendliness,  
Could not be friendly ourselves<sup>40</sup>.

Indeed, things have reached a stage where it is no longer a question of protecting Oriental individuals but saving the Oriental spiritual and liturgical tradition itself from the forces of Latin religious violence. The troikas have declared war on the Oriental Churches in India and all the values they stand for: simplicity, neighbourly love, peace, independence, unity in diversity, predominance of spirit and *Communio ecclesiology*.

Now what should be the Orientals' response to this danger of Latin violence. That is the important question to which we should address ourselves. It is easy to blame this or that individual. The fact is that the universal Church will find it difficult to resolve the perilous consequence of the Latin connection as long as the Latin Church

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40. Quoted in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, March 4, 1984, 35

in India is dominated by the troikas who believe that power and religion go hand in hand. The majority of the Latin hierarchs in India are either unwilling to act up to their religious sentiments in the best interests of Christian values or they are virtually captives of the troika groups. The question remains unanswered: how can the universal Church allow a religious bulldozing in India? Undoubtedly, it is a '*mysterium*' (*fidei*)! Denying human rights to the Orientals in India is maintaining unity and order in the Catholic Church!

The causes underlying the frequent and ugly outbreaks of religious violence do the leaders no credit. For, they signify the moral decay and imply the decline in standards in ethical and religious behaviour. The tricks and manoeuvres were good and tolerated in the medieval Europe, but one doubts seriously whether they can be tolerated in the modern Indian society. To the great surprise of all, they still continue to exist! For the troika, Christian life is no more a commitment. It is a career like any other. It has become a trade in which the Orientals are hired and sold — with profits! In the face of moral decay it is necessary to get at the diseased tissues of the mystical body. The underlying symptoms of the Latin violence are moral. In 1931 Mahatma Gandhi said: "In the midst of untruth, truth persists; in the midst of darkness, light persists; in the midst of death, life persists"<sup>41</sup>.

Total oblivion of the Orientals in the Latin connection impeded the progress of the Orientals. The Latins were traders of spices but have assumed sword and sceptre. They could thus easily join the cannibal galaxy<sup>42</sup>.

The logic of domination is not the domination of logic. Territorial domination is a quantitative aspect of domination. Logical domination paves the way for real domi-

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41. Quoted in *India Today*, April 15, 1984, 76

42. In astronomy, it is one of the vast colonies of stars that devour smaller galaxies.



nation and real domination should be fought with logic and logos. Logos is rational power. Territorial domination is a part of political ethics (*rajaniti*). In the case of territorial domination of the Latins it is both political ethics and religious ethics. From both point of view, it is unethical.

It is very convenient for the troika to dominate in the name of religion, in the name of evangelization. It is convenient to perform *yajna* (holy sacrifice to fire), incense and to spend their time in acts of devotion to God and in exercises of periodical discussions over the problem of Latin-Oriental relationship. Where greed, power and lust combine, any argument can be evoked. For the troika, dharma is only a concept, not a reality.

Man uses his talents to dominate other men. Everyday he perfects his talents to better dominate his fellow human beings. It is good to remember that all kinds of chauvinism is bad, male chauvinism worse, religious chauvinism the worst. Thus human beings, keeping their human form, can assume the character of beasts. The Bible teaches that man has dominion over fishes and fowls but now the troikas who know the Bible show that they can have dominion over their fellow human beings!

The frustrating thing about the Indian Catholicism is how blind the Church is to its present theological development. Young Orientals know that neither their leaders nor the universal Church will save them from the Latin Ettuveetil pillamars<sup>43</sup>. The Malayalee poet Changampuzha (1911-48) wrote in a poem:

The rich man's baby has milk,  
The poor man's boy has only saliva;  
This is not the will of god; if it is  
We may kick that god<sup>44</sup>!

43. Cf. T. Vellilamthadam and J. Naduvilezham, *art. cit.*

44. Quoted in K. K. N. Kurup, "An Early Marxist Play", *Malayalam Literary Survey*, 7, 1 (1983), 19-20

With mere luck of history, the Latin Church has accumulated vast land. Is it the will of god to keep it unused? It is mere the greed of man. It is useful to remember the fate of the magistrate in the novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) of South Africa's J. M. Coetzee. The magistrate is in the service of the empire. But in the end he is the victim of conspiracy. The troikas think they have the role of the guardians of the Latin empire in India.

The Malabar Church has suffered a prolonged period of oppression and domination. But it has also learned to fight and die for its freedom and liberation from the Latin domination. They have the long history of struggle against the brutal Nature. Jnanapith Award Winner S. K. Pottakkatt (1913-82) in his novel *Vishakanyaka (The Poison Damsel*, first published in 1949) narrates the story of the migration of hard-working Christians from south Kerala to virgin forest-lands of north Kerala. For the migrants it is a fight on two fronts: one against the unrelenting Nature and other against the vain land-owners. Now too the Malabar Christians have to fight on two fronts: one against the unethical territorial domination of the Latin Church in India and the other against the unethical tolerance of this situation from the part of the universal Church.

Malabar Christians have given their life's blood in order to combat the Portuguese religious domination and exploitation. They have lived difficult moments but they know now that they have a future. They are aware that the Latin Church has robbed not only fruits of the Malabar Church but also their true faith and freedom.

The experience of the Malabar Christians is that of an exploited people who fight for their religious freedom. They are fighting not with defeatism but with joy - Paschal Joy. They have passed through suffering and death. They also know that all these sufferings, death and pain are products of unjust religious and social systems. So struggle

and celebration are now the hallmark of Malabar Christians, for their faith is instinctively connected with their fight for justice and liberation from the Latin domination.

Everybody is fully aware that there is a deep wound inflicted by the dominating history upon the universal Church. It is useless to hide this wound. Let us cut it open so that the pus may be removed. It is a painful process. But it is indispensable. The usual items of the Latin spirituality cannot heal this wound. Only an open surgery and an open fight for justice can heal it.

We are not dealing with the problem of a few Christians or persons but with the history of an entire people who belong to an ancient apostolic tradition. Nobody can close his eyes to this collective ecclesial dimension of a particular Church. It is probably not too early to say whether the territorial victory of the Latins is a permanent one. At any rate, it is a symbol of a permanent loss for Christianity.

The universal Church has to pay the price of delay in solving the problem in India. The delay has done irreparable damage to the growth of Catholicism in India. Nobody knows for sure right now the full impact of the Latin connection in India but it would only be realistic to think that it must be colossal.

Fortunately, the younger generation takes a relaxed view of these things. At the same time, the younger generation tries to be informed about the right theology and right oriental spirituality so that it does not follow the track of its latinised leadership which is addicted with the Latin spirituality, Latin canon law, Latin theology and Latin view of authority. Only then will progress take place and Orientals be Orientals.

Correct and committed training aside, there is another antidote for the Latin connection and its perverse effects. One should find time to read the Bible and the *Varthamānappusthakam* and devote an hour for reflection. Then

the Oriental Churches can still be saved. It is better to die of Oriental faith than of Latin addiction and pollution. Better to be an 'anonymous Christian' than be chained by the troikas ! The Latins may devour the Orientals but they will never be able to digest them. With guns a territory can be won but not the people. Now the Latins may win a few battles but not the war. Due to mere arrogance and outdated theology and lust for power of the troikas, the division in the Indian Catholicism seems to be widening.

Orientals have still to get off the Latin manteau and the Latin idea of considering religion as a magic wand and of looking for religion descending from another world to solve their problems in India. They have to work hard to study and reflect, knowing that their problems have to be solved by determined efforts by themselves committed to serious study and willing to dig their feet into Indian soil.

It is true that in a tropical area, there is a menace of insects, snakes and epidemics. There is also a menace of foreign domination — religious and political. Latin menace is a similar one. Latin domination is a religious expression of aggression. The troikas use religion as merely an outlet for their inner aggression. They look for gratification, not from religion but from the feeling of power they derive from religiously dominating the Orientals. Acts that had traditionally been seen as perversions like sadism and domination and violence are now proclaimed necessary 'in the Indian context' by the troika<sup>45</sup> ! Is India a dumping ground for the outdated and unchristian Latin theology ? Time will come when the younger generation feels that they can live without an imported latinised faith, but not without self-respect. Are the Orientals the milk cows for the rapacious and colonial Latin Church in India ?

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45. This is frequently used in the memoranda of Latin Hierarchs submitted to Pope in 1982 and 1983

India, our mother country, is our vineyard. Orientals should know this. Then they are determined to labour and toil. If the Orientals are not allowed to preach the Gospel message in their own mother country, where do they go? If the universal Church and the Latin Church in India continue to ignore this basic right of the Orientals, then Christianity will become a meaningless religion in India.

Can we be faithful to the universal Church and fight against the Latin domination? Yes. C. F. Andrews (1871-1940) who helped the Indians to gain independence and showed Christ to the Indians declared in a speech delivered at Lahore in 1906: "My one great wish is to express to you how wholeheartedly, as a Christian missionary and as a loyal Englishman, I sympathise with the higher aspirations of Indian nationalism today. Can I say this and be absolutely loyal to my own country and Emperor? I say emphatically yes. The very constitution and foundation principles of the British Empire are such that there is room for fullest and freest development within its borders"<sup>46</sup>. Universal Church has all the moral power to help the suffering individuals and individual Churches.

Majority of the Orientals belong to the category of the peripheral and the disadvantaged and thus what is seen as selective use of moral and legal principles in the First and Third World nations becomes in the Third World country like India a major onslaught of Christian principles on the large number of Orientals. This issue of social and religious control which the Orientals may become victims is what most worries the conscience of mankind.

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46. Cf. *Indian and Foreign Review*, Feb. 29, 1984, 29; also P. C. Roy Chaudhuri, *C. F. Andrews. His Life and Times*, Bombay: 1971; M. Chaturvedi and M. Sykes, *Charles Freer Andrews*, New Delhi: 1971

The world Catholicism has enough to be perplexed, when the Latins in India take a clear path away from the official teachings of the Catholic Church. They are following a dangerous path, indeed. Consequently, dialogue with the Latins in India has now ended up in utter illusion<sup>47</sup>. Latins have taken undue advantages of gestures of cooperation: more power and sheep-stealing from the part of the Latins.

Latin violence is detrimental to the future of Christianity in India. It is against the age-old Indian tradition of ahimsa and non-violence. By using violence, Latins show themselves to be people trying to take in through the back door after they were firmly repulsed at the main entrance. If the troika believes that the way out is to take the law unto its own hands, it is wide off the mark. It demonstrates the unwillingness — not ignorance — to accept the religious and pastoral reality of India today. Young generation is impatiently waiting to see whether the universal Church is still a Church where laws still operate and if there is anti-papal activities, there is no shortage of laws with which to deal.

Orientalists are not intimidated by the fact that the Latin Church is the most powerful colonizing power. Through their power troikas believe that the only way to save the catholic faith is to destroy the Orientals in India. All diversity is drowned in the name of a spurious uniformity. It is time to cast off the soiled shirts. It is more and more evident from the activities of the troika that the Latin Church in India is a Church with absolutely no sense of shame. In this context the Oriental Churches should continue to speak to the Latin Church in India on her sins.

There are several rounds of heated discussion on the situation of the Latin-Oriental relationship in India. But for

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47: The futility of dialogue with the Latins in India has been expressed by the three Syro-Malabar Bishops on the Inter-Ritual Dialogue-Committee of the C. B. C. I to Pope John Paul II in January 1984

the rhetoric, the leaders seemed to be very much in a blind alley. What is really frustrating is that one is not even aware of the fact that this anomaly is more conditioned by the historical ethos and there is little realization that much water has flown down the rivers Pampa and Bharatapuzha. There are clear facts:

- a) The intelligent and religious-minded Latin hierarchs seem to have ultimately accepted the inevitability of changes of the present anomalous and unchristian state of affairs in the Indian Catholicism;
- b) The Orientals, more than ever before, have become self-conscious about their theological and ecclesial identity. This sharpening of the Oriental self-consciousness is the result of deep and prolonged study of the history of the Indian Church and of the universal Church. The growth in the intensity of the collective self-consciousness of the Orientals is likely to push more and more Orientals to be more unsympathetic towards the present Latin domination;
- c) The Orientals in India — whatever their differences of opinions which have arisen out of their different schools of theological training given by the Latin Church in the course of four centuries — are united to fight for their legitimate ecclesial cause;
- d) The territorial and religious demands of the Orientals are based on sound theology and Gospel message.

The worst victims of the Latin connection are the Oriental faithful, largely living in an economically poor, politically weak and religiously indifferent situation. Catholics in India live in the midst of the worst religious crisis. Attitudes have hardened, decisions are postponed, Gospel witness is delayed. Nobody can foresee the dangerous consequences of the continuation of the Latin arrogance and domination. Troika wants a negotiated settlement of mutual grievances and at the same time wants domination of the Orientals by the Latin majority. Meanwhile the neglect of the inarticulate Oriental faithful in the vast and wild 'Latin territory' is prolonged. These faithful are abandoned both

by their own mother Church and by the step-mother Church! Nobody can imagine the pain and loss they undergo. It is the religious and moral injustice that cries out to heaven.

It has become a Latin mode of theologizing to misinterpret historical facts and theological notions. The Marathi poet Tukaram (1608-50) says:

What can be done to the mosquito?  
It is in its nature to bother us<sup>48</sup>:

The Latins have to erase from their minds false notions, hardened prejudice and dominating attitude — the earlier the better for the universal Church and the local Church.

The following questions can be asked:

Were these undue privileges and advantages of the Latin Church solely the result of colonial period? Did not the present Latin hierarchs move towards conscious attack on the Orientals? Did not the qualities of strong faith, hard work and ability to adjust found among the Oriental priests and nuns working in the Latin eparchates help build up the 'Latin Kingdom' in India? Did not the Latin hierarchs make use of the skills and good will of the Oriental priests and nuns to implement their pastoral growth? Did not the Latin Church exploit undue advantages — religious and financial — to manipulate C. B. C. I. functioning? Did not the troika exploit the simplicity and openness of the Oriental leadership?

The ideas mentioned above point to one basic moral issue. It is the massive unchristian retaliation by the Latins against the defenceless Orientals since four centuries. The present Latin domination over the Orientals cannot be justified either on moral or on religious grounds. It is a shameful act for the Latin Church (universal and local) and a painful act for the Oriental Church.

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48. Quoted in B. Nemade, *Tukaram*, New Delhi: 1980, 60



The troika knows well that the colonial structures in which the message of Christ has been enveloped hindered the growth of Christianity in India: Unchecked expansion of territory by the Latin Church produced all pervasive cynicism and spiritual superiority complex among the troika groups. The tragedy of Christianity in India cannot be solved unless the territorial domination of the Latins is not overcome. A way to solution lies in recognizing the legitimate rights of the Orientals to preach the Good News everywhere in India. The imported component of Christianity found in the Latin Church when preached by the arrogant hierarchs can be dangerous. The combination of religion, politics and domination is exciting for the politicians and the fanatics, but it is not fitting for the religious leaders.

The story of the cruel bandits of Chambal valley is well known. They conquer the entire region and defy all rules of the State. Violence and vendetta reign. Similarly there is a strange code of morality that is being perpetrated through this Latin connection. There is no bloodshed and murder but there is brutality and *himsa* of heart. If no solution is found in the near future, younger generation will abandon all moral and religious talks and jump to the arena of stadium or to the ravines of the territory.

The offence against the Orientals is not that the pain is inflicted upon them but the fact that their rights are not recognized. The Orientals are subject to the most cruel pastoral coercion — unknown and unheard of in the whole world. When others wondered how permanent the victory of Solidarity in Poland was, Lech Walesa would tell them: "Our only real guarantee is ourselves"<sup>49</sup>.

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49. Cf. N. Asherson, *The Polish August*, Harmondsworth, England: 1981, 24

The Latin Church may continue to subjugate the Orientals through the possession of vast territory and huge canon law but let it be known that this inhuman domination is not an eternal one. The Latins have the *raison d'état*, but the Orientals have the *raison d'être*.

The Orientals are like pilgrims captured and abused by unscrupulous highway gangs, and they, now released, belong to neither the Oriental Churches nor to the Latin Church! The Orientals have suffered so long under every conceivable religious, political and psychological disadvantages that they no longer believe in their own power to redeem themselves from the unchristian Latin domination. The Malayalee poet Kumaran Asan, (1873-924) says in his "Sita in Contemplation":

Perhaps the bird caged long  
Its wings' thrust forgets 50.

(പിരബന്ധനമാർന്ന പക്ഷിതൻ-  
ചിറകിൻ ശക്തി മറന്നുപോയിടാ..)

The Thomas Christians are prepared to wait till 1999, 400th anniversary of their complete latinisation. 400 years of religious slavery and political manipulation is nothing in the long history of salvation. The Thomas Christians in India have a sense of history — a history of domination. More than that, they have a sense of faith — a deep faith. It is not a faith imported from abroad. It is an inborn faith, heritage of a Church, implanted by an Apostle of Christ. Now for the younger generation of the Orientals, it is out of question to live under a dark age of 'latinitas'. Let the modern Menezes, Ettuveetil pillamars and brown sahibs do not have any illusion! Orientals fought and will fight religious imperialism and domination, in whatever form it appears. By doing this, they do not want to sever historical links but to transform them into a new relationship of friendship, cooperation and reconciliation.

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50. Quoted in P. K. Narayana, *op. cit.*

Orientalists in India are well aware that "kings...have vanished. Those who come before, others beside them, and others still to come will vanish, as shall those who will succeed them. It seems as though the Earth is laughing, in the joyous outburst of her autumn flowers, to see these kings attempting (vainly) to undertake the conquest<sup>51</sup>. It is true that no human effort can weed out the African payal. Only the Lord Almighty can.

"Do not worry about the wicked,  
Do not envy those who do wrong.  
Quick as the grass they wither,  
Fading like the green in the field.

Trust in Yahweh and do what is good,  
Make your home in the land and live in peace;  
Make Yahweh your only joy  
And he will give you what your heart desires.

Commit your fate to Yahweh,  
Trust in him and he will act:  
Making your virtue clear as the light,  
Your integrity as bright as noon."<sup>52</sup>

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51. Cf. Vishnu Purana, Part IV, XXIV, quoted in J. Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India from approximately 200 BC to AD 700*, London: 1967, 255

52. Psalm 37: 1-6

## Denha Services

A Fellowship at the service of the Church

- no. 1 Dr. Quriaquos Elijah Vadaketh, cmi.  
വ്യക്തിസാഹചര്യം (*A Study on Oriental  
Spirituality*), 1984
- no. 2 Dr Varghese Pathikulangara, cmi.  
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- no. 3 Dr Varghese Pathikulangara, cmi.  
വി. കർബാനയുടെ ആരാധന, ആശീർവാദം.  
(*Benediction and Adoration*), 1984
- no. 4 Dr Thomas Vellilamthadam,  
*African Payal*, 1984

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Liturgical wall calendar 1984-85 (English - Malayalam)