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THE BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

by Alf Johansen

Pastor Alf Johansen (Lutheran), Salling, Logstor, Denmark, has visited the Bulgarian Orthodox Church seven times between 1956 and 1981. He has written Theological Study in the Russian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches under Communist Rule (London: Faith Press, 1963), and articles on "Bulgarian Catechetics," in Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift, 1967, No. 3; "Bulgarian Orthodox Apologetics" (I and II) in Diakonia, 1967, No. 4; and "The Sermons of Kiril, Patriarch of Bulgaria" in Eastern Churches Review, 1969, No. 3. In addition, he contributed articles on Romanian and Russian Orthodox Churches to the Journal of Ecumenical Studies.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church is the largest church in Bulgaria. It left a strong imprint on Bulgarian history and culture. Since World War II, the most important event in the life of this church has been the reestablishment of the Bulgarian Orthodox Patriarchate and reconciliation with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. The whole history of the Bulgarian Church deals with problems connected with the establishment of this patriarchate.

The First Bulgarian State, founded in 681, existed until 1018. After the adoption of the Christian faith by Prince Boris I (865), Christianity became the official religion in 870 with an autonomous Orthodox archbishopric under the jurisdiction of the Constantinopolitan patriarchate. Prince Boris thought that an autocephalous church might help to unify the people, promote cultural advancement, and strengthen the prestige of Bulgaria. About 919, the Bulgarian Church was proclaimed autocephalous, and in 927 its patriarchal dignity was acknowledged by Byzantium.

In 1018, Bulgaria again came under Byzantine domination and was deprived of its patriarchal title, as the Bulgarian patriarchate was considered to be a rival of the Greek patriarchate in Constantinople. Instead of the patriarchate, the autocephalous status of the Archbishopric of Ochrid was acknowledged; it existed till 1767.

The Second Bulgarian State was founded in 1186, with Turnovo as its capital. The principle of linking the sovereignty of the state with the autocephaly of the church reached its final expression in 1235, when the Bulgarian patriarchate was reestablished in Turnovo lasting till the Second Bulgarian State fell under Ottoman (Turkish) domination in 1393.

During the Byzantine period between the two Bulgarian states, the Greek influence upon the Bulgarian Church was important. It increased still further during the
Ottoman occupation. At the beginning, the high Bulgarian clerics were replaced by Greek hierarchs who celebrated Mass in the Greek language, of which the Bulgarian population was completely ignorant. The Ottoman conquerors granted extensive civic and judicial rights to the Patriarch of Constantinople and also to the diocesan—mostly Greek—metropolitans in Bulgaria. The Patriarch of Constantinople became the head of all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

The Bulgarian Church, nevertheless, proved to be the staunchest defender of the Bulgarian Orthodox faith and the protector of the national spirit. The monasteries, such as the Rila, Troyan, and Cherepish monasteries, played a great part in the preservation of faith and nationality. They taught the population how to write and read in their schools and trained the future priests. A series of uprisings against the oppressors was organized in the monasteries. Traveling monks toured the country and taught the illiterate. They were the predecessors of the Bulgarian National Revival, founded in the second half of the eighteenth century by the Bulgarian monk, Paisiy Hilendarski, who pointed out that the restoration of the independent Bulgarian Church would mean the recognition of the Bulgarian population as a Bulgarian nation.

In 1870, the Sultan by decree recognized a "Bulgarian Exarchate" in Istanbul, but the Patriarch of Constantinople and a local Council of the Orthodox Church in 1872 rejected this establishment of an independent Bulgarian Church, accusing it of "phyletism"—i.e., introducing the principle of nationality (the Bulgarian Church comprising also Bulgarians in Constantinople) instead of being based on the principle of statehood (comprising only citizens in Bulgaria). The Bulgarian Church was declared schismatic, but it was supported by the Russian and some other, non-Greek Orthodox churches.

According to Bulgarian views, the Bulgarian Exarchate was deprived of its dioceses in Macedonia and Aegean Thrace after World War I. As early as 1913, Exarch Josif I transferred his offices from Istanbul to Sofia. After his death, from 1915 to 1945 the church was not in a position to elect its own regular head. It seems that the Bulgarian government impeded the election. This election was, however, made possible after the socialist revolution in Bulgaria (September 9, 1944). With the help of other Orthodox churches (especially the Russian) and "thanks to the favorable attitude of the Bulgarian People's Government," the schism was lifted on February 22, 1945, and the Patriarchate of Constantinople recognized the autocephaly of the Bulgarian Church. The Exarchate again had a Primate; Metropolitan Stefan of Sofia became exarch, 1945-1948, and, after Mihail and Paisiy, the Metropolitan of Plovdiv, Kiril, became deputy-exarch in 1951.
The Statute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (1950) in Article 1 calls "the self-governing Bulgarian Orthodox Church" a "Patriarchate." The word "exarchate" was not compatible with the word "autocephaly." On January 3, 1953, the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church decided to convene a council to restore the patriarchal dignity of the national church and to elect a patriarch. This Third Council of the Church and the People (May 8-10, 1953) elected Metropolitan Kiril of Plovdiv, chairperson of the Holy Synod, as Patriarch of Bulgaria and Metropolitan of Sofia. Born in 1901, Kiril studied in Belgrade, Chernovtsy (then a Rumanian, now a Soviet, town), Zagreb, Vienna, and Berlin. He became Metropolitan of Plovdiv in 1938. Prof. Slijepčević describes his personality:

Kiril leads all other Bulgarian bishops in education, working habits, and ability. . . . He has an outstanding sense for social issues, yet he is totally dedicated to the Church. . . . Patriarch Kiril values greatly loyal cooperation with the Bulgarian government."

Most Orthodox churches sent delegations or congratulations to the Council. But the Patriarch of Constantinople wrote, on April 25, 1953, that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, by restoring the patriarchal dignity, introduced "a spirit of novelty and rupture of the existing canonical and ecclesiastical order." He did not acknowledge the reestablishment of the Bulgarian Patriarchate.

The Patriarchal Electoral Council consisted of 107 members: ten metropolitans, five titular bishops, three representatives of the state, and three priests and four laymen from each diocese. Metropolitan Kiril received 104 votes. His enthronement took place immediately after the election in the Alexander Nevsky Memorial Church. One of the state's representatives, Mihail Kjucukov, said in his speech that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church had been liberated from the schism in 1945 by the help of the Patriotic Front, a party organization. Through the mediation of the Russian and Antiochian patriarchs, the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church received a letter on August 27, 1961, from the Ecumenical Patriarchate which recognized the restoration of its patriarchate and reestablished canonical communion with the Bulgarian Church. In the Spring of 1962, Patriarch Kiril visited the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and in 1969 the Ecumenical Patriarch visited Sofia.

Patriarch Kiril died on March 7, 1971. On July 4, 1971, Metropolitan Maksim of Loveć was unanimously elected patriarch. He was born in 1914, becoming president of the Bulgarian church podvorie in Moscow, 1950-1955; the secretary general of the Holy Synod, 1955-1960; and Metropolitan of Loveć in 1960. At this patriarchal election, four representatives of the state took part: Mihail Kjucukov, the President of the Committee for the Problems of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Religious Cults; the vice president of the National Committee of the Patriotic Front;
the president of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; and the president of the Bulgarian Supreme Court. Kjucukov said on this occasion that the government highly appreciated "the loyalty, cooperation, and high patriotic spirit of the Orthodox Church." Patriarch Maksim visited other Orthodox churches between 1972 and 1975, and through the 1970's he "still further increased the prestige of the Bulgarian Patriarchate."

While the fortunes of the patriarchate increased, the fortunes of the federation of priests declined. As in Yugoslavia, a "Federation of Orthodox Priests" was formed by left-wing priests. Its spiritual leader was Archimandrit Jonah, who was also the secretary general of the Holy Synod. The program and procedures of this federation were never approved by the Holy Synod. Leading members of the federation tried to take over the leadership of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. The Holy Synod responded on July 8, 1955, by dissolving the federation. Before this decision was published, Patriarch Kiril was received by then-Prime Minister V. Cervenkov, and Jonah was dismissed as secretary general of the Holy Synod.

The church's legal position is defined in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria of May, 1971. It is written in Art. 53 that the freedom of conscience and faith and the freedom of performing religious rites are guaranteed and that the church is separated from the state. Details concerning the relations between church and state are to be found in the "Religious Denominations Act" of February 24, 1949. No one's civic or political rights can be infringed or limited, nor can anyone be discharged of obligations ensuing from the national laws, simply because one belongs to a specific faith or no faith at all (Art. 2). "In their organizational structure, in their rites and services, the religious denominations are guided by their canons, dogmas, and statute stipulations . . ." (Art. 5). The legislation also guarantees the freedom to build churches and houses of worship and to offer spiritual and religious education to believers (Arts. 7, 8, and 16). "If necessary, the state can subsidize the maintenance of the denominations" (Art. 13). The training and educating of the younger generations "is carried out under the special care of the state and is beyond the activity of the cults and their clergy" (Art. 20). The same is also true of all social services (Art. 21). "Whoever hinders, by force or threat, the citizens or the acknowledged religious denominations in practicing their faith and in performing their religious rites and services is to be punished with one year of imprisonment" (Art. 165 of the Penal Code). Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there is a Committee for the Problems of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Religious Cults, which was reconstructed on March 17, 1954.
According to the Statute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church of December 31, 1950, there are eleven dioceses (whose bishops are called metropolitans) and two foreign dioceses, in New York City and Akron, Ohio. The supreme clerical, judicial, and administrative power is exercised by the Holy Synod, which includes the Patriarch as chairperson and all diocesan bishops. In addition to the Full Synod with two regular sessions annually there is a Little Synod which is a standing body. There is a Supreme Church Council at the Holy Synod which is in charge of the general and economic affairs of the Church. The Council of the Church and the People is convened when it is necessary to make decisions on most important church problems. The ecclesial power in a diocese belongs to the diocesan prelate and is exercised with the aid of the diocesan council. Church life in the parish is guided by the parish priest with the aid of four to six elected lay wardens.

The Church's economic activities are developing in compliance with the 11th Decree of the Council of Ministers (January 22, 1954), by virtue of which the Church has the monopoly to produce, fix prices of, and sell its own products. The synodal candle workshop in Sofia is its most profitable enterprise. The Church collects fifty-eight percent of its maintenance income from the candles it produces and sells to churches and monasteries. All church utensils, bells, candlesticks, crosses, and burial lanterns are produced in a synodal foundry in Sofia, the income of which amounts to twelve percent of the Church's budgeted income. In addition, there are synodal workshops in six nunneries for the production of incense, icon-lamp wicks, incense-burner briquets, iconstases, vestments, and burial shrouds. Their sale is carried out in church shops in the capital and the diocesan seats, but mostly in parish churches.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church receives annual subsidies from the People's Government, which amount to about thirteen percent of the revenues of the Holy Synod. In addition, the state annually grants considerable sums to the Church for the restoration, repair, and maintenance of such church buildings as have been declared monuments of culture. Similar grants are made by the district and municipal people's councils for buildings of historical significance in their areas. A large number of the diocesan churches in the country own a total of about 3,500 hectares of land (1975), cultivated by the Church or by the cooperative or state farms. Land is owned by two bigger church farms of Bachkovo and Troyan Monasteries and seventy-nine smaller diocesan monasteries. A special designing and a church building organization are building and restoring many churches and monasteries. The Church has many rest homes and summer houses where clergy and other church personnel can spend their holidays.
The money for maintenance of the theological seminary and the theological academy amounts to six percent of the total expenditure of the central church management. In recent years the priests' salaries were raised, and salaries of all church employees, including teachers in the theological schools, were made equal to those of their colleagues in corresponding secular establishments. They are granted retirement pensions from the general pension funds of the country.

Today there are 3,670 Orthodox churches and fifty chapels in Bulgaria, about 1,500 parish priests, and 120 monasteries with about 200 monks and nearly as many nuns. The monasteries are either stauropigial (depending directly on the Holy Synod) or diocesan (under the local prelate). Stefan Cankov, the great old man of Bulgarian Orthodox ecumenism, wrote in 1958 that life in the Bulgarian monasteries in recent decades had experienced a period of great decline. Many monasteries were without monks. He wrote further that this decline had been hastened by the nationalization of almost all the land owned by the monasteries. The Rila monastery was nationalized in 1961 and used only for tourists. In 1967-1968, it was reopened for eleven to fifteen monks, and divine services were performed.

The daily and holiday services include vespers, morning prayer, and liturgy. Services are celebrated in the Church-Slavonic language, a later edition of the Old Bulgarian language, which serves today as a unifying link for the Orthodox Slavic nations. The sermons are in Bulgarian. In October, 1981, I did not find Sunday services in Sofia as well attended as some were fifteen and twenty-five years ago; Patriarch Kiril, however, preached at many of the services at that time. Comparing Bulgarian, Rumanian, and Russian services, I must also compare the number of churches. In Sofia there are thirty-six to thirty-eight churches for one million inhabitants; In Bucharest, about 250 churches for about one-and-a-half million; in Leningrad, fifteen or sixteen churches for about four million. In Leningrad I often saw four or five thousand churchgoers in Nikolskij Sobor. In Bucharest the churches were somewhat better attended than in Sofia, but there are six to seven times as many churches. Professor Cankov told me the reason in Sofia, in 1956. The Bulgarian type of piety is a traditional Orthodox one, but with fewer mystical elements than the Russian type. The Bulgarians and Serbs were accustomed to hide their piety, since during their whole history they were more dependent on the Turks than were the Rumanians.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Bulgarian Church exerted itself on behalf of the general enlightenment of the people. The regular preaching was raised to a satisfactory level through a planned and careful supplying of the parish priests with books of sermons, usually for a whole year. Today the Bulgarian Church continues this practice. Patriarch Kiril published more volumes of sermons
than any other preacher in the three countries mentioned. His first three volumes bear the title "At the Source" (Pri izvora, 1943-46) and differ from the following seven volumes—the last six of which are called "The Way of Our Lord" (Put Gospoden, 1957-69). The first three contain intellectual church lectures, sometimes apologetic in nature. The last volumes contain sermons and a few addresses in the traditional Orthodox style, spoken on Sundays, feast-days, and saint-days.

Homiletic professor Todor Todorov has published three volumes under the title "Practical Homiletics" (1963-66). They contain comments on the Gospels for Sundays and feast-days and on the biographies of the saints, as well as prayers and hymns. They are written for priests, but, with all of their printed illustrations and episodes, they also are very useful for the laity. Todorov has also published a text on homiletics in three volumes (1956, 1957, and 1959). The principal of the theological academy, Bishop Nikolay, has published Sunday sermons for a whole year (Glas na Blagovestieto, 1971), which Protestants may read with delight as they cover the common Christian message.

In recent years there have been two large volumes of Patriarch Maksim's "On the Lord's Field" (Na Gospodnyata Niva, 1975 and 1981), containing mostly speeches at special bishop-ordinations, jubilees, Orthodox and ecumenical visits, etc. Metropolitan Sofroniy has published three volumes of sermons (Sbornik propovedi, 1974, 1976, and 1980), and Metropolitan Yosif published in 1980 a volume titled "Reflections in Prayer on God and Man" (Molitveni razmišleniya za Boga i Čoveka), with about a hundred reflections on God, redemption, free will, humility, etc.

In 1981, the official book of the Bulgarian Patriarchate states: "The greatest and direct effect of the Christian instruction and education is the Orthodox divine service ... The essential part of the Christian divine service is the sermon. The most important obligation of the priest is to teach. This activity he accomplishes from the pulpit."18

The Orthodox Church publishes two periodicals. Curkoven vestnik (Church Gazette) is the organ of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church for religious and social education and information, published since 1900 every tenth day with eight pages. Duhovna Kultura (Spiritual Culture) is a monthly magazine for religion, philosophy, science, and art, published regularly since 1920. (By comparison, the Rumanian Orthodox Church now publishes eight or nine larger theological and church periodicals, four to ten times a year.) In addition, other religious and theological books are being published. Since 1938, the publishing activities of the Holy Synod have been carried out by the Synodal Publishing House (with state printing houses). Its publications are sold at the central synodal bookshop in Sofia and at the church shops in the diocesan centers.
While Russian Orthodox theological textbooks are typewritten rather than being printed, about half of the Rumanian Orthodox texts were printed and half were typewritten during the 1950's according to a fixed plan acknowledged by Patriarch Justinian. Bulgarian Orthodox theological textbooks are published, as far as I can see, more privately, not according to a fixed plan.

In Pastoral Theology (two volumes by Hristo Dimitrov, published in 1955 and 1957), contemporary church problems were emphasized. Dimitrov wrote that believers in the villages attended divine services less frequently than believers in the towns. In the towns the priests should counteract the increasing indifference by means of apologetic sermons, catechizing adults, distributing religious publications in homes, and caring for souls of children, youth, and the educated people. No similar Rumanian pastoral theology was published up to 1961.

I found no textbook of catechetics in Bulgaria, but there are three volumes of the Orthodox catechism: Our Faith (1950), Our Hope (1957), and Our Love (1958). They are written not for theologians but for the laity. The last two volumes were written intentionally as catechetical lectures by Archimandrit Serafim. Professor Ivan Pančovski has written two books of apologetics: Life and Happiness (1957) and The Personality of Jesus Christ (1959). Professor Boris Marinov wrote two long articles on the "Weapon of the Apologist" in the Yearbook of the theological academy, in which he directly discussed the Soviet anti-religious views of Christ's historical existence. They are more directly apologetic than similar Rumanian articles. I feel that such articles could not have been written after 1960, when Khruschev began his new anti-religious campaign which influenced church life in Romania and Bulgaria as well.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church published many devotional books for the laity up to 1960, while the Rumanian Church has published almost entirely theological books. Some Bulgarian books were popular biographies of the saints. After 1960, more scholarly church history was written. Professor Pančovski published An Introduction to Moral Theology (1958) and Methodology of Moral Theology (1962), and books on special dogmatic themes have been published. Patriarch Kiril wrote several large scholarly biographies of some of the exarchs, but the Bulgarians have not written long textbooks on dogmatics and church history, as the Rumanians did from 1956 to 1958.

In the 1970's, the Rumanians published new major texts on dogmatics (Professor Staniloae) and on Rumanian church history (Professor Pacurariu). The Bulgarian Orthodox Church has published no new theological texts in the 1970's, but it has published two major jubilee publications. First was The April Uprising and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (1977, 584 pp.); many priests and monks took part in this uprising,
which was crushed by the Turks in 1876 with severe brutality. Second was *The Church and the Resistance of the Bulgarian People against the Ottoman Yoke* (1981, 392 pp.), which debates Bulgarian-Russian and Bulgarian-Romanian relations during the War of Liberation in 1878 and the participation of Russian and Bulgarian church people. Both have multiple authorship.

The Orthodox Christian Brotherhoods started at the beginning of the twentieth century and included the "most zealous and active Christians from the parishes." Their purposes were to read and explain Holy Scripture and to organize pilgrimages to old monasteries. Fifteen years ago, lectures were delivered by theological professors and priests, but now by priests only. Then, the lectures were announced on the walls of a central church in Sofia; in 1981, I saw no such announcements. A theological professor now calls them "sisterhoods," as they are attended only by women. The brotherhoods now seem to have lost almost all their significance.

Since 1952 there have been in Bulgaria, as in Romania, district conferences and obligatory refresher courses for priests, in which they learn to defend orthodoxy against other religious denominations. In 1950, the two theological schools, in Plovdiv and Sofia, were merged into one theological seminary in Cherepish Monastery, seventy-five kilometers from Sofia. The seminary, with about 200 students, now has a five-year course of studies for students up to seventeen years of age and a three-year course for adults up to thirty-five years of age. Here priests are trained for work in village parishes. In 1921, a Theological Faculty was opened at the Sofia State University, changing in 1950 to a theological academy under the Holy Synod, with about 120 students, one-third being part-time, non-resident students. The Yearbook (*Godishnik*) of the academy, published annually, contains studies by the academy's teaching staff. Begun in 1950, it has now been issued twenty-five times.

After World War II, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, together with many other Orthodox churches (at the Moscow Conference, 1948), withdrew from the ecumenical movement. At the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi in 1961, the Russian, Romanian, and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches were admitted to membership in the W. C. C. In January, 1979, Todor Subev, professor of Bulgarian church history, was chosen to be a vice secretary general of the W. C. C.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church also participates in the world peace movement. It organized in Sofia on October 5, 1952, a large conference of all faiths in defense of peace. When Kiril was elected patriarch, he made ecumenism and peace-making the meaning of his life. At his death in 1971, Prime Minister Todor Zivkov characterized the peace-making of Patriarch Kiril as a model to be followed by all believers. Patriarch Maksim takes a most active part in the Prague Christian Peace Conference. A special office has been created at the Holy Synod for ecumenical and peace-making activities.
In Bulgaria—but perhaps not so severely as in the Soviet Union—there is an inner contradiction between both the relations of the state with the church and the relations of the party with religion. Georgi Dimitrov, founder of the Communist Bulgarian State, said in 1946 on the occasion of the thousandth anniversary of the Rila Monastery: "Our Orthodox Church has historical merits preserving the national feeling and consciousness of the Bulgarian people during centuries of its most severe sufferings ... There would be no present democratic Bulgaria ... if during those times of slavery our monasteries had not existed." 22

The Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party published on April 4, 1962, a resolution on "Ideological Work of the Party," which declared that underestimating the ideological struggle against religion must be liquidated. More atheistic houses and clubs must be opened. The most important point was the unmasking of the harm of the religious anti-scientific, reactionary ideology. 23 While Soviet anti-religious propaganda reached its peak between 1959 and 1964 under Khrushchev, I found in 1964 in the bookshops in Sofia only fourteen small, original Bulgarian anti-religious pamphlets and a single anti-religious book, translated from Russian—The Foundations of Scientific Atheism (1964).

In order to describe and evaluate the current position of the Orthodox and other denominations, I shall provide some information and evaluations from both Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift (Bern, Switzerland; hereafter IKZ) and Curkovenvestnik (hereafter Cv):

—IKZ reported that Professor Todor Subev said in a 1968 interview that only a few young people attend divine services, usually out of curiosity, and that the Church still owns much land. 24

—The Secretary General of the Holy Synod, Stefan, maintained a year later that youth attend the services more than before and that seventy percent of the population are Orthodox believers.

—Patriarch Kiril became a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences on July 10, 1970. 25

—The present Prime Minister, Todor Zhivkov, visited the Vatican on June 27, 1975, and agreed on the reestablishment of a Roman Catholic hierarchy of the Latin Rite. 26

—The land of the Rila Monastery was nationalized in 1976–77. One of the thirteen monks declared to tourists that farming for monks had become a poor business. 27

—Cv constantly repeats themes from national church history and underlines their significance for national development, but it does not state the numbers of churchgoers, baptisms, or priests' ordinations. Duhovna Kultura publishes theological articles, often on national church history, but never on contemporary problems. 28

—In 1980, 30,000 Bibles were printed. 29
Prime Minister Zivkov received the newly elected Patriarch Maksim on August 7, 1971, and expressed his "gratitude ... for the contribution of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church to the progress of our socialist native country, to the patriotic unity of the people, to Bulgarian-Soviet friendship, and to the defense of peace."30

Patriarch Maksim is often mentioned as an ecumenist 31 and as working for peace.

The students of the theological academy must do one month of agricultural work in the "brigadier movement" each year.33

Footnotes

1 Churches and Religions in the People's Republic of Bulgaria (Sofia: Ecumenical Department of the Holy Synod, 1975), p. 28. This is the only booklet of those mentioned which has been translated into English.
2 Ibid., p. 29.
3 Ibid.
4 Ustav na Bulgarskata pravoslavna crkva (Sofia, 1951), p. 3.
6 Ibid., p. 33.
7 Dejanija na Tretija curkovno-naroden subor (Sofia, 1953), pp. 171-175.
8 Ibid., p. 48.
9 The Bulgarian Patriarchate during the Centuries (Sofia, 1981), p. 75.
10 Curkoven-naroden patriarski izbiratelen subor 4 juli 1971 (Sofia, 1973), pp. 147-150.
11 Ibid., p. 56.
12 The Bulgarian Patriarchate, p. 77.
13 Slijepevic, Die bulgarische, p. 48.
14 Churches and Religions, p. 62.
15 Ibid., pp. 33, 37, 38.
17 I saw several monks at Rila Monastery when I visited in October, 1981.
18 The Bulgarian Patriarchate, p. 103.
20 The Bulgarian Patriarchate, p. 134.
21 Ibid., p. 167.
22 Slijepevic, Die Bulgarische, p. 7.
23 Published in Sofia in 1962, in 32 pages.
Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift (IKZ), 1969, no. 4, p. 255. Professor B. Spuler, Hamburg, twice yearly since 1946 has published a long article in IKZ on the Orthodox churches. He also wrote on the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Die Gegenwartslage der Ostkirchen (Wiesbaden, 1948).

IKZ, 1971, no. 1, p. 10.
IKZ, 1975, no. 4, p. 224.

Ibid., p. 81, and IKZ, 1980, no. 2, pp. 94-95. The Rumanian Orthodox Church publishes a bulletin in English. Romanian Orthodox Church News regularly provides statistics on ordinations of priests in the different dioceses and on the consecration of churches.

IKZ, 1980, no. 4, p. 242.

Curkoven vestnik (Cy), 11.8.1971, p. 12.
Cy, 11.11.1980. I witnessed this in October, 1981.

Appendix

Statistics for 1975 show that Roman Catholics of the Western Rite numbered about 50,000 members with a bishop in Plovdiv and over forty priests and thirty churches. Roman Catholics of the Eastern Rite (Uniates) had about 10,000 members, twenty-five parishes, and seventeen churches, guided by an Apostolic Exarch in Sofia.

Protestants included Congregationalists (5,000 members in fifty-two churches), Methodists (about 1,300 members in fifteen churches with fifteen pastors), Baptists (650 members in ten churches and nine communities, with seven pastors), Adventists (3000 members and forty pastors), and Pentecostals (6000 members in twenty-five houses of worship with thirty-six pastors).

The Armenian Church had twelve parishes, ten parish priests, and twelve churches and chapels. The Armenian Bishop's seat is in Bucharest. There are about 22,000 Armenians in Bulgaria.*

In 1966, I visited some Protestant divine services in Sofia. Only a few young persons attended, similar to the Orthodox services. Among the Methodists, I found only one book published after 1944—the second edition of the hymnal, Duhovni pesni (Sofia, 1955), containing 452 hymns. This book was also used by Congregationalists, Baptists, and Pentecostals. In their sermons in 1966, the Protestants fought against the Orthodox teaching on the connection between the earthly and the heavenly church.

*Statistics are from Churches and Religions, pp. 64-71.