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Brunner, Daniel L.

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"Sectarian Lutherianism"

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phy of Jones declared: "Wales was not to be deprived of so eminent a Minister, who proved so great a Blessing to it."[39]

"Sectarian Lutheranism"

The SPCK could not find any Anglican clergy who had the qualities of the German Lutheran missionaries. In his influential *Address to Persons of Quality* Robert Nelson wished the work of the missionaries "would excite a Spirit of Zeal and Emulation in our Universities, and especially in the younger Students of Divinity, to offer themselves to be sent forth on this glorious Expedition",[40] but his call fell on deaf ears. Newman envied the zeal of the Lutherans from Halle and called it "a reproach to the English Nation"; with no English missionaries he acknowledged that "those that are well disposed in Britain for Propagating the Gospell among the Heathen must be content to come in as Auxiliaries to other Nations since they have forfeited the Honour of being Principals".[41]

Archbishop Tenison in 1713 first raised the delicate issue of the propriety of an Anglican society providing support to a Lutheran mission. He took particular offence at the omission in the Tranquebar catechism of the second Commandment in the Decalogue against false images, which appears in the Anglican and Reformed but not the Lutheran and Catholic catechisms. This omission was brought to the attention of the Special Committee in letters from Chamberlayne and Boehm.[42] Newman told Chamberlayne that, because of the matter's importance, the Committee had sent it to the Society where a long debate ensued.

> The major part [of the Society] seemed to wish the matter had never come in Question before them. ... The Members who have solicited for charities to this Mission have thought it their prudence and Charity to avoid as much as they could putting it into the heads of the Benefactors that the Missionarys were Lutherans or Ministers not episcopally ordained, etc. because Mankind are too apt to catch at objections to save their Purses. ... They considered that, though they unfeignedly wish'd to see the Gospel in its purity propagated without any bias to the sects or opinions that unhappily divide Christians, yet that it is rather to be conniv'd at that the heathen should be Lutheran *Christians* rather than no *Christians*.[43]

The members of the SPCK were aware that these were ordained Lutheran missionaries, but evidently few of them had mentioned it when they had sought to raise subscriptions for the work. With the battles raging in the Church of England at this time over lay baptism and the validity of non-

39 *A Sketch of the Life and Character of ... Griffith Jones* (London, 1762), p. 5.

40 *An Address to Persons of Quality*, p. 132.

41 Newman to Jennings, Lewis, Stevenson, and Long, Whitehall, 22 Dec. 1713 (ArSPCK, *Letters from India* [ME/CR/1]).

42 *SCM* (ME/m/3), 16 Dec. 1713

43 Newman to Chamberlyne, Whitehall, 19 Dec. 1713 (ArSPCK, *Soc Lett* [CS2/3]).

episcopal orders, the Society was anxious to avoid such debates, which would only harm the more important task of mission.

But an angry Archbishop could not be ignored. The Special Committee asked the missionaries in Tranquebar to conform their catechism to one prepared by Plutschau when he had been in England, in which "the second Commandment is set down in the manner used by the Church of England",[44] though, as if to show that they themselves held no malice, the Committee gave £70 to the mission, "considering the great zeal of the Danish Missionaries in India to promote the Protestant Mission".[45] According to Newman, the Society viewed the omission as "one of the Raggs of Popery that has been unfortunately handed down among the Lutheran Reformers".[46] When sending a copy of Newman's letter about the proceedings in the Society to Tenison, Chamberlayne added:

> If the inclos'd from Mr. Newman about the Malabar Mission should not appear altogether as satisfactory to your Grace as it does to me, yet I hope it will appease in some measure your just Resentments of the Proceedings of the wel-meaning Men at Tranquebar, and suspend the Effects of it, til your Grace has what further satisfaction you please which I assure you our Society is entirely dispos'd to give your Lordship.[47]

Chamberlayne reported that the Archbishop was satisfied with the steps taken by the Society;[48] however, a year later, when the Archbishop received further Portuguese books from Tranquebar, he "complained of the Lutheranism in them" and said the missionaries "seem to go on in promoting the way of their Party".[49]

Because of the importance of this affair the Special Committee asked Boehm to write a letter to the missionaries, acquainting them "with much respect and Christian Tenderness of the offence that has been taken by some Gentlemen, their Benefactors at the omission, and particularly by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury".[50] Either this letter or another personal one sent by Boehm shortly thereafter has been preserved in Boehm's printed letters;[51] because of its significance in showing the tightrope which Boehm tried to walk in England between Lutheran Pietism and the Anglican Church we will deal

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44 Early in 1713, before it received the Portuguese catechisms printed at Tranquebar (*SCM* [ME/m/3], 28 July 1713), the SPCK had had Plutschau's Portuguese catechism printed at its own costs and had sent a large number of them to Tranquebar. (Boehm to P[lutschau], London, 9 June 1713, printed in: *ErBrief*, p. 246)

45 *SCM* (ME/m/1,3), 14 & 20 Nov. 1712, 22 & 24 Dec. 1713.

46 Newman to Chamberlayne, 19 Dec. 1713 (ArSPCK, *Soc Lett* [CS2/3]).

47 Chamberlayne to Archbishop Tenison, Petty France Westminster, 21 Dec. 1713 (Lambeth MSS 953:102).

48 *SCM* (ME/m/3), 26 Dec. 1713.

49 White Kennett to Chamberlayne, 17 Aug. 1714, and Archbishop of Canterbury to Chamberlayne, 19 Aug. 1714 (copy) (ArSPCK, *Letters from India* [ME/CR1]).

50 *SCM* (ME/m/3), 22 Dec. 1713.

51 Boehm to Ziegenbalg and Grundler, London, 8 Jan. 1714, printed in: *ErBrief*, pp. 288–309.

with it at length. In it, Boehm informed Ziegenbalg and J.E. Grundler, his closest associate, that he had been working hard in England to further interest in the Tranquebar mission and that "my weak efforts have not been without all blessings. Many see the possibility of such an undertaking right before their eyes and are truly applying themselves to assist the workers."[52] Since the missionaries were the first in such a work they had a responsibility to use divine wisdom and set a good example, especially now, since Tenison had taken particular offence at their catechetical omission:

> You can easily see, that through this unexpected objection (especially since it was made by one of the most noble theologians in the whole land) much disruption and animosity has developed, though indeed I spared no effort from my side to pacify minds and to forestall further damaging results. The Archbishop went so far that he informed the Society that he would advise the clergy strongly against taking up in the least bit further or assisting in any way such a mission which aimed at planting sectarian Lutheranism.[53]

Having no idea such a stir would be caused by a trifle [*Kleinigkeit*], he testified that Tenison was a well-intentioned and honest man who had been a friend and supporter of the mission. The missionaries could see, though, how much caution they needed in the performance of their office if they wanted other nations to support the work.

Boehm then offered some advice. The second commandment must be included in the Decalogue of the next edition of the Catechism and he suggested printing it as in Exodus xx, with no numbers, which is what he had done in the prayer book used in the Royal Chapel.[54] Urging the missionaries to forgo all human and party names, he could see no need to call the catechism Luther's as they had done on the title page, since Luther's name would have no authority with Indian natives. Every effort should be used to bring the affair back into good standing. In their future letters to the Society he counselled against speaking of the matter in particulars and urged that they should in a friendly manner offer to conform themselves to the Society's reminders. Then,

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52 "Mein schwaches Bemühen ist nicht ohne allen Seegen gewesen. Viele sehen die Möglichkeit eines solchen Unternehmens gleichsam vor Augen, und legen wircklich Hand an, den Arbeitern beyzuspringen."

53 "Ihr könnet leicht erraten, daß durch diesen unvermutheten Einwurf, (zumal da selbiger von dem vornemsten Theologo im gantzen Lande gemacht wurde,) viele Zerrüttung und Widerspruch entstund, ob ich zwar an meiner Seite keinen Fleis sparete, die Gemüther zu besänftigen, und ferneren schädlichen Folgen vorzukommen. Der Erz-Bischof gieng so weit, daß er der Societaet entbiethen ließ, er wolle der Clerisey mit Macht widerrathen, sich solcher Mission, welche auf Fortpflantzung des Sectirischen Lutheranismi abziele, ferner im geringsten anzunehmen, oder selbiger einigen Vorschub zu thun."

54 Although the text from Ex. xx was used in the prayer book, including the prohibition against false images, the commandments were not exactly unnumbered. They were written as a litany and the ten responses of the congregation corresponded to the Lutheran numbering. (Boehm, ed., *Gebeth-Büchlein*, pp. 44-47)

slowly, things would be forgotten. He assured the missionaries that the members of the SPCK had such a high esteem for their work in East India

> ... that they would have no qualms sending their own missionaries to you in order to watch first your whole conduct, methods, and teaching-style among the heathen, before they themselves set their hand to the matter.[55]

But Boehm did not wish the missionaries to misunderstand his advice:

> With all this business, dear brothers, is it in no way my opinion that you should go over to another party or by any chance introduce the liturgy or confession of another Church; because I would be truly opposed to such a case, whereby bad would become worse, and would rather let everything fall apart and sink as consent to such a dangerous mixture.[56]

He hoped that the missionaries would take a middle way by which they remained Lutheran but did not employ the name. The doctrine in the Lutheran Church was as pure as any Protestant Church and especially "when we practise it in such an order as it has been expounded in recent years by Dr. Spener",[57] but Boehm would identify it only as Christian, not Lutheran.

To ensure that the missionaries grasped the gravity of the matter Boehm suggested that Francke or others give the missionaries some "further advice ... to carry on the work with proper theological prudence".[58] Eventually the message got through; the Anglican/Reformed second commandment was added as a clarification to the first commandment in the second edition of the catechism.[59] The missionaries told the SPCK, "As to what relates to Party-Names, or Distinctions, the divine Wisdom, which is without Partiality, has taught us to abhor them. Our Scholars [students] know not so much as the bare Name of Luther or Calvin."[60]

Despite the growing toleration in Europe this kind of cooperative venture did not come about easily; the SPCK, Halle, and Copenhagen were pioneers, an insight recognized in 1713 by Francke: "Posterity shall learn ... how one Nation can help the other in the common Cause of Propagating the Christian

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55 "... daß sie kein Bedencken tragen würden, ihre eigene Missionarios zu euch zuschicken, um euren gantzen Wandel, Methode und Lehr-Art unter den Heiden erst zusehen, ehe sie selbst die Sache angreiffen."

56 "Bey alle diesem Handel gel. Br. ist die Meinung keinesweges, als ob ihr zu einer andern Partei treten, und etwa einer andern Kirche Liturgie oder Confession einführen soltet: denn in solchem Fal, wodurch übel ärger werden müste, würde ich getrost widersprechen, und lieber alles fallen und sincken lassen, als in ein solches gefährliches Gemenge willigen."

57 "... wenn wir sie in solcher Ordnung treiben, wie sie in diesen letzern Jahren von Hr. D. Spenern vorgetragen worden."

58 "... ferneren Raht ... mit rechter Theologischer Prudence das Werck zutreiben." (Boehm to G.H. Neubauer, London, 22 Jan. 1714 [ArFrSt C 229:29])

59 W. Germann, *Johann Philipp Fabricius* (Erlangen, 1865), p. 131.

60 Ziegenbalg and Grundler to SPCK, Tranquebar, 27 Sept. 1714, printed in: *PGE III* (1718), pp. 115f.

Religion, finding that the *German* Nation assisted the *Danes*, as the *English* do both."[61] Despite Francke's optimism the situation was a delicate one, as C.B. Michaelis at Halle made clear in a 1719 letter to the missionaries:

> One has to make every effort to treat the English nation with respect and to behave towards them moderately and wisely, that they may not find the least reason to go back on their affection and good will. However, on the other hand, you should also take care not to do something trying to please everyone which would bring vile gossip in Denmark and in the Lutheran Church.[62]

As long as the cooperation took place on a material or external plane conflicts were minimalized; but when theological or doctrinal questions were raised problems were unavoidable. Not only was the SPCK Anglican and the Danish authorities and Halle Lutheran, but the Lutherans in Denmark were Orthodox and those in Halle Pietist. Boehm was familiar with these tensions and wanted for the sake of the mission to avoid theological disagreement as much as possible, so he advised the missionaries to keep a low theological profile. The mission should remain solidly Lutheran and Pietist in doctrine, but not in name.

Because of the concern among some in England that the missionaries were spreading sectarian Lutheranism Boehm feared that enthusiasm for the mission might decline.[63] One of the ways in which he hoped to awaken anew support for the mission was through publishing a third part of *Propagation of the Gospel in the East*.[64] After the yearly charity school sermon in 1714, fifty copies of this new edition were distributed among the people there, by which Boehm hoped to renew or awaken awareness of the mission.[65] Even as Boehm was the catalyst for the initial involvement of the SPCK in the mission, it was largely due to his efforts that the Society's interest continued unabated after the affair with Tenison.

Through regular publications Boehm kept the East India mission before benefactors and the public. The final volume of *Propagation of the Gospel in the East* came out in 1718. In 1720 Boehm also published some correspondence between George I and the missionaries in Tranquebar, together with a letter from Francke. In the "Advertisement" which prefaced these letters Boehm wrote that this work was to be an "earnest" on a fourth volume of letters.[66]

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61 Francke to Newman, Halle, 26 Feb. 1713, printed in: *PGE III* (1718), p. 61.

62 "Man hat die englische Nation mit allem Fleiß zu schonen und sich dergestalt gegen sie zu bescheiden und weislich zu verhalten, daß sie keine wenigstens gegründete Ursach finden, mit ihrer Neigung und Willigkeit zurückzugehen. Jedoch werden Sie auch andrerseits sich vorsehen, daß Sie nicht etwa aus Menschengefälligkeit etwas thun, welches in Dänemark und bei der evangelischen Kirche eine üble Nachrede machen könnte." (C.B. Michaelis to [Ziegenbalg and Grundler], [Halle,] 27 Nov. 1719, quoted in: Germann, *Fabricius*, p. 131)

63 Boehm to Ziegenbalg and Grundler, London, 31 Dec. 1714, printed in: *ErBrief*, pp. 397f.

64 Boehm to Ziegenbalg and Grundler, 8 Jan. 1714, printed in: *ErBrief*, p. 308.

65 Boehm to Mr. P[lutschau], London, 30 June 1714, printed in: *ErBrief*, pp. 349f.

66 [Boehm,] Advertisement to *Several Letters relating to the Protestant Danish Mission at*

One year later a letter from William Stevenson, English chaplain at Madras, appeared in print, in which he appealed for missionaries on English settlements in India.[67] This letter was the last work published for the general English readership; the fourth volume to which Boehm referred never appeared. The reason for the abrupt end is that Boehm died in 1722 and Ziegenhagen, his successor, was unable to find someone qualified to translate the fourth volume.[68] Newman told Archbishop Wake that by Boehm's death "the Society, the missionaries in the East Indies, Professor Franck, and the College of Copenhagen have a very great loss, he being the grand cement of all their Interests".[69] From 1709 to 1721 it was Boehm alone who kept the East India mission before the English public; he was the prime mover for SPCK involvement and for English interest in the Tranquebar mission.

2. The First English Mission

Struggles in Tranquebar

When Plutschau returned to Europe in 1712, he was unsuccessful in removing the difficulties with the Danish government in Tranquebar, so Ziegenbalg decided to go to the homeland.[70] In Denmark he obtained assurances that the mission would be set on a better foundation with the government at Tranquebar.[71] From there he journeyed to Halle and then crossed the Channel with his new wife to London, where he was received warmly by the SPCK. William Nichols, rector of Stockport, offered a congratulatory speech in Latin; Ziegenbalg responded in Tamil and Newman read a Latin translation.[72] During his stay in London Ziegenbalg went with Boehm and Sir John Philipps to give George I an oral account of the whole mission undertaking,[73] while Lady Mary Philipps, Sir John's wife, introduced Ziegenbalg's wife to the Princess of Wales.[74] This exchange gave Boehm some hope that the Court would begin

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Tranquebar in the East-Indies (London, 1720), n.p. Newman asked Archbishop Wake in 1721 for letters to be included in the fourth volume. (Newman to Archbishop Wake, Middle Temple, 5 Oct. 1721 [ChCh, *Wake MSS* 24:109])

67 *A Letter from Fort St. George in the East-Indies* (London, 1721).

68 Ziegenhagen to Francke, London, 18 Dec. 1724 (*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/18).

69 Newman to Wake, Middle Temple, 28 May 1722 (ChCh, *Wake MSS* 24:121).

70 Ziegenbalg to SPCK, Cape of Good Hope, 15 Jan. 1715, printed in: *PGE III* (1718), pp. 144f.

71 Ziegenbalg to Boehm, Halle, 20 Oct. 1715, printed in: *PGE III* (1718), p. 158.

72 SPCK Minutes, 29 Dec. 1715 (vii.101); see *Orationes Duae* (London, 1716); repr. in: *PGE III* (1718), pp. 219-230.

73 *SCM* (ME/m/3), 7 Feb. 1716; cf. Ziegenbalg and Grundler to George I, Tranquebar, 2 Jan. 1717, printed in: *Several Letters relating to the Protestant Danish Mission at Tranquebar in the East-Indies* (London, 1720), p. 6.

74 Ziegenbalg to Francke, London, 6 Jan. 1716, printed in: *Alte Briefe*, p. 448.