

EASTERN CHURCHES

# News Letter

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**THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF  
THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT  
FROM THE ORTHODOX STANDPOINT**

*by Professor Basil Exarchos*

One characteristic mark of the 20th century is the fact that the various sections of mankind living on the surface of this planet have communicated amongst themselves largely in order to develop their mutual acquaintance to the greatest extent. For this reason both mutual recognition and, consequently, deeper awareness of their essential identity has been greatly advanced; and so the promotion of mutual aid and friendship and love among the various nations of the one and the same human race has been achieved. Considered from a christian point of view, this fact is seen as a creation or achievement of a pre-Christian stage in human relations, which leads on to the truth about men being the children of the one true God and thereby to their common brotherhood, as proclaimed and taught in the Gospels.

In the political sphere, two "world wars" have occurred, after each of which there have been set up institutions to settle the political problems of all mankind: the "League of Nations" after the First World War, and the "United Nations" after the Second.

II

The facts of Christianity—its actual universal presence and its activity throughout life—seem to take no account of what has been accomplished among mankind as a whole, or only very recently to have become aware of "the signs of the times". For, in spite of the teaching of the Gospel about the brotherhood of all men, both within and outside the Church, Christians and the organised institutions which represent them (the Churches) continue and will continue in a state of schisms and heresies and in a mood, not of love but of alienation and even of enmity!

The first great split, the Schism of the 11th century, was followed by a second in the 16th century, which was not simply a "disagreement" but a "deep division": it was not only a matter of "administrative" separations and schisms, but also of heresies in which sometimes merely nominal "Christians" have appeared to have nothing to say in common about the essential content of Christianity.

III

The authorities and the leaders of the groups and churches which were the results of the second schism were the first to be conscious

of and to express their compelling need for reconsideration and renewal and reunion. Their efforts to these ends were intensified at the beginning of the 20th century, at which time the word "Ecumene" came to be used; and in the same period they sought the cooperation of the Orthodox Church, which would afford a visible sign of "historical renewal" with the "ancient Mother Church", the "Ecumenical Church" *par excellence*.

Thus it was that through these efforts there arose mistakenly "the Great Idea" of the reunion of the whole of Christendom, when the reunion of the fragments of "Western" Christendom would be made part of the general ideal and consequently would acquire a pan-Christian value and importance.

The word *Oikumene* and the derived term "Ecumenical Movement", irrespective of the real content intended by the "word manufacturers", are also a reminder of the tradition of the "Ecumene" in the Orthodox Church. It is well known that the identity of the earthly boundaries of Christendom, i.e. of the Church's earthly communion, and of the unified spiritual (i.e. "of civilisation") fellowship appeared first in the Christian and (strictly speaking) Greek Empire of Constantinople. Anyone looking at events from the standpoint of this historical fact is entitled to speak also of the "First Ecumene", since in the history of the Divine Economy the fellowship of the Church was the first to appear as a self-contained spiritual communion: outside it there are none but "barbarians", in the sense of the lowest stage of the beginning and development of human existence, both individual and corporate.

#### IV

The gates of this First Ecumene were knocked on and then forced open after the so-called migration of peoples, when the incursions reached their full force and were successful through sheer material strength: at the same time, however, the intruders began to partake of, or to get ready to partake of, the spiritual essence of the First Ecumene. The fellowship between those peoples outside the Ecumene and those who upheld it has continued even to our own day, with the result that one must be allowed to be precise and to say that the Second Ecumene is still continued within the bounds of the whole of mankind; and thus each of us has a duty to ask himself how far he is taking his part in this Second Ecumene, or how far and whether he is contributing to this work of integrating it.

#### V

The "genesis" of the First Ecumene was completed within four or five centuries; but the preparatory work for it had been done by Alexander the Great, and it was shown great favour until "the

fulness of time had come" (Gal. iv 4). The Second Ecumene, which was begun by the mass migration of peoples (as has been said already), continues and is still to be completed. A survey of the principal stages in this spiritual history is instructive, for it shows that mankind, which had thus been prepared, in the period of the Greek-Roman civilisation faced great difficulties in its efforts to conform to the Christian standard of human perfection. That is why at that time there occurred "misinterpretations" of the very truth itself concerning the facts of knowledge as a whole. In spite of these things, the truth persisted in the Communion of the Church, and was handed down intact through the centuries.

#### VI

Here must be remembered the most important distinction between the total situation then and now: life was lived then, not in some personal and individual sense, but after a public and communal fashion. Because of this, new "churches" and "parishes" were formed, distinct from what had preceded them; and each of them developed a vigorous work of proclaiming the Gospel, as this was experienced and understood by each group. Hence, too, is explained the fact that wrong interpretations of the truth by certain persons could be put forward and become the basis for forming "false congregations", i.e. groups separated from the Church. Thus a "schism" or "heresy" was created: a schism is created, of course, when the differences do not constitute an absolute danger of exclusion from the possibility of salvation or redemption, and a heresy comes about when the quality of belonging to the communion of the one Church has been taken away. For heresy is essentially a cutting off from the body of the "one" Church, whereas schism is the result of and a witness to the earthly weaknesses of Christians.

#### VII

Some of these "false interpretations" have led to a falling away from the Church's communion: this has happened often, as one or more persons or groups have persisted in their private and peculiar views and have refused to accept the Church's authoritative and essential truths of the Gospel. The Church has always striven to point out the errors of these individuals and groups: this demonstration is made by means of an internal dialogue according to each age's own ways and means, since obviously every understanding of spiritual truths is achieved through dialogue between consciously pre-existent opinions about the whole world or part of it, on the one hand, and new concepts which become apparent to the mind and demand to be accepted, on the other hand. Thus both internal and external dialogue are the principal and essential

elements of the spiritual life of the Church-community, even between the biologically mature (grown up) but spiritually immature Christians and those who are both biologically and spiritually immature. (Cp. 1 Cor iii 1-3, xiii 11ff, etc.)

### VIII

In our day, the word "dialogue" is used to denote both spiritual and social life. Dialogue is conducted not only "horizontally" between contemporaries but also "vertically" between generations within the Church's earthly life. This social and historical dialogue is constantly overlooked, although it is this which constitutes the principal factor whereby the Saviour's essential historicity and thus His eternal presence and annunciation are effected.

Great play is made also with the word "tradition" in the sense of the transmitted content of the Christian human life, i.e. its material revelation, and also in the sense of the process of transmission, acceptance and re-transmission. In this second sense it refers to the universal phenomenon of earthly human life whereby the transmission of acquired experience to succeeding generations is pursued and is accepted by the succeeding generations. Obviously this is done also by the Christian community on earth, i.e. by the visible Church. In other words, there is a constant tradition (transmission) of "salvation" and its acceptance in God's Communion with men, which is the principal reason for and purpose of the incarnation of the Son and Word of God.

### IX

Such being the case, it is clear that the Ecumenical Movement too is understood as an attempt at accepting salvation in Christ, as it was "delivered" and "preserved" in the First Ecumene; and this is the principal presupposition for a genuine realisation of the Second Ecumene which is in process of coming into being. Hence it follows also that the Ecumenical Movement is a duty for all who bear the name of Christian and wish to be active members of the Church; and this, both as a search for and appropriation of "transmitted" truth, and also as an attempt at "transmitting" it further, both vertically and horizontally.

In other words, the Ecumenical Movement is not confined and ought not to be confined to efforts between Christian bodies: it should be understood as extending to all mankind, so that progress can be made in the realisation of the Second Ecumene (and very probably the last one), after which the last days will come.

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(\*Dr. Basil Exarchos is Professor Emeritus of the University of Thessaloniki, and Grand Preceptor of the Gospel in the Great Church of Christ).

## THE VOCATION OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY TODAY

The vocation of Orthodox theology in inter-Orthodox relations, "especially during the period of the preparations for the Pan-Orthodox Council", was the subject chosen by Professor Nikos Nissiotis for his address at the reception given by the Faculty of Theology of Athens University in honour of the delegates from the Orthodox Churches to the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Church of Greece in May, 1971. The full text was published in *Ekklesia*, the Greek Church's official journal.

According to Professor Nissiotis, "Orthodox theology is still basically an ecclesiastical science, closely connected with the ecclesial fellowship . . . It is a work of self-criticism, devoted to the Church, which springs from her interior life and has as its aim the fathoming of truth and the renewal of the ecclesial life; and thereby the Church can provide a presence and a more dynamic service in the modern world, by friendly collaboration with the other sciences, through constructive and sustained contact with the other Christian confessions and in dialogue with our age's ideologies".

After having underlined the need for collaboration among the Faculties of Orthodox theology, the professor added: "as for the Theological Faculties, we bear an enormous responsibility at this critical juncture, when the renewal of the Orthodox Church is becoming an imperative necessity. Orthodoxy is waiting for us to perform our dynamic service of the spirit, so that she may undertake anew her heavy and original task, viz. to bring her vital presence to the heart of a technocratic society, which is being changed radically day by day".

There exist, according to Professor Nissiotis, three "fundamental problems" which contemporary Orthodox theology must face and resolve "in order to achieve her aim, which is nothing less than the renewal of the Church's life": 1. the conflict between cataphatic (positive) and apophatic theology; 2. the Orthodox interpretation of what is meant by Tradition; and 3. the problem of "the so-called dialogue with the other Confessions and ideologies".

He asserts that there exists "a latent conflict between two theological methods, i.e. the cataphatic and the apophatic"; and he believes that "in this latent conflict which exists today between Orthodox theologians who are too exclusively partisans of the one or the other approach, the necessity for their coexistence must be forcefully positioned once more, albeit in an inevitable tension . . . The two methods are not wrong in themselves, provided that they are used simultaneously in theological research: they give rise, however, to a one-sided theological outlook when they are considered simply by themselves, isolated the one from the other".

"It is neither possible nor admissible for a person who is theologising to be now exclusively cataphatic, now exclusively apophatic . . ." Nissiotis puts the question: "how can one be at the same time an indivisibly cataphatic and apophatic theologian?" and he answers: "that is the very essence of Orthodox theology, which causes reason and mystery to become mutually interpenetrating, without any apologetic or polemical intent".

On the question of the Orthodox interpretation of Tradition, Nissiotis complains of Orthodox theology because "we have reached the point where even we hold that Tradition is only one of the two sources of Revelation, designed to complete and to annotate the Holy Scriptures; and thus we have become content to believe that, by these definitions, we have given an answer to this problem of extraordinary importance for the renewal of our Church's life".

He points also to the danger of identifying Tradition "with a past Golden Age in the manner of a *monism*, like the fount of other Confessions which exalt other past ages. It is then that the feverish struggle begins, to know how to preserve it (sc. Tradition)—and this gives rise to a belligerent attitude and, above all, to an unreasoning repetition of its modes of expression; and the effect of all this is the repudiation of the perpetual motion, (a personal hypostatic movement on the part of the Word), between substance and form by the Holy Spirit".

As a solution, Professor Nissiotis proposes "a dynamic understanding of Tradition". "We can best understand Tradition", he writes, "as a creative and dynamic force which renews the whole of Creation throughout the ages, without making a rigid differentiation between past, present and future within the One Church. This Tradition crystallises out once and for all in Holy Scripture, as a living and written witness to it, and afterwards in the historical structures of the Church and her theological doctrines, which proceed perpetually from the very life of the Church and which constitute the manifestations of Tradition by the Holy Spirit in all ages and for the whole world . . . Orthodox theology, assisted by Tradition in its true sense, must pay attention to the historicity of its faith, i.e. to its reality, activity, content and relevance to the modern world."

As for the dialogue with the other Confessions and ideologies, Professor Nissiotis is of the opinion that "this dynamic conception of Tradition can become the point of departure for a true presence of Orthodox theology in the heart of the theological dialogue which is going on at present among the Churches, and for cooperation with them".

After insisting that the aim of the Ecumenical Movement "is neither dogmatic syncretism, nor mutual concessions in the realm of faith, nor a facile taking by force of union on the part of the

Churches tomorrow, although union remains the ultimate aim", the professor says that "Orthodoxy, having closed its ranks, should look to this problem with all necessary attention and should give to its dynamic presence a deeper sense and content, in order to make a positive contribution; for, by its nature and position, it is that dialogue's centre, axis and heart".

Professor Nissiotis finds that "the dialogue which is hard for the Orthodox is that with the contemporary ideologies, philosophical and humanist, which are diametrically opposed to the Church's faith. There, we are called to participate in a broader spirit, with understanding and respect and dispatch, to listen first and only later to speak". Yet in spite of these difficulties Professor Nissiotis thinks that "Orthodoxy possesses the experience necessary to ensure a worthy presence in no matter what society, secularised or radically opposed politically. One of the main tasks of Orthodox theological Faculties is a ceaseless concern to present, to develop and to carry into effect these preconditions by means of writing, teaching, scientific and ideological and interconfessional contacts, and (in particular) by creating a new generation of theologians, capable of preaching and of acting in a spirit which is both very broad and truly Orthodox".

#### IN MEMORIAM

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#### PATRIARCH MAXIMOS V OF CONSTANTINOPLE

The former Ecumenical Patriarch Maximos V died at his home in Istanbul on New Year's Day 1972, at the age of 75; and his funeral, when he was laid to rest beside others of his predecessors in the Stavropegic Monastery of Baloukli, was attended by delegates from all the Orthodox Churches and by a great number of local Christians, a fitting tribute to His Holiness's notable work in past years.

Born at Sinope on the Black Sea in 1897, and educated at the Halki Theological School, the late Primate spent his whole life and ministry within the immediate purlieu of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He became Metropolitan of Philadelphia in 1930, and of Chalcedon in 1932; and in 1946 the Holy Synod unanimously elected him to the Ecumenical Throne. Unhappily, two years later, ill health compelled him to resign his supreme office and to retire into a very circumscribed private life.

In 1936, during the pontificate of his predecessor Patriarch Benjamin I (1936-46), Metropolitan Maximos of Chalcedon was president of the Synodal Commissions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and thus he played a great part in its affairs, not least when difficult problems had to be resolved: the question of the autocephaly of the Albanian Orthodox Church, and efforts to settle the Bulgarian schism which had lasted since 1872. During his very brief tenure of the Ecumenical Throne, Maximos V worked tirelessly to improve his Church's spiritual life and organisation, and to promote harmonious cooperation between the various local Orthodox Churches.

#### NEW PATRIARCH OF BULGARIA

Patriarch Maksim of Bulgaria (in the world, Marin Naydenov Minkov) was born on 29th October 1914, in the devoutly Christian family of a modest joiner in the village of Oreshak, in the district of Lovich at a distance of only three kilometres from the historic Trojan Monastery, the nearness of whose sheltering walls was a constant factor of his childhood and adolescence. When he had finished primary school in his native village, he entered the theological seminary at Sofia, from which he graduated with distinction in 1935. Not having the means to continue his education, he began work as a reader and treasurer of the Church of the Dormition in the town of Rusa and only in 1938, thanks to the support of the monks of the Trojan Monastery, did he enter the theological faculty of the State University of Sofia which he completed with distinction in 1942.

While he was still a student, on 13th December 1941, he was consecrated a monk by Metropolitan Filaret of Lovich and given the name of Maksim, and a few days later ordained hierodeacon by Metropolitan Paisiy of Vrachany—who has lived to see him ascend the Patriarchal Throne. After a brief period of service as Metropolitan's deacon in Lovich he was appointed teacher-tutor at the Sofia Theological Seminary and, on 14th May 1944, the same Metropolitan Paisiy ordained him a priest-monk.

His pedagogical work attracted the attention of the Metropolitan Mikhail of Dorostol-Cherveny (Rusa) who remembered him from the time he had worked in the town of Rusa; and on 12th June 1947, he was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite and soon afterwards appointed *protosingel* of the Metropolitan See of Dorostol-Cherveny.

In 1950, according to the decision of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Church, Archimandrite Maksim was sent to Moscow as incumbent of the Bulgarian Ecclesiastical *Podvorye* (=a church given over for use by foreign nationals *Ed.*) in Moscow, where he remained for almost six years. In a letter dated 6th September 1955, Patriarch Aleksiy wrote to the Bulgarian Patriarch Cyril that "Archimandrite Maksim has shown himself a worthy representative of the Bulgarian Church and the Bulgarian people. Modest in his outward manner, inwardly deeply aware of his duty, he has won the sincere love of ecclesiastical circles of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the respect of the society in which he moves".

On his return from Moscow, Archimandrite Maksim was appointed secretary in chief to the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Church; and on 30th December 1956 he was ordained Bishop of Branitsy by the Holy Council of Bishops under Patriarch Cyril in the Patriarchal Cathedral Church of Aleksandr Nevskiy.

On 30th November 1960, in the Synodal Church of St. Boris the Tsar, after the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, at a vote taken by members of the Holy Synod, Bishop Maksim was proclaimed Metropolitan of Lovich.

After the blessed end of Patriarch Cyril on 7th March 1971, Metropolitan Maksim, according to the constitution of the Bulgarian Church, took over direction of the Holy Synod in the capacity of Chairman. In this office he remained until, on 4th July 1971, the decision of the Council of Church and People convened to elect a new Patriarch called upon him to take the helm of the Church.

The new Bulgarian Patriarch is a distinguished theologian, an active worker of the Church, and a great patriot. He has a reputation for the purity of his life as a religious leader, and for kindness, fairness and courtesy in his dealings with his fellow-men.

In all spheres of life he has distinguished himself as an excellent organiser and administrator. His Holiness is an ardent supporter of ecumenism and of the peace movement. He has taken an active part in international peace forums and meetings. He represented his native Church at the Pan-Orthodox Conferences, at the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala, at the All-Christian Peace Congresses and Assemblies in Defence of Peace at Prague and Berlin, etc. etc. . . .

All aspects of the life and work of the new Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church augur favourably for a successful and blessed ministry as First Bishop.

A. Ignatyev

(Reprinted from, and with thanks to, the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*).

## ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA

The problem of Orthodox unity in America was aggravated considerably by the granting of autocephaly to the Russian-Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America (Metropolia). The correspondence between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Moscow Patriarchate and the subsequent decisions of the ancient patriarchates and other autocephalous churches is now a matter of record. When it appeared that a *modus vivendi* had been reached, good relations between the Metropolia and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese were strained to breaking point by certain unwarranted actions on the part of the Metropolia. In light of the increasing tension, Archbishop Iakovos resigned as Chairman of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) in October 1970, and requested that the Study and Planning Commission revise the constitution to reflect the current situation. He was prevailed upon, however, to continue serving as Acting Chairman of SCOBA. The Study and Planning Commission, inclusive of Metropolia representatives, fulfilled its mandate at the XXVth regular meeting of SCOBA on 15th June 1971. At that meeting, there was detailed discussion about the revised constitution with the Metropolia representative abstaining.

In a mutual effort at reconciliation, Archbishop Iakovos and Metropolitan Ireney met at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese headquarters on 6th October. Positive steps were taken there to re-establish good relations between the two jurisdictions and to assure the continuation of SCOBA. As a result, a regular meeting of SCOBA was held on 30th November.

Archbishop Iakovos took the chair at the meeting, which was attended by the representatives of the Metropolia, the Greek Archdiocese, the Albanian Orthodox Diocese, the Romanian Orthodox Missionary Episcopate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America, the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese, the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Exile. Representatives of the Bulgarian and Antiochian Archdioceses were absent.

The meeting was conducted in a cordial and friendly atmosphere, following the conciliatory tone set by the opening statement of Archbishop Iakovos, who called for a spirit of peace and reconciliation in this time of crisis. He emphasised that the high purposes of SCOBA were more important than the differences which constantly beset us. The potential for Orthodoxy through the SCOBA is very great and all of us should do everything within our power to see that it survives and flourishes in the coming years. At the request of Bishop Dimitri and in the light of Archbishop Iakovos's remarks, it was agreed that the matter of an immediate consideration of the proposed constitutional amendments be postponed for

the future. It was further decided that this question should be taken up by the Study and Planning Commission, and that a report be tendered within one year. Archbishop Iakovos reported for the information of the member Hierarchs of the recent meeting between himself and Metropolitan Ireney during which positive steps were taken to restore former good relations between the two jurisdictions. This report served to satisfy the concern of some members who were anxious to see harmonious relations between the various jurisdictions.

A report of the Ecumenical Commission for its reconstitution was received and approved. Archbishop Iakovos was elected Chairman of the Ecumenical Commission and a modest budget for its work was approved. Further consideration will be given to the reconstitution of other Commissions along the lines approved for the Ecumenical Commission.

Final action was taken for the regular continuation of the SCOBA with election of Officers for the new year. Archbishop Iakovos was unanimously elected Chairman. Bishop John (Martin) was elected Vice-Chairman and Bishop Andrey (Kuschak) Treasurer. The Revd Dr. Robert G. Stephanopoulos was elected Executive Secretary, replacing the Very Revd Paul Schneirla who had served faithfully in that capacity for the past several years.

Announcements were made that a meeting of the new Officers would give consideration to the future programmes and finding of SCOBA. The date of the next regular meeting of SCOBA will be on Thursday, 20th April 1972, at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese headquarters.

## ECONOMY IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

*This article, prepared and published by Episkepsis, is an abridgement of a report submitted to the Preparatory Commission for the future Great Council of the Holy Orthodox Church. Its importance for, and relevance to, all non-Orthodox is self-evident.*

The Commission's report on this subject comprises a short introduction and three chapters: "1. The meaning of the terms *akrivia* and *oikonomia* in the Orthodox Church. 2. Economy in the sacraments celebrated within and outside the Church. 3. Economy in the reception of heretics and schismatics by the Orthodox Church".

"The terms "strictness" (*akrivia*) and "economy" (*oikonomia*) are commonly used in theological terminology to denote two attitudes on the part of the Church when she employs the means of salvation

which she possesses. The first term, "strictness", denotes the faithful adherence by the Church to the canonical rules in her dealings with each of the faithful. The second term, "economy", stands for the Church's attitude of deep love towards those of her members who transgress against her canonical rules, as well as towards those Christians outside her ranks who wish to enter her . . . It is the Church's right and the Church's duty, after the example of the economy of Christ, to deal with the various weaknesses and failures of people in their Christian life and faith, with the same love and tenderness as a mother shows in her pity."

In the chapter on economy in the sacraments, the Commission spells out more precisely the purpose of economy in that connection:

"*Strictness* and *economy* are two poles marking the limits within which the Church develops her work, both for her members and also for those Christians outside her. These two poles are the two chief ways which allow the Church to confer the means of salvation. The problems involved in strictness and economy are of immense importance for modern church life, since never in the Church's history has she been so forcefully confronted by the problem of inter-ecclesial and inter-confessional relations, both the reconciliation and union of Christians and also unity on the universal plane".

The Commission cites many Patristic texts and canons in which "it appears clearly that the principal object pursued by economy is not to close the door of salvation on anyone (1 Tim ii 4 and Acts xiv 27) but, on the contrary, to open wide the gates of heaven for every member of the faithful and to facilitate the return to the bosom of the Church of those who have been estranged".

In the last chapter, the Commission notes that:

"The Orthodox Church has used strictness and economy, both towards its own members and also towards the heterodox (non-Orthodox). As to the latter, she has always made a clear distinction between different categories of the heterodox whom she has received into herself: all those who were returning to the father's house in a spirit of repentance (St. Luke vi 11-32), and even others—especially those who had caused her great suffering—she has forgiven in the name of Christ (2 Cor v 11). For she did not consider them as being in schism or separation from her for ever, but only temporarily, since "it is not a matter of being dupes of Satan" (2 Cor ii 11).

"The Church being one, all those who are estranged from her can be considered as standing on different rungs of one ladder which leads up to her, when they want to return to the Church. More precisely, it could be said that the Holy Spirit works in many ways on other Christians, according to their degree of faith and hope . . .

"It means that those who are outside the Orthodox Church can be considered to be alive after leaving the Lord's house and its threshold, whatever their distance away".

After an historical summary of the primitive Church's practice in the matter of receiving heretics and schismatics who returned to her bosom, the Commission also took note of later practice with regard to Roman Catholics and Protestants and came to this conclusion:

"Our holy Orthodox Church has not only a great freedom of action in applying economy to her brothers in Christ who stand outside her: economy itself, applied with love towards all in good measure (where and when required), is destined in the future too to govern the Orthodox Church's intercourse with the other Churches and Confessions. Until that day when the individual Churches and Confessions draw near and identify themselves with the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, no form of economy in their relationships will be more effective, being only a transitory institution to correct the existing anomaly. Thereafter there will be only strictness of the one faith which, being the same for all and being expressed infallibly in the strictness of the dogmas and of life, will predominate and constitute the one Body of Christ.

"Conscious of the importance of the present structure of Christianity, our holy Orthodox Church, although she is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, recognises not only the actual existence of those Christian Churches but also firmly believes that all her intercourse with them should be based upon an elucidation (made as speedily and as objectively as possible) of the ecclesiological problem and their whole doctrine. She recognises also that the basis for her meeting with them will stem from the divine-human structure of the Church. Yet she has no desire to forget the manifold pastoral responsibilities of the Church of Christ, which include the task of teaching the Gospel "without excision" and the duty to avoid troubling the consciences of the faithful for whom the division of Christians is a scandal; "is Christ divided?" (1 Cor i 13).

"Our holy Orthodox Church will never cease to observe strictness in the dogmas of the faith and of grace which she must safeguard; but she will regulate by economy that which is worthy of economy in her contacts and intercourse with those outside, provided always that there is agreement on faith in God the Trinity and in the other truths of the Orthodox faith which derive from that dogma. For she will always remain within the limits of the teaching of the one and undivided primitive Church.

"A further aim would be the propagation of living witness to Christ and of the true faith among secularised circles and in that large part of the world which does not follow Christ, in order to bring all men to the only Christ, the only faith, the only baptism, the only breaking of bread, the only God and Father of all (Eph iv 5,6).

"By so doing the Orthodox Church sets her sights on the following constructive objects:



(a) In the first place—and it is the most important—to preserve her own faith and doctrine intact and uninfluenced by her condescending by economy to those outside her. “For there is no place for concessions in matters of the Orthodox faith, and reason makes use of economy when the dogma of the faith is not mutilated” (Evlogios of Alexandria, PG 103, 953).

(b) To make an exact evaluation of the positive points in the faith and doctrine, the ecclesial structure, the sacramental grace and the eschatological hope of the non-Orthodox, whilst remaining true to God’s word and the Gospel of salvation.

(c) To expunge every feeling of jealousy and violence, private interest, opportunism, acts of interference in another Church, proselytising of groups or individuals on the other side by means well known in the past, which should be abandoned as prejudicial to the Churches’ sovereignty and to the work of unification.

(d) To make a fair and exact judgement on the precedents created over the centuries, as well as in more recent years, in the field of the Orthodox receiving by economy non-Orthodox sacraments, according to the Church’s canonical practice.

(e) To seek, within the limits of economy which correspond to the extremes of the Divine philanthropy, for ways of applying this economy within the framework of the good relations which exist at present between the Christian Churches, in order to promote all that is conducive to the common life in Christ in ecclesiastical practice, liturgical life, common prayer, meeting and growing cooperation in the theological sphere, etc., with a view to crowning the Churches efforts towards unity.

(f) Within the conditions of which the Orthodox Church is very conscious, and with mutual fairness, to do all that ought to be done at every given moment in common striving and joint action, in order that all may be built up in Christ”.

## NEWS AND CAUSERIE

### ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

A delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, led by Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, visited the Vatican from 23rd to 26th January: its main purpose was to convey to Pope Paul VI a copy of *Tomos Agapis* (“Book of Love”), which was a joint work undertaken by the Vatican and the Patriarchate together.

The principal ceremony took place in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, where His Holiness presided in person and received the

volume from Metropolitan Meliton before a great congregation which included HM Queen Frederika the Queen Mother of Greece, the Diplomatic Corps and many ecclesiastical leaders.

This “Book of Love” is a record, some 750 pages long, of all that has been said and done in the years 1958–1970 in the field of the continuing “encounter” between the two great leaders of the Eastern and Western Churches.

### ALEXANDRIA

On 21st November 1971 the new Patriarchal House was opened formally in Alexandria, in the presence of representatives of all the local Orthodox Churches. The coming together of so many and distinguished figures in Orthodoxy was made the occasion for an exchange of views on the subject of the unity of the Orthodox Church—a most important topic in these days.

Patriarch Nicholas VI of Alexandria said that “the body of Orthodoxy ought to present today, in these so difficult times, a unified stand in the face of the great problems which preoccupy mankind”.

### ANTIOCH

The new building in the ancient Balamand Monastery was opened on Sunday, 7th November 1971, in the presence of Patriarch Elias of Antioch, the President of the Lebanese Republic, members of the Government, and many other notables. The Patriarchate’s new Theological Faculty has an aim which can be summed up in the phrase, “in the tradition of Antiochene theology, in the setting of the Arab world”.

“This Institute is the cornerstone of our renewal”, declared Metropolitan George (Khodre) of Mount Lebanon: “its vocation is to train priests, as well as teachers and staff to serve the Church in various fields. What spirit will prevail? That of Antioch. This Institute of Theology desires an Antiochene vocation . . . Particular emphasis will be put on the Church Fathers who lived in this region who wrote either in Greek or in Syriac. Secondly, this Institute wants to work out a theology which will express itself in Arabic and be addressed to Arabs. For that reason we attach great importance to the study of Islam.”

### JERUSALEM

The Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research at Tantura, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, which it was decided to set up in 1964, opened its doors on 3rd November 1971. Twenty students from various Christian confessions are studying there—Church history, Christian sources, the planning of theological dialogue. Orthodox, Roman Catholics and Protestants are members of the staff; and the Library is managed by the Abbey of Montserrat.

#### RUSSIA

In February, Pope Paul VI received in private audience a delegation from the Moscow Patriarchate which had come to Italy to visit various institutions for the training of young priests. It was led by the Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy at Zagorsk (Bishop Filaret of Dmitrov).

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We welcome the appearance of the first number of an English edition of the well-known *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. Although it reached us in 1972, it is numbered 1971/1; and its contents are not the same as those of the Russian edition. Nevertheless, it is a valuable addition to Orthodoxy's documentation in the West; and the high standard of the text owes much to Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh and his staff, who have made themselves responsible for the English language translations.

#### CYPRUS

During the festivities connected with the opening of the new Patriarchal House in Alexandria, the delegation from the Church of Cyprus handed over to the Patriarchate the sum of £10,000, as a first instalment towards the building of a block of flats in Alexandria which will assure the funds needed for its work. Its architect was at present in Nairobi to put in hand the construction of an Orthodox seminary there for natives belonging to the Throne of Alexandria.

#### GREECE

The meeting of the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy, which had been planned to begin on 26th February, has now been adjourned to 15th November by decision of the Governing Holy Synod.

The new Patriarch Theophilos of the Ethiopian (Coptic) Church paid an official visit to the Church of Greece last November, and then went on to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople.

During his time in Athens, the Patriarch took occasion once again to emphasise the fact the Christological faith of the two Churches was identical. "This is the faith which, we believe, we hold in common. Whether historically we recognised the fact or not, the fact that we possess the same faith means that we are united in the one Church: the Body of Christ. Consequently, our division is simply a family quarrel, which we have allowed to persist for fifteen centuries: it is high time that we did our best to resolve it, in our own age".

The Patriarch announced that "very soon" a Theological Commission of the non-Chalcedonian Churches would be set up, to make preparations "for an official meeting of representatives of the Churches of the two families".

#### GERMANY

On 6th February, the new Metropolitan Eirenaios of Germany was enthroned in Bonn: formerly Bishop of Kissamos and Selinon in Crete, the new Metropolitan succeeds the late Metropolitan Iakovos who was killed in a motor accident in Germany last November.

The new Metropolitan, who earlier studied in Paris, Lille and Frankfurt, as well as being a graduate of Athens, is no stranger in Western Europe; and the establishment of the Orthodox Academy in Crete was one of the richest fruits of his ministry there.

#### SINAI

On 30th November, fire broke out in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai: that it was not more destructive was due to the prompt action of General Dayan and the Israeli authorities who flew in equipment and water by helicopter to this remote and waterless region. The unique and priceless icons were undamaged; and the Israeli Government has promised help to restore the damage that was done.

Archbishop Gregory of Sinai has said that he will ask for the help of UNESCO and the Red Cross, to protect the Monastery's treasures. At the same time, Cardinal Stephanos in Cairo, the "Coptic Catholic Patriarch", accused the Israelis of having set fire to the Monastery in order to steal its priceless treasures . . . !

#### GREAT BRITAIN

Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira announced last autumn, at his Clerical-Lay Assembly, the establishment of a Convent of the Dormition of our Lady at Filgrave, near Northampton.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Once again the Editor wishes to express his indebtedness to all the various Orthodox journals which allow him to draw upon their resources, and especially to that most excellent and so far indispensable *Episkepsis*, the fortnightly news bulletin put out by the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Orthodox Centre in Geneva, Switzerland, under its Director, Mr. I. K. Papadopoulos.

## AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association exists to unite members of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches for the following objects:

- (a) The principal object for which the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association is established is the advancement of the Christian religion, in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Church and those of the Eastern Orthodox Church the doctrine, worship and way of life of the other.
- (b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Communions in prayer and work in achieving the principal object, with a view to promotion of visible unity between them.

## SOME METHODS OF HELPING THE WORK

1. By joining the Association and getting others to join.
2. By arranging for a meeting in the neighbourhood, when a lecture may be given on the Eastern Churches and Reunion, and the objects of the Association explained.
3. By asking the Parochial Authorities to promise a Sunday collection every year either in the service or afterwards at the doors.
4. By uniting in local centres for the study of Eastern Christendom, and for Intercession for Reunion.

Lectures – with or without visual aids – can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

## SUBSCRIPTION

The minimum annual subscription is £1, but none will be excluded solely on account of inability to pay this amount, while it is hoped that those who can afford to pay more will do so.

All members receive the *Eastern Churches News Letter* which is published quarterly.