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THE OECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE IN THE  
ORTHODOX CHURCH

A review article of the recently published monograph  
by Metropolitan Maximos of Sardis \*

The position of the Oecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox Church is by no means a subject of interest merely to the Orthodox world. The oecumenical activity of the Archbishops and Patriarchs of Constantinople from the fourth century right up until today concerns Christendom as a whole, and this book will be welcomed by Christians of all denominations.

The history of the Oecumenical Patriarchate certainly includes some unfortunate episodes, yet I should like to stress the element that strikes the historian who views it as a whole. From its earliest days, the Church of Constantinople figured in world history as the Church of a Christian city within the Roman Empire as reformed by Constantine the Great. It was called the Church of New Rome, the new capital of the first Christian Emperor.

It came to prominence at a time when the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity was being completed, and when Byzantium was beginning to develop as a Graeco-Roman and Christian Empire. This empire was at heart both Christian and Greek; Greek not in a baldly nationalistic sense, but rather as world-wide and *oecumenical*. This Christian-Greek element was nearly always predominant. Byzantine history has a broad basis, as the Church there, which once had had quite a simple task, was then called upon to offer the world-wide *oecumenical* worship of Christ on behalf of man. As far as both the Christian-Greek element and the Christianity of the Greek nation proper are concerned, it may be said that the Greek Church of Constantinople possessed the unity and spirit of primitive Christianity which had itself mastered the world-wide Greek culture of the Roman Empire. It carried on the ancient Catholic Church of the Greek World and the Graeco-Roman Empire of Byzantium, and preserved more authentically than the other churches this union of *oecumenical* Christianity and the Greek World. For this reason its Orthodoxy is

\* Maximos, Metropolitan of Sardis, *Τὸ Οἰκουμενικὸν Πατριαρχεῖον ἐν τῇ Ὁρθοδόξῳ Ἐκκλησίᾳ* (*The Oecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox Church*), a historical and canonical study. Thessaloniki, Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1972, 389 pp., with a summary in French. An English translation is currently in preparation.

Cf. my communication (in German) at the second Conference of South Eastern European Studies, Athens, 1970. Now at press.

not so static or restricted in form, but is rather dynamic. This is clear from the Encyclical of 1920, and by the modern developments in the Greek Theology of Athens, Thessaloniki and Chalki, and in the thought of the modern theologians of the Russian Diaspora and the Orthodox Balkan countries. The unity of the Orthodox Churches with the Oecumenical Throne as head, and with the other seven Patriarchates and autocephalous Churches is a remarkable phenomenon for the divided world of today, and for Western Christianity. Orthodoxy is firmly rooted in its liberal, democratic organization, mid-way between two extremes; the monarchic Roman-Catholic Church, and the divided Protestant confessions.

*Introduction* (pp. 1-9). The author starts by giving as an example of the unity of Orthodoxy the recent initiative of the Constantinopolitan Patriarch; the first pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes in 1961. He praises this as done in full consciousness of the responsibilities involved. The Orthodox Church, he writes, connects freedom in expressing thoughts with authority; that is reverence for truth, the Canons and for History, and for the ancient ecclesiastical and canonical establishment and order. He points out that Orthodoxy being life is organically structured, and as such has as head and centre the Oecumenical Patriarchate. No other Church has exerted itself more for Orthodoxy, fulfilling over the years what it understood to be the function of the Holy and Great Church of Christ. The position and rights of the local Orthodox Churches are defined by the Holy Canons and the course of history, and the same is true for Constantinople. The charge of «Eastern Papacy» is therefore groundless. The author examines the peculiar position of the Oecumenical Patriarchate in relation to the autocephalous churches, and to the churches of the Diaspora. Particularly interesting are his remarks on the internal unity of Orthodoxy, and his investigation of the interchangeable terms, *The Orthodox Church*, and *The Orthodox Churches*. He concludes: diversity in unity, as in the Trinity<sup>1</sup>. He goes on to develop this in connection with the Eucharistic ecclesiological basis of the Church of Christ: he sees fullness of Communion on Christ in the visible Church as the local and original basis of the existence of the individual churches. He finds the origin of autocephaly in the unity in a particular place of bishop, clergy, and laity, and not in a fixed connection between local churches where the bishops are equal to one another. The author makes a distinction between the ontological equality of the bishops of the local churches—each of which fully possesses the Apostolic charismata—and the autocephaly and hierarchy of the individual sees. He does not confuse equality of honour among

1. Cf. certain remarks of Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira in his periodical, July/August 1972, page 6.

bishops with autocephaly and the hierarchy of honour, but he considers the Roman Papacy a distortion of ecclesiology. This is also his judgement upon a bishop's being employed merely as a legate of the Patriarch. While the bishops and leaders of each of the local churches are ontologically equal in honour, the author makes an exception: according to the ecclesiastical and canonical order of the universal Church, which concerns the interpretation of autocephaly, «*the Bishops are not equal in honour*». The interpretation of autocephaly (in its widest, historical sense) belongs not in the sphere of the «ontology» of the Church, he emphasizes, but rather in that of its *historical hypostatic form*, as Father Alexander Schmemmann remarks, citing the case of the dioceses of Tula and Moscow, to show that there is indeed a *primacy of honour* in the historically evolved «hierarchical order of the Universal Church». The existence of such a hierarchy, however, does not annul the ontological equality of honour of all the bishops and their Churches, in terms of ecclesiastical theology.

We can therefore correctly use the expression: *The Unity of the Churches that are episcopally constituted and independent of each other where administration is concerned*. The expression was used by Eusebius<sup>1</sup>, «concerning the common union» of the communities whose «common faith» is preserved even when there is disagreement in secondary matters. Yet the existence of Apostolic, missionary or *Mother Churches*, and the political organization of the ἐπαρχίαι of the Roman Empire, which were divided into metropolises with dioceses subject to them, and independent arcidioceses not controlling subject dioceses, together with the need to preserve identity of faith in essentials in the face of heresies and schisms, brought to light the concept of the Synod as an essential factor in the life of the Church. From the idea of the Synod grew the *order of precedence among sees* of the fifth and sixth centuries. This grew up and took shape from the historical circumstances of the *Synodical Church*, which after about 160 turned out to be a serious factor in the formation of the faith, and of the organization of episcopal jurisdictions throughout history. The *unity in essence* of the Churches as the Body of Christ is an essential concept of both Christology and ecclesiology, and emphasizes their identity in faith, liturgy and ethics, in usage and tradition, within the Synod framework.

Within the Synodical institution, however, the equality of the bishops is safeguarded by the system of government by majority rule—all votes having equal authority. This demonstrates *the shared responsibility for the truth of the Apostolic tradition*, the Scriptures emerging as part of the tradition of the Church. The Synodical system brought about the questions of the status of sees, of jurisdiction on matters of faith, ordinations, judgements upon bishops and

1. Hist. Eccl. V, 24 ix.

ecclesiastical order in general. The administrative distinction of bishops into Archbishoprics, Patriarchates, Provinces and the like is closely bound up with the synodical system.

I agree with what Metropolitan Maximos says about the need to avoid confusing the ontological equality of all churches (not just the autocephalous ones) in the person of their bishop with autocephaly. Yet in connection with the hierarchy, I prefer the use of the terms *elder* and *younger* churches, and the idea of *first*, *second* and *third* as an expression of the primacy of honour—either of sees or of seniority in consecration—and of jurisdiction. This last does not affect in the slightest the equality of the Apostolic successors<sup>1</sup>. I should prefer to avoid the term *subordinates*, because the bishops, as successors of the Apostles, are basically all equal. I cannot justify the existence of assistant bishops and titulars, since even the *chorepiscopi* or country-bishops had some jurisdiction, and the successors of the Apostles must have territorial jurisdiction. Nevertheless in Churches such as Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch, where the flocks were driven out of the fixed diocesan areas by force, their existence is justified, because they have dioceses *in partibus infidelium*.

The primacy of Constantinople once accepted as a canonical and synodical principle, I am in full agreement with what Metropolitan Maximos has to say about Constantinople as the first Eastern see, in contrast to the West. If there is one particular factor that has maintained the Oecumenical Throne it is this: it has combined an ancient catholicity that rises above national divisions with unity in Orthodoxy and in the primacy of honour. This has brought about fixed episcopal jurisdictions, yet has left the equality, which is of Apostolic origin, unaffected. This equality is the heritage received from the Apostles in particular areas, and in the synod, where it is possible for the presiding Patriarch to be in the minority, and to be obliged to yield. In the West, however, there arose the idea of two inheritances—one from Peter, and one from the Apostles, the former clearly having priority. The primacy of honour and authority which resulted from this led to the breaking away of Protestantism, and the emergence in the Roman Catholic world of the present struggle of the *Primatus Petri* with the *collegialitas* of the Apostles (two inheritances) which leads to an impasse. The unity, however, of the bishops of the first three centuries was preserved more properly in the East, within the canonical order of the sees.

The work of the Metropolitan is to be seen as an attempt to link ecclesiology with the ecclesiastical order evolved by history and tradition, which serves the collective responsibilities of the bishops for the continued existence and propagation of Christianity. The sole responsibility that concerns essen-

1. *Ibid.*, I, 1.

tials in the Synodical system of the Church is the responsibility for the Truth and for ecclesiastical tradition.

At the end of the introduction, Metropolitan Maximos goes into the emergence and development of the local churches which formed the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, whose bishops, united in identity of faith and equal to one another, acquired a «hierarchy of sees» led by *First Bishops* (πρωτόθρονοι). Thus, while the first two chapters avoid somewhat the question of the position of the Oecumenical Patriarch in the Orthodox Church today, they do deal with the structure of the Church, and the construction of the pyramid of government on the basis of which equality is preserved in the unity and identity of the churches/bishops. This unity and identity proceeded from the will of the founder and of the Apostles, directly from the Early Church.

The first chapter, entitled *General Presuppositions*, deals with three questions. The first is *the position within the Eucharist of the bishop*. The second is *the meaning of Catholicity* (that is the fulness of the local church which entirely possesses Christ, as expressed clearly in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans, VIII [p. 28, and cf. Zezioulas, op. cit., p. 99] and hinted at in the other sources, even in I Clement in the West). The third is the position of the priesthood in the Eucharist, subordinate in the Church according to divine will<sup>1</sup>. This leads to the Eucharist's becoming, both in East and West, the centre of the life of the Church in a particular place. Beginning quite properly with the New Testament texts<sup>2</sup>, and Christ's words that «where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them», the author shows that from the earliest times the leader of the Christian community has been seen as the image of Christ himself. He takes the line that what was seen as internally, liturgically and ecclesologically necessary was accepted by the Church right from sub-apostolic times — a monarchic episcopal organization, with the presbyters encircling the bishop as the body of the Apostles encompassed Christ. This recalls my belief that there was no monarchic organization (p. 11) as some modern Protestants understand it by forcing the texts. The Metropolitan goes on to examine the Eucharist as a revelation of the Church both ideally and in history, and sees the bishop as leader and head of the Eucharistic Community which united the Church of God both temporally and spatially<sup>3</sup>. By the second century, the term *Catholic Church* was also associated with Orthodoxy in the

1. Isaiah LX, 17 (Septuagint).

2. I Cor. XIV, 40 «but everything is to be done properly, and in order».

3. On page 12, he mentions the book of a pupil of mine, Professor I. Zezioulas, *Ἡ ἐνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῇ Θεῇ Εὐχαριστίᾳ καὶ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ κατὰ τοὺς τρεῖς πρώτους αἰῶνας*, Athens, 1965.

faith<sup>1</sup>, but without any weakening of the concept associated with the Eucharist. Eucharistic ecclesiology and correct belief were inseparably connected (Hippolytus) with the bishop as guardian of the correct faith. The unity of the Local Churches in the One, Holy Catholic Church throughout the world is seen in its identity to the whole Christ, to the primitive Catholic state. This is the basis of Orthodox ecclesiology. I must point out that the basic factor in the Church of the first three centuries—before the formation of parishes—was the succession of the *προεστῶς* presbyter-bishop to the position belonging to every Apostle. A similar succession is to be observed in the concelebration with the *προεστῶς* of presbyter-bishops assisted by deacons. The participation of all of them in the Eucharist was of fundamental significance, as was also the formation of each church as a closed liturgical circle, and the passing on of the Apostolic way of naming the *προεστῶς* (Justin) once there were no more Apostles. They were remembered through the name; this happened with Paul, Ignatius, Clement and Polycarp. There then rapidly came to be an association of the person with the name of his people, and later with that of his city (for instance Polycarp of the *Smyrnaeans*, and later Alexander of *Alexandria*). When necessary, the presbyters were entitled to celebrate the Eucharist alone, in the absence of the bishop. It was celebrated by the *προεστῶς*, which is a term for bishop in Justin, according to H. Lietzmann<sup>2</sup>). The basic unit, therefore, of ecclesiastical organization was the diocese, directed by one bishop, celebrating the One Eucharist with the presbyters and deacons, and preserving the one true faith and tradition. The identity of the Catholic Bishops with each other and with the primitive Church is what makes the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

In chapter two, entitled *Ecclesiastical Organization*, the author examines the question of the first Church organization, its development from the primitive period, the subsequent concentration around city one and one bishop in the one Eucharist, and goes up to the formation of parishes with presbyters in charge in the mid-third century. Pointing out that it was frequently necessary to represent the bishop (p. 36) he concludes that «the solution of the problem was to be found by strengthening the liturgical jurisdiction of the presbyters». I do not agree with the word *strengthening*, because I Clement and Ignatius do not lead me to interpret the liturgical prayers of Hippolytus for the ordaining of presbyters as granting a prerogative originally granted to them through their ordination or appointment during the Eucharist. Reserving examination of this later, I will only say now that I should prefer the expression

1. Irenaeus P.G. VII, 1025.

2. *Geschichte der Alten Kirche*.

«more frequent and canonical use of the liturgical prerogative of presbyters», which was granted to them, and ever since has been granted to them for the specific purpose, for the κατάστασις (Clement of Rome constantly uses this expression as against that of χειροτονία-electium) within the Eucharist; the prerogative of the principal ministers in the Eucharist, the bishops and presbyters, the deacons acting as assistants. The author discusses the question of travelling presbyters, and presbyters permanently appointed to parishes, who naturally also undertook the celebration of the Eucharist, while during the period of concélébration (50 - c. 250) their more usual task had been teaching. He then moves on to the great increase in the number of the bishops towards the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, and deals with the question of *chorepiscopi*. I cannot examine this matter here, but I should like to point out that they should be seen as bishops dependent on the city bishop, but receiving less jurisdiction when it came to ordinations. Later he examines two kinds of ecclesiastical structure; the one which has a large number of dioceses, the other having fewer dioceses, but where the parishes were correspondingly more extensive. He goes on to deal with Metropolitan Churches, and the unity of the local churches<sup>1</sup> in the Eucharist, in faith, in love in Christ, and the devotion of their members. This unity is best expressed in frequent communication and communion, and in the Synod, the significance of which I have underlined in a discussion of the formation of the Early Catholic Church in connection with the three Hierarchs of the Orthodox Church— 'Ἡ διαμόρφωσις τῆς Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας μέχρι τῶν ἀρχῶν τοῦ Ε' αἰῶνος, Athens, 1955, pp. 38-41. Metropolitan Maximos refers to this book on p. 47. It is highly probable that synods of local bishops frequently met to elect and consecrate bishops for vacant sees (cf. pp. 48-49). Such a meeting of the local church was already a continuation along the lines of the Apostolic Council. In this synodical development of the Church on the basis of metropolitan cities where the bishops naturally assembled to consecrate new bishops and to solve ecclesiastical questions, the order of precedence of bishops and sees was formed in the Roman areas. The word μητροπολίτης appears in the fourth canon of the Council of Nicaea. At the same time there grew up the particular rights of the apostolic sees and the πρωτόθρονοι. The rights of ordaining and judging bishops deriving from the primacy among sees were the essential factors in the primacy of honour. While they were in my opinion of historical origin (as in Rome, Alexandria and Antioch) they were shaped by resolutions of the first four Oecumenical Councils into historical and canonical rights belonging to the Churches of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem (*Pentarchy of*

1. I Clement VI, 1, Ignatius: Magn. IV, 1 and VI, 1, Trall. III, 1, Philad. VIII, 1.

*Patriarchs*, cf. work by Konidares and Pheidas). In the West the primacy of honour of Rome emerged as a dogmatic primacy of authority, ignoring the significance of the Oecumenical Council. On the contrary, in the East, inasmuch as the democratic, that is synodical, basis has remained, the Oecumenical Council is still the supreme organ of dogmatic and canonical authority in the Church, that is as an organ of the truth expressed in the Holy Scriptures and in tradition, and by those Oecumenical Councils that have come to be accepted as such by the Church. The author discusses well the position of the first sees of the autocephalous churches (cf. the works of Konidares, Zezioulas, Schmemmann and Metropolitan Stylianos Charkianakis) in relation to the order of sees, the τάξις προκαθεδρίας, in which the ontological equality of bishops and sees is preserved. The hierarchy is indispensable, because «every confusion in this leads to the distortion of ecclesiology, that is to the position of the Roman Papacy, where the diocesan bishop becomes simply a legate of his Patriarch», of, that is to say, the «Supreme Bishop». It is properly emphasized that such a concept is foreign to the East, but that the subordinate bishop has unfortunately developed in the form of assistant bishops.

In the final section of chapter two, which deals with the Council of Nicaea, the author examines at length the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh canons. Accepting the interpretation of canon six, he discusses the fact that the Bishop of Alexandria was recognized as having direct jurisdiction over a large number of dioceses. It is, however, unquestionable that this canon establishes the metropolitan organization. Schwarz thoroughly investigated the text in question and established that the original phrase was not ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἐπαρχίαις but ἐν ταῖς τῶν μητροπόλεων ἐπαρχίαις<sup>1</sup>. Parallel to this was the *primacy of honour* which entailed the powers of those bishops that from the middle of the fourth century were called Archbishops; those of Alexandria, Rome and Antioch, to whom the Bishop of Constantinople was added by the third canon of the Council of Constantinople. He was then placed parallel with and immediately after Rome, and became first bishop in the East instead of Alexandria. In 451 the Bishop of Jerusalem was added as the fifth, but had nevertheless been revered since the time of Nicaea. These were the principal *exarchs*, while the others, such as Caesarea, Ephesus and Heraclea were not so honoured. After Chalcedon these principal *exarchs* became Patriarchs. The customary exercise of authority within the synodical system was canonized by the first four Oecumenical Councils, but the Council of Ephesus passed a resolution (which became canon eight) which preserved one metropolis, that of

1. Cf. my investigation and communication about Cyprus in *Πρακ. Α' Κυπρ. Συνεδρίου*, and in *Α' Έπετηρ. Έπιστημονικῶν Έρευνῶν Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν*, Athens, 1970, p. 167.



Cyprus. The order of precedence among sees, compulsory in subsequent councils, formed a pyramid with the most distinguished sees at the top as points of union for the Churches (resolution of Chalcedon; canon twenty eight). The primacy of honour associated with the exercise of power achieved canonical status, and the Oecumenical Council<sup>1</sup> allowed the question of the fundamental unity of the Church in Christian truth and love to be faced on a world-wide basis.

*Chapter three* examines the main theme of the book, the primacy of the Bishop of Constantinople up until the Council of Chalcedon; to be more precise the historical presuppositions, the question of the new centre of the Eastern Churches, the scope of its jurisdiction, the primacy in action, the question of Eastern Illyricum, and the consolidation of jurisdiction over the exarchates. Investigating the historical acts of the Constantinopolitan bishop from 330 until the definite formation of the primacy of honour, he extols its use right from the time of John Chrysostom and Anatolius. The matter of Eastern Illyricum, and the necessary down-grading of Alexandria, as well as the recognition in the councils of the primacy of honour and jurisdiction are discussed. The working of the Resident Synod in Constantinople was an important factor in the exercise of Constantinople's power before 381, and during the time of Nectarius, because East and West had turned their eyes towards Constantinople —the preparatory work of Polakes is helpful here. The chapter examines how the Canons grant the Patriarch of Constantinople equality with the Pope of Rome. This was done by the third canon of the Council of Constantinople, with the stipulation, «after the Bishop of Rome, because it is New Rome». The application, both before and after 381, of this primacy by Archbishops of Constantinople such as John Chrysostom, Atticus and Anatolius up until Chalcedon, together with the *de facto* effect upon the eastern exarchates and Illyricum are dealt with admirably by the author.

*Chapter four* is entitled *The Council of Chalcedon* and considers the following questions; The Council, its reason for being called, its results in terms of canons; discussion of the ninth and seventeenth canons, their interpretation by Byzantine canonists, by the Imperial legislation, and by modern historians and canonists; the question of the twenty eighth canon, its composition and meaning; the pentarchy of Patriarchs and the political laws; the question of Σταυροπήγνια and of titles. The Metropolitan methodically analyzes and refutes the opinions of both Roman-Catholics and Slav Orthodox about the dignity of the Patriarch of Constantinople, who, in spite of the vicissitudes of history and his own Greek nationality, preserved, in my opinion, his ancient oecumenicity, even in the teeth of Modern Greek and Slav ecclesiastical thought.

1. Anticipated by Ignatius, Eph. III, 3.

Let us turn to the questions of the second and third canons of Constantinople, and of the ninth, seventeenth and twenty eighth of Chalcedon. I should like to add some comments to support the author's position.

I am particularly interested in the problem of *hearing appeals*, a privilege of the Patriarch of Constantinople which even today is a matter of controversy, although it is applied in practice. It is well discussed on pp. 138 ff., where the author deals with canons nine and seventeen of Chalcedon. Constantinople alone, as the first see of the East, was justified, when there were clerical appeals, in exercising judgement upon clergy outside its own jurisdiction, from the Provinces or Exarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and from the autocephalous metropolis, Cyprus<sup>1</sup>.

I agree with the author in interpreting the canons generally as dealing with the right of receiving appeals only from the Exarchates of Pontus, Asia and Thrace, that is to say Caesarea, Ephesus and Heraclea. This had been fixed by a decree of Chalcedon (later canon twenty eight) and these bishops were subordinated to the Patriarch of Constantinople as the first Metropolitans of Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia and Thrace. I take this line for the following reasons:

a) The restriction of the sense of *Exarch of the region* to these three areas alone reads into the formulation of the Canons a sense which was probably not in the general formulation, which read as follows: «If a member of the clergy has something against his own bishop, or against another, let the matter be decided at the synod of the province. If on the other hand a bishop or member of the clergy has a dispute with the metropolitan of the province, let him repair to the exarch of the region, or to (the incumbent of) the throne of Constantinople, the Imperial capital, and let the matter be decided there»<sup>2</sup>.

b) The word ἡ (or) places all the *regions* of the Empire in parallel. The word is the key to the correct understanding of the texts of the Canons, which in fact favoured the Constantinopolitan Bishop and his Resident Synod, where an appellant had a greater chance of finding a fair judgement. The Resident Synod, when it met as an extraordinary synod, as a tribunal, constituted a general Great Synod. The Great Synod, in fact, found its full application in Constantinople, hearing appeals from episcopal and metropolitan courts.

c) The hearing of appeals should not be interpreted as limited merely to the metropolises of these three regions—that is to say Caesarea, Ephesus and Heraclea—because even canon twenty eight made no distinction between

1. G. Konidaris, *Γενική Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 1957<sup>1</sup>, p. 389.

2. *Ninth Canon of Chalcedon*; v. Alivizatos, p. 52, and J. P. Fonti, I, pp. 76—Similar expression also in the seventeenth canon (*ibid.*, p. 83).

them and the other Metropolitans of the same area, although the «order of precedence» probably began to hold good in tradition from that point on. However, in canon thirty, the idea that the Bishops of Egypt were unaccountable «as they did not sign the letter of St. Leo of Rome», becomes a positive statement about the Bishop of Alexandria as Archbishop of the Province<sup>1</sup>.

d) The formula of canon thirty six of the Council in Trullo of 691/2 «concerning the dignity of Patriarchs» should be mentioned:

«Reaffirming the enactments of...(Constantinople and Chalcedon)...we declare that the see of Constantinople *shall enjoy rights equal to the see of Old Rome, and the see is to be honoured in ecclesiastical matters just as Old Rome, as it comes second after it*. Let the see of the great city of the Alexandrians be numbered after Constantinople, and then that of the Antiocheans, and after that the see of Jerusalem»<sup>2</sup>. Aristenos uses the terms identity-of-honour and equality-of-honour for the Bishops of Old and New Rome. The particular privilege of both was precisely *the right to receive appeals against bishops and metropolitans from the other regions*, whereas no such thing is mentioned for the other three Patriarchates. Under the principles of both the pentarchy of Patriarchs and the primacy of honour, these two sees were senior. Old Rome as capital before 330 came first, and was followed immediately by Constantinople, capital in its turn and pre-eminent ever afterwards, and which hence emerged as patron of all the Patriarchates of the East. A distinction emerges between the two Romes, Old and New, which were on an equal footing because of their equal rights and prerogative of hearing appeals, and the other three Patriarchates.

This distinction indicates a recognition that jurisdiction was in reality being exercised<sup>3</sup>. In the two Romes, identical and equal in honour, can be seen essentially the function of the Extraordinary Synod, which was the Great Synod of the Regions, because the Resident Synod in Constantinople was another way for the Church to revise the resolutions of provincial synods. The Local Synod, although a synodical institution of a superior kind as possessing authority above the regional authorities, is however related to both the Resident and the Great Synods. The relation is in the extraordinary nature of the assembly, and of the questions before it, when compared with lower organs of government. The highest administrative organ in the Orthodox Church has always been the Oecumenical Council.

1. Text in Ioannou, p. 95, and Alivizates, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

2. This has been interpreted by Balsamon, Zonaras and Aristinos. Cf. also Rhalles - Potles, vol. II, pp. 173 ff., 280 ff., and 387 ff.

3. Rhalles - Potles, p. 286.

Constantinople's hearing of appeals—a right which this bishop exercised on the broad basis of the Resident Synod, and which was not confined to the jurisdictional area of the Patriarchate—must properly be referred to the Resident and not the Patriarchal Synod, if it concerns the Ancient Patriarchates, or the Greek autocephalous Churches<sup>1</sup>. The Great Synod called in 1872 to deal with the Bulgarian Schism was essentially extraordinary; a synod greater than either the Patriarchal or the Resident. The Resident Synod can therefore act as a third stage in the appeal process; a kind of House of Lords or Supreme Court of the Church, composed of different bishops who do not judge the case in question during the first or second judicial stages<sup>2</sup>. As far as purely administrative matters are concerned, neither the Local nor the Great Synod are bound by this provision which concerns judicial matters only. The Great Synod, as an extraordinary synod, can be a judicial or administrative organ of the Church. Given this argument, I consider the refutation of Pheidias' opinions to be well-grounded, because of the statements set out on pp. 206 ff., referring as far back as the Patriarchate of Anatolius (449-458) and explaining the existence of an earlier custom: «Nothing has been done which involved irrovation on my part, nor have the resident Holy Bishops, meeting as is the custom, introduced any new formula...». Expressing differently what the author says about *traditio constitutiva* and *traditio continuativa*, I should say that the latter is the authentic witness not only of the understanding in practice of canon law, originating from the form *either...or...* of the ninth and seventeenth canons of Chalcedon. It is also the key to the principle which there furnished the Bishop of Constantinople with the right to hear appeals, as if he had authority over the *exarchs*, since he could be called upon to decide judicial cases instead of any other *exarch*, even one bearing the title of Archbishop, such as Alexandria. *Traditio continuativa* thus rapidly becomes *traditio constitutiva* for the law of the Eastern Church. I can therefore conclude that the Patriarch of Constantinople can even today, within his Resident Synod, be of use as a second court of appeal. Certainly as far as the Churches of the lands gained by the Greek State this century are concerned (these churches come under the

1. The Patriarch can receive appeals from the New Patriarchates and autocephalous Churches, provided the case concerns areas that belonged to the Byzantine Empire, or that were adjacent to it.

2. I have in mind the case of Decree 3615 passed by the Greek Legislature in July 1928, and the Patriarchal and Synodical Act of the 14th of September 1928, which, because of the time of its publication, authoritatively interpreted the Decree, even though the text was not published in the official Government Gazette. Cf. also Professor Vavouskos' work on the Metropolitans of the «New Lands»—the Greek territories acquired this century—and the rights of the Oecumenical Patriarchate.

Oecumenical Patriarchate) this right cannot be withdrawn, because of the provisions of the Decree 3615/1928, when read in connection with the Patriarchal and Synodical Act of September 1928<sup>1</sup>. This fundamental privilege of the Church of Constantinople must be considered of great value. It expresses not merely the rule of law, but also the consciousness in the Church of the need to avoid internal disputes.

*Chapter five* contains the author's principal contribution to Theology, because he discusses the important speculative question of the relations between *canons*, *Canonicity*, and *canonical consciousness*, and the extent to which the essence of the Church and of its doctrine and life is expressed in these concepts. Essence and form are discussed here on the basis of short discussions, and he pin-points the meaning of *Ecclesiastical Canonical Consciousness* as it has been preserved in the Orthodox Church; the spirit of canonical tradition as a criterion for the developing operation of the Church and her government. While, however, the decrees of the Oecumenical Councils relating to the faith are unchangeable and must remain so, periodical ecclesiastical clarification is not, I believe, excluded, given particular presuppositions. On the contrary the canons are changeable by the competent organ of the Church. In this case we cannot, I submit, accept the principle of secular law, where temporal legislation is omnipotent. This «competent organ» takes into account the customs that develop through the ages, upon which the various administrative systems are based, which manifest both ecclesiastical consciousness and conformity to the needs of a particular period by making what administrative changes are necessary. At the same time, however, it makes a clear distinction between the *Jus Divinum* and the *Jus Humanum*, the former making ineffectual or ignoring the latter. Clearly there must be a distinction between the fundamental and the ephemeral in the canonical life of the Church, even in reference to the first five centuries, because otherwise ecclesiastical authority will be condemned to stagnation. Christianity would become unable to speak to the needs of the times. On the other hand it must be stressed that the Canons have an ecclesio-

1. A great deal of confusing information has been written about the Synodical Tome of 1928. These are the facts:— The Synodical Tome grants administrative *detachment* and thus administrative independence for the Church, which is not the case with the Churches of the «New Lands», which were joined to the Autocephalous Church of Greece. Hence the term Church of Greece comprises two distinct elements:

a) *The Autocephalous Church of Greece*, established by the Synodical Tomes of 1850, 1864 and 1882, stretching as far as, and including Thessaly.

b) The dioceses of the territory acquired this century, with the exception of Crete, the Dodecanese Islands, and Mount Athos, that is to say those areas which belong to the Oecumenical Patriarchate.

logical basis, and there are fundamental formulations which cannot be changed, not even by the Church itself in Council. I am particularly interested in the basis of the ecclesiastical establishment, where the clergy is distinguished from the people as a necessary order existing by divine law, not as a contradiction in the Church, for both are within the single Body of Christ. The three grades of the clergy are however necessary, as is also the acceptance of the mystery of priesthood and the Apostolic Succession, without which there is no Church. The synod structure, however, is also a fundamental principle that cannot be changed by any Council in its essentials—that is the identity and equality of honour of the bishops, quite apart from the administrative distinctions in the order of precedence among sees. The unity in Christ being both vertical and horizontal expresses the Church's link with its head, with the primitive Church, and with the living παρουσία of the Lord in the Church. St. Ignatius of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Romans 3, advising Christians to fall in with God's mind, well expresses the faith of the Early Church: «For Jesus Christ also, our inseparable life, is the mind of the Father, just as the bishops, appointed in the furthest extremities of the world, are in the mind of Jesus Christ»<sup>1</sup>. Notice the prelude to the principle of the Oecumenical Council as the highest organ of the Church, and the beginning of the synodical idea, the body of bishops, in which there is neither monarchy nor oligarchy. These principles were preserved by the original canons and Early Church practice which were and still are the basis of the canonical theory and ecclesiastical structure of the Orthodox Church. The Church organization remains fundamentally democratic and liberal, so as to safeguard the worship of absolute spirit<sup>2</sup>, of reasonable service<sup>3</sup>, of truth<sup>4</sup>, of love, and of perfection in holiness, humility and freedom in Christ Jesus<sup>5</sup>. Both clergy and people are called upon to safeguard these Early Christian fundamentals of the new life in Christ Jesus.

From the basic principles of the *canonical structure* and the *canonical consciousness* of the Church, the author proceeds in *chapter six* to examine how the Oecumenical Throne, thanks to its position, acted in the *Life of the Church*, exercising not power but service to the autocephalous churches. This is a most important chapter, because in my opinion<sup>6</sup> the Archbishop of Constantinople

1. Ignatius, Eph. III, 3.

2. «God is a spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth». Jn. IV, 24, cf. Rom. II, 29.

3. Rom. XII, 1.

4. Jn. VIII, 32.

5. II Cor. III, 17, Gal. II, 4, V, 1.

6. Cf. G. I. Konidaris, *Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐκκλησία ὡς πολιτιστικὴ δύναμις ἐν τῇ Ἱστορίᾳ τῆς Χερσονήσου τοῦ Αἰῶνος*, Athens, 1948. By the same author, «Ἡ ἄρσις τοῦ Βουλγαρικοῦ

preserved the ancient supra-national spirit more strongly than did the national autocephalous churches, including the Church of Greece, which was founded in an age of nationalist movements. This characteristic of the Patriarchate can be attributed to four factors:

a) The birth of this church in the Graeco-Roman civilization of the Eastern Mediterranean, which was the only area where the Oecumenical Councils of the Early Church were held.

b) The inheritance by Constantinople of the *oecumenicity* of early Christianity (Paul: «Neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free...») and of the Greek World.

c) Because of its exercising an oecumenical ecclesiastical policy through the Oecumenical Councils.

d) Because of its seat and position near the Emperor. The universal Hellenic spirit (not merely a nationalistic Greek attitude) referred to at the beginning of this article was what has formed the successful element in the Patriarchate's existence. This is not thanks to «Hellenism» since it is certainly not dangerous to Turkey, but rather to the Christianity and brotherhood of the people. But let us turn to those factors that bear witness to the mediation and concern of the Oecumenical Patriarchate on behalf of all the Eastern Churches, and to its missionary work in Eastern Europe. The primacy of honour of the see became constantly, in fact, a primacy exercising jurisdiction, because the Oecumenical Patriarchs realized they were responsible for the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and for the autocephalous Church of Cyprus, which suffered first from heresies and later from the Arab conquests. The facts which emerge support this, because they refer to the exercise of an oecumenical policy.

When it came to establishing and guiding the new churches, the Oecumenical Patriarchate became the principal vehicle of Christianity and of the unity of the Orthodox Church. It preserved and expanded Orthodoxy in the world, in spite of difficult circumstances such as the transformation of the world by the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the nationalist and socialist revolutions. This was an immense achievement of great difficulty brought about through the years that followed the work of transmitting Christianity and civilization to the Slavs. It was, thanks to Christianity, civilization and guidance from the Greek Patriarchs and Bishops that the Slavs formed states with auto-

Σχίσματος ἐν τῇ Πλαισίῳ τῆς Καθολικῆς Ὁρθοδόξιας», *Ἑλληνισμός*, III, 1971, and (now at press): «Die Privilegien der Oriental Kirche im Osmanischen Reich und die Erfüllung der dreifachen Aufgabe der Ökumenischer Patriarchats (völkisch-nationalen, panorthodoxen und ökumenischen), Communication gehalten am 2 Mai 1972 in II Kongress f. Südosteuropäischen Studien. *Acts of the Second Balkan Congress*, Athens, 1972.

cephalous churches. The Church of Constantinople emerged as the Mother Church of all the Orthodox of the East, to the extent that under Turkish domination, «The Oecumenical Patriarch was recognized not only as a religious leader, but also as a kind of political ethnarch — *Millet Basi*— of the entire *Romaic Nation* — *Rum Milleti*— which was reckoned to comprise all the Orthodox people» that had formerly been subjects of the Eastern Roman Empire, regardless of nationality. The recognition of the «right to judge and govern» under Christian Law, with political responsibility, made the Oecumenical Patriarch responsible to the Sultan as the first Patriarch of the Orthodox East, since Orthodox Patriarchs of the captive countries were elected and often lived in Constantinople from 1453 onwards. The position of the Oecumenical Patriarchate was clearly defined in the edict recognizing the election of Dionysius IV: «The Patriarchs of the other areas are to conduct their business through the Patriarch of Constantinople». As representative and intermediary of the other Patriarchates he intervened, where necessary, as witness examples from the history of the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Russia and Cyprus (the date 1660 on page 296 should be corrected to 1620, as Cyril Lucaris was murdered in 1638)<sup>1</sup>. We can see here in practice Constantinople's privilege of hearing appeals. Of great significance is the fact that the Oecumenical Patriarch, because of the particular circumstances, also exercised administrative power over the other Patriarches. When necessary he elected and deposed them (cf. texts; *ibid.*, pp. 297 ff., 300 ff., 302 ff., and 312 ff. These texts add to the Patriarchal writings of Delicanes' edition). He mostly cooperated with the other Patriarchs and the Resident Synod. This was important not merely as a regular practice which established an habitual right, but also as an application of the ninth and seventeenth canons of Chalcedon. It was in fact done at the demand of the clergy of the other Patriarchates until the nineteenth century, when the other Orthodox Patriarchates began to flourish. A large number of examples are provided, and show how useful is Metropolitan Maximos' book for the interpretation of the Holy Canons, and my view that a historical interpretation is more correct. The Resident Synod of the fifth century was frequently extended<sup>2</sup> into a Great Synod with the participation of the other Orthodox Patriarchs. Autocephaly does not abolish the right of hearing appeals, nor the concern of the Oecumenical Throne for all the Orthodox Churches, nor its particular initiative — cf. the passage on Cyprus (pp.

1. Cf. Chrysostom Papadopoulos, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας Ἀλεξανδρείας*, p. 682.

2. Cf. for example p. 308, which concerns the recognition of the Russian Patriarchate, which derives from the Apostolic Throne of Constantinople, as do also the other Patriarchs. So Delikanes, *Πατριαρχικά Ἐγγράφα*, vol. III, p. 20, mentioned by Maximos of Sardis, pp. 308-9.



312) where the author writes of guardianship, care and arbitration in disputes. Autocephaly, as I said in my paper on Cyprus, is not above the canons, which would be absurd, but is rather subject to them. The Holy Canons and their application in practice are as it were the legal code of the Orthodox Church, the doctrinal unity of which is considered even in the principles of Canon Law, which are found in the Holy Canons. For further development of this I shall soon be publishing a study of the legal structure of the Cyprus Church. It is to be remarked that when the Oecumenical Throne intervened, on request, in Cyprus, it was called an «oecumenical ecclesiastical tribunal», and is spoken of as having «canonical rights». Yet the author rightly concludes (on p. 314 there should have been a separate title) that the effective leadership of Orthodoxy by the Oecumenical Patriarchate never meant that the Patriarchate became an Eastern Papacy, as some scholars have supposed<sup>1</sup>. The author presents texts and examples to show how the Oecumenical Patriarchs «noticed and gave as much assistance as possible to the needs of the other Patriarchates, without jeopardizing the rights of these churches. As it was not under any human control, the Oecumenical Throne tried by intervening occasionally to protect the Orthodox against attack. It was particularly called upon to help or arbitrate, and sometimes it went as far as making economic sacrifices» (p. 316). «Although there were unfortunate circumstances, the Oecumenical Patriarchate «succeeded in preserving in their entirety its oecumenicity, Orthodox doctrine and traditions and the Holy Canons, as well as the various elements it received from Early Christianity. It was regarded during those years as *Mother of the Churches*, particularly by the peoples of the Balkans»<sup>2</sup>. He cites the acknowledgement of a distinguished Russian Theologian, I. Sokoloff, who extols the skill of the Oecumenical Throne in acting as *primus inter pares* without trying to acquire power over the autocephalous churches, but nevertheless attempting to resist Latin propaganda, to give material aid to the Holy Sepulchre, and, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to defend the Church of Cyprus. Even the Russian Canon lawyer Troitsky, a critic of the Oecumenical Patriarchate, was compelled to accept that even when the Patriarchs can be seen as having erred in solving questions pertaining to other churches, their interventions «were not canonical, but on the other hand were not uncanonical». Metropolitan Maximos counters Troitsky's observation as follows:

«Troitsky, however, supports the strange view 'that these cases of interference by the Patriarchate of Constantinople were not canonical, and yet were not uncanonical'. Is this not a contradiction in terms? Does he not end up with absurd conjectures?

1. So Souvorov, Pavlov, Troitsky, Polsky, Mendelson, Herzberg, and Diehl, among others.

2. G. I. Konidaris, *Ἡ Ἑλληνική Ἐκκλησία...*, see Maximos of Sardis, p. 317.

«In principle, ecclesiastical acts can either be canonical, and demand the respect of the entire Orthodox Church, or uncanonical, in which case they must be condemned. Troitsky's attempt to connect the statements 'were not canonical, and yet were not uncanonical' is in my opinion alien to the language of Canon Law. Ecclesiastical actions in this sphere are evaluated exclusively by the following principle: they are called canonical to the extent that they are based on the Canons, and uncanonical to the extent that they contravene them. Any canonical act can have irregularities of greater or less significance, but the action, in terms of canonicity, can be seen only as irregular, but not as uncanonical, or contravening the Canons».

In the third section of this chapter, the author carefully examines examples of the ecclesiastical policy of the Oecumenical Patriarchate from the nineteenth century until today; the period, that is, of national revolutions and of unilateral declarations of autocephaly — Greece 1833, Rumania 1865, Bulgaria, 1870 Albania, 1922, 1928 and 1937; the Church of Serbia was an exception. The Metropolitan praises the consciousness of the Oecumenical Throne of its two-fold mission in modern history; the popular-national rôle, and the oecumenical position, and the balancing of the two. He accepts the truth of what I declared, that the consciousness of an oecumenical mission was paramount in the mind of the Patriarchate. Typical was its position towards the Greeks (1833-1850) and the Slav peoples when it came to the question of declaring autocephaly. It was strictly canonical, as was naturally essential. The Metropolitan rightly acknowledges that the conflicts over autocephaly were the result of a non-spiritual outlook prevailing since antiquity among the peoples of the East, which in the nineteenth century became nationalistic to the point of being Chauvinistic (cf. my theories and those of Schmemmann and Alivizates, on p. 322). Over the Bulgarian question, this outlook came to be outright racism (p. 323). This perversion of reasonable patriotism threatened the unified life of the Orthodox people. The relevant section of the text of the Great Synod of 1872, being based on interpretation of the Canons, is properly inserted. It is exceedingly enlightening for the view that the local division of churches is done on a basis of cities and territory, not on one of race, regardless of whether these churches are independent, autonomous or semi-autonomous.

In spite of the 1872 resolution, racism, the author points out, continued to obstruct the unity of Orthodoxy. In the next heading (pp. 330 ff.) which concerns the Orthodox Diaspora, it is good to see him stressing the painful fact that the «national and nationalistic theories and divisions, and the exces-

1. For this reason I fully accept what Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira writes in 'Ορθόδοξος Κήρυξ, VIII, July/August 1972, pp. 11 and 12.

sive accentuation of nationalism in the Church contributed to our proceeding precipitately to acts that subverted proper ecclesiastical organization and government» in Europe, Canada, Australia, the United States of America and South America. In the same way, Alexander Schmemmann writes about «an unhealthy ecclesiastical nationalism that is a real heresy in Orthodoxy, threatening the work of salvation». In my opinion this has often led to theological acrobatics. Unquestionably autocephaly is not fundamental in Church organization, but rather the bishop in each place, in the *Churches of God* as envisaged by Ignatius and Clement of Rome. The Holy Canons, and particularly those of the Oecumenical Councils, as an expression of the Church and of Tradition together with *historical order*, as defined by Canon twenty eight of Chalcedon (a measure dealing with a specific question) and Canon 36 of the Council in Trullo of 691/2, are behind the autocephaly of the Churches. Unfortunately this was not a fundamental principle in the Orthodox Church. A history of arbitrary acts in certain churches clearly demonstrates where the Church is led by accepting as a guiding principle not *Canonicity*, which is based on the *Jus Divinum* as *Jus Sacrum*, but rather *autocephaly*. In these churches it is believed that the political principle should be adopted of non-intervention in the internal affairs of others, even by longer established churches. Such eradicates the principles of the Gospel which demand that government and justice should be exercised in the spirit of love. For this reason, Metropolitan Maximos stresses, in the paragraph on the twentieth century, that as first in rank the Oecumenical Patriarchate had the initiative in summoning pan-Orthodox meeting and conferences. It has been called upon to resolve questions dealing with autocephaly and the individual churches, and has so advanced the Oecumenical Movement that unity has arrived on a practical level, and the way has been prepared for the theological union of the Churches. This is clearly a matter of pioneer work relating to pan-Orthodox oecumenical activity, fulfilling an obligation which arises from the traditional, historical and canonical rôle of the Oecumenical Throne. Unquestionably this section contains material of the utmost importance, and, given the sort of initiative the Oecumenical Throne has been taking, it is to be hoped that it will become the object of a new systematic historico-canonical study. Such a study should show how profound and widespread has been the exercise of Constantinople's right of initiative. Its oecumenicity has been remarkable, particularly during recent years when it has been declining in numbers (1920-1970); years in which it fulfilled its threefold mission, *popular-national, pan-Orthodox, and oecumenical*<sup>1</sup>.

1. Cf. the German communication in the Second Congress of South-Eastern European Studies, Athens, 1970.

The final section of the work, entitled *Epilegomena* reverts to the theme of the beginning of the book, and surveys it as a whole. It was the Oecumenical Councils which gave the impetus for the great churches<sup>1</sup> to develop with their primacy of honour and responsibilities for the orthodoxy of the Church over large areas. The author deals first with the primacy exercised by Metropolitans, then with that of Patriarchs and heads of churches, and lastly with the universal, *oecumenical* primacy of Old and New Rome. The responsibilities of the great churches entail the Primates' exercising certain canonical jurisdiction. Metropolitan Maximos supports his case for the Oecumenical Patriarch's activity in this field by analysing the terms ἐξουσία and διακονία. He understands the exercise of this power (ἐξουσία) by Constantinople exclusively in terms of a *service* exercised in neighbourly cooperation between the Orthodox Churches. He discusses subjects which are, despite appearances, connected: the unity of the whole Church, and the primacy of honour involving jurisdiction over large unions of churches in extensive areas. To this end, he examines Ignatius' fundamental expressions<sup>2</sup>, which I believe to be the prelude to the idea of the Oecumenical Council — coincidence and identity of the local churches in the one centre, Jesus Christ. He compares these ideas with Cyprian's teaching on the unity of the Churches throughout the world (p. 340)<sup>3</sup>. The Churches with the *Apostolic Tradition* were distinct, as they showed that they had preserved Truth within the faith. At councils, bishops of capital cities and those with larger jurisdictions and missionary authority were treated with distinction. In this way was formed the administrative distinction of bishops into Metropolitans, Archbishops of autocephalous archdioceses, Exarchs, Primate-Archbishops and Patriarchs, as well as the primacy of honour which led to prerogatives of consecrating and judging bishops. This last clearly emerges from the Canons of Nicaea and Chalcedon. As far as the authority that the Patriarchs or Exarchs had over Metropolitans is concerned<sup>4</sup>, the two first sees of the Roman Empire, Old and New Rome, were distinguished by their right of hearing appeals. There is, however, an important difference between East and West. In the West, three theories, *the extension of the jurisdiction of the Roman Empire*, *the plenitudo potestatis* and *the infallibility* gradually debased the council to a simple advisory body of the Bishop

1. I see the formation of Church entities larger than the bishopric as a kind of pyramid growing to form the full development of the ecclesiastical organization.

2. Ignatius, Ephesians III, 2, «The bishops set in the furthest regions are in the mind of Jesus Christ».

3. For the details, v. D. Zezioulas, *Ἡ ἐνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, Athens, 1965.

4. For this, v. Palachkovsky, «La Législation canonique d'appel dans l'Eglise», in the *Messenger de l'Exarchat du Patriarche Russe*, 78-79, p. 137.

of Rome, who was the successor of Peter. The Bishop of Constantinople, on the other hand, was closely linked with the Synod, to form the key administrative organ, putting into practice the principle of *collective responsibility* for formulating the Truth, and developing Canon Law, just as the Apostles did so in the Apostolic Synod.

This book was written with the aim of reinterpreting the primatial position of Constantinople from the historical point of view, and in the light of the organization of the Orthodox Churches today. I have some objections on certain points, and I shall write elsewhere on the Apostolic Succession<sup>1</sup>, and on the responsibilities of bishops for missionary work. Other than this I must say that the author skilfully refutes accusations of Caesaro-papist or neo-papist tendencies made against the Oecumenical Throne. He gives a clear definition to the West of the true position of the Archbishop of Constantinople and Oecumenical Patriarch.

The book objectively clarifies the exemplary position of the Oecumenical Patriarchate as Mother of the new Orthodox Churches founded during the nineteenth century. The autocephalous churches that were formed by the national feeling of the time are to a greater or less extent affected by this feeling. The Oecumenical Patriarchate, on the other hand, with its older, universalist and oecumenical tradition, succeeded in preserving more carefully, and in fully developing its oecumenical and pan-Orthodox mission, without abandoning its national obligations. This combination demanded dexterity, and this was evident even during the years of its external decline (1920-1972). Compare, however, the extracts I quote here:

«The Oecumenical Patriarch does not suppose that his prerogatives are of divine origin. He has no claim whatever to be a 'Bishop of the whole world'. He does not claim doctrinal infallibility, nor a direct, absolute jurisdiction over the faithful. He is not above the Oecumenical Council, nor above all ecclesiastical judgement. He has no secular power, nor an absolute sovereign status. He is in a position of *first bishop*, and his jurisdiction deriving from this is defined by the Holy Canons and by History...».

«The Oecumenical Throne does not look upon its primacy as a way of satisfying ambitions, and of imposing absolute rule in the Church, to the detriment of the other Orthodox Churches. Rather it sees it simply as a primacy of humble service in a spirit of love, peace and of mutual respect for the concerns, the glory and greatness of the Eastern Orthodox Church — 'But I am among you as a servant'» (pp. 8 and 9).

1. For the time being, cf. G. Konidaris, «Διαδοχή 'Αποστόλων» in *ΘΜΕ*, and in *'Επιστ. Ἑπετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς*, XV.