



Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece  
**Holy Synod in Resistance**

Protocol No. 567

To the Editorial Board of  
Ἐκκλησιαστικός [Ekklesiastikós]  
Apollonos 4  
181 20 Korydallos

Phyle, Attica  
March 5, 2010 (Old Style)  
Thursday of the Great Canon

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Dear Brothers in Christ:

With the kiss of the love, peace, and unity of the Divine Comforter, we wish you a joyous Pascha in Christ, by the intercessions of the Most Blessed *Theotokos*.

**1.** I ask your forgiveness personally yet again for the truly tardy response of our Holy Synod to the questions that you posed in your “Second Epistle” of September 8/21, 2009.

**2.** This epistle was preceded by your “First Epistle” of July 1/14, 2009, to which we responded in our own “Epistle” (Protocol No. 550) of July 31, 2009 (Old Style).

**3.** Since that time, you have reminded us, by way of four e-mail messages in all (November 28, December 17, February 1, and March 2), of the obligation of our Holy Synod to “clarify our stand on certain crucial theological issues” (December 17).

**4.** I am sincerely sorry about this, given that the great delay in our response led your Editorial Board to erroneous thoughts and suspicions, which, nonetheless, we believe that you could have addressed with greater understanding and forbearance.

**5.** In any event, invoking the blessing of our much-revered Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian, and also the guidance of our Lady, the *Theoto-*

*kos* and of all the Saints, we will endeavor to elucidate in brief all of the points which, in your opinion, are in need of clarification.

**6.** Let it be clear from the outset that our position paper is a joint effort and that we are submitting it for your consideration and, more broadly, to the judgment of the conscience of the Church, with good intent, in any case, and certainly not as an infallible proclamation.

On behalf of the Standing Holy Synod

*† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi*  
Acting President of the Holy Synod

# Ecclesiological, Canonical, and Historical Clarifications of the Holy Synod in Resistance in Response to Questions from Ἐκκλησιαστικός

(posed in the “First Epistle,” of July 1/14, 2009,  
and the “Second Epistle,” of September 8/21, 2009)

## PART ONE

**I.** It is necessary to make it clear, prefatorily, that we will avoid refuting certain points in the first and second “Epistles” which, although they do not render correctly the meaning of what the Holy Synod in Resistance has written, nonetheless do not require any response.

- We will endeavor to confine ourselves to crucial issues, with the humble wish that the Editorial Board of Ἐκκλησιαστικός will not jump to hasty conclusions or unfoundedly ascribe self-serving intentions to the Orthodox in resistance, since our Holy Synod has elected, by the Grace of the Lord, to live “in singleness of heart.”<sup>1</sup>

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*N.B. [Trans.]* The questions that appear in quotations at the beginning of each section are, again, those of Ἐκκλησιαστικός, an organization/group that describes itself as committed to presenting “views of orthodox interest and, in particular, on issues related to the history, ecclesiology and theology of the Genuine Orthodox Church of Greece, headed by His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos II.”

**II. “First Epistle,” p. 1, §1a:** *“In the end, what exactly are the ‘Resisters’? Are they a community? Are they a Church? Are they a community and, secondarily, also a Church?”*

- **First Response:** The Orthodox in resistance to the heresy of ecumenism constitute an Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community which, *although they are not the Church in her entirety*—just as, moreover, no

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1 Cf. Acts. 2:46.

local Church or Orthodox parish, Diocese, Archdiocese, or Metropolis is—belong nonetheless to the “healthy part,” that is, to the *anti-innovationist congregation* of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church and *embody her in time and place through her Orthodox Bishops*.

1. It is well known that the existing plurality and diversity of the members of the Church, be they individual Christians or communities or local Churches—*healthy in faith, of course*—does not abrogate the unity of the Body of the Church; nor, on the other hand, does the plurality of members collectively constitute the One Church, since “wherever Christ Jesus is,” by way of the Orthodox Bishop and the Divine Eucharist, “there also is the Catholic Church.”<sup>2</sup>

**III. “First Epistle,” p. I, §1b:** “*How does the author of the communiqué<sup>3</sup> understand the ‘boundaries’ of the Church? Is it possible for ‘Orthodox communities’ to exist outside the boundaries of the Church without being characterized as schismatic? Is any kind of division admissible? Is it possible for any of the ‘temporary administrative structures’ in synodal form, which are endowed with Bishops not in ecclesiastical communion with each other, either individually or in their totality to express the Catholic Orthodox Church in Greece? May we conclude that different communities and groups participate in the Body of the Church by virtue of the simple fact that they condemn ecumenism, without regard to differences of belief and matters of canonicity? Is the Church of Christ not one, indivisible, and Catholic, as our Fathers have taught for so many centuries?*”

• **Second Response:** The One, unique, and singular Orthodox Church, although she does not include within her boundaries (the boundaries of Truth) persons or aggregates of persons “completely broken off” from her Body of their own will or by synodal decision, nonetheless regards as her members those Ecclesiastical Communities which, in a time of heretical confusion, have walled themselves off from the “ailing part,” namely the innovators, but happen, at the

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<sup>2</sup> St. Ignatius of Antioch, “Epistle to the Smyrnæans,” VIII.2, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. v, col. 713B.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://hsir.info/p/td>.

same time, to be out of communion [with each other] because they do not have a clear and common understanding of all the issues involved in resistance to heresy.

1. St. Theodore the Studite used to say, in his equally turbulent era: “I am grieved, my most honored Father, with considerable sorrow: first, that among us who teach aright the word of Truth during the Iconoclast heresy that now rages, quarrels are arising and schisms are developing.”<sup>4</sup>

2. Likewise, St. Basil the Great wrote “To the Italians and Gauls” that the Orthodox in the East, struggling against Arianism, were divided: “That which appears to be healthy is divided against itself.”<sup>5</sup>

3. Be that as it may, the Sacred Canons are in force among the walled-off Ecclesiastical Communities, “for the Canons have not been persecuted along with us,” as St. Basil the Great aptly put it;<sup>6</sup> however, their interpretation and application is not without peril, especially in a time of heretical confusion, since at times, as St. Theodore the Studite says, “we do not understand aright the words of the Saints, and therefore we find ourselves waging war against the Fathers, or rather, against God.”<sup>7</sup>

4. The walled-off Ecclesiastical Communities, despite their mutual estrangement, constitute the “healthy part” of “all the rest of the Church,” says St. Basil the Great,<sup>8</sup> which certainly ought to be united by some “healthy head.”<sup>9</sup> It was in this sense that St. Athanasios the Great was invited by St. Basil the Great to intervene in Antioch, for the purpose of “uniting those healthy” in the Faith,<sup>10</sup> since, as we said before, “that which appears to be healthy is divided against itself.”<sup>11</sup>

**IV. “First Epistle,” p. 2, §1c:** *“The communiqué leads the reader to conclude that all of the principal schisms which originated from the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece and ultimately broke away from her (1937, 1984, and 1995), and which maintain the*

4 “Epistle II.155,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xcix, col. 1482CD.

5 “Epistle xcii,” §3, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 481C.

6 “Epistle cclxvi,” §1, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 993A.

7 “Epistle II.155,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xcix, col. 1484D.

8 “Epistle ccli,” §4, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 937D.

9 “Epistle lxvi,” §2, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 423B.

10 “Epistle lxix,” §2, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 432C.

11 See note 4.

*Old Calendar in their worship and are opposed to ecumenism, together constitute the canonical Orthodox Church in Greece. Does this assertion not smack of the ecumenist ‘Branch Theory’ or ‘theology of invisible unity’ and, in the final analysis, to a form of ecumenism?”*

• **Third Response:** The “divisions” in the “healthy part,” that is, in the anti-ecumenist Old Calendarists, are neither “schisms” in a literal sense, since the Old Calendarists have not split away from the One, unique Church, but are divided within the boundaries of the Church; nor do they “together constitute the canonical Orthodox Church in Greece,” but rather “the healthy part of Orthodoxy,” as St. Theodore the Studite says.<sup>12</sup>

1. We would remind you that in Antioch the Orthodox were divided into Eustathians and Meletians, who nonetheless constituted that part of the local Church that was “sound in faith” and which ought to have been united, as St. Basil the Great, who favored union, wrote to St. Athanasios the Great: “That entire portion of the people of the Holy Church of Antioch who are sound in faith should be brought into one concord and union.”<sup>13</sup>

2. It should be noted that in the preliminary stage of the Antiochian Schism (361-381), St. Basil and the other Cappadocian Fathers were in communion with St. Meletios. St. Athanasios, St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome, and the West were in communion with Paulinos (who in fact inclined towards Monarchianism) and had reservations about St. Basil’s Orthodoxy (!), while the West simultaneously recognized Eustathios of Sebasteia (a Pneumatomachian) and Markellos of Ankyra (a Monarchian). Indeed, the very important Synod of Alexandria (summer of 362) did not succeed in ending the disagreement.

**V. “First Epistle,” p. 2, §2a:** *“The author of the communiqué characterized the schism of 1984 as an ‘estrangement’ and a ‘division,’ though ‘not a schism per se.’ So be it; but was it a good thing? What is the difference between a ‘schism per se’ and a ‘division’? Does there exist in Orthodox Tradition such a distinction between schisms of an intrinsic and a simple kind? And how is such a distinction compati-*

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12 “Epistle II.65,” *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1288A.

13 “Epistle LXVII,” §I, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XXXII, col. 428A.

*ble with the Patristic conception of the Church? Is the Patristic diagnosis, that what is wrongly divided and persists will turn into a heresy, not valid?<sup>14</sup> Finally, even if today's situation could be characterized as a 'simple' estrangement and not as a schism, why are the Resisters not subject to the synodal and canonical decisions of the Holy Synod of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece? Does the existence of a 'Holy Synod in Resistance' as a special, parallel, and alternative synodal structure not conflict with this concept of conciliarity, being at odds with the dogma of the Catholicity of the Church?"*

• **Fourth Response:** The aforementioned points (§§III and IV) clearly establish that there really is a distinction in Orthodox Tradition between a “schism *per se*” and a “division.” This distinction emerges especially in a time of heretical confusion, without, however, conflicting with the “concept of conciliarity” or being at odds with the “dogma of the Catholicity of the Church,” since—aside from other considerations—as St. Theodore the Studite says: “At a time of heresy, on account of compelling need, things certainly do not proceed flawlessly in accordance with what is prescribed in a time of peace.”<sup>15</sup>

1. The Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance “is not subject to the synodal and canonical decisions of the Holy Synod of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece” because it lodged a “Canonical Charge” against the Synod to which it temporarily belonged (in 1984, under Metropolitan Antonios of Attica and Megara) and broke communion therewith “for reasons of faith and righteousness.”<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the First Hierarchy of the Synod in Resistance, Metropolitan Cyprian, never belonged, as a Bishop, to the Holy Synod of the “Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.”

**VI. “First Epistle,” p. 2, §2b:** *“In 1969, the then Hieromonk Cyprian, according to his biography, ‘along with his Brotherhood joined the anti-innovationist Old Calendar Orthodox Church on January 3/16,*

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14 Cf. Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, *Δωδεκάβιβλος*, Bk. x, ch. 3.1.6 (Thessalonica: Ekdoseis Bas. Regopoulou, 1983), Vol. v, p. 293.

15 “Epistle II.65,” *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. xcix, col. 1645D.

16 Thirty-first Apostolic Canon; Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod.

1969.’ *Did he ultimately join the Church, as stated in his biography, or some temporary administrative structure in synodal form?’*

• **Fifth Response:** His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle (as he is now), First Hierarchy of the Holy Synod in Resistance, had the conviction, in 1969, that he was walling himself off from the ecumenists and uniting himself with the “healthy part of Orthodoxy,”<sup>17</sup> which, although it is called a Church, does not constitute the Church in her totality, as we have already pointed out (§§II and III).

1. He expressed this conviction explicitly and clearly to the then First Hierarchy of the Synod, Archbishop Auxentios, who had such respect for it that, on the one hand, he received the now Metropolitan Cyprian and his flock without Confession or Chrismation, and, on the other hand, never proposed to him that he alter his convictions, even after his Consecration, whereafter they maintained good relations in Christ.

**VII. “First Epistle,” p. 2, §2c:** *“Can it be argued that from 1969 until 1984 he was unfamiliar with the ecclesiology of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, which he had joined and from which he received Episcopal Consecration? If he had a different ecclesiological position, then why did he join this Church and why, in addition, was he consecrated by it, keeping silence from 1969 through 1984? (cf. the Encyclical of 1974 and the Baptism and Ordination ab initio of Giovanni of Sardinia.)”*

• **Sixth Response:** His Eminence, now First Hierarchy of the Synod in Resistance, was not unaware of “the ecclesiology of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece,” but regarded this from the outset as an opinion that was neither preponderant nor mandatory as a dogma of Faith, since: first, the manner of his reception was as set forth above; secondly, he encountered no reaction from his Holy Synod, even though he did not hide his convictions; and thirdly, he realized that in deed and in word the people and clergy of the Church of

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17 See note II.

the True Orthodox Christians had no deep-seated or consistent belief in such an “ecclesiology.”

1. When, amid this confused ecclesiological climate, the ecclesiology of the 1974 Encyclical was proclaimed, the now Metropolitan Cyprian protested vigorously and personally to the then First Hierarchy, Archbishop Auxentios, without, however, undergoing any persecution. Subsequently, he was in agony over the future of his flock: he continued to see clear evidence of the ongoing inconsistency of the “Church of the True Orthodox Christians,” believing at the same time that the profound, general, and protracted synodal crisis of the Synod of Archbishop Auxentios—which was, in any case, well known to everyone—lent an ungodly expediency to the Confession of 1974; i.e., it was a document without substance or consequence.

2. The Episcopal Consecration of Metropolitan Cyprian in 1979, as a result of the profound synodal crisis of the Synod of Archbishop Auxentios, which was in many ways in disarray, and the ensuing events proved that the Hierarchs who consecrated him, although of a Matthewite mentality, actually had the discretion not to impose this mentality on the one whom they were consecrating; and his own attitude, indeed, was not a matter of dispute.

3. There was, therefore, hope for coexistence and coöperation, since even after 1974 the so-called “ecclesiology of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece,” which subsequently became entrenched as a dogma of Faith and which was thenceforth held up as a fundamental and truly “superior ecclesiological position,” had not assumed a dogmatic character.

**VIII. “First Epistle,” p. 3, §2d:** *“Taking it for granted that, (1) the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece continues to believe even now what it believed in 1935, 1969, 1979, and 1984, (2) the Canon that permits a rupture of communion for reasons of heresy is the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod, and (3) in accordance with the Patristic maxim that “when the Church is right-believing, those who are separated from her stand aloof without reason,” the question arises: What was the condemned heresy that required the invocation of the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod and brought about the walling-off of Bishop Cyprian from his superior ec-*

*clesiastical authority and the creation of the community of the “resisters” through new Consecrations, as ‘necessary actions’?”*

• **Seventh Response:** In the official statement of the Holy Synod in Resistance, “The Cessation of Informal Dialogue” (May 18, 2009 [Old Style]),<sup>18</sup> there is a reference in §1.4 to the periodical *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 191 (November 1984), pp. 377-407, which includes the full chronicle of events and opinions that led the now Metropolitan Cyprian to lodge a “Canonical Charge” against the Synod to which he temporarily belonged (1984) “for reasons of faith and righteousness.”

1. We have attached to the present text the thirty-page issue of the periodical in question, so that those who are interested may study the historical and theological data that contributed to the walling-off of 1984, in the light, of course, of what has been set forth above.

**IX. “First Epistle,” p. 3, §3a:** *“The author states that it is the practice of the Synod in Resistance to receive members of the ecumenist New Calendar Church ‘sometimes’ through Chrismation and that it maintains a ‘condemnatory’ attitude towards ‘rebaptism’ in cases in which the Orthodox formula is lacking, whereas ‘by synodal decision’ New Calendarists are forbidden to receive Divine Communion [from the Synod in Resistance—Trans.]. Again, while you accept ‘rechrismation’ as a means of receiving those coming from ecumenist Churches—a practice which presupposes that those coming are outside the Church—how is it that you do not accept ‘rebaptism’ when the formula is lacking? Is this not a patent contradiction?”*

*And in any case, what decision of what ‘Major or Œcumenical Synod’ mandates this pastoral practice of reception ‘sometimes through Chrismation’ and of a ‘condemnatory’ attitude ‘towards rebaptism’? Why should we wait for an Œcumenical Synod to come about which will indicate to us the stricter practice? Should we not perhaps apply exactitude until some Major Synod makes a decision about the exercise of oikonomia? Could it be that the opposite of what you assert holds good?”*

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18 <http://hsir.info/p/td>.

• **Eighth Response:** In the first place, point VI.7 of the document (Protocol No. 527 [December 17, 2008 (Old Style)]) of the Holy Synod in Resistance is not rendered correctly, in that whereas it is written therein that “our attitude is, of course, condemnatory towards Baptisms celebrated contrary to the prescribed formula,” you misrepresent the Resisters, oddly enough, as maintaining a “‘condemnatory’ attitude towards ‘rebaptism.’”

1. In the next instance, one is at a loss to understand the correlation of defective Baptism, Divine Communion, and Chrismation, since it evinces a simplistic approach and one that certainly does not constitute an Orthodox interpretation of the matter.

2. A Pan-Orthodox or Major or Œcumenical Synod is truly indispensable, since what is awaited is assuredly a “Synodal verdict,” a “Synodal judgment,” a “Synodal examination,” and a “final decision,”<sup>19</sup> which will issue a proclamation with the highest authority not about the “stricter practice” or “the exercise of *oikonomia*,” but, as it is written in the Proceedings of the Seventh Œcumenical Synod, “so that dissension between the Churches may be banished... for the union and concord of the Church... for the union of the Holy Catholic Church of God... to the end that, having shaken off the discord between the Churches, we might draw into union those that are separated... in order that we might transform the discord of those at variance into concord and that the middle wall of enmity might be removed.”<sup>20</sup>

3. In any case, however, even if all that the Orthodox in resistance upheld and enacted, deferring such actions to [a future] “Synodal judgment,” were to be regarded as an “exercise of *oikonomia*,” then those in resistance are answerable to God and the Church, which assesses, one way or another, the exercise of *oikonomia* by responsible Pastors.

**X. “First Epistle,” p. 4, §3b:** *“In the communiqué, but also more generally in the documents and proceedings of the Synod in Resistance, emphasis is placed on the necessity of convoking a Pan-Orthodox*

19 See the Thirty-first Apostolic Canon, the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod, and the commentaries thereon.

20 *Πρακτικά τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων* [Proceedings of the Holy Œcumenical Synods], ed. Spyridon Melias (Holy Mountain: Ekdotis Kalyves Timiou Prodromou, 1981), Vol. II, pp. 728B, 758B, 760B, 880A, 881B).

*Synod, which will resolve all of the matters of Faith that have emerged. The question that arises from this position of the resisters is: Who will convoke this future Pan-Orthodox Synod? Are you referring to the ecumenist patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops of what of old were Orthodox Patriarchates, but are now mired in the panheresy of ecumenism, who are subject to trial according the Sacred Canons, or are you referring to ‘temporary administrative structures in synodal form’?”*

• **Ninth Response:** The convocation of a genuinely Pan-Orthodox or Ecumenical Synod is a charismatic event in the Church, and history attests that such events occurred at times contrary to expectation, in spite of grave adversities in human terms, and after long-drawn-out struggles of witness and theology.

1. When it is the good pleasure of the Divine Founder of the Church that we experience this miracle, then all Orthodox Hierarchs who are unfailingly anti-ecumenist in essence and actuality, regardless of their provenance, will be summoned to participate, for it should never be forgotten that repentance and Orthodox confession in the past, “against hope in hope,”<sup>21</sup> brought Shepherds over from the “ailing part” to the “healthy part” of the Church.

2. In such a case, the convocation and participation of all the truly Orthodox anti-ecumenists, and also of “temporary administrative structures in synodal form,” in a Great Pan-Orthodox Synod will be accomplished on the basis of genuine criteria, as St. Theodore the Studite avers, echoing on the issue at hand the spirit of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod.

3. “Epistle 1.53, ‘To Stephen the Reader and those with him,’” is quite unambiguous about these criteria, and its central exhortation is extremely timely: “Be sedulous to inquire and investigate; for communion without examination is fraught with peril, since the peril involves matters of importance”;<sup>22</sup> “Therefore, let us inquire and investigate from whom we ought to commune”;<sup>23</sup> and with whom, in our view, we should sit and travel.

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21 Cf. Romans 4:18.

22 *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1105A, citing St. John Chrysostomos, “Homily XI on Hebrews,” *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. LXIII, col. 96.

23 *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1105AB.

4. The most holy Patriarch Tarasios, explaining that the Seventh Ecumenical Synod has decided on these criteria, “following our Holy Fathers,” says: “We should accept [those coming from heresy], unless some other cause expels such persons from the Priestly rank.”<sup>24</sup>

5. One might perhaps be astonished at this, but it is a fact that “Juvenal and those in his circle were the leaders of the Robber Synod [in Ephesus, 449], but were received at the Fourth [Ecumenical] Synod [451]”; “indeed, Juvenal (the Patriarch of Jerusalem) was the leader of the [Robber] Synod; and after his transgression, once he had repented, he was accepted” by virtue of his simply moving to the side of the Orthodox: “The most reverend Bishop Juvenal stood up...and went over to the other side; and the Easterners and the most reverend Bishops with them exclaimed: ‘God has done well in bringing you over [to us], O Orthodox; welcome.’”<sup>25</sup>

• Now, how many “leaders” and “Juvenals” are there be, who, hastily condemned in advance by some and without proper competence, at that, might hear the word “welcome” at the right time and with God’s blessing?

**XI. “First Epistle,” p. 4, §3c:** *“Since ‘Bishops embody and express in place and time the Catholic Church, that is, the entire Church,’ as the author of the communiqué asserts, what deprives them of the right to condemn heresy and thereby protect their flock from grievous and ravaging wolves, namely, heretics? Are the True Orthodox Bishops of today not ‘successors of the choir of the Apostles’? Of whom are they the successors? And if they are not the successors of the Holy Apostles (as is clearly disputed in your communiqué), then what are they?”*

• **Tenth Response:** To begin with, it is wholly groundless to conclude that in “the communiqué of the Resisters” “it is clearly disputed...that the True Orthodox Bishops of today” are supposedly “not the successors of the Holy Apostles,” since the emphasis of the position paper of the Synod in Resistance falls on the phrase: “[Synodal

<sup>24</sup> Πρακτικά τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων, Vol. II, p. 758B (Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1118E).

<sup>25</sup> Πρακτικά τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων, Vol. II, p. 758B (Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1118B); Πρακτικά τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων, Vol. II, p. 736B (Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1034B).

bodies] which do not possess all of the canonical prerequisites to represent the Church fully, validly, and suitably for the proclamation of anathemas and condemnations.”

• “Successors” of the Holy Apostles are not just any Bishops, regardless of their Orthodoxy, but “those who have truly become their successors in all strictness.”<sup>26</sup>

1. The Synod in Resistance has expounded in detail on the issues pertaining to the proclamation of an anathema in a fundamental Synodal document published on its website: “An Informatory Epistle Concerning the Ecclesiological Identity of the Orthodox in Resistance to the Panheresy of Ecumenism”<sup>27</sup> (1998, §II: “Basic Ecclesiological Precepts”). Consequently, it is superfluous to repeat those points here.

2. Next, since the genuineness of [Apostolic] Succession must be determined “in all strictness,” it follows that the aforementioned criteria are valid, as are also a multifarious irreproachability and blamelessness; for that which does not belong to heresy, St. Theodore the Studite says, “albeit secondary,” “is yet no less in the eyes of those who view matters in an Orthodox spirit,”<sup>28</sup> since “the one is affected by the other.”

3. In conclusion, there lurks a danger for the Old Calendarist Orthodox anti-ecumenists: various incautions and extremes damage the credibility of their witness and give rise to doubt about their stability “on the rock of the Faith and Tradition of the Church,”<sup>29</sup> since the “right doctrine of the true Faith,” according to St. Basil the Great, can be distorted “towards excess or deficiency.”<sup>30</sup>

## End of Part One

Phyle, Attica  
March 5, 2010 (Old Style)

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26 St. John Chrysostomos, “That We Should Not Anathematize the Living or the Dead,” §3, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XLVIII, col. 948.

27 <http://hsir.info/p/tz>.

28 “Epistle I.53,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1108A.

29 St. John of Damascus, “Third Apologetic Discourse Against Those Who Decry the Holy Icons,” §41, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIV, col. 1356C.

30 *On the Holy Spirit*, §77, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, col. 213C.

# **Ecclesiological, Canonical, and Historical Clarifications of the Holy Synod in Resistance in Response to Questions from Ἐκκλησιαστικός**

(posed in the “First Epistle,” of July 1/14, 2009,  
and the “Second Epistle,” of September 8/21, 2009)

## **PART TWO**

**I. “Second Epistle,” p. 1, first sentence:** *“How can Ἐκκλησιαστικός possibly be aware of oral answers that have supposedly been given to our questions during a dialogue which was conducted in closed deliberations, in which we did not take part, and concerning which no official communication was issued? Consequently, where will we find the answers to our questions?”*

[The foregoing rhetorical question from Ἐκκλησιαστικός makes reference to earlier replies from the Holy Synod in Resistance, directing this organization/group to matters discussed in the informal dialogues between the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostomos II and the Synod in Resistance—Trans.]

- **First Response:** Both Ἐκκλησιαστικός and any interested clergyman or layman belonging to the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostomos may “find the answers to his questions” by addressing himself to the three-member Hierarchical Committee of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians, which maintains informal minutes of the dialogue.

- One wonders: would the Holy Synod of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians give a reply to just any clergyman or layman of the Synod in Resistance who might want to learn from it the “supposed responses” of our three-member Hierarchical Committee from the Synod in Resistance? [*i.e., would the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece presume to do what the Synod in Resistance is being asked to do; viz., to speak on behalf of the Synod Resistance?—Trans.*]

**II. “Second Epistle,” p. I, second sentence:** *“At the moment your ecclesiology is under formation (a new, expanded edition is, you say, impending) and needs, in fact, to be explored, as you assert in your response.”*

• **Second Response:** Never has the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance maintained that its ecclesiology is “under formation.”

1. An anticipated “new, expanded edition” of our position paper—i.e., more detailed and enriched with new data—is one thing; quite another would be an ecclesiology that is “under formation,” to wit, involving a modification of the original form and “Principles” of the fundamental charter of the Holy Synod in Resistance, “An Ecclesiological Position Paper For Orthodox Opposed to the Panheresy of Ecumenism.”<sup>31</sup>

2. Mention by the Synod in Resistance of the dialogue, which aimed at “a fuller exploration of the ecclesiological self-understanding of both sides,”<sup>32</sup> obviously does not mean “to assert” (to maintain emphatically) and bears no relation to the anticipated “new, expanded edition” of its “Ecclesiological Principles.”

3. During the dialogue, both sides, the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece and the Synod in Resistance, were obliged, after an estrangement of almost thirty years (1979-2008), to reformulate with clarity their ecclesiological self-understanding, with documentation from the Fathers and the Synods; this is the meaning of “an exploration of the ecclesiological self-understanding of both sides,” which was indispensable in order to dispel the unhealthy cloud of irresponsible rumors and thereby to establish the edifice of the dialogue on strong foundations.

**III. “Second Epistle,” p. I, second sentence:** *“You are convinced that your texts have such dogmatic precision, clarity of theological discourse, and sufficient Patristic documentation that you think that*

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31 Ἅγιος Κυπριανός, No. 191 (November 1984), pp. 392-398; <http://hsir.info/p/c>.

32 See the “Epistle of the Synod in Resistance to Ἐκκλησιαστικός” (Protocol No. 550 [July 31, 2009] [Old Style]), §3.

*there is no need for further elucidations on perceived obscurities and dogmatic deficiencies.”*

• **Third Response:** The Holy Synod in Resistance has never had such a “conviction,” although it certainly reckons that it does not present in its “Position Paper” any obscurities, and still less any dogmatic deficiencies.

1. On the contrary, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, First Hierarch of the Synod in Resistance, wrote the following on May 31, 1983, in his “Third Memorandum” to the Synod to which he temporarily belonged (under Metropolitan Kallistos of Corinth): “In light of this, I feel obligated humbly to express my views; ...I will gladly accept any observation, suggestion, or correction as long as it is documented with reference to Holy Tradition, since to err is human.”<sup>33</sup>

2. Likewise, our Most Reverend First Hierarch wrote as follows in an epistle dated August 6, 1984 (Protocol No. 103) concerning our “Ecclesiological Position Paper”: “Our attitude, quite plainly, is not one of contention, for as men we are capable of making mistakes. Hence, we will gladly await any criticisms, observations, and objections you may have—on the basis of the Fathers, of course—regarding our document, so that, by the Grace of God, we may reach agreement on matters of Orthodox ecclesiology.”<sup>34</sup>

**IV. “Second Epistle,” pp. 1-2, second sentence:** *“(1) What was the condemned heresy that required the invocation of the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod and brought about the walling-off of Bishop Cyprian from his superior ecclesiastical authority and the creation of the community of the ‘resisters’ through new Consecrations, as ‘necessary actions’? In which of your texts do you answer this crucial question? (2) Who will convoke this future Pan-Orthodox Synod? Are you referring to the ecumenist patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops of what of old were Orthodox Patriarchates, but are now mired in the panheresy of ecumenism, who are subject to trial according the Sacred Canons, or to ‘temporary administrative structures in synodal form’? Where is your reply to this question? (3) Since ‘Bishops*

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33 Ἅγιος Κυπριανός, No. 191 (November 1984), p. 385.

34 Ibid., p. 391.

*embody and express in place and time the Catholic Church, that is, the entire Church,' as the author of the communiqué asserts, what deprives them of the right to condemn heresy and thereby protect their flock from grievous and ravaging wolves, namely, heretics? Are the True Orthodox Bishops of today not 'successors of the choir of the Apostles'? Of whom are they the successors? And if they are not the successors of the Holy Apostles (as is clearly disputed in your communiqué), then what are they? When and in which of your texts do you respond to this? On this point you have given the impression that you doubt the Apostolic Succession of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece. We think that you have a moral obligation to clarify your position."*

• **Fourth Response: 1.** There do not exist, as far as the Synod in Resistance is concerned, "unanswered questions about which a clear position has not been expressed." If such questions had been posed, and the Synod in Resistance had perhaps been indifferent to them, then they would truly have gone "unanswered."

**2.** Nevertheless, the foregoing series of questions posed by Ἐκκλησιαστικός have already been answered sufficiently and with documentation, both during the dialogue (February 2008-February 2009) and in *ad hoc* texts of the Synod in Resistance which have been in circulation since the 1980s.

**3.** Regarding the "condemned heresy," see the aforementioned issue of Ἅγιος Κυπριανός, which is in the hands of Ἐκκλησιαστικός.

**4.** Enough has already been said about who is going to convoke and participate in the "future Pan-Orthodox Synod," aside from what has been said before, in Part One of the present text (Ninth Response).

**5.** The Synod in Resistance has adequately dealt with all that is wholly without foundation ascribed to it with regard to the Apostolicity of the "True Orthodox Bishops of today" in Part One of the present text (Tenth Response).

**V. "Second Epistle," p. 2, third sentence:** *"We undertook to set forth some questions based on your communiqué, both arising from this and tangentially in connection with problems raised by other of your documents. This is because, as you admit, you very often employ*

*equivocations, that is, ambiguous formulations, which consequently provoke serious questions and doubts.”*

• **Fifth Response:** Never has the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance “admitted” that it “very often employs equivocations and ambiguous formulations.” This conclusion is completely groundless and superficial, and constitutes an appalling misinterpretation of everything stated in §4C of the “Epistle of the Synod in Resistance to *Ἐκκλησιαστικός*” (Protocol No. 550, July 31, 2009 [Old Style]).

1. The Synod in Resistance, with reference to the manifest scholasticism and textualism of the list of questions posed by the Editorial Board of *Ἐκκλησιαστικός*, simply reminded you of something self-evident, namely, that the genuine ecclesiastical and theological ethos “has always acknowledged the existence of gray areas within the life of the Church.”

• This quite obviously does not signify an “admission” on the part of the Orthodox in Resistance that they allegedly and even willfully “very often employ equivocations and ambiguous formulations.” Should human negligence occasion such, we ought not become textualists and jump to hasty conclusions, forgetting the “examination of language”<sup>35</sup> and that the views of a writer are to be understood from the spirit of his entire work.

2. Furthermore, we should not forget the historical truth that “the final formulation of dogmas was typically preceded by free discussions; theological theories were propounded—not infrequently mutually contradictory—after which there followed the final and enlightened formulation of the dogma.”<sup>36</sup>

3. The entire Patristic Tradition teaches that “we should not simply read letters, but inquire into their meaning”;<sup>37</sup> that “one must not injudiciously examine mere words, but pay attention to the pious in-

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Plato, *Republic*, Bk. v, 456C.

<sup>36</sup> Panagiotes Trembelas, *Δογματική τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* [Dogmatic Theology of the Orthodox Catholic Church], 2nd ed. (Athens: Adelphotes Theologon “Ho Soter,” 1979), Vol. II, p. 352.

<sup>37</sup> St. John Chrysostomos, “Homily VIII ‘On the Incomprehensibility of God,’” *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XLVIII, col. 769.

tent of the author”;<sup>38</sup> and that “it is irrational and foolish not to attend to the force of the meaning, but to the words.”<sup>39</sup>

**VI. “Second Epistle,” p. 2, third sentence:** “*When did the Fathers ever tolerate the typically ambiguous formulations of heretics? Are neologisms of a legalistic spirit permissible in matters of dogma? Are ambiguous, equivocal, obscure, and fuzzy formulations permissible?*”

• **Sixth Response:** We Orthodox in Resistance have never preferred “unity” at the expense of “dogmatic exactitude,” and the opinion of Ἐκκλησιαστικός, which is clearly due to its textualist mentality, is an abysmal misinterpretation of the positions contained in our “Epistle.”

1. The view expressed by the Orthodox in Resistance concerning the acknowledgment of gray areas within the life of the Church is not only not an innovation, but is, in fact, a commonplace in Holy Tradition, attested “at sundry times and in divers manners.”<sup>40</sup>

2. St. Basil the Great, for example, spoke in support of St. Gregory the Wonderworker of Neocæsarea, who had been charged with expressing Sabellian views “on the ground that he had stated in his ‘Exposition of Faith’ that the Father and the Son are two in thought, but one in Hypostasis.” St. Basil said as follows: “Those who congratulate themselves on the subtlety of their intelligence were unable to see that this was said not as a point of dogma, but in the context of a controversy with Aelian [the idolater]; ...In endeavoring to persuade the pagan, however, he did not deem it necessary to be precise in the words he employed, judging that there are cases in which one has to make concessions to the character of the one whom he is trying to persuade, so as not to run counter to the opportunity given him.”<sup>41</sup>

• The Revealer of Heavenly things accepts that St. Gregory spoke in a different sense. He spoke not with dogmatic exactitude, but with an apologetic intent and one relative to the issue at hand; he was not

38 St. Ephraim of Antioch, cited by St. Photios the Great, *Myriobiblon*, Cod. CCXXIX, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CIII, col. 989B.

39 St. Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Divine Names*, Ch. IV, §II, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. III, col. 708C.

40 Hebrews I:I.

41 “Epistle CCX,” §5, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, col. 776AB.

being precise in his words, but making allowance for the other person's way of thinking, so as not to lose the opportunity.

**VII. “Second Epistle,” pp. 2-3:** *“Concerning the cessation of dialogue: You persistently assert that the dialogue ‘ceased abruptly and unexpectedly,’ without this being the wish of your committee, giving the impression that it was the desire of the committee of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians—something which is not borne out by the published documents of the dialogue. On the contrary, the natural conclusion that any objective reader of these documents would arrive at is that the ‘Informal Dialogue’ came to an end because no ‘identity of faith’ could be found and because you failed to express your prior desire for its continuation in a more official form. You asked in retrospect for a ‘Formal Dialogue’ towards ‘a fuller exploration of the ecclesiological self-understanding of both sides’ (!) [the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece is consistent in its Faith, has a clear ecclesiological self-understanding, and is not in need of any further exploration—Note appended to its text by Ἐκκλησιαστικός] when beforehand: (1) you had sought a ‘magnanimous waiver’ of the differences and of the ‘weighty agendum,’ leaving one to wait for you to put forward in your turn the issues that you wanted to submit for discussion, and (2) on the other hand, you do not regard the ten [non-negotiable—Trans.] points of our Church as being of primary importance and therefore not ‘necessary presuppositions for Eucharistic communion,’ consequently leaving one to wait for you to accept them for the sake of unity. You have not done any of these things, but only requested a cessation of the theological discussions and a union and alliance [a union and alliance with the Church or with a community and temporary administrative structure in synodal form?—Note by Ἐκκλησιαστικός] with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece despite the existing ecclesiological differences. In other words, unity without the assurance of a common faith [is this not what the ecumenists believe?—Note by Ἐκκλησιαστικός]. And after all of this, how is it possible for you to maintain that your documents and activities ‘did not envision any impasse or severance of deliberations’? If you had expressed from the outset (and not after the cessation) your desire for a ‘Formal Dialogue’ and further discussion of ecclesiologi-*

cal differences, then we are convinced that it would have enabled this God-pleasing unionist move on your part to continue, which would have led to the lifting of the deposition of your gravely ailing Elder [for whom we expressed our sympathy and our wish that God deliver him from this disagreeable situation—Note by Ἐκκλησιαστικός] and a healing of the schism.”

- **Seventh Response:** This section of comments by Ἐκκλησιαστικός does not warrant any reply, for through a completely arbitrary and superficial web of words and conjectures it leads inevitably to a hodgepodge of fixations and, consequently, to a culmination of their textualist mentality, and at the same time prevents the sober and unprejudiced reader from comprehending what is ultimately at stake.

- Nevertheless, we offer the following observations:

1. The impression is given that the Synod in Resistance “persistently asserts that the dialogue ‘ceased abruptly and unexpectedly,’” whereas we simply wrote that “this dialogue ceased abruptly and unexpectedly, without our so intending and while it was still in progress.”<sup>42</sup>

- The Synod in Resistance does not, in this document, “assert,” still less “persistently” (!), nor does it “strongly maintain” anything (the language of Ἐκκλησιαστικός is almost as slipshod as its documents are irresponsible), but records its experience of the dialogue with sobriety and sincerity, and without self-seeking.

2. Ἐκκλησιαστικός writes that our opinion about the abrupt cessation of the dialogue is supposedly “not borne out by the published documents of the dialogue.”

- The communiqués about the cessation of the dialogue do not constitute the “documents of the dialogue,” that is, the proceedings of the dialogue, and these communiqués can be read in many ways, corresponding to the reader’s own prejudices and *idées fixes*.

3. Ἐκκλησιαστικός “naturally concludes” that “you [the Synod in Resistance] failed to express your prior desire for [the] continuation [of the dialogue] in a more official form.”

- This conclusion is entirely unfounded and irresponsible, since

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<sup>42</sup> See the “Epistle of the Synod in Resistance to Ἐκκλησιαστικός” (Protocol No. 550 [July 31, 2009] [Old Style]), §3.

both orally and in writing the committee for dialogue of the Synod in Resistance explicitly expressed its intention that the dialogue move forward.

4. The further comments penned by Ἐκκλησιαστικός as putative “natural conclusions” simply expose the members of its Editorial Board as, while informed, incapable of articulating or constructing a credible argument, never mind a theological argument.

**VIII. “Second Epistle,” pp. 3-4:** *“Concerning the Encyclical of 1995: You have formally admitted in your communiqué that you are in resistance to, and walled-off from, not only ‘uncondemned heretics,’ i.e., the ecumenist New Calendar State Church, which you no longer recognize as the ‘Mother Church,’ but also and at the same time the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, since 1984, even specifying the year 1985 as the date at which the ‘resisters’ appeared. Now that you acknowledge that you are separated from our Church (a separation which, in ecclesiastical parlance, is termed a schism, and not an estrangement or a division), how can you doubt that Encyclical 2/199 of 1995 places you outside the Church? Furthermore, how is it that the Encyclical in question now constitutes an impediment to answering our questions and not then to conducting your dialogue with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians? We think that the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece has every right to show concern for her children and to deter them, when necessary, for pastoral reasons from texts that contain, according to their author, ambiguous and obscure formulations which can thus lead even to spiritual delusion.”*

• **Eighth Response:** In this section of comments by Ἐκκλησιαστικός one can also discern the same pathological disease of textualism: misnomers, arbitrariness, superficialities, misreadings, and sophistries.

• Here are some selections to illustrate the continuing fatuities of Ἐκκλησιαστικός:

1. The adverb “no longer” means that in the past the Synod in Resistance recognized the ecumenists as their “Mother Church,” a blatant falsehood dealt with clearly and explicitly in the “Synodal Epis-

tle of the Synod in Resistance” (Protocol No. 527 [December 17, 2008 (Old Style)], point VI.4).

2. “...how can you doubt that Encyclical 2/199 of 1995 places you outside the Church?”

• The Synod in Resistance, in its “Epistle to Ἐκκλησιαστικός” (Protocol No. 550 [July 31, 2009] [Old Style]), §§5 and 6), did not express any such doubt, but asked the Editorial Board: “How can we... engage in...discussions...when you are ...strictly forbidden [by this Encyclical] to study our documents?”

3. The remainder of this section of comments by Ἐκκλησιαστικός is marked by sophistry and unwarranted conclusions, and for this reason we will pass over it, so as not to lay open the Editorial Board any further.

**IX. “Second Epistle,” p. 4:** *“We have not asked for ‘a dialogue on another level,’ but only for clarifications.”*

• **Ninth Response:** The Editorial Board of Ἐκκλησιαστικός characterizes all that it writes in the eight pages of its two epistles as a request for clarifications. But what we really have, as our critical discussion confirms, is an arbitrary set of conclusions with a quasi-intellectual veneer and an unpardonable superficiality; in other words, material which, despite the good intentions of the editors, does not encourage sober intellectual and theological discussion.

## End of Part Two

Phyle, Attica

July 14-15, 2010 (Old Style)

St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite,

St. Vladimir the Equal to the Apostles

• **Request:** If Ἐκκλησιαστικός is going to respond to the present document of the Synod in Resistance (Parts One and Two) and publish it, we request that our text be published together with that response.

