



Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece

Holy Synod in Resistance



Anti-Ecumenism in Serbia and Greece

Is It Possible for Metropolitan Cyprian
and Bishop Artemije Jointly
to Offer a Credible Anti-
Ecumenist Witness?

† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi
Acting President of the Holy Synod

On June 5/18, 2012, at the beginning of the Fast of the Holy Apostles, the Holy Synod in Resistance, under His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, convened for a special session, prompted by the activities of Bishop Artemije of Raška and Prizren, from the Serbian Patriarchate.¹

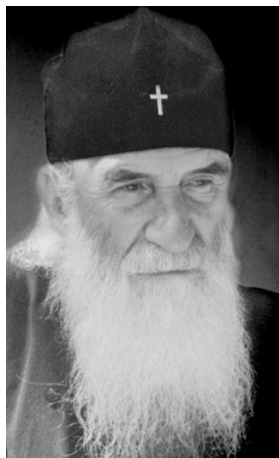
We thus reckon that the time is now ripe for us to formulate certain fundamental principles regarding this subject, in order, *inter alia*, to clarify fully the criteria for a joint and credible anti-ecumenist witness by the two Hierarchs.

* * *

A. Preconditions for Genuine Anti-Ecumenism

1. If Bishop Artemije espouses the view, attested in many and diverse ways, that inter-Christian and interfaith ecumenism represents an appalling ecclesiological deviation from Patristic and Synodal Tradition, namely a “panheresy,” the “greatest ecclesiological heresy in the history

¹ See, for example, the following websites: “Ακτίνες” (June 18, 2012), “Πατερική Παράδοση” (June 18, 2012), “Αποτείχιση” (June 18, 2012), and “Αδγουστίνος Καντιώτης.”



Saint Justin Popović

of the Church,” “with grave consequences for soteriology;”² then his thinking is correct.

2. If **Bishop** Artemije continues to revere the Divinely enlightened opinion of his Elder among the Saints, Father Justin Popović (†1979), that participation in the ecumenical movement constitutes an “unprecedented betrayal,” a “slavish degradation,” a “pitifully and dreadfully anti-traditional stance,” “apocalyptically horrendous in its unorthodoxy and anti-Orthodoxy,” and a “monstrous humiliation;”³ then he truly is correct in his thinking.

3. If **Bishop** Artemije is in agreement with the ever-memorable Elder Paisios (†1994) and his practice of “breaking off relations with, or avoiding seeing, clergy who took part in joint prayers with the heterodox;”⁴ then he really is acting correctly.

4. If **Bishop** Artemije sincerely believes that the Serbian Orthodox Church has suffered a frightful ecclesiological fall by participating in the ecumenical movement, since—according to doctrinally sound academic theology—this is not consonant with “the theoretical principles of Orthodoxy and its age-old Tradition, nor with the teaching and practice of its Seven Ecumenical Synods and its great Fathers;”⁵ then he is teaching aright the word of Truth.

5. If **Bishop** Artemije sincerely believes in the Orthodox practice of walling off, handed down by the Holy Fathers, in the way that this has been perennially expressed and synodally endorsed, as the ultimate and salutary means of dealing with a heresy “prior to a Synodal verdict;”⁶ then he is assuredly and veritably Orthodox.

² “Inter-Orthodox Theological Conference of Thessalonike” (September 20-24, 2004), “Οικουμενισμός: Γένεση-Προσδοκίες-Διαψεύσεις” [Ecumenism: Origins-Expectations-Disenchantment], *Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος*, No. 1577 (December 17, 2004), p. 5; *Θεοδομία* (October-December 2004), pp. 504-521; *Παρακαταθήκη*, No. 38 (September-October 2004), pp. 2-12.

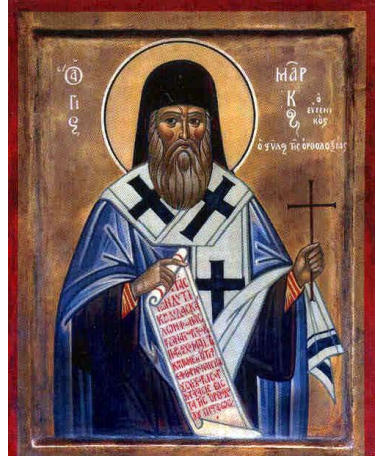
³ Cf. “Orthodoxy and Ecumenism: An Orthodox Appraisal and Testimony by Archimandrite Justin (Popović),” http://www.synodinresistance.org/Theology_en/E3a4012Popovic.pdf.

⁴ Hieromonk Isaac, *Βίος Ἐροντος Παΐσιου τοῦ Ἁγιορείτου* [The Life of Elder Paisios the Hagiorite] (Mt. Athos: 2004), p. 690.

⁵ Ioannes Karmires, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* [The Dogmatic and Credal Monuments of the Orthodox Catholic Church], 2nd ed. (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1968), Vol. II, p. 953 [1051].

⁶ Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Synod [861, under St. Photios the Great], in “A Contribution to the Theology of Orthodox Resistance and Walling-Off,” <http://hsir.org/p/uy>.

6. If Bishop Artemije is of the opinion, together with St. Mark of Ephesus, and thus with all of the Holy Fathers, that “all of the Teachers of the Church, all of the Synods, and all of the Divine Scriptures exhort us to flee from the heterodox and to stand aloof from fellowship with them;”⁷ and also that “the more I distance myself” from the Latin-minded unionists, “the closer I draw to God and all of the faithful and Holy Fathers; and [that] just as I separate myself from these persons, even so am I united with the truth and the Holy Fathers and Theologians of the Church,”⁸ then he undoubtedly has a Patristic outlook.



Saint Mark of Ephesus

7. If, finally, it is the conviction of Bishop Artemije that whatever penalties those walled off in an Orthodox manner are subjected to by heterodox and teachers of false doctrines constitute a persecution for the Faith,⁹ and consequently are not only uncanonical, invalid, and groundless, but also draw down the blessing of God more abundantly¹⁰ upon those who are walled off, then he rightly expresses “the pious mind of the Church.”¹¹

* * *

B. Basic Criteria

1. As long as Bishop Artemije fulfills the seven foregoing sufficient preconditions for genuine anti-ecumenism, then the Old Calendarist anti-ecumenists in Greece would have absolutely no reservations about communing with him ecclesiastically forthwith—not, of course, by way of a process of mutual submission, but certainly with the prospect of a joint reinforcement of anti-ecumenism and of an auspicious anti-ecumenist witness.

2. Given the foregoing, the following questions arise:

- for what reasons, we might wonder, does Bishop Artemije reject the possibility of such a common witness? What are the reasons for his virtual

⁷ St. Mark of Ephesus, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CLX, col. 101CD

⁸ *Idem*, “Apologia Uttered Impromptu at the Time of His Death,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CLX, col. 536CD.

⁹ See St. Maximos the Confessor, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xc, col. 128D.

¹⁰ See St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, *Ἱερὸν Πηδάλιον* [The Sacred Rudder], 7th ed. (Athens: 1970), p. 30.

¹¹ Seventh Œcumenical Synod, “Synodikon of Orthodoxy.”

disdain for Metropolitan Cyprian and the Holy Synod under him?

- Does Bishop Artemije, by acting in such a way, not contradict himself and lay himself open to criticism, insofar as he is not working against ecumenism in a consistent, sustained, and credible manner before the Catholic conscience of the Church?

3. **With the** certitude that Bishop Artemije’s endeavor is defective, subject to misinterpretation, and shortsighted, since he strangely enough disregards coöperation with those who are truly Orthodox and is inadmissibly oblivious to the basic criteria that would put such coöperation on a sure footing, we would remind him of the following points in order to make him aware of our affinity, which, if suppressed and covered up, will be detrimental both to him and to his prospective movement, and also to the unity of the Church.

First. The Orthodox anti-ecumenists who belong to the Old Calendarist Ecclesiastical Community in Greece have walled themselves off lawfully and canonically from the New Calendarist ecumenists (1924–), that is, did ninety years ago what Bishop Artemije is doing today, ninety years later.

- Sources testify that the reformers of 1924 endowed the calendar issue with a very clear ecumenist dimension, since they were acting with the feeling that they constituted “members of the pan-Christian brotherhood,” and since they viewed the New Calendar as “the first stone in the edifice of the union of all of the Churches of God.”¹²

Secondly. Three Metropolitans, Germanos of Demetrias, Chrysostomos of Phlorina, and Chrysostomos of Zakynthos, walled themselves off, in 1935, from the New Calendarist ecumenists, forming and organizing the anti-innovationist congregation of the Church of Greece; that is, they did what Bishop Artemije is doing today—and ought, furthermore, to have done earlier—in Serbia, eighty years later.

- The sources attest with complete clarity that Archbishop Chrysostomos Papadopoulos (†1938), that is, the reformer of 1924, consciously embraced the ecumenist Encyclical of 1920 and collaborated with the innovator Meletios Metaxakes in its agenda, such that he is regarded as a pioneering ecumenist and as one of the founders of the World Council of Churches.¹³

¹² Dionysios M. Batistatos (ed.), *Πρακτικά και Αποφάσεις του έν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Πανορθόδοξου Συνεδρίου, 10 Μαΐου–8 Ιουνίου 1923* [Proceedings and decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople, 10 May–8 June 1923] (Athens: 1982), pp. 72, 189.

¹³ See Antonios M. Papadopoulos, “Η στάσις τής Ἐκκλησίας τής Ἑλλάδος ἔναντι τών Σχέσεων τής Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας πρὸς τοὺς Ἑτεροδόξους” [The attitude of the Church of Greece towards relations between the Orthodox Church and the heterodox], in *Μαρτυρία και Διακονία τής Ὀρθοδοξίας Σήμερα* [The witness and service of Orthodoxy today] (Thessalonike: Ekdoseis “Adelphon Kyriakide,” 1998), Vol. II, pp. 85–87; Archimandrite Theokletos Strangas, *Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλλάδος Ἱστορία ἐκ πηγών*

Thirdly. Metropolitan Cyprian, from the inception of his walling-off (1969), had the profound awareness that he was an anti-ecumenist and that it behooved him to struggle in a theologically consistent way, and without reservation, against ecumenism, which, of course, encompasses also the issue of the calendar. This brought upon him many persecutions and slanders, both from the innovationists and from misguided Old Calendarists; that is, he did (and suffered) what Bishop Artemije is doing (and suffering) today, forty years later.

- The sources bear witness that Metropolitan Cyprian never awaited legitimation or approbation of his ecclesiastical stand against heresy from those who give the impression that they are struggling against ecumenism, but who have forfeited any theological consistency, persistency, and credibility, just as they have also forfeited a Christocentric awareness of the missionary dimension of Orthodox anti-ecumenism; that is, he never awaited legitimation or approbation from those who embody a sterile and hidebound anti-ecumenism.

* * *

We sincerely hope and pray that both the “Preconditions for Genuine Anti-Ecumenism” and the “Basic Criteria,” to which we have referred summarily and selectively, will impel anti-ecumenists, wherever they may be, towards more careful self-criticism, so as not to be led astray henceforth by various prejudices and “words that are bandied about,” but so as to hasten joyfully, with respect and love, to union with like-minded anti-ecumenists, those who engage in God-pleasing resistance to ecumenist “false bishops and false teachers,” being sedulous to “deliver the Church from schisms and divisions,”¹⁴ by the Grace of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Fast of the Holy Apostles

June 9/22, 2012

St. Cyril of Alexandria



Ἀψευδῶν (1817-1967) [A history of the Church of Greece from reliable sources (1817-1967)] (Athens: 1970), Vol. II, pp. 901-914.

¹⁴ See note 6.