

THEODOROS A. MEIMARIS
TERTIARY PATRIARCHAL DEACON

**The Holy and Great Council
of the Orthodox Church
&
the Ecumenical Movement**

ANT. STAMOULIS
PUBLICATIONS

CHAPTER II

ECUMENISM AND INTER-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS IN THE PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCES OF 1961, 1963, 1964, AND 1968

The idea of convoking a Pan-Orthodox Synod in order to deal with issues affecting the life of the Churches was very much in the mind of Orthodox leaders from the beginning of the 20th century. After the call, in 1902, of Patriarch Joachim III for a Pan-Orthodox consultation on matters of Church discipline and common action, the Ecumenical Patriarchate summoned two important meetings, namely the 1923 Pan-Orthodox Conference in Constantinople⁷¹ and the 1930 inter-Orthodox Commission at the Mount of Athos⁷². In the latter one, the delegates made plans for the convocation of a Pan-Orthodox Synod and drew up its agenda, in which the question of inter-Christian relations was included. Furthermore, they decided to call a Pre-Synod in 1932 in order

71. The 1923 Pan-Orthodox Conference in Constantinople authorized local churches to use the Revised Julian calendar whilst maintaining the traditional Paschalion. A comprehensive list of the Orthodox Councils can be found at the following internet source: T. R. Valentine, "Orthodox Church Listing of Synods and Councils", <<http://mb-soft.com/believe/txw/orthcoun.htm>>, accessed 9 July, 2012.

72. Ecumenical Patriarchate, *Πρακτικά τῆς Προκαταρκτικῆς Επιτροπῆς τῶν Ἁγίων Ὁρθοδόξων Ἐκκλησιῶν, Ἁγιον Ὄρος, 1930* (Minutes of the Preliminary Commission of the Holy Orthodox Churches, Mount Athos, 1930), Constantinople 1930.

to pave the way for the convocation of the Holy and Great Council⁷³. This ambitious plan, however, did not occur, because of the difficult international circumstances and the inability of some Orthodox Churches to participate in the Pre-Synod. It is only in the early 60's that this wish was exhausted.

The convocation of the Four Pan-Orthodox Conferences⁷⁴ in the early 60's played a decisive role in the reinforcing of the inter-Church relations. The first three Pan-Orthodox Conferences were held in Rhodes (1961, 1963, and 1964) while the last one in Chambésy in 1968. They were convoked by the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras⁷⁵, *primus inter pares*⁷⁶ in the Orthodox Church and responsible for the overall coordination of the Orthodox Churches, and they were presided over by the senior delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. These Conferences advanced the tangible expression of the indissoluble unity within the Orthodox world.

73. Cf. H. Alfeyev (Metropolitan of Volokolamsk), "Inter-Orthodox Cooperation in the Preparations for a Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church", <<http://www.mospat.ru/en/2011/11/03/news50923/>>, accessed 3 November 2011.

74. G. Tsetsis, "Pan-Orthodox Conferences" in N. Lossky, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 878-879.

75. V. Istavridis, *Οἱ Οἰκουµενικοὶ Πατριάρχες, 1860-Σήμερα, Ἱστορία-Κείμενα*, 637-678.

76. On the role of the First Bishop as *primus inter pares* see: V. Pheidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία I* (Ecclesiastical History), 3rd edition, Athens 2002, 806-820. Cf. A. Schmemmann, "The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology", in J. Meyendorff (ed.), *The Primacy of Peter. Essays in Ecclesiology and the Early Church*, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood 1992, 145-171; J. Zizioulas, "Primacy in the Church: An Orthodox Approach", in J. Puglisi (ed.), *Petrine Ministry and the Unity of the Church. Toward a Patient and Fraternal Dialogue*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999, 115-125; L. Vischer, "After the Debate on Collegiality", in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 37, 1985, 306-319.

But apart from the exclusively Orthodox issues (doctrinal, missionary, socio-ethical), the Conferences debated also topics of ecumenical significance: namely the attitude of the Orthodox vis-à-vis the Ecumenical Movement, the participation of the Orthodox Church in the WCC, the importance of bilateral dialogues with other Christian churches, and the position of Orthodoxy concerning inter-faith relations⁷⁷.

2.1. THE FIRST PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCE (RHODES, 1961)

This Conference⁷⁸, convened by Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople, met in Rhodes in 1961. Its task was to prepare the ground for the convocation of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church. The Conference brought together delegates from almost all the Orthodox Patriarchates and the Autocephalous Churches⁷⁹. Representatives, however, from the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Old Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion

77. For the significance of inter-religious dialogue today see: Anastasios (Archbishop of Albania), (a) *Mission in Christ's Way*, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline 2010, 225-228; and (b) "Problems and Prospects of Inter-religious Dialogue", in S. Damaskenos, F. Doris, B. Kyrkos, E. Moutsoulas, G. Babiniotis, K. Beis, Th. Pelegkrines (eds.), *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. Dedicated to Archbishop Demetrios*, A.N. Sakkoulas Publications, Athens 2002, 1-8. Cf. *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Verbum Domini of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to the bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and the lay faithful on the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 2010, 185-188.

78. "Πρακτικά τῆς Πρώτης Πανορθοδόξου Διασκέψεως, Ρόδος, 1961" (Minutes of the First Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes, 1961), in *Ὁρθοδοξία* (Orthodoxy), year 37, no. A and B, January-June 1962, 51-83.

79. Only two autocephalous Orthodox Churches were not present at this Conference for different reasons; the Orthodox Church of Georgia, which was represented by the Moscow Patriarchate, and the Church of Albania.

and the WCC also attended the Conference as observers, because by that time the Orthodox Church had regular or occasional contacts with the above Churches only.

This Pan-Orthodox Conference constituted a turning-point not only in the life of the Orthodox Church, but also of the Ecumenical Movement. The experiences and practices of the Conference significantly enriched the essence of the Orthodox Church, enhancing the consciousness of her position, duty and task within the world. The gathering of the Orthodox delegates, after so many centuries of external separation and obligatory isolation, was a historic fact and a visible expression of the unity of the Orthodox Churches. The unanimous and solid spirit prevailed and manifested itself during the consultation, through the common conclusions and the admirable agreement concerning the issues discussed. It is noteworthy, however, that, in order to safeguard and strengthen the sometimes fragile unity of the Orthodox Church, the Conference decided to abandon the diachronically operating principle of the ancient synodical practice: “the thought of the most” which was for ages the prevailing and acceptable decision-making model. Instead, it adopted the consensus model, by acknowledging the right of the Orthodox Churches to exercise veto⁸⁰.

It was the first time during the 20th century that the expectation to hold a Holy and Great Council⁸¹ of the Orthodox Church became a reality. The Orthodox Church, as a whole, gathered together to cope with unprecedented challenges. Due to the radical evolutions of the

80. Maximos (Metropolitan of Sardis), *Πρώτη Πανορθόδοξος Διάσκεψις Ρόδου, 24 Σεπτεμβρίου-1 Οκτωβρίου 1961* (First Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes, 24 September-1 October 1961), Athens 1965, 12.

81. Cf. G. Matsoukas (ed.), *Orthodox Cristianity at the Crossroad, A Great Council of the Church-When and Why*, Orthodox Christian Laity, U.S.A. 2009.

contemporary world, the various theological and ecclesiastical tendencies and the endless ethical and social implications, the convocation of Pan-Orthodox Conference was an imperative preparatory stage leading to the Holy and Great Council. The significance of this Conference lies in the fact that all the fundamental issues concerning the positive and effective presence of Orthodoxy in the contemporary world were retained in the agenda of the impending Council⁸², without putting a veto on any of them.

Among the essential issues, the Conference paid special attention to the concern for the Christian unity. This is obvious from the decisions about inter-Christian relations and the cooperation of the Orthodox Church with the WCC. Concerning the latter, the Conference listed this issue on the agenda of the planned Council and recommended the study of the theological and other prerequisites of the Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement and its institutional expression such as the WCC within the spirit of the Patriarchal Encyclicals of 1920 and 1952⁸³.

Nevertheless, the anticipation of the Oriental Churches⁸⁴ for imme-

82. R. Marshall, "The Rhodes Conferences, Renewal at Rhodes", in *Diakonia*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1966, 64.

83. "Tentative Agenda For The Pan-Orthodox Meetings of Rhodes", in *Diakonia*, vol.1, no. 2, 1966, 75. A thorough analysis of the 1952 Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras can be found in chapter 3.1 of the present book.

84. Cf. J. Karmiris, (a) *Αἱ Ἀρχαῖαι Ἀντιχαλκηδόνηοι Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀνατολῆς καί ἡ Βάσις τῆς Ἐπανενώσεως Αὐτῶν μετὰ τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (The Ancient Anti-Chalcedonian Churches and the Basis of their Reunification with the Orthodox Catholic Church), Athens 1966; and (b) *Relations between the Orthodox and the Non-Chalcedonian Churches and the Beginning of the preparatory Dialogue between them*, Abba Salama, vol. 1, 1970, 138-153, vol. 2, 1971,

diate improvement of their relations with the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the re-establishment of canonical unity with them remained just a desire. The exploratory nature of the First Rhodes Conference and the lack of extensive groundwork⁸⁵ did not allow the Eastern Orthodox Churches to undertake imminent initiatives. The Conference believed that before entering into negotiations aiming at the restoration of the unity of the two Church families, it was necessary to elucidate their theological-christological and ecclesiological divergences⁸⁶.

It is generally admitted that the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras played an influential role in the convocation of this Conference. Athenagoras considered inter-Orthodox unity as prerequisite for implementing an effective inter-Christian policy. The Conference was measured as one of the most important inter-Church events of this period, because, as foreign observers stressed, “after almost 10 centuries, the Orthodox Church gathered around a common table, so representative of its fullness”⁸⁷.

This Conference was a successful attempt, and justified Patriarch Athenagoras’ ecclesiastical policy because (a) it manifested the unity of

22-42, and (c) “Περί τόν διάλογον μεταξύ Ὁρθοδόξων καί Ἑτεροδόξων [Ἀρχαίων Ανατολικῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν]” (Concerning the Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Heterodox-Ancient Oriental Churches), in *Ἐκκλησιαστικός Φάρος* (Ecclesiastical Pharos), vol. 52, 1970, 303-314, 329-348, vol. 53, 1971, 150-173, 653-684, vol. 54, 1972, 194-236.

85. R. Marshall, “The Rhodes Conferences, Renewal at Rhodes”, 64.

86. After fifteen years of informal contact between theologians of the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches (1964-1979), the formal Theological Dialogue between the two Churches lasted from 1985-1993.

87. *Θρησκευτική καί Ἠθική Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια* (Religious and Moral Encyclopaedia), vol. 1, Athens 1962, 604.

the Orthodox world and enabled its concerted activity; (b) it confirmed the right and privilege of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to summon Pan-Orthodox meetings⁸⁸; and (c) it strengthened the bonds of the Orthodoxy with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The determination of the Orthodox to re-activate again the institution of the General Synods as a crucial dimension in the life of the Church, according to professor John Karmiris, “constituted a factual disappointment of the claims of some Western theologians, such as Harnack and Boyer, who tried to present Orthodoxy as a petrified, stagnated and static ecclesiastical organization”⁸⁹.

Comparing the agenda of the 1930 inter-Orthodox Commission on Mount Athos and the one set for the First Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes, we can detect the continuous concern of the Orthodox Church to deal with the contemporary issue of the Church unity.

The 1930 Commission focused only on the inter-Christian relations with no direct reference to the Ecumenical Movement. Furthermore, the Orthodox delegates felt the need to make an explicit distinction⁹⁰ between those Christian Churches with which the Orthodox Church desired “relations in the spirit of love” (such as the Oriental Churches, the Anglican Communion and the Old Catholic Church), and those Christian Churches with which Orthodoxy was forced to develop “relations of protection and defense” (for example Roman Catholics,

88. Cf. Maximos (Metropolitan of Sardis), *Τό Οἰκουμενικόν Πατριαρχεῖον ἐν τῇ Ὀρθοδόξῳ Ἐκκλησίᾳ* (The Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox Church), Patriarchal Institute of Patristic Studies, Thessaloniki 1972.

89. J. Karmiris, *Ἡ Πανορθόδοξος Διάσκεψις Ρόδου* (The Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes), Athens 1961, 34.

90. “Τό ἔργον τῆς Προκαταρκτικῆς Διορθοδόξου Ἐπιτροπῆς” (The task of the preliminary inter-Orthodox Commission), in *Πάνταινος* (Pantainos), year 23, no. 46, 13-11- 1930, 841.

the ‘Uniates’, Protestants-Methodists, Baptists, Jehovah Witnesses) because of their proselytism and harmful attitude towards the Orthodox.

On the contrary, the First Pan-Orthodox Conference adopted a more open and generous stance towards inter-Christian relations, by taking a unified approach towards the Christian world, namely the Roman Catholic Church and the whole Protestant world, without any essential distinction among them. The Conference included the issue of the Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement among the significant ones, pointing out that Orthodox engagement in the WCC was required as a response to the contemporary challenges that the world was facing.

This new progressive attitude of the Orthodox towards the other Christian Churches is clear in the message that the Rhodes Conference promulgated at the conclusion of its work. After underlining the inner unity among the local Orthodox Churches manifested through this very representative meeting for the first time after a long period, the Conference greeted in love:

all of our brothers from the ancient East, with whom we have so long retained many bonds of fellowship of thought and sentiment, as well as those in the West, with whom we have never ceased to co-operate in fulfillment of the commandment of our Lord ‘that all may be one’ for which our Holy Church prays unceasingly⁹¹.

Nevertheless, the quantity, quality, and variety of subjects drawn up for the agenda for the Holy and Great Council, demanded a long, deep

91. “The Pan-Orthodox Conference on Rhodes, September 24th – October 1st”, in *Sobornost*, series 4, no. 6, Winter-Spring 1962, 288.

and corporative preparation for the successful realization of the second step, namely the calling of the Pre-Synod. The day of the Pre-Synod had not been set during this Conference, and there was a general fear that the next chapter on the so called book “The Holy and Great Council” would have taken some considerable time before it would be written.

2.2. THE SECOND PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCE (RHODES, 1963)

Between September 26 and 29, 1963, twenty six delegates of the Orthodox Churches gathered in Rhodes once again, in order to participate in the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference, convened again by the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras. The main agenda item was the participation of the Orthodox Churches as observers in the Second Vatican Council⁹². All Orthodox Churches represented at the previous Conference sent delegates to this Second one, with one remarkable exception: the Church of Greece. Indeed, this Church decided at the last moment to be absent from this Pan-Orthodox gathering because of her opposition to any kind of rapprochement with the Roman Catholic Church. The Church of Greece, influenced by a rather aggressive anti-Roman literature of that time, believed that participation in the Vatican Council contained “inherent dangers for Orthodoxy”⁹³. In addition, the

92. Cf. C. Dollen, *Vatican II: A Bibliography*, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen 1969; M. Faggioli, “Council Vatican II: Bibliographical overview 2007-2010”, <http://stthomas.academia.edu/MassimoFaggioli/Papers/1036404/_Council_Vatican_II_Bibliographical_Overview_2007-2010_>, accessed 10 July, 2012.

93. R. Marshall, “The Rhodes Conferences, Renewal at Rhodes”, 65-66. Moreover, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece under the leadership of Archbishop Chrysostomos attempted unsuccessfully to induce the Greek government to rule out the Rhodes meeting.

then Archbishop of Athens Chrysostomos II⁹⁴ was systematically opposing Patriarch Athenagoras' ecumenical openings.

The Second Rhodes Conference examined solely two issues: firstly, the specific question whether the Orthodox Church should send delegates to Vatican Council II; and, secondly, the proposal of the Ecumenical Patriarchate pleading for the establishment of dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Churches.

Concerning the attendance of Orthodox delegates at the Vatican Council II, the majority of the Orthodox Churches came out against this eventuality⁹⁵. The representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Metropolitan Iakovos of Philadelphia⁹⁶, while underlining the interest of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for Vatican Council II, spoke about the decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate not to send observers, because of the inability of such participants to serve effectively the relations between the two Churches. The Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem followed the same line. The spokesperson of the Church of Antioch, in particular, stressed that the Orthodox presence at the Vatican Council II was in contradiction with the position of the Orthodox Church and that this participation could be interpreted as indirect recognition of the Roman Catholic Church, as "the Church" possessing the truth. The Churches of Cyprus and of Serbia also adopted similar attitudes. The

94. 'Χρυσόστομος' (Chrysostomos), in *Πάπυρος Λαρούς* (Papyrus Larousse), vol. XII, Publication of the Scientific Association of Greek Literature 'Papyrus', 1964, 1037.

95. "Πρακτικά τῆς Δευτέρας Πανορθόδοξου Διασκέψεως, Ρόδος, 1963" (Minutes of the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference, Rhodes, 1963), (unpublished), Chambésy, 6-7.

96. Cf. 'Ίάκωβος' (Iakovos), in *Θρησκευτική καί Ἠθική Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια* (Religious and Moral Encyclopaedia), vol. VI, Athens 1965, 658-659.

latter one justified her resolution by evoking not only theological but also historical reasons.

On the other side, the Church of Russia proposed a different approach by pleading for the attendance of Orthodox delegates at the Vatican Council II. The Church of Russia considered that fact as one that could affect positively the dialogue between the Churches. Moreover, the Church of Russia proposed that each Orthodox Church should decide on this issue separately⁹⁷. The Churches of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia backed the proposal of the Russians. Finally, the Church of Romania made a distinction between sending observers to the Vatican Council II and initiating a dialogue with Rome. It is only during its fourth session that the Conference unanimously agreed that each local Church was free or not to send observers to the Vatican Council II, with the *proviso* that they should not be bishops, but only inferior clergy and lay theologians⁹⁸.

Examining this decision, we can say that it did not stem from a fundamental opposition to the idea of sending observers, as it is evident from several pre-Conference statements, that some Churches intended to send their own observers, e.g., the Church of Cyprus. Further proofs of this were the critical remarks made by several delegations in relation

97. The Orthodox Church of Russia, acting on its own, sent delegates for the first session of the Vatican Council II, without informing its sister Orthodox Churches officially.

98. "One of the great issues was whether or not the Orthodox Churches would send observers to Vatican II. We did not send them to the session in 1963. But after regular contacts with the Orthodox churches, we agreed to send observers to the third and fourth sessions in 1964 and 1965 respectively". A. Vrame, "Patriarch Athenagoras: A witness of Orthodoxy", <<http://orthodoxinstitute.org/athenagoras.html>>, accessed 10 July, 2012.

to the attitude of the Church of Greece⁹⁹. The decision for independent action by each local Church seems to have been a reaction to the forceful role played by Patriarch Athenagoras. Some of the Orthodox Churches were not willing to acknowledge his role as the unique Orthodox intermediary in contacts with Rome.

Apart from the question of sending observers to the Vatican Council II, the Conference also dealt with the proposal of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to start a “dialogue on equal footing” with the Church of Rome¹⁰⁰. The representative of Constantinople documented this proposal as an answer to the invitation of Rome for the participation of Orthodox observers in the Vatican Council II. An event that could reinforce the position of the Orthodox Church among the Christian world. The representative of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, agreed with the plan of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, too. The delegate of the Patriarchate of Antioch underlined the unique chance presented to Orthodoxy to offer its treasure of love towards the unity. The representative of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem also approved the proposal with the presupposition that the dialogue will take place on “equal terms”. The Churches of Russia and Romania expressed positive thoughts as well and declared their agreement with this dialogue in principle.

After thorough discussion, the Conference decided for the opening of a theological dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church¹⁰¹, while the

99. For example, Metropolitan Spyridon of Rhodes (Ecumenical Patriarchate) labelled as “myopic” the stance of some Greek prelates, while Archpriest Vitaly Borovoy of the Patriarchate of Moscow declared that “any Church which does not welcome reunification is not Christian”.

100. “Πρακτικά τῆς Δευτέρας Πανορθόδοξου Διασκέψεως, Ρόδος, 1963”, 15-16.

101. G. Martzelos, “Αξιολόγηση καὶ Προοπτικὲς τοῦ Θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου μετὰ τῆ Ρωμαιοκαθολικῆ Ἐκκλησίας ἐξ ἀπόψεως ὀρθοδόξου” (Evaluation and Prospects of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman

Ecumenical Patriarchate was unanimously entrusted with the task of coordinating the whole issue in consultation with the Sister Orthodox Churches. In doing so, however, the Conference agreed that one had to assure that this dialogue would be on “on an equal footing”, and not merely as “a move of dissidents” petitioning their reinstatement.

Beneath the above common agreement among the Orthodox one can foretaste some traces of the compromise made between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Moscow Patriarchate at the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference. At the beginning of this meeting, the aim of these Churches was different; the Constantinople delegation focused on the question of a dialogue with the Roman Church, whereas the Russian delegation emphasized the point for which the Conference had been called: the sending of observers at the Vatican Council II¹⁰². At the end of this process, both of them seemed to fulfill somehow their goals; the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s proposal was commonly accepted. All the Orthodox Churches were bound to contribute towards the dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Russian Church’s desire for independent action among the local Orthodox Churches on issues of less significance, such as the sending of delegates at the Vatican Council II, was also unanimously adopted by the Conference.

Another remarkable development is the sudden change of the position of the Church of Greece. Despite her refusal to participate in the Conference, later on she accepted its decisions, with the *proviso* that

Catholic Churches from an orthodox point of view), in *Επιστημονική Έπετηρίς Θεολογικής Σχολής* (Scientific Yearbook of Theological Faculty), Aristotle University Publications, Thessaloniki 2004, 157-161.

102. G. Dejaifve, “The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes”, in *One in Christ*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1965, 141.

the dialogue with Rome should start after the conclusion of the Vatican Council II. The Conference, however, did not formulate any wish to open immediately a dialogue with Rome, believing that the whole matter needed appropriate preparation and careful treatment.

2.3. THE THIRD PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCE (RHODES, 1964)

One year after the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras adopted the proposal of the Russian Orthodox Church for the convoking of a new Conference to deal with the details of the dialogue with Rome, as well as with the content of the Patriarchal Letter announcing to the Pope the desire of the Orthodox Church for “dialogue on equal footing” with the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, Patriarch Athenagoras convoked the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference which took place again in Rhodes between the 1st and the 15th of November 1964. With fifty delegates from almost all the Patriarchates and the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches¹⁰³ this Conference was the most representative of the three. The Church of Greece sent the largest delegation, in an endeavor to amend the negative impressions from her absence during the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference. Observers of the non-Orthodox Churches (Roman Catholic, Old Catholic and Anglican) were present as guests of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Prof. Nikos Nissiotis of the Bossey Ecumenical Institute (WCC) was also attending the Conference in the same capacity.

The main subject of the Conference was the preparation of the theological dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church¹⁰⁴. According to

103. Only the Church of Albania was absent, like on the two previous occasions.

104. For the outcome of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches see: G. Martzelos, (a) “Η επανέναρξη του Θεολο-

the Letter that Athenagoras sent to the Primates of the Orthodox Churches, the meeting would deal with:

- (a) the accomplishment of the decisions taken by the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference;
- (b) the study and regulation of the ways via which the announcement of the Orthodox proposal for dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church should be followed; and
- (c) the content, the scope, and the fields of the dialogue from the Orthodox stand-point¹⁰⁵.

The Conference took into consideration the hopeful horizons opened after the historic meeting of Patriarch Athenagoras with Pope Paul

γικοῦ Διαλόγου τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου μέ τῆ Ρωμαιοκαθολική Ἐκκλησία. Τό κείμενο τῆς Ραβέννας” (The Re-opening of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches. The Ravenna Statement), in *Ὁρθόδοξο Λόγμα καί Θεολογικός Προβληματισμός. Μελετήματα Δογματικῆς Θεολογίας Δ΄* (Orthodox Dogma and Theological Speculation. Studies in Dogmatic Theology 4), Pournaras Publications, Thessaloniki 2011, 417-448; (b) “Ἐνότητα καί Καθολικότητα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας στό Θεολογικό Διάλογο τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου μέ τῆ Ρωμαιοκαθολική Ἐκκλησία” (Unity and Catholicity of the Church in the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches), in *ibid.*, 475-501; and (c) “Ἡ Ἀποστολικότητα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας στό Θεολογικό Διάλογο τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου μέ τῆ Ρωμαιοκαθολική Ἐκκλησία” (The Apostolicity of the Church in the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches), in *ibid.*, 503-528; S. Harkianakis (Archbishop of Australia), “The Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Roman Catholics: Problems and Prospects”, in *Ἐπιστημονική Ἐπετηρίς τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης* (The Scientific Yearbook of the Thessaloniki University's School of Theology), no. 29, 1986-89, 22-24.

105. J. Karmiris, *Ὁρθοδοξία καί Ρωμαιοκαθολικισμός (Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism)*, Athens 1965, 7.

VI in Jerusalem (January, 1964)¹⁰⁶ and the presence of Orthodox observers at the sessions of the Vatican Council II. It should be noted that the message¹⁰⁷ of Pope Paul VI to the Conference, characterized by “its

106. Cf. P. Gregorios, *Χρονικόν Συναντήσεως Πάπα Παύλου τοῦ Στ' καὶ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου Ἀθηναγόρου Α'* (Chronicle of the Meeting between Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I), Athens 1964; K. Bonis, *Ἡ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Συνάντησις τῆς ΑΘΠ τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου μετὰ τῆς ΑΑ τοῦ Πάπα Ρώμης Παύλου τοῦ ΣΤ'* (The Meeting in Jerusalem between the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope Paul VI), Constantinople 1964.

107. “Your Excellencies and dearly beloved Brethren in Christ. It is from the bottom of our heart that we send you our fraternal greetings. While your brothers of the Roman Catholic Church, gathered in Council, are asking themselves about the way to follow ever more faithfully the designs of God for His Church in this time, so rich in possibilities and at the same time so full of trials and temptations, you are preparing also to turn to the same problems in order to respond always better to the Lord's will. Fully aware of the importance of your venerable assembly, we fervently pray for the light of the Holy Spirit upon it. Rest assured that we ourselves, with the Council gathered together now, and the whole Catholic Church, watch the progress of your labors with the greatest interest, associating them in fervent prayer with those going on at present near the tomb of the Apostle Peter, in full confidence that the grace of the Lord will the more richly be with both because a common charity has inspired this common prayer. We keep in mind the recommendations of the Apostle Paul: 'Bear one another's burdens; it is thus that you will fulfill the law of Christ'. We dare to count on the fruits of your prayers, your Excellencies and beloved brethren in Christ, that the Lord will grant us the grace necessary to the faithful accomplishment of the work to which the mysterious design of His Providence has called us. May the All-holy Mother of God, to whom we pray and whom we honor with the same fervor, intercede for us that we grow ever in the love of her Son our one Savior and Lord. May charity nourished at the table of the Lord make us daily more eager for 'the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace'. Eph. 4:3. From the Vatican, 29th October 1964 Paulus PP. VI”. M. Fougias (Metropolitan of Pisidia), “The Orthodox Church as seen by the Roman Church”,

humble and brotherly tone”¹⁰⁸, left an enduring impression on the assembly. This message was underlining the similarity of issues dealt with by the Vatican Council II and the Rhodes Conference, and was declaring the special interest of the Roman Catholic Church for initiating a dialogue with the Orthodox Church.

Although the desirability of a dialogue with Rome was no longer in question, the path for a common Orthodox decision on the details of this process proved extremely difficult and thorny. If one examines carefully the minutes¹⁰⁹ of the Conference, one easily discerns quite divergent approaches and views on this issue. The Conference was split into two blocks.

On the one hand, the Church of Constantinople supported wholeheartedly an immediate dialogue with Rome, to be proposed by Patriarch Athenagoras directly to Pope Paul VI in the name of the whole of Orthodoxy. The announcement of the dialogue was considered as the logical follow-up to the sending of observers to Vatican Council II and the meeting of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope in Jerusalem. To act otherwise could give the impression that Orthodoxy was afraid of the rapprochement with Rome. Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Myra explained the attitude of the Ecumenical Patriarchate by stating that the Orthodox initiative had to be taken before the conclusion of Vatican Council II for two reasons; first, in order to encourage the Roman Catholics to take proper action to reply, and second, because the Orthodox

<http://www.apostolikidiakonia.gr/en_main/catechism/theologia_zoi/themata.asp?cat=dogma&NF=1&contents=contents_Texts.asp&main=texts&file=4.htm>, accessed 10 July, 2012.

108. G. Dejafve, “The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes”, 146.

109. “Πρακτικά τῆς Τρίτης Πανορθόδοξου Διασκέψεως, Ρόδος, 1964” (Minutes of the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference, Rhodes, 1964), (unpublished), Chambésy.

gesture could have an effect upon the measures under consideration in Rome. The Churches of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Cyprus and Finland shared Constantinople's conviction for immediate pronouncement of the dialogue so that it could begin without delay.

On the other hand, the Churches of Antioch, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Georgia, under the leadership of the Church of Russia, adopted a more cautious stance; they preferred to wait until after the end of the Vatican Council II for the announcement of the dialogue with Rome, in order to see any changes in the Roman teaching. They wanted also to await specific assurances that the dialogue would be on "equal footing".

The hesitation of this second group of Churches towards any hasty initiative had different reasons. First of all, the attitude of Paul VI, especially his frequent declarations on the primacy, and his Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*¹¹⁰, seemed that the new Pope's disposition towards other Churches was not as open as his predecessor's, Pope John XXIII¹¹¹. That group of Churches preferred to wait the official acts of the Roman Catholic Church through the working out of the Vatican Council's decisions on collegiality and ecumenism, in order to adjust their attitude towards them. Secondly, the consideration by the Orthodox Church of the Uniates¹¹² as a means of the Roman Catholic

110. "*Ecclesiam Suam*, Encyclical of Pope Paul VI on the Church, August 6, 1964", <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam_en.html>, accessed 10 July, 2012.

111. G. Dejaifve, "The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes", 149.

112. Cf. D. Attwater, *The Christian Churches of the East*. 2 vols., Wis., Milwaukee 1947, 1948; J. Karmiris, *Τά Δογματικά καί Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, 821-859 [901-939], 860-870 [940-950]; C. Papadopoulos (Archbishop of Athens), *Φύσις καί χαρακτήρ τῆς Οὐνίας* (The Nature and the Character of Uniatism), Foinikas Publications, Athens 1928.

Church for proselytizing Orthodox folk, as well as the official recognition of Uniates¹¹³ by the Vatican Council, made the Slavic Churches, which were affected by that mission more deeply, feel unhappy and wait to see what formal approaches would be taken up by the Roman Catholic Church towards Orthodoxy as a pledge of good will. Finally, the wartime massacres of Orthodox Serbs by Roman Catholics in Croatia during the Second World War¹¹⁴ impeded the unconditional proposal for dialogue with the Rome. The Serbian and Greek delegations followed an intermediate position; they wanted to announce the dialogue immediately, but not to begin it until after the end of the work of the Vatican Council.

The only possibility for a common agreement among the Orthodox delegates was that of a compromise between the “cordial ecumenism” of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the “wait and see” attitude of the Church of Russia¹¹⁵. Finally, after many informal discussions it was decided that a theological dialogue was not feasible at present. But in postponing it, a strong recommitment in principle to the dialogue was to be undertaken.

113. G. Dejaifve, “The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes”, 153.

114. During the Second World War 750.000 Serbian Orthodox and 500 Orthodox priests were executed by Roman Catholics. See more in V. Istavridis, “The Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Movement (1948-1968)”, 11, in *WCC Archive Ecumenical Patriarchate (Istanbul), 1968-1969 /471.021*.

115. Even though the Church of Russia was the first Orthodox Church that sent observers to the Vatican Council II, her reserved attitude towards the dialogue with Rome was based on (a) her interest about the scope of amendments within the Roman Catholic Church that could affect the quality of the dialogue significantly; (b) the particular political circumstances subjecting the Eastern Orthodox Churches to political pressures; and (c) the longstanding rivalry between Constantinople, the New Rome, and Moscow, the self-proclaimed ‘Third Rome’.

With the unanimous vote of the heads of the delegations, the Conference declared the will of the Orthodox Church to develop the best possible relations with all Churches and Denominations, in order to promote the unity of all Christians within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Concerning the relations with Rome the Conference reiterated the previously expressed desire of the Orthodox Church to open a dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, after due preparation and the creation of the appropriate conditions¹¹⁶. Furthermore, the Churches were encouraged to continue to cultivate, on local level, fraternal relations with the Roman Catholic Church, and in this way gradually neutralize the obstacles which existed so far. Finally, the Conference asked the local Orthodox Churches to study the aspects of this dialogue from the Orthodox point of view and to share with each other the results of such a study.

According to its agenda, the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference also dealt with the relations of Orthodoxy with the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches. Concerning the theological discussions with the Anglicans¹¹⁷, the Conference decided (a) to form immediately an inter-Orthodox Theological Commission composed of theological specialists appointed by the local Churches; (b) to accept a list of topics for discussion; and (c) to pay special attention to the appropriate preparation of this inter-Orthodox Commission prior to the opening of the theological discussions.

116. Apart from the necessary theological preparation, some delegates stressed also the need for psychological preparation of the Orthodox faithful.

117. "Decisions and the Closing Message of the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes-1964", in *Diakonia*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1966, 90.

The Conference followed a similar attitude in relation to the theological discussions with the Old Catholic Church¹¹⁸. In particular, the Conference (a) decided to appoint an inter-Orthodox Theological Commission, composed of theological experts; (b) recommended the methodical preparation of the Orthodox theses concerning doctrinal and liturgical texts of the Old Catholic Church; and (c) accepted to start the discussions with the corresponding Commission of the Old Catholic Church¹¹⁹, after mutual consultation.

The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference constituted an important event in the life of the Orthodox Church and her relationships with the other sister Churches and the Ecumenical Movement. As Dr Visser 't Hooft's message to the Conference pointed out, "these meetings of two or more Churches should be understood as a service and an exhortation to all other Churches, which are not directly engaged in them, but whose witness and experience can be helpful here for the whole Ecumenical Movement"¹²⁰.

2.4. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PERCEPTION OF THE RHODES CONFERENCES

The Roman Catholic Church paid special attention to the Rhodes Pan-Orthodox Conferences, as the issue of the bilateral dialogue

118. *Ibid.*, 90-91.

119. For proposed bibliography about the outcome of the theological dialogue between the Old Catholic and the other Christian Churches in the framework of the Ecumenical Movement see: P.A. Baktis, "Old Catholic-Orthodox Agreed Statements on Ecclesiology: Reflection for a Paradigm Shift in Contemporary Ecumenism", in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 46, no. 4, 1994, 461-466; J. Gros, H. Meyer & W. Rusch (eds.), *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level 1982-1998*, WCC Publications, Geneva 2000.

120. G. Dejaifve, "The Third Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes", 154.

between the Eastern and Western Churches occupied a considerable part of their debates. Many articles were devoted to these meetings, with an attempt to depict the positive and negative aspects of the deliberations. In their criticism, Roman Catholic scholars tried to be objective, even though their different understandings of synodality¹²¹ and ecclesiology in general caused them difficulties in comprehending the Orthodox reality.

The Roman Catholic scholars seemed disappointed with the general results of the Rhodes Conferences. It is obvious from their articles that they expected a more generous attitude of the Orthodox vis-à-vis the Church of Rome. Although they appreciated the decisions of the Conferences concerning Christian unity, they also discerned the inability of Orthodoxy to undertake concrete initiatives and to promote this issue effectively.

On this particular point the Roman Catholic scholars stressed the internal weakness of Orthodoxy because of the heterogeneity of opinions, goals and particular interests of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches. Particularly they emphasized the rivalry between the

121. Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Messinia emphasises characteristically the relation between primacy and synodality by speaking about the mutual perichoresis between them: “The First becomes the expression of the volition of all the member bishops and it is not possible [for his primacy to function] in a monarchical way, without taking into consideration the opinion of the rest of the bishops. As there is no synod without the First, [so likewise] the First cannot act without the synod. There is a mutual perichoresis between primacy and synodality”. T. Meimaris, “Η Διορθόδοξος Διάσκεψις εις Ἁγίαν Νάπαν Κύπρου, 3-9 Μαρτίου 2011 ...”, 638-641. Cf. M. Vgenopoulos, *Primacy in the Church. From Vatican I to Vatican II: A Greek Orthodox Perspective*, Thesis, London 2008.

Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Patriarchate of Moscow¹²² as an attempt to give to Orthodoxy a new center of gravity¹²³. Their impression was that the Orthodox world was as dispersed as before. Moreover, they criticized the principle of unanimity prevailed at the Conferences as the criterion for a common Orthodox agreement on specific issues.

However, the Catholic press did not ignore the positive elements emerging from the convocation of the Rhodes Conferences; namely, the revitalization and working out, in a noticeable and tangible manner and on a world-scale, of the synodical ethos within the Orthodoxy; the fact that these Conferences were reliable expressions of the general consensus of Orthodoxy as well as the elaboration of a plan for the agenda of the forthcoming Holy and Great Council¹²⁴. Moreover, all the Orthodox Churches verified their yearning for self-renewal. Finally, the Catholic press considered these meetings as an admirable beginning of the Orthodox Churches for “overcoming to a large extent their feelings of merely national or local concern and have registered their desire to share in the life of the Christian community at large”¹²⁵.

2.5. THE FOURTH PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCE (CHAMBÉSY, 1968)

The Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference, convened again by the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, took place at Chambésy, in Switzerland, in June 1968 (unlike to the previous three held in Rhodes). Its

122. S. Keleher, “Orthodox Rivalry on the Twentieth Century: Moscow versus Constantinople”, in *Religion, State & Society*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, 125-137.

123. R. Clement, “A catholic views the Rhodes Conferences”, in *Diakonia*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1966, 88-89.

124. Editorial, “The Rhodes Conferences”, in *Diakonia* vol. 1, no. 2, 1966, 58.

125. R. Marshall, “The Rhodes Conferences, Renewal at Rhodes”, 70.

purpose was threefold (a) to promote further the preparations for the convocation of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church; (b) to oversee the inter-Orthodox conversations with other Churches; and (c) to reflect the issue of a more systematic Orthodox participation in the WCC. Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon¹²⁶, head of the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, presided the Conference, consisted of twenty-nine delegates from eleven autocephalous Orthodox Churches: those of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Poland, as well as the autonomous Orthodox Church of Finland¹²⁷.

Concerning the bilateral dialogues undertaken by Orthodox Church with other Christian Churches, the Conference supervised those dialogues with the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, the Old Catholic, the Lutheran and the Oriental Churches¹²⁸. Regarding the relations with the Roman Catholic Church¹²⁹, the delegates ascertained the positive evo-

126. Cf. Athanasios (Metropolitan of Helioupolis and Theirai, now Senior Metropolitan of Chalcedon), *Rome & Constantinople: Pope Paul VI & Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon*, Orthodox Research Institute, 2006.

127. The Churches of Georgia, of Albania and of the Czech Lands and Slovakia were unable to send delegates.

128. “Πρακτικά τῆς Τετάρτης Πανορθόδοξου Διασκέψεως, Σαμπεζύ, 1968” (Minutes of the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference, Chambésy, 1968), in *Συνοδικά* (Synodica), vol. VI, 1982, 81-106; V. Istavridis, *Ιστορία τῆς Οἰκουμενικῆς Κίνησης*, 292-311.

129. It should be mentioned that nowadays, besides the theological work performed by the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches since 1980, the newly established, in 2007, Forum of Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches in Europe and the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences of Roman Catholic Church (CCEE) deals with anthropological, cultural, social, economical and moral problems that the two Churches are facing in the secularized and pluralistic

lution and constructive atmosphere among the Churches, even though they underlined that some manifestations of the Roman Catholic side (Uniates)¹³⁰ could negatively affect the course of the dialogue and the cultivation of fraternal relations. The participants decided that contacts and expressions of fraternal love and mutual respect between the local Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church should continue in order to overcome the obstacles towards a fruitful theological and theoretical dialogue. They also recommended continuing systematic

European context. The first meeting of the Forum, held in Trento, Italy in 2007, dealt with the issue of the family as a good for humanity, while the second one, in Rhodes, Greece, in October 2010, discussed the Church and State relations in Europe from a theological and a historical perspective. The third meeting of Lisbon, Portugal, in June 2012 dealt with the unprecedented challenge of the economic crisis and poverty in Europe. Cf. Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae (ed.), (a) *La Famiglia: un bene per l'umanità (Atti del I Forum Europeo Cattolico-Ortodosso Trento, Italia, 11-14 dicembre 2008)*, Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2009; and (b) *Rapporti Chiesa-Stato: prospettive storiche e teologiche (Atti del II Forum Europeo Cattolico-Ortodosso Rodi, Grecia, 18-22 ottobre 2010)*, Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2011.

130. This specific fear of the Orthodox delegates became a reality almost three decades later when the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church met in Baltimore U.S.A. in 2000 in order to discuss the ecclesiological and canonical implications of Uniatism. Due to the fact that an agreement was not reached on the basic theological concept of Uniatism, it was decided not to have a common statement at that time. As a consequence, the dialogue was postponed for a couple of years until 2006 when the Commission met again in Belgrade. “Joint International Commission for the theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, Communiqué, Emmitsburg- Baltimore USA, July 9-19, 2000”,

<http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ch_orthodox_docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20000719_baltimore_en.html>, accessed 10 July, 2012.

preparation for theological and theoretical dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

In regard to the dialogue with the Anglican Church¹³¹, the Conference determined explicitly the context for that dialogue by requesting from the Anglican Church (a) to include all “schools of thought” in the dialogue; (b) to elucidate the way that the unity is understood; (c) to explain the status of intercommunion between Anglicans and

131. The Anglican - Orthodox dialogue began in 1973, when the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions (A/OJDD) held its first meeting in Oxford. The first phase of the dialogue was concluded by the publication of “The Moscow Agreed Statement” in 1976. The publication of “The Dublin Agreed Statement” in 1984 brought its second phase to a conclusion. Both statements recorded a measure of agreement on a range of specific topics, while acknowledging continuing divergence on others. The third phase of the dialogue began in 1989, when the commission was re-constituted as ‘The International Commission for Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue’ (ICAOTD) under the chairmanship of Metropolitan John of Pergamon and Bishop Henry Hill (succeeded in 1990 by Bishop Mark Dyer) and drawing together senior clergy and theologians from across the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Anglican Communion. Its task has been to consider the doctrine of the Church in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, and to examine the doctrine of the ordained ministry of the Church. Particular attention has been given to the question of who may be ordained to the presbyterate and episcopate. This third phase of the dialogue has given further consideration to ecclesiological issues discussed in earlier phases, and to aspects of Trinitarian doctrine. Cf. V. Istavridis, *Ὄρθοδοξία καὶ Ἀγγλικανισμός* (Orthodoxy and Anglicanism), Athens 1963; M. Fougias (Metropolitan of Pisidia), *Ὄρθοδοξία, Ρωμαιοκαθολικισμός καὶ Ἀγγλικανισμός* (Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism), A. Livanis Publications, Athens 1996; *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984*, SPCK, London 1984; K. Ware & C. Davey (eds.), *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Moscow Agreed Statement*, SPCK, London 1977; *The Church of the Triune God, The Cyprus Statement Agreed by the International Commission for the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue 2006*, The Anglican Communion Office, London 2006.

Lutherans¹³², as well as their relation to the Church of South India¹³³; (d) to safeguard that the future agreement between the Orthodox and the Anglicans should be obligatory for the whole Anglican Communion¹³⁴; and (e) to clarify the significance of the ‘39 Articles’¹³⁵ and the ‘Book

132. For the practice of intercommunion between the Church of England and various Scandinavian Lutheran churches see: “The Pullach Report 1972”, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/lutheran/docs/pullach_report.cfm>, accessed 11 July, 2012.

133. The Church of South India was inaugurated in 1947 by the union of the South India United Church (itself a union of Congregational and Presbyterian/Reformed traditions), the Southern Anglican Diocese of the Church of India, Burma, Ceylon, and the Methodist Church in South India. It is one of the four United Churches in the Anglican Communion. More information in “Provincial Directory: The Church of South India (United)”, <<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/tour/province.cfm?ID=S3>>, accessed 11 July, 2012.

134. For selective bibliography about Anglican Communion see: R. Coleman & O. Chadwick, *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences 1867-1988*, Anglican Book Centre, Toronto 1992; G. Evans & R. Wright (eds.), *The Anglican Tradition: A Handbook of Sources*, SPCK, London 1991; W.M. Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, SPCK, London 1997; S. Neill, *Anglicanism*, 2nd edition, Mowbray, London 1977; S. Sykes (ed.), *Authority in the Anglican Communion*, ABC, Toronto 1987; S. Sykes, J. Booty & J. Knight (eds.), *The Study of Anglicanism*, SPCK, London 1998.

135. The ‘Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion’ are the historically defining doctrinal statements of the Church of England with respect to the controversies of the English Reformation. First established in 1563, the articles served to define the doctrine of the Church of England and its relation to Calvinist doctrine and Roman Catholic practice. The full name for the articles is commonly abbreviated as the ‘Thirty-Nine Articles’ or the ‘XXXIX Articles’. The ‘Thirty-nine Articles of Religion’ were drawn up on the basis of the earlier Forty-two Articles of 1553. Subscription to them by the clergy was ordered by act of Parliament in 1571. Devised to exclude Roman Catholics and Anabaptists, but not to provide a dogmatic definition of faith – in many instances, they are ambiguously phrased –

of Common Prayer'¹³⁶ of the Anglican Church.

the articles were influenced by the confessions of Augsburg and Wurttemberg. They concern fundamental Christian truths (Articles 1 - 5), the rule of faith (Articles 6 - 8), individual religion (Articles 9 - 18), corporate religion (Articles 19 - 36), and national religion (Articles 37 - 39). Retained in use by the various churches of the Anglican Communion, the Articles have been changed only as circumstances require. Thus the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States has retained them, without requiring assent, changing only those articles affected by the Independence of the United States from England (Articles 36 and 37). Cf. E.J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty - Nine Articles of the Church of England*, 1947; P.T. Fuhrmann, *Introduction to the Great Creeds of the Church*, Philadelphia 1960; K.N. Ross, *The Thirty - Nine Articles*, 1957; G. Bray, *The Faith We Confess: An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*, Latimer Trust, London 2009; J.I. Packer & R.T. Beckwith, *The Thirty-Nine Articles: Their Place and Use Today*, Latimer House, Oxford 1984.

136. The 'Book of Common Prayer' (BCP) has been called "the priceless possession of the Anglican Church". Around the world, the BCP is known wherever the Anglican Church took root. Versions of the BCP (or simply the 'Prayer Book') are used in over fifty countries and have been translated into 150 languages. The 'Book of Common Prayer', refined in the crucible of the Reformation in England, is a system of Christian devotion almost without peer. The first 'Book of Common Prayer' was compiled in 1549, after the Church of England had repudiated the legal jurisdiction of Rome. The aim of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and his collaborators was to streamline and condense the Latin service books of the medieval Church, and to produce in English a simple, convenient and comprehensive volume as an authoritative guide for priest and people—hence the name 'Book of Common Prayer'. Essentially, the Prayer Book is a book of worship. It includes the Offices – services of morning and evening prayer to be said every day – along with tables for reading through the Bible yearly as a part of these services—and the Psalms, as appointed to be read through monthly as a part of the offices. It also contains the forms for administering the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Anglican Church: Holy Communion (along with the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels used at Communion and other services), Baptism, Matrimony, and Burials, and the ordination rites.

Concerning the Old Catholic Church¹³⁷, the inter-Orthodox Theological Commission was asked to conduct the dialogue after studying the dogmatic-symbolic texts and the official confession of faith of the Old Catholics¹³⁸. The Old Catholics interlocutors were also asked to define the practice of intercommunion with the Anglicans¹³⁹, the autonomous Church of Philippines¹⁴⁰ and the reformed Churches of Spain

Also found in the Prayer Book are a number of other services and prayers for specific occasions or needs, such as the Litany, the prayers for the sick, and prayers for use at sea. Finally, the 'Book of Common Prayer' includes official doctrinal statements, both Christian and specifically Anglican, such as the Creeds and the 39 Articles of Religion. Cf. P. Dearmer, *Everyman's History of the Prayer Book*, A.R. Mowbray & Co, London-Milwaukee 1912.

137. Cf. Maximos (Metropolitan of Sardis), *Παλαιοκαθολικισμός και Όρθοδοξία* (Old Catholicism and Orthodoxy), Athens 1966.

138. "The Fourteen Theses of the Old Catholic Union Conference at Bonn, A.D. 1874", in P. Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical notes. Vol. II. The History of Creeds*, CCEL, 1877, 545 etc.

139. The Anglican Communion signed the Bonn Agreement with the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht in 1931. This agreement of "inter-Communion" has formed the basis for an ongoing relationship mediated by the Anglican-Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council. Cf. C.B. Moss, "The Old Catholic Churches and Anglican Orders", in *The Christian East*, January 1926, 216-218.

140. The Episcopal Church of Philippines is a province of the Anglican Communion first established by the Episcopal Church. It was founded in 1901 by American missionaries led by Charles Henry Brent, who served as the first resident bishop. It became an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion on May 1, 1990. At present, the Episcopal Church has six dioceses. For further information see: "Episcopal Church of Philippines", <<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/asia/philippines/episcopal-church-in-the-philippines.html>>, accessed 1 January, 2006.

and Portugal¹⁴¹.

The Conference dealt also with the relations of Orthodoxy with the Ancient Oriental Churches¹⁴² and decided unanimously to immediately initiate the dialogue. For that purpose, an inter-Orthodox Committee was established in order to define the common points of faith, to

141. Cf. *The Lambeth Conference, Resolutions Archive from 1958*, Anglican Communion Office, 2005, 15.

142. For selective bibliography on the outcomes of this dialogue see: The Joint Commission of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, *Restoring the unity in faith: The Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Theological Dialogue*, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline 2007; G. Martzelos, (a) “Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ αἵρεση τῶν Ἀντιχάλκηδονίων κατὰ τὸν Ἅγ. Ἰωάννη τὸν Δαμασκηνό” (Orthodoxy and heresy of the Anti-Chalcedonians according to Saint John of Damascus), in, *Ὁρθόδοξο Δόγμα καὶ Θεολογικός Προβληματισμός. Μελετήματα Δογματικῆς Θεολογίας Γ’* (Orthodox Dogma and Theological Speculation. Studies in Dogmatic Theology 3), Pournaras Publications, Thessaloniki 2010, 207-232; (b) “Ἡ ‘Ὁρθοδοξία’ τῶν Ἀντιχάλκηδονίων κατὰ τὸν Ἅγ. Ἰωάννη τὸν Δαμασκηνό καὶ ὁ ἐνδοορθόδοξος διάλογος” (The ‘Orthodoxy’ of the Anti-Chalcedonians according to Saint John of Damascus and the Inter-Orthodox Dialogue), in *ibid.*, 233-278; (c) “Οἱ προοπτικές τοῦ Θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου μεταξύ Ὁρθόδοξων καὶ Μή-Χαλκηδονίων” (The Prospects of the Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Anti-Chalcedonians), in *Ἱερά Σύνοδος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος (Συνοδική Ἐπιτροπή Διορθόδοξων καὶ Διαχριστιανικῶν Σχέσεων), Ὁρθόδοξη θεολογία καὶ Οἰκουμενικός Διάλογος* (The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, Synodical Committee of Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations, Orthodox Theology and Ecumenical Dialogue), Apostoliki Diakonia Publishing House, Athens 2005, 279-293; and (d) “Ὁ Θεολογικός Διάλογος τῆς Ὁρθόδοξης Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας μέ τίς Μή-Χαλκηδόνιες Ἐκκλησίες τῆς Ἀνατολῆς. Χρονικό-Ἀξιολόγηση-Προοπτικές” (The Theological Dialogue of the Orthodox Catholic Church with the Anti-Chalcedonian Churches of the East. Chronicle-Evaluation-Prospects), in *Πρακτικά 14’ Θεολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου Ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης μέ θέμα «Ἡ Μήτηρ ἡμῶν Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία», 10-13 Νοεμβρίου 1993* (Minutes of the 14th Theological Symposium of the Holy Metropolis of Thessaloniki on “Our Mother Orthodox Church”, 10-13 November 1993), Thessaloniki 1994, 293 etc.

elucidate points of disagreements on the dogmatic, canonical, liturgical fields, and to work out a plan for union, for when the dialogue will reach a successful conclusion¹⁴³.

As for the dialogue with the Lutherans, the Conference considered as very beneficial the beginning of mutual contacts between Orthodox and Lutherans¹⁴⁴. It was decided that the dialogue should take place between the Orthodox Church and the World Lutheran Federation and

143. Despite the progress achieved during the work of the Joint Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Ancient Oriental Churches and the dogmatic agreement they reached, the reaction of the conservatives of the Orthodox Church and of Mount Athos on these agreements was sharp and intense. Cf., T. Zisis, (a) *Η 'Ορθοδοξία' τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων Μονοφυσιτῶν* (The 'Orthodoxy' of the Anti-Chalcedonian Monophysites), Vryenios Publications, Thessaloniki 1994; and (b) *Τά ὄρια τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Οἰκουµενισµός καί Παπισµός* (The Boundaries of the Church. Ecumenism and Papism), Thessaloniki 2004, 104-125; The Holy Monastery of Saint Gregorios, *Εἶναι οἱ Ἀντιχαλκηδόνιοι Ὀρθόδοξοι; Κείμενα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Κοινότητος τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους καί ἄλλων ἁγιορειτῶν Πατέρων περί τοῦ διαλόγου Ὀρθοδόξων καί Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων (Μονοφυσιτῶν)* (Are the Anti-Chalcedonians Orthodox? Texts of the Holy Community of Mount Athos and other Fathers of Mount Athos about the Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Anti-Chalcedonians-Monophysites), Mount of Athos 1995; The Holy Community of Mount Athos, *Παρατηρήσεις περί τοῦ Θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου Ὀρθοδόξων καί Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων (Ἀπάντησις εἰς κριτικήν τοῦ Σεβ. Μητροπολίτου Ἑλβετίας κ. Δαµασκηνοῦ)* (Remarks on the Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Anti-Chalcedonians. Reply to the critique of H. E. Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland), Mount Athos 1996; S.N. Bozovitis, *Τά αἰώνια σύνορα τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας καί οἱ Ἀντιχαλκηδόνιοι* (The Everlasting Boundaries of Orthodoxy and the Anti-Chalcedonians), 'The Savior' Publications, Athens 1999.

144. For the formal Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Lutheran World Federation see: T. Meimaris, "Ἡ ἀξιολόγησις καί αἱ προοπτικαί τοῦ 30ετοῦς Διεθνoῦς Θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου Ὀρθοδόξων καί Λουθηρανῶν (1981-2011)".

ordered the formation of a special inter-Orthodox Committee by expert theologians for the preparation and the holding of the dialogue.

A critical evaluation of the decisions of the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference about the bilateral theological dialogues with other Christian Churches, illustrates the obvious Orthodox desire to promote formal relations with different branches of Christianity. The appointment of Theological Committees to conduct dialogues with the Lutheran and the Oriental Churches, the exhortation that the existing Committees of dialogue with the Anglicans and the Old Catholics continue the acceleration of their preparations in order to initiate their main task, demonstrate the firm and resolute attitude of Orthodoxy to engage itself in the common goal for Christian unity. Concerning the relations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Conference seemed to maintain the same attitude with the previous one, namely to focus on the ground preparation, aiming to appoint a Theological Committee. Despite this, however, it was not difficult to feel a profound evolution among the Orthodox Churches as a result of the “favorable atmosphere” created after the reciprocal uplifting of ex-communications at Rome and Constantinople¹⁴⁵. According to the minutes of the Conference, the only Orthodox delegation that raised the issue of Uniatism as an obstacle to the dialogue with Rome was the Church of Romania. The next step on that process, namely the establishment of a Theological Committee, was a thing that soon would have been actualized.

The particularity and the significance of the Chambésy Conference lies in the fact that, contrasting with the previous ones dealing exclusively with the issues of bilateral dialogues, the main concern became “the more positive Orthodox participation and contribution in the

145. “The Inter-Orthodox Conference, Chambésy”, in *One in Christ*, vol. V, no. 1, 1969, 106. Cf. A. Panotis, *Παῦλος Στ’-Αθηναγόρας Α΄, Εἰρηνοποιοί* (Paul VI - Athenagoras A, the Peacemakers), Athens 1971.

Ecumenical Movement”¹⁴⁶ in general, and in its institutional form, the WCC, in particular. This question was debated thoroughly for the first time during this Pan-Orthodox Conference, at the eve of the Fourth General Assembly of the WCC (Uppsala, 1968)¹⁴⁷. It is important to point out that the Conference, after thorough discussions, expressed “the general conscience of the Orthodox Church that she constitutes an organic member of the WCC, and the firm resolution to contribute through all the means at her disposal, theological and other, to the furtherance and the success of the whole work of the Council”¹⁴⁸.

On the basis of this firm conviction, the Conference (a) requested the WCC to appoint more Orthodox members to its staff, whether theologians or not¹⁴⁹; (b) suggested the Orthodox representatives serving in the WCC to have regular contacts with one another; (c) proposed the creation of a permanent position for an Orthodox Secretary or Assistant Secretary of the “Faith and Order” Commission; (d) requested the participation of specialist Orthodox representatives at the local study groups established by the “Faith and Order” Commission; (e) approved the celebration of Orthodox acts of worship, as an organic part of the WCC’s program of worship; (f) envisaged the inclusion of a reasonable

146. “Πρακτικά τῆς Τετάρτης Πανορθόδοξου Διασκέψεως, Σαμπεζύ, 1968”, 96.

147. Cf. N. Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968, official report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala July 4-20, 1968*, WCC Publications, Geneva 1968; M. Bührig, “Uppsala 1968-Berlin 1974-JPIC Convocation 1990”, in *Commemorating Amsterdam 1948: 40 Years of the World Council of Churches* (offprint of *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 40, no. 3-4, July-October 1988), 394-396.

148. “The Inter-Orthodox Conference, Chambésy”, 107.

149. Cf. T. Meimaris, “Η 59^η Κεντρική Ἐπιτροπή τοῦ Παγκοσμίου Συμβουλίου Ἐκκλησιῶν, 16-22 Φεβρουαρίου 2011” (The 59th Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, 16-22 February 2011), in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* (Gregory Palamas), vol. 846, year 95, May –June 2012, 251-255.

number of contributions of Orthodox theologians in the official Journal of the WCC (“The Ecumenical Review”); (g) emphasized the necessity of preparation of competent Orthodox staff on the Ecumenical matters; and finally (h) stressed the need for cooperation among the Orthodox delegates during the imminent Fourth General Assembly of WCC at Uppsala aiming at the most effective Orthodox contribution in it.

Examining the main lines of the Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement during the 1960’s, one could see an obvious shift in the Orthodox theological thought and practice concerning the WCC¹⁵⁰. Till the First Pan-Orthodox Conference, the Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement was based on the Synodical Encyclical of 1920, and gave emphasis more to the “Life and Work” Movement rather than to the theological-theoretical Movement of “Faith and Order”. The First Pan-Orthodox Conference explicitly considered the ecumenical relations of the Orthodox Church within the frame of the “Life and Work” Movement. During the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference, however, there was a revolution by giving special emphasis to the “Faith and Order” Movement.

The contribution of the four Pan-Orthodox Conferences for the advance of the Ecumenical Movement was remarkable and significant. Orthodoxy came out of these meetings with a strong, undisturbed unity and with a unanimous voice. From that moment, the convoking of inter-Orthodox Conferences became the typical practice of the Orthodox Church, in order to respond to the fervent contemporary challenges such as the restoration of the Christian unity, and the promotion of reconciliation and cooperation among peoples.

150. G. Tsetsis, *Η συμβολή τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου στήν ἴδρυση τοῦ Παγκοσμίου Συμβουλίου τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν*, 165-181. Further analysis of the reasons and the forms of that shift follows on the next chapter.