



"A Painful Remembrance"

1924-2004: The Eightieth Anniversary of the Calendar Reform

Concerning the New and the Old Calendars*

A Presentation by
Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Boguchar
to the Congress of Moscow
(8-18 July 1948)

Fifty-six years ago, at the Congress of Moscow (8-18 July 1948), on the occasion of the quincentennial of the proclamation of the Autocephaly of the Russian Church (1448), the leaders of the delegates of the Autocephalous Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Russia, Serbia, Romania, Georgia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Albania rejected any participation by their Churches "in the ecumenical movement, in its present form."¹

What serious reasons led to the taking of such a momentous decision, which represented a rupture with "the thitherto common policy, a policy of coöperation by the Orthodox Churches, under the leadership of the Œcumenical Patriarchate, in the ecumenical movement," and on the very eve, indeed, of the founding of the World Council of Churches (Amsterdam, 22 August–4 September 1948)?

The following have been adduced as reasons for such a decision:

(1) The goal of the WCC to form an 'Ecumenical Church' did not correspond to the principles of the Orthodox Church.

(2) The WCC aimed, through the manipulation of social and political life, at the creation of an 'Ecumenical Church,' which would be capable of exercising influence on international issues.

(3) In its present form, the ecumenical movement had lost its hope for union in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, and aspired, rather, to the realization of a union in the social, economic, and political arenas.

(4) During the period from 1937-1948, the problem of the union of the Churches was not examined at all at the dogmatic and confessional level, and

(5) faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior was considered deficient in and of itself.

The decision not to participate was taken in the light of the points set forth above.²

That is to say, we see a clear and extremely pointed declaration of the Truth of the "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church in contradistinction, as much to the alteration of this truth by Papism, as to the unionist tendencies of the ecumenical movement."³

Regardless of the reasons which led the aforementioned Churches, a few years later, to violate this essentially binding decision of theirs when they eventually joined the ecumenical movement en masse, it is very striking that, right from the outset, the Orthodox viewed the WCC as a potential "Ecumenical Church."

In fact, this was proved incontrovertibly during the subsequent course of the Geneva-based ecumenical organization.

"The Congress" of Moscow, "having undertaken an examination of the subjects," (1) "The Vatican and the Orthodox Church," (2) "The Anglican Hierarchy," (3) "The Ecumenical Movement and the Orthodox Church," and (4) "The Church Calendar," "issued four decisions thereon."⁴

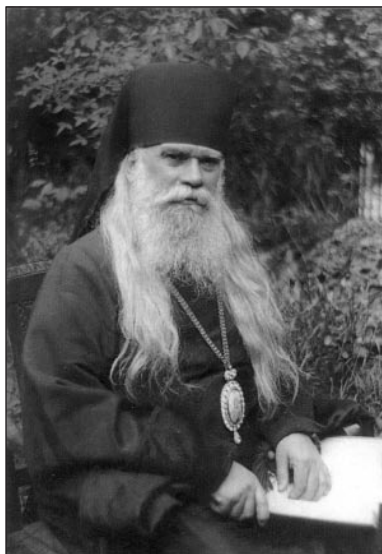
Of these four decisions, only the first, second, and fourth have been published in Greek,⁵ but we hope, with God's help, to publish very soon both the third, the importance of which is self-evident, along with the memorable presentation to this Congress by Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Boguchar, entitled "Should the Russian Orthodox Church Participate in the Ecumenical Movement?"⁶

For the time being, we are publishing Archbishop Seraphim's marvelous presentation, "Concerning the New and the Old Calendars," which was given on 14 July 1948 at the Congress of Moscow. We should make it clear that this virtuous Confessor and Hierarch did not agree with the final decision of the Congress concerning "The Church Calendar," and he in fact submitted a special statement of his own to the Congress.⁷

Now, in order to understand the importance of Archbishop Seraphim's views, we need to become familiar with his life, albeit in a condensed form.⁸

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Archbishop *Seraphim* (Sobolev) was born in Ryazan, Russia, on 1/14 December 1881. He studied at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, where he was on close terms with its Rector, Bishop Theophan (Bystrov), who was renowned for his virtue and education. After his graduation in 1908, he was appointed, in succession, professor at the Pastoral School of Zhitomir, assistant inspector of the Ecclesiastical School in Kaluga, inspector of the Seminary in Kostroma (1911), and was finally elevated to the dignity of Archimandrite (1912), and became Rector of the



Voronezh Theological Seminary, when he was about thirty years of age.

On 6 May 1919 at Stavropol, in the Caucasus, the “Temporary Higher Church Administration for South-Eastern Russia” was organized, in order to unite “the Bishops of South-Eastern Russia who have lost all contact with the Moscow Patriarchate on account of the civil war.”⁹

At that time, the Synod of the “Temporary Supreme Administration” Consecrated Archimandrite Seraphim Bishop of Boguchar to serve as an Assistant to the renowned Bishop

Theophan (Bystrov) of Poltava, at about the age of thirty-eight.

After the defeat of the White Army, great multitudes of refugees emigrated to the Balkans, Western Europe, and the Far East. “The exact number of émigrés who fled Russia after the Revolution and the civil war is unknown. It has been estimated that the number might have amounted to one million.”¹⁰

Among the Russian émigré Bishops of the “Temporary Higher Church Administration” who reached Constantinople was the future Archbishop Seraphim. Shortly after their arrival in Constantinople, many of these Hierarchs assembled at a meeting on 1 November 1920 and founded the “Higher Church Administration Abroad.” The most outstanding of the founding Hierarchs were Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Galicia, Metropolitan Platon (Rozhdestvensky) of Kherson and Odessa, Archbishop Anastassy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev, and Bishop Benjamin (Fedchenko) of Sebastopol.¹¹

Following an invitation by Patriarch Dimitrije of Serbia to Metropolitan Anthony, the headquarters of the “Higher Administration” were transferred to Sremski Karlovci, Yugoslavia, in January of 1921.¹²

Bishop Seraphim went with Vladyka Theophan to Bulgaria, where he was appointed administrator of the Russian Orthodox parishes in Bulgaria. He settled in Sofia, near which he later founded the Convent of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos in Knyazhevo, a veritable spiritual

nursery, which flourishes down to the present day, and the only convent in Bulgaria following the traditional Church Calendar after the introduction of the New Calendar into the Bulgarian Church (1968).¹³

Archbishop Seraphim was a consummate Orthodox theologian, when we take into account his literary activity and, in particular, his involvement in the “Sophiological disputes” of the years 1935-1936 and his confrontation of the patently Gnostic “Sophiological” system of Archpriest Sergius N. Bulgakov.

“Sophiology” or “Sophianism” is characterized as a “philosophico-theological or Gnostic teaching of a series of modern Russian thinkers concerning the creation of the world, and, in particular, man and the God-Man Christ, which revolves around the notion of Divine Wisdom.”¹⁴ Its leading representatives were Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), the Priest Paul A. Florensky (1881-1943), Father Sergius Bulgakov (1871-1944), et al.

In 1935, the Sophiology of Bulgakov (but only indirectly that of Florensky and Soloviev) was condemned as heretical, first by Metropolitan Sergius (later Patriarch of Moscow), and subsequently by the Church of the Russian émigrés, which at that time had its Metropolitan See in Karlovci, Yugoslavia. The ground for the condemnation by the latter Hierarchy was prepared in the massive book, *Novoe Uchenie o Sofii* [The Novel Teaching Concerning Sophia] (Sofia: 1935), by Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), who was in charge of the Russian Orthodox parishes in Bulgaria. Metropolitan Evlogy, to whose jurisdiction Bulgakov belonged, did not condemn this teaching, but advised Bulgakov to reexamine it.¹⁵

Archbishop Seraphim is numbered among others who undertook critiques, albeit “with less theological vigor,” of the “Sophianic system of Bulgakov from the perspective of classical Patristic Orthodox thought,” as did Vladimir Lossky (in his book *Spor o Sofii* [The Controversy over Sophia] [Paris: 1936]) and the then Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Moscow (in an ukaz of 1935).¹⁶

During the Second World War (1940-1944), unable to leave Bulgaria, isolated from the Karlovci Synod, and not wishing to be separated from his flock, Archbishop Seraphim was compelled and pressured to enter into communion with the “Sergianist” Moscow Patriarchate, a relationship which was maintained until his repose in 1950, during which he endured many indignities and tribulations at the hands of the Communists.

He was buried in the Church of St. Nicholas, at the Russian Embassy

in Sofia, and his tomb, which is preserved to this day, has become a place of pilgrimage for pious Orthodox Christians and a well-spring of miracles, which have been attested in writing.¹⁷

The published works of Archbishop Seraphim

1. Novoe Uchenie o Sofii [*The Novel Teaching Concerning Sophia*] (Sofia: 1935).

2. Zashchita Sofianskoi Eresi Protoiereja S. Bulgakova [*The Defense of the Sophianic Heresy by Archpriest S. Bulgakov*] (Sofia: 1937).

3. Russakaia Ideologija [*Russian Ideology*] (Sofia: 1939).

4. Iskazhenie Pravoslavnoi Istiny v Russkoi Bogoslovskoi Mysli [*The Distortion of Orthodox Truth in Russian Theological Thought*] (Sofia: 1943).

5. Propovedi [*Sermons*] (Sofia: 1944).

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The Presentation

“Concerning the New and the Old Calendars”¹⁸

One of the scientists who has investigated the issue of the new and the old calendars, E.B. Predtechensky, a full member of the Russian Astronomical Society, maintains that only since the period of the Renaissance did people in the West begin to take an interest in the calculation of the date of Pascha, among other scientific questions. “Unfortunately,” he stated,

although they barely understood the details of the Alexandrian rule, and although they were probably far from understanding it as they should have, the Western Paschalists desired to reform this rule within a short time and arrogantly attempted to correct a superbly executed piece of work... If the period of the Renaissance had begun simultaneously in Western and Eastern Europe, if difficult circumstances had not stifled education almost to the vanishing point in the ancient Christian Churches of Byzantium,... if the Alexandrian traditions and the learning of the early centuries had not come to an end in the East, then it is doubtful whether Pope Gregory XIII could have accomplished what he

did.*19

To these words of Predtechensky we should add that the emergence of the calendar reform of Pope Gregory XIII was caused not only by the fact that Western Paschalists had not assimilated, and lacked the requisite understanding of, the Alexandrian rule or method for calculating Pascha, and by the collapse of education in the East, but also, and chiefly, by the Westerners' lack of faith in the Holy Church, and more precisely, their inability to believe that in her the Holy Spirit lives and breathes as the fount of all Truth.

If the Roman Catholic Church had possessed this faith, then she would not, in the person of her Popes and her expert Paschalists, have undertaken to alter the Canons on which the Paschal reckoning of the Old Calendar is based, whereby the Holy Spirit expressed a truth which is not subject to alteration. We have in mind primarily the Seventh Apostolic Canon:

If any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon, shall celebrate the holy day of Pascha before the vernal equinox, along with the Jews, let him be deposed.

This injunction is mentioned also in the First Canon of the Synod of Antioch:

All those who dare to set aside the decree of the Holy and Great Synod which was assembled at Nicæa in the presence of the Emperor Constantine, beloved of God, concerning the holy and saving Feast of Pascha; if they shall contentiously persist in opposing what was then rightly ordained, let them be excommunicated and cast out of the Church (let this be said with regard to the laity). But if any one of those who preside in the Church, whether he be Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon, should dare, in the wake of this decree, to exercise his own private judgment to the subversion of the people and to the disturbance of the Churches, by observing Pascha along with the Jews, the Holy Synod decrees that he shall thenceforth already be an alien from the Church, as one who not only brings sins upon himself, but who is also the cause of destruction and subversion to many; and it deposes not only such persons themselves from their ministry, but those also who after their deposition dare to commune with them. And the deposed shall be deprived even of that external honor, of which the Holy Canon and

God's Priesthood partake.

The foregoing Canon of the Synod of Antioch strikes us as particularly noteworthy, because it not only prohibits the simultaneous celebration of Pascha with the Jews, but also proves that such a prohibition was recorded in the Decree of the First Œcumenical Synod. To be sure, this synodal Decree has not come down to us, but a well-known epistle of the Emperor Constantine the Great to all of the Bishops who were not present at the Œcumenical Synod of Nicæa, refers to its content.²⁰

Let us cite the substance of the Nicene Decree, as set forth in the interpretation of the First Canon of the Synod in Antioch by Bishop Nikodim (Milaš), an interpreter of the Sacred Canons who is recognized by the entire Church:²¹

The Synod in Nicæa occupied itself with the examination of this issue (the time for the celebration of Pascha) for the purpose, by means of a common decision, of averting all discord that might arise from this matter, and of restoring harmony to the whole Church. First and foremost, on the basis of the Seventh Apostolic Canon and of the Scriptural teaching about the seventh day, the Fathers of the Synod decided on the following points: (1) the Christian Pascha should always be celebrated on a Sunday, (2) this Sunday should be after the first full moon following the spring equinox, and (3) if it should happen that the Jewish Passover was to be celebrated on this Sunday, then the Christian Pascha should be transferred to the Sunday immediately following.²²

To all of these canonical prescriptions of the Orthodox Church we should add also the Seventh Canon of the Second Œcumenical Synod and the analogous Ninety-fifth Canon of the Synod in Trullo (Penthekte), which decreed how heretics were to be received into the Church:

Those who from the heretics join themselves to Orthodoxy and to the portion of those who are being saved, we receive according to the following order and custom. Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, Tessaeskaidekatitai [Quartodecimans], or Tetraditai, and Apollinarians, we receive on their presentation of statements of faith and on their anathematizing every heresy which does not hold as does the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of God; and first of all, we anoint them

with holy Chrism on their forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears, and, as we seal them, we say: 'The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

As we see here, the Quartodecimans, i.e., Christians who celebrated Pascha together with the Jews on the 14th of Nisan, are clearly called heretics and are placed in the same category as the Arians and other major heretics, and for this reason, in the event of their repentance, they are to be received into the bosom of the Church through Chrismation (re-Chrismation).²³

See where violation of the Canons regarding the time for celebrating Pascha leads. From the aforementioned canonical prescriptions of the Orthodox Church it is clear that we must uphold them reverently, without any alteration. For this reason, the Twenty-first Canon of the Synod in Gangra says:

We wish that all things which have been handed down by the Divine Scriptures and the Apostolic Traditions be observed in the Church.

And the Second Canon of the Sixth Œcumenical Synod:

...that no one be allowed to falsify or set aside the aforementioned Canons [of the Apostles, of the Œcumenical and Local Synods, and of the Holy Fathers], or to accept any Canons other than those herein specified, which have been composed under a spurious inscription by certain persons who have attempted to traffic in the truth.

Such a steadfast and undeviating upholding of the Canons is demanded by the Seventh Œcumenical Synod, the First Canon of which states:

...We gladly embrace the Divine Canons and hold fast all the precepts of the same, complete and without change, whether they have been set forth by those clarions of the Spirit, the all-laudable Apostles, or by the Six Œcumenical Synods, or by Synods locally assembled for promulgating such decrees, or by our Holy Fathers; for all these, being illumined by the same Spirit, ordained such things as were expedient; and those whom they placed under anathema, we likewise anathematize; those whom they deposed, we also depose; those whom they excommunicated, we also excommunicate....

From all of the aforementioned canonical prescriptions it is evident

to what a great sin the Roman Catholics fell when they overturned the Sacred Canons, which forbid us to celebrate Pascha along with the Jews. This is the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which God does not forgive, either in the present life or in the life to come. For, the same Holy Spirit, God, speaks through the Sacred Canons, because the canonical, as well as the dogmatic, prescriptions of the Œcumenical Synods were composed in accordance with the words of Divine Scripture: "It seemed pleasing to the Holy Spirit and to us."²⁴

And the Divine Spirit, through the Apostles, the Œcumenical Synods, and the Holy Fathers, did not ordain canonical truths in order that we might subsequently correct and alter them, as being, supposedly, imperfect and erroneous. Such an attitude towards the Sacred Canons is completely unacceptable and blasphemous.

Thus, the Roman Catholic Church is guilty of directly violating and annulling the Sacred Canons by celebrating Pascha in 1805, 1825, 1903, 1923, 1927, and in many other years simultaneously with the Jewish Passover.^{*25}

And, worse still, the New (Gregorian) Calendar decrees that the Roman Catholic Church be at odds with the Holy Gospel through its distortion of the Gospel account. It is clear from the Gospel that the Christian Pascha took place after the Jewish Passover.

But the Papists, with their new rules for determining Pascha, not only regularly celebrate their Pascha along with the Jews, but frequently before them, as happened in 1845, 1853, 1856, 1891, 1894, and in many other years.²⁶ In 1921, the Hebrew Passover fell on 10 April, while the Papists celebrated Pascha on 14 March, i.e., almost a month before the Passover!²⁷

But if, on the basis of the Sacred Canons, it is impossible for us to accept the New Calendar in its entirety, then by the same token it is impossible for us Orthodox Christians to accept the New Calendar in the form of a compromise.²⁸

This compromise has been discernible of late in the life of certain Orthodox Churches and consists in the fact that Pascha is celebrated according to the old Orthodox Paschalion, whereas all of the fixed Feasts are celebrated according to the New Calendar. But such a mixed calendar cannot possibly be accepted by the Orthodox, because it simultaneously gives rise to violations of other ecclesiastical ordi-

nances, too, which are found in the *Typikon* and which we ought to observe religiously and steadfastly, since we should not deviate from obedience to our Mother, the Church.

The New Calendarists are guilty of such disobedience. We speak in this manner, having in view their transgression of the instructions of the *Typikon* regarding the fixed Feasts. The Church has ordained the temporal limits within which the fixed Feasts that fall during Great Lent may be celebrated. Thus, for example, the Feast of the Venerable Forerunner (the First and Second Findings of his head) fluctuates between the Wednesday of Meatfare Week (lower limit) and the Tuesday of the Fourth Week of the Fast (upper limit).^{*29} But the New Calendarists do away with these limits, because they celebrate all of the fixed Feasts thirteen days earlier.

The same thing happens with the Feast of the Annunciation (25 March). According to the instructions in the *Typikon*, the Annunciation is celebrated during the period between the Thursday of the Third Week of the Fast and the Wednesday of Bright Week.^{*30} But with the introduction of the New Calendar, the period during which the Annunciation can be celebrated begins on the Friday of the First Week of the Fast and extends only as far as the Thursday of the Sixth Week of the Fast.

But the sin of the New Calendarists with regard to the demands of the Church and her *Typikon* does not stop at this. Their negative attitude towards the appointed limits for the celebration of the great Feasts leads them into a yet graver violation of the *Typikon*.

The Church foresaw the coincidence of certain of the great Feasts with movable Feasts or with various days in Great Lent. In all of these instances, she has decreed a precise liturgical order. But in violating the appointed limits, the New Calendarists also wreak havoc with the liturgical order of the Orthodox Church.

For this reason, the New Calendarists cannot ever celebrate the Annunciation during Great Week and, by the same token, they can never celebrate “Kyriopascha,” that is, the coincidence of the Annunciation with Pascha, and in this way they clearly violate the *Typikon*.

A particularly shocking transgression of the *Typikon* by the New Calendarists is to be observed in connection with the Feast of the Holy

Apostles Peter and Paul. The Holy Church honors these great Apostles to such an extent that she prepares for their Feast (29 June) with a fast lasting from eight to forty-two days. But with the introduction of the New Calendar, this Fast, contrary to the *Typikon*, is always abbreviated. And when Pascha is celebrated during the period from 20-25 April, then the Apostles' Fast is completely abolished, because there is no time left over for it!³¹

One could say that this violation of the *Typikon* does not constitute a serious sin, because it does not involve any violation of dogma. But the words of Christ, "If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican,"³² do not refer to the violation of one or another dogmatic truth of our Faith. And yet, according to the testimony of these Divine words themselves, anyone of us who does not show obedience to the Church is to be cut off from her and enters into the ranks of great sinners, because in the case in question the severest punishment is imposed: excision from the Church. Furthermore, through their contempt for her *Typikon*, the New Calendarists commit the sin of disobedience to the Church publicly and brazenly.

From the standpoint of the Orthodox Faith, such a contemptuous attitude towards the *Typikon* is not permissible for the children of the Holy Church, just as any violation of her dogmatic or canonical ordinances is impermissible. And this is quite understandable.

Just as contempt for dogmatic or canonical ordinances leads to alienation from Orthodoxy, so contempt for the *Typikon* also leads to such alienation. In truth, the *Typikon* constitutes, for us, a sacred law, which gives us guidance in our God-pleasing services, Feasts, and Fasts. The *Typikon* is a sacred book, connected with the name of an outstanding vessel of Grace, St. Savvas the Sanctified, and it became accepted by the Orthodox Church as one of her basic books. The *Typikon* is nothing other than the voice of our Mother, the Church.³³ And we must not maintain an attitude of contempt towards this voice, but, rather, unhesitating and unshakable obedience, if we wish to be faithful and dedicated to the Holy Church and to all of her Orthodox Canons.

What do we gain as a result of violating this sacred book through the introduction of the New Calendar? If we use the New Calendar



in order to establish new dates for our Feasts, Fasts, and services, then we shall in this way testify that the New Calendar is ecclesiastically correct, whereas the *Typikon* is mistaken. And this, despite the fact that we know that the *Typikon* derives from the Orthodox Church, the very Church in which the Apostles have laid up, as in a valuable treasury, whatever pertains to the Truth. And this, despite the fact that we are well aware that the aforementioned violation of the *Typikon* derives from the Papists, who are engulfed in the darkness of all heresy and error.

As the offspring of Papism and as an anti-ecclesiastical phenomenon, the New Calendar has nothing, other than confusion, to offer the Orthodox Church. From the outset of its appearance, the New Calendar was understood in this way by its opponents:

Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople and the local Synod which he convened in 1583 in Constantinople. From such an unsound beginning, the New Calendar remains to this day a tool of Papist propaganda and very detrimental to the life of the Orthodox Church. Hence, if we were to accept the New Calendar, despite the will of the Holy Church—albeit by way of compromise—, it could only lead us to contribute to confusion and disorder in Church life, through which we would undermine by our own hands the authority of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Therefore, just as we will find ourselves on the road of the grave sin of disobedience to the Church if we accept the New Calendar in its entirety by repudiating the Sacred Canons, so also do we find ourselves on the same road of disobedience if we accept the New Calendar in a mixed form, by repudiating the requirements of the *Typikon*.

From the foregoing, it is clear why the Orthodox Church was so resolutely and ardently opposed to this anti-ecclesiastical innovation from the inception of the calendar reform until recently.

As soon as Pope Gregory XIII introduced the New Calendar, straightway in the same year, 1582, Œcumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, together with his Synod, condemned the new Roman reckoning as antithetical to the Tradition of the Orthodox Church.³⁴ The following year, 1583, Patriarch Jeremiah, with the participation of Patriarch Sylvester of Alexandria and Patriarch Sophronios IV of Jerusalem, convened an ecclesiastical Synod, which condemned the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar into the Roman Church as contrary to the Sacred Canons of the Catholic Church and as violating the prescription of the First Œcumenical Synod concerning the calculation of Holy Pascha.

This Synod, in its Sigillion of 20 November 1583, urges the Orthodox to adhere steadfastly and unswervingly to the Orthodox Calendar and the Julian Paschalion unto the shedding of their blood and imposes upon all who transgress this injunction the anathema of expulsion from the Orthodox Church.³⁵

The Synod of Constantinople communicated this decision to all of the Eastern Churches, to Metropolitan Dionysii of Moscow, to the Church of the Ionian islands, to the renowned champion of Orthodoxy in Western Europe, Prince Konstantin Ostrozhsky, to Niccolo da Ponte, the Doge of Venice, and to Pope Gregory XIII, who was responsible for disturbances in the Church.

Thus, the Œcumenical Patriarchs and, together with them, the whole Catholic Church in the ensuing centuries, reacted in a completely negative way to the introduction of the New Calendar.³⁶

For example, Patriarch Kallinikos II of Constantinople, along with Patriarch Athanasios IV of Antioch, testified that the celebration of Pascha with the Papists, the rejection of the ordinance of the Orthodox Church concerning fasting, and the acceptance of the injunctions of the Roman Church constitute a betrayal of Orthodoxy and a violation of the laws of the Holy Fathers that is destructive for the flock of the Orthodox Church, and that, for this reason, every Christian is obligated to celebrate Pascha and the Feasts connected with it, as well as all of the seasons of the ecclesiastical year, as these have been set forth

in the practice of the Orthodox East and not in the manner of the heterodox West, which is alien to the Faith.

In his Encyclical of 1756, Œcumenical Patriarch Cyril V utters fearful imprecations—applicable both in this transient earthly life and in eternal life—against all Christians who accept the New Calendar.³⁷

With the intention of protecting Christians from accepting the New Calendar, on the ground that it was a very great sin, in 1848, Œcumenical Patriarch Anthimos VI, together with the other Eastern Patriarchs, that is, Hierotheos II of Alexandria, Methodios of Antioch, Cyril II of Jerusalem, and their Synods, in their Encyclical in the Name of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, set forth the following Confession of Faith:

Since with us neither Patriarchs nor Synods have ever been able to introduce novelties, because the defender of our religion is the very Body of the Church, that is, the People of God themselves, who wish their religion to be eternally unchanging and identical with that of their Fathers..., ‘Let us hold fast the confession,’ which we have received unadulterated from such great men, abhorring every innovation as a suggestion of the Devil; whoever accepts innovations censures as deficient the Orthodox Faith that has hitherto been preached. But this Faith, in its integrity, has now been sealed, admitting neither decrease nor increase, nor any alteration whatsoever, and he who dares either to do or to advise or to contemplate this has already denied the Faith of Christ, has already voluntarily placed himself under eternal anathema on account of his blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as, supposedly, not having spoken perfectly in the Scriptures and through the Œcumenical Synods.... All, therefore, who innovate either in heresy or in schism, have voluntarily ‘put on cursing as a garment,’ as the Psalmist says, whether they happen to be Popes, Patriarchs, clergy, or laity; ‘even if an Angel from Heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.’³⁸

Between 1902 and 1904, at the initiative of the renowned Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople, the Autocephalous Churches of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Greece, Russia, Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro, in the persons of their Primates, expressed their rejection of the calendar reform of Pope Gregory XIII.³⁹

Likewise, the Pan-Russian Synod of 1917-1918 decided on strict observance of the Old Calendar for ecclesiastical use.⁴⁰ In reaching

this decision, the Moscow Synod took under advisement the opinion of Father Dimitry A. Lebedev, a professor at the Moscow Theological Academy, who demonstrated, on the basis of astronomical and canonical data, how destructive any accommodation to the Gregorian Calendar would be, ascribing complete superiority to the ancient Julian Calendar.”*⁴¹

Unfortunately, the Pan-Orthodox Congress⁴² that was convened by Patriarch Meletios IV of Constantinople in 1923 departed from the sacred traditions which the Œcumenical Patriarchs had so fervently and piously upheld over the long course of centuries.⁴³ This Congress decided to accept the New Calendar. The Orthodox laity of Constantinople confronted this uncanonical innovation with evident commotion, and Patriarch Meletios was forced to resign.⁴⁴

And yet, Gregory VII, who succeeded him as Patriarch of Constantinople, attempted, in 1924, to introduce the New Calendar for the fixed Feasts, temporarily allowing Pascha and the other Feasts dependent on it to be celebrated according to the old Paschal reckoning, until the convocation of an Œcumenical Synod. In the official periodical of the Greek Church, *Ἐκκλησία*, and in certain Russian periodicals, an authoritative article was published in his name and in the name of his Synod concerning the acceptance of the New Calendar on the part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Under the influence of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Romanian Church also decided to celebrate the fixed Feasts by the New Calendar. However, the Eastern Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem resolutely refused to look into the question of the changing the calendar.⁴⁵

In his response to the aforementioned article, His Beatitude, Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and All Russia informed the Œcumenical Patriarch that, although he had received his letter concerning the implementation of the New Calendar starting on 10 March, it had, however, become impossible to introduce it into the Russian Church on account of the staunch opposition of the people.⁴⁶

As well, the Synods of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in 1923, 1924, and 1925 totally refused to accept the New Calendar.⁴⁷

We ought to remain in steadfast solidarity with these Orthodox

Churches, without any compromise, observing the Old Calendar in our Church life, following the prescriptions of the Canons, which must remain unshaken, since they form one of the bases of the existence of the Orthodox Church.

Moreover, as attested by scientific data, the New Calendar contains many errors and is certainly less accurate than the Old Calendar. This is the reason why the Scientific Commission that was convened on 18 February 1899 by the Russian Astronomical Society^{*48} to make a decision about reforming the calendar stated that “there are no grounds for introducing into Russia (and still less into the Church) the Gregorian Calendar, which is notorious for its errors.”^{*49}

It is essential to point out that until recently it was not the Gregorian, but the Julian, Calendar that was used in astronomy.^{*50} The American astronomer Newcomb has already spoken in favor of returning to the Julian Calendar, as being simpler and more practical for astronomical calculations.

For us, the opinion of the celebrated Professor Vasily V. Bolotov, of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, is both useful and of the greatest interest. In the final year of his life, the Holy Synod of the Russian Church appointed him a delegate of the Department of Church Affairs under the Commission newly established by the Russian Astronomical Society to inquire whether the Old Orthodox Calendar was compatible with the New Calendar.

Professor Bolotov investigated this question in all of its details, not only from an ecclesiastical, canonical, scientific, and historical standpoint, but from every possible aspect. Possessing all of this scientific knowledge, he took part in the astronomical meeting of the Scientific Commission, when the Commission examined the issue of the introduction of the New Calendar. And lo and behold, since the meeting could not reach a definite decision, and since many of its members had begun to incline towards the New Calendar, the chairman of the meeting suggested to Bolotov that he express his opinion.

Professor Bolotov set forth his historical arguments for two hours, holding in his hands the astronomical tables^{*51} which he had compiled. He defended the Old Calendar wholeheartedly. His conclusions in support of the Old Calendar were so scientific and incontrovertible that the entire meeting unanimously decided in favor of retaining the

Old Calendar.

We will always remember this and we will never forget the testament which the great genius and savant Bolotov bequeathed to us regarding the calendar question:

As for me, I consider it wholly undesirable to change the calendar in Russia. I will remain, as I have in the past, a resolute and devout defender of the Julian Calendar. Its exceptional simplicity constitutes its scientific superiority over every other reformed calendar. I believe that the cultural mission of Russia regarding this issue consists in preserving the Julian Calendar in its life for the many centuries to come, and thereby smoothing the way for the peoples of the West to return from the Gregorian Calendar, which is of no use to anyone, to the untainted Old Calendar.*⁵²

* Source: Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία, Nos. 24-25 (July-December 1991), pp. 322-343.

Notes

1. Basil T. Stavrides, *Ἱστορία τῆς Οἰκουμενικῆς Κινήσεως* [*History of the Ecumenical Movement*] (*Analekta of the Vlatadon Monastery*, Vol. XLVII; Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute of Patristic Studies, 1984), p. 112. Cf. John Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* [*The Dogmatic and Credal Monuments of the Orthodox Catholic Church*] (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 2nd ed., Vol. II, p. 964 [1044]; Chrestos Yannaras, *Ἀλήθεια καὶ Ἐνότητα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας* [*The Truth and Unity of the Church*] (Athens: “Gregore” Publications, 1977), pp. 200-202.
2. Stavrides, *Ἱστορία τῆς Οἰκουμενικῆς Κινήσεως*, p. 111.
3. Yannaras, *Ἀλήθεια καὶ Ἐνότητα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, p. 201.
4. Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα*, Vol. II, p. 964 [1044].
5. The first and fourth decisions are printed in Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα*, Vol. II, p. 964 [1044]. The second decision is printed in Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (Athens: 1953), Vol. II, pp. 1036-1037 (appendix to the first edition). The first and second decisions were printed in *Νέα Σιών*, No. 47 (1952), pp. 193-205. The fourth decision was printed in *Ἐκκλησία*, No. 29 (1952), pp. 219-220.
6. See *Proceedings of the Congress of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches at the Celebration of the Quincentennial of the Autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church, 8-18 July 1948* [in Russian] (Moscow: 1949), Vol. II, pp. 364-386 (Vol. II, pp. 375-397 in the French translation, *Actes de la Conférence des chefs et des représentants des églises orthodoxes autocephales*, published in Moscow in 1952).
7. See Igumen'ia Serafima, “Ο nekotorykh podrobnostyakh zhizni Preosvyashchennago Serafima (Soboleva)” [“Concerning Certain Details of the Life of His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev)”], *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, No. 20 (1449) (October 15/28, 1991), p. 9.
8. A biography of the sainted Hierarch in Russian recently saw the light of publication: *Kratkoe Zhisneopisanie Arhiepiskopa Serafima (Soboleva)* [*A Short Biography of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev)*] (Thessaloniki: 1991).

9. Thomas Fitzgerald, *Οἱ σχέσεις μεταξύ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Βορείου καὶ Νοτίου Ἀμερικῆς καὶ τῆς ἐκτὸς Ρωσίας Ρωσικῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας στὶς Ἠνωμένες Πολιτεῖες κατὰ τὴν χρονικὴ περίοδο 1921-1971* [*The Relations Between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in the United States During the Period 1921-1971*] (Thessaloniki: 1985), p. 101.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

11. See note 9.

12. See note 9.

13. See “Οἱ Βουλγάροι "Παλαιοημερολογῖται"” [“The Bulgarian ‘Old Calendarists’”], *Ἅγιος Κυπριανός*, Nos. 63-64 (July-August 1972), pp. 41-42, 44; “Ὁ Οἰκουμενισμὸς εἰς τὴν Βουλγαρίαν” [“Ecumenism in Bulgaria”]. *Ἅγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 65 (September 1972), pp. 49-51.

14. Article “Σοιολογία” [“Sophiology”], in *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεύα* [*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*], Vol. XI (Athens: 1967), col. 342.

15. *Ibid.*, col. 344.

16. See Hieromonk (Bishop) Irinej Bulović, *Τὸ Μυστήριον τῆς ἐν τῇ Ἁγίᾳ Τριάδι διακρίσεως τῆς Θείας Οὐσίας καὶ Ἐνεργείας κατὰ τὸν Ἅγιον Μάρκον Ἐφέσου τὸν Εὐγενικόν* [*The Mystery of the Distinction in the Holy Trinity Between the Divine Essence and Energy According to St. Mark Eugenikos of Ephesus*] (*Analekta* of the Vlatadon Monastery, Vol. XXXIX; Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute of Patristic Studies, 1983), 2nd ed., p. 80, n. 63.

17. See note 8.

18. For the translation from the Russian text, we had before us the *Proceedings of the Congress of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches at the Celebration of the Quincentennial of the Autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church, 8-18 July 1948* [in Russian] (Moscow: 1949), Vol. II, pp. 305-317 (Vol. II, pp. 313-326 in the French translation published in Moscow in 1952), and *Kratkoe Zhisneopisanie*, pp. 80-91, where the presentation (with the exception of one paragraph) is reprinted verbatim, with footnotes by the editors of this publication.

• By way of clarification, of the following footnotes, only those marked with an asterisk belong to Archbishop Seraphim; the rest are ours.

*19. E.B. Predtechensky, *The Church Calendar and a Critical Review of the Existing Rules for Determining Pascha* [in Russian] (St. Petersburg: 1892), pp. 4-5.

20. See the “Epistle of the Emperor Concerning the Saving Feast [of Pascha], Which He Wrote to the Churches After the Synod in Nicæa” (Eusebios of Cæsarea, *Life of the Emperor Constantine*, Book III, chs. 17-18, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XX, cols. 1073B-1080B; Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book I, ch. 9, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXVII, cols. 89A-93AB; Theodoret of Cyrillus, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book I, ch. 9, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXXXII, cols. 932C-937A; Gelasios of Cyzicus, *Collection of the Proceedings of the Holy Synod in Nicæa*, Ch. 36 *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXXXV, col. 1340C).

• The decision of the First Œcumenical Synod concerning the Feast of Pascha, the so-called Decree on Pascha, is not included among the Canons of this Holy Synod, but it is mentioned in various sources in the form of notes and clarifications. In our view, one author, after a profound study of the subject, has very correctly opined that “the rule [*Kanonion*] for computing Pascha (the nineteen-year cycle) and clarifications regarding the nineteen-year cycle in the form of notes, which were practically identical in content to the Seventh Apostolic Canon and the determination of Sunday [as the day for celebrating Pascha], constituted the ecclesiastical Ruling or Decree on Pascha. Thus, the rule and the notes comprise the Decree on Pascha. But on account of the completeness and self-sufficiency of the rule, by dint of use the notes disappeared from it, as being familiar to everyone and self-evident to any student of the nineteen-year cycle. They have, however, been preserved in many writings of the Holy Fathers and other ecclesiastical writers” (A.D. Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου* [*The Lord's Pascha*]

[Athens: 1985], p. 412).

21. Nikodim Milaš, Bishop of Dalmatia and Istria. A great ecclesiastical personality, an expert in the areas of the Canon Law of the Orthodox Church, the interpretation of the Sacred Canons, and Church history, he enjoyed pan-Orthodox esteem and prestige. Of Serbian descent, he was born in Sibenik on 16 April 1845. He graduated from the Karlovci Theological Seminary, attended classes in philosophy at the University of Vienna, and completed the Kiev Theological Academy, where he was awarded the degree of Master of Theology. The degree of Doctor of Theology was conferred on him by the Theological School of Bucharest. Returning to his homeland in 1874, he taught at ecclesiastical schools and seminaries. In 1890, he was Consecrated Bishop of Dalmatia and Istria, then under Austro-Hungarian occupation, where he remained for twenty years. He spent the final years of his life in Dubrovnik, where he reposed on 2 April 1915. His best-known and most important work, *Orthodox Canon Law* (1890), was translated into Russian, German, Greek, and Bulgarian. *The Canons of the Orthodox Church, With an Interpretation* (1895) is also a classic work. He wrote other studies of similar content, as well as monographs on topics in Church history, which are distinguished for their profundity, sobriety, and thoroughness (see Hierodeacon Grigorije Kalinić, “His Grace Dr. Nikodim Milaš, Bishop of Dalmatia and Istria,” *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, No. 12 [1975], pp. 55-56).

22. “There are four stipulations necessarily required for our Pascha, two of which are decreed by the (Seventh) Apostolic Canon, as we said shortly before in the chapter on Pascha, and two of which we derive from unwritten Tradition: that we must celebrate Pascha (1) after the spring equinox, (2) not on the same day as the Jewish observance (the fourteenth of the month of Nisan), (3) not just after the equinox, but after the first full moon following the equinox, and (4) after the full moon, on the very first day of the week, i.e., on Sunday” (Matthew Blastaris, *Alphabetical Collection of Canons*, Ch. VII, “Concerning Holy Pascha,” in G. Rallis and M. Potlis [eds.], *Σύνταγμα τῶν Θείων καὶ Ἱερῶν Κανόνων* [*Collection of the Divine and Sacred Canons*] [Athens: G. Chartophylax, 1852-1859], Vol. VI, p. 420).

• For a detailed and profound analysis of the “Stipulations of the Decree on Pascha,” see Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, pp. 412-447.

23. “They are called Tessarekaidekatitai, or Tetraditai, because they celebrated Pascha, not on Sunday, but on whatever day the moon happened to be fourteen days old, by fasting and keeping vigil” (St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, *Ἱερὸν Πηδάλιον* [*The Rudder*], Interpretation of the Seventh Canon of the Second (Ecumenical) Synod).

• “All Quartodecimans who did not accept the Decree of the First (Ecumenical) Synod concerning Pascha became schismatics and heretics. These were very few in number: the Protopaschites, the Audians, and the Novatians, and also the Montanists” (Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, p. 539).

24. Acts 15:28.

*25. *Pravoslavni Sobesednik* [*The Orthodox Conversationalist*] (1859), Part I, p. 165; *Orthodox Theological Encyclopedia* [in Russian], Vol. VII, p. 880.

*26. *Ibid.*

27. Papism, when it introduced its anti-ecclesiastical innovation in 1582, made an innovation in the Festal Calendar, and in moving the spring equinox back to 11 March from the correct ecclesiastical and age-old date of 21 March, violated the four stipulations of the Decree on Pascha:

it celebrates Pascha before 21 March (according to the Church/Julian Calendar);

it celebrates Pascha with the Jews or even before the Jews;

it celebrates Pascha on the full moon after the spring equinox of 21 March, and also before it;

it celebrates Pascha even before the first Sunday after the first full moon following the

spring equinox of 21 March.

“The calculation of Pascha on the basis of the calendar innovation of the Papists leads to absurdity, because, apart from the Paschal reckoning handed down by the Holy Fathers, there ‘cannot be any other’ more perfect ‘reckoning’” (Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, p. 567).

28. The Church of Constantinople, after the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress of 1923, communicated its resolutions to the other Orthodox Churches, but when it saw that it was not achieving pan-Orthodox agreement on the issue of calendar reform, it hastened to provide a partial solution to the problem, “through the adjustment of the Festal Calendar to the New Calendar for the time being, with the *Paschalion* remaining intact until this, too, could later be settled” († S.G., “Ἐορτολόγιον–Νέον Ἡμερολόγιον” [“The Festal Calendar and the New Calendar”] *Ὁρθοδοξία*, No. 4 (31 July 1926), p. 108).

- The Church of Greece contributed greatly to this definite decision of Constantinople, for it proposed a “similar solution in a letter of His Beatitude, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens, dated 21 December 1923/3 January 1924 (No. 70)” (*Ibid.* See the letter of Archbishop Chrysostomos [No. 70/21 December 1923/3 January 1924] in Archimandrite Theokletos [Strangas], *Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλλάδος Ἱστορία ἐκ πηγῶν ἀφευδῶν (1817-1967)* [History of the Church of Greece From Reliable Sources (1817-1967)] [Athens: 1970], Vol. II, pp. 1241-1243, and Gregorios Evstratiades, *Ἡ πραγματικὴ ἀλήθεια περὶ τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ Ἡμερολογίου [The Real Truth About the Church Calendar]* [Athens: 1929], pp. 45-47 [the first third of the letter is omitted]).

- Constantinople proposed such a “partial calendar reform” by telegram and by letter, in the wake of a Synodal decision (24 January 1924) during the reign of Gregory VII, to its Sister Churches, but when, once again, a unanimous decision was not reached, the Œcumenical Patriarchate decided definitely (23 February 1924), and certainly unilaterally, on the implementation of the “intermediate solution” of reckoning the 10th of March 1924 as the 23rd of the same month, “with Pascha and the movable Feasts dependent on it remaining intact, at least for now” († S.G., “Ἐορτολόγιον–Νέον Ἡμερολόγιον,” p. 110, where the relevant letter of Patriarch Gregory VII, No. 706/26 February 1924, through which this definite decision was communicated, is cited).

- On the subject of the “intermediate solution,” initiated by the Fourth Synod of the Hierarchy of the Church of Greece (16-21 April 1923), continued in the Fifth Session of the Hierarchy (24 December 1923-2 January 1924), and completed and in essence imposed by Chrysostomos of Athens, see:

Archimandrite Theokletos, *Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλλάδος Ἱστορία*, Vol. II, pp. 1140, 1141, 1193-1197; † S.G., “Τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸν Ζήτημα” [“The Calendar Question”] *Ὁρθοδοξία*, No. 3 (30 June 1926), p. 69; Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, pp. 665-667, 675, 679-682, where the following apposite words, among others, are written: “The so-called ‘intermediate solution’ is the firstfruits of the innovation in the Festal Calendar spawned by ecumenist apostasy, in a spirit of compromise deriving from masonic ideology and expediency. For this reason, after the innovation in the fixed Feasts, it provides for the ultimate innovation (according to Masonic understanding): innovation in the movable Feasts of the *Paschalion*. That is to say, the ecumenists are not really interested in steering a middle course, but rather in inaugurating an innovation” (p. 681).

*29. *Typikon* [in Russian] (1867), p. 245.

*30. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

31. The Fast of the Holy Apostles, instituted in the Church “according to ancient tradition” (St. Symeon of Thessalonica, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CLV, col. 900C), since it is regulated in accordance with the movable Feast of Pascha, fluctuates from a duration of eight days at the least (21-28 June) to forty-two at the most (18 May-28 June).

- This Fast was instituted as a type of the “Life-Creating Spirit, Who instructed the

Apostles in everything that He had been taught by the Father and the Son” (St. Theodore the Studite, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1696BC). This Fast is also observed in honor of the Holy Apostles, because “we have been vouchsafed very many goods through them” and because “they showed themselves to us as practitioners and teachers of fasting, obedience unto death, and self-restraint” (St. Symeon of Thessalonica, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. CLV, col. 901A).

• Such impiety did the innovators display towards this Fast handed down from antiquity that in the periodical *Ἐκκλησία*, a certain journalist, mocking sacred things, characterized “the Fast of the Holy Apostles as a fast of the fishmongers and grocers of the Phanar. What a downfall!” ([Metropolitan] Christopher of Leontopolis, *Ἡμερολογιακά* [*Calendar Questions*] [Athens: 1925], pp. 22-23).

32. St. Matthew 18:17.

33. Cf. “The Divine Fathers, who have ordered all things aright, have handed down to us in mutual succession from both the Divine Apostles and the Sacred Gospels...”; “The most Divine Fathers have ordained that commemoration be made...”

34. The sources speak of three synodal condemnations of the Papal calendar: 1583, 1587, and 1593. For the pan-Orthodox rejections of the innovation of Pope Gregory XIII, see:

Athanasios Comnenos Ypsilantis, *Τὰ μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν* [*The Aftermath of the Fall of Constantinople*] (Constantinople: 1870), pp. 111, 113, 114; Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, *Τόμος Ἀγάπης κατὰ Λατίνων* [*Tomos Agapes Against the Latins*] (Iasi: 1698), pp. 538-540; *idem*, *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Πατριαρχουσάντων—Δωδεκάβιβλος* [*Twelve Books Concerning the Patriarchs of Jerusalem*], Book XI, ch. 8 (Bucharest: 1715), p. 1167 ([Thessaloniki: B. Regopoulos, 1983], p. 57); Meletios of Athens, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία* [*Church History*] (Vienna: 1784), Vol. III, pp. 402, 408; Archimandrite Germanos Karavangelis, *Ἐπιστημονικὴ διατριβὴ περὶ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ Πάσχα* [*A Scientific Treatise Concerning the Feast of Pascha*] (Constantinople: 1894), pp. 121-122; Nicholas Voulgaris, “Ἡ μεταρρυθμίσις τοῦ Ἰουλιανοῦ Ἡμερολογίου” [“The Reform of the Julian Calendar”], a three-part article in the Trieste newspaper, *Νέα Ἡμέρα*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 1120-1122 (1896); Philaret (Bapheides), Metropolitan of Didymoteichos, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία* [*Church History*] (Constantinople: 1912), Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 124-125; C.N. Sathas, *Βιογραφικὸν σχεδιάσμα περὶ τοῦ Πατριάρχου Ἱερουσόμου Β΄* [*A Biographical Sketch of Patriarch Jeremiah II*] (Athens: 1870), pp. 91-92; John N. Karmiris, “Ἱερομίας Β΄ Πατριάρχης Κωνσταντινουπόλεως” [“Jeremiah II, Patriarch of Constantinople”], article in *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεύα* [*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*] Vol. VI (Athens: 1965), col. 781.

35. See the “*Sigillion* of the Patriarchal Encyclical to Orthodox Christians Everywhere, That They Should Not Accept the New *Paschalion* or Calendar of the Innovative *Menologion*, But Should Adhere to What Has Been Once and For All and Correctly Formulated by the Three Hundred Eighteen God-Bearing Fathers of the First (Ecumenical) Synod, With a Penalty and Anathema,” in Evstratiades, *Ἡ πραγματικὴ ἀλήθεια*, p. 122.

• A mighty philological dispute has been provoked over the genuineness and authorship of this *Sigillion*, and the most extreme opposing views have been expressed on the subject. We propose to deal with this issue in due course. In any case, let the innovating ecumenists not hasten superficially, relying on their philological abilities, to reject it as a “pitiful forgery” and counterfeit, since the fearful accusation hangs over them of suppressing historical evidence that is decisive on this matter. And we would immediately ask them: Why do they studiously keep silence about section 18 of the Appendix to Book XI of the *Δωδεκάβιβλος* of Patriarch Dositheos? In this section, the decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Synod of 1593 in Constantinople are mentioned in summary form, with the following characteristic conclusion: “Tenthly and finally, that Pascha be celebrated as the First Synod decreed and that the New Calendar devised by the Latins be anathematized” (*Δωδεκάβιβλος Δοσιθέου* [*The Twelve Books of*

Dositheos] [Thessaloniki: B. Regopoulos, 1983], Vol. VI [Books XI-XII], p. 232).

- For a judicious attitude towards the question of the *Sigillion*, “which those in resistance have invoked as their most powerful weapon against the calendar innovation, and which the innovators have fought against as the Achilles’ heel of the resistance,” see Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, pp. 793-795.

36. “After the multiple condemnations of the Papal calendar innovation by the Orthodox Church in the sixteenth century, the waves of confusion from the “universal scandal” of the Gregorian Calendar did not cease to dash against the Divine Vessel of Orthodoxy through intense Papal propaganda in the East. But the sentinels kept watch and safeguarded their rational flocks.

- Professor John Sokolov, of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, wrote in 1910: ‘In subsequent years, Greek Hierarchs like Cyril Loukaris, Parthenios I, Paisios II, Cyril V, Gregory VI, and Anthimos VI repeatedly advised the Orthodox to avoid this new weapon of Latin propaganda. And the Patriarchs of the other Churches also displayed the same concern over this matter, since in Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Cyprus Patriarchal and pastoral encyclicals were issued both to the clergy and to the laity, which emphasized the character and the purpose of this calendar reform and linked it with the rest of the well-known series of different innovations on the part of the Papal Church,’ in that ‘the calendar reform introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 was from the outset, or, rather, immediately viewed in the Orthodox East as an ecclesiastical and religious innovation and as one of the habitual propensities of the ecclesiastical absolutism that prevails in the West, the dream of which was and is the expansion of its influence in the Orthodox East. In other words, it was viewed as a *new Papal crusade* against the Orthodox East. Considered and evaluated as such, this innovation was *forthwith condemned*’ synodally by the Orthodox Church” (see “Ο παπικός προσηλυτισμός και ἡ μεταρρυθμισὶς τοῦ ἡμερολογίου” [“Papal Proselytism and the Calendar Reform”], *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία*, Nos. 18-21 (January-December 1990), pp. 111-112).

37. We are not familiar with the Encyclical of 1756 by Patriarch Cyril V against the Papal Calendar. The name of the virtuous, traditionalist, anti-Papist, and truly worthy Patriarch Cyril V (r. [i] 29 September 1748-June 1751, [ii] 7 September 1752-15 January 1757, †27 July 1775, at the Skete of St. Anna on the Holy Mountain) is associated with the “Decree of the Church of Christ Concerning the Baptism of the Westerners (1755/1756).” “The Synod of Constantinople under Cyril V (1755) finally decided on and mandated the Baptism of Latins, in spite of the decision of 1484. The Decree of the Synod, signed also by the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, continues to be the last official decision of the Orthodox Church on the issue” (Protopresbyter George D. Metallinos, “Ὁμολογῶ ἐν βάπτισμα” [“I Confess One Baptism...”] [Athens: 1983], p. 59).

- The “Decree” of this Synod (July 1755) has come to be dated to 1756, because it was then that it was published for the first time in the work *Παντισμοῦ Στηλίτευσις* [A Refutation of Aspersion] (pp. 173-176).

38. “Reply of the Orthodox Patriarchs of the East to Pope Pius IX,” §§17, 20, in Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικά καὶ Συμβολικά Μνημεῖα*, Vol. II, pp. 920, 922-923 [1000, 1002-1003].

- This “Reply” is an Encyclical, promulgated by the Œcumenical Patriarchate in May of 1848 under Patriarch Anthimos VI and co-signed by Patriarchs Hierotheos II of Alexandria, Methodios of Antioch, and Cyril II of Jerusalem together with a total of twenty-nine Metropolitans representing their respective Holy Synods.

39. See the “Patriarchal and Synodal Encyclical” (12 June 1902), “Concerning the Relations of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches and Concerning Other General Issues,” the “Replies of the Holy Autocephalous Orthodox Churches” therein, and also the “Reply of the Patriarchate of Constantinople” (12 May 1904), and the “Second Reply of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church” (18 March 1905), in Antonios Papadopoulos, *Κείμενα Διορθόδοξων*

καὶ Διαχριστιανικῶν Σχέσεων, Οἰκουμενικά II [Documents Concerning Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations: Ecumenica II] (Thessaloniki: Kyriakides Bros. Publications, 1984), pp. 9-91.

40. Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow, laboring under the intolerable pressure of political developments in Russia after the Revolution of 1917, in his letter (No. 464/21 January 1919) to Patriarch Germanos V of Constantinople (1913-1918) (published in *Ἐκκλησία* [No. 30 (25 July 1925)], pp. 233-236), excerpts from which are reprinted in Anthimos of Bizya, *Τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸν Ζήτημα* [*The Calendar Question*] [Constantinople: 1922], pp. 62-63) reports at length on the prevailing situation in Russia from the standpoint of the calendar, and mentions:

- the recent pan-Orthodox decision, under Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople, to adhere to the “Old Calendar” (see note 39 of the present article);
- the sudden introduction of the “New Calendar” into Russia by the government (29 January 1918);
- the permission granted to the Orthodox in Finland to follow the New Calendar;
- the inquiry by the local Pan-Russian Synod (30 January 1918) into the problem created within Russia by the coexistence of two calendars;
- and the decision that the Old Calendar should remain in effect for Church use during 1918, but that a commission should be assigned to investigate the possibility of introducing the New Calendar.

• He then presents the findings of the commission, which

(1) regards the question of changing the calendar as “so momentous” and as possessing “such significance for the whole Church,” that no solution is possible without the input of the other Orthodox Churches;

(2) proposes that Patriarch Tikhon address himself to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the latter to the Sister Churches, soliciting their opinion “concerning the possibility of changing to the New Calendar,” and that, until a reply on the subject is received, the Old Calendar should remain in effect in Russia;

• In concluding his letter, Patriarch Tikhon hypothetically sets out four different responses or solutions to the calendar question, of which the third is the aforementioned and annotated “compromise” or “intermediate” solution (see note 28 of the present article).

• For an analysis—not, in our view, entirely accurate or correct—of this important letter of the martyred Patriarch Tikhon, see the monograph by the Cypriot academic Andreas Papavasiliou, *Ὁ Πατριάρχης Μόσχας Τύχων (1917-1925) καὶ τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸ Πρόβλημα* [*Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow (1917-1925) and the Calendar Problem*] (unpublished).

*41. See Professor Nikolai N. Glubokovsky, “Περὶ μεταρρυθμίσεως τοῦ Ἡμερολογίου” [“Concerning Reform of the Calendar”], *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἱεραπόστολος*, Nos. 5-6, p. 262.

42. For the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress of 1923 in Constantinople, “which was wrongly called pan-Orthodox” (Metropolitan Chrysostomos [Kavourides] of Florina, see the article “Οἱ ἐμπνευσταὶ καὶ πρωτεργάται τῆς καινοτομίας: οἱ δύο οὗτοι Λούθηροι τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας” [“The Inspirers and Ringleaders of the Innovation: ‘These Two Luthers of the Orthodox Church’”], *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία*, No. 17 (October-December 1989), pp. 67-78, especially notes 6 and 7 (pp. 69-70).

43. See the “Decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Congress” in Dionysios M. Batistatos (ed.), *Πρακτικά καὶ Ἀποφάσεις τοῦ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Πανορθοδόξου Συνεδρίου, 10 Μαΐου-8 Ἰουνίου 1923* [*Proceedings and Decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople, 10 May-8 June 1923*] (Athens: 1982), 2nd ed., pp. 211-222.

The decisions:

I. concerning the correction of the Julian Calendar and the determination of the date of Pascha “on the basis of astronomical calculations,”

II. concerning conditions for participation [by the Orthodox Church] in a consultation regarding the creation of a more correct calendar that would be acceptable to all Christians, concerning the reduction of the number of days in a week and a fixed date for the celebration of Pascha,

III. concerning the marriage of Priests and Deacons after Ordination,

IV. concerning the second marriage of widowed Priests and Deacons,

V. concerning various matters: the age at which clergy should be Ordained, the criteria for the competence of pastors to serve the Church, the cutting of the hair and the outer clothing of clergy, the keeping of monastic vows, impediments to marriage, the celebration on non-working days [weekends] of Saints' Days that fall in the middle of the week, the Fasts,

VI. concerning the celebration of the sixteen-hundredth anniversary of the First Ecumenical Synod at Nicaea and the convocation of a Pan-Orthodox Synod, and

VII. concerning sympathy for Patriarch Tikhon of Russia, who was in prison.

44. These innovations of Meletios Metaxakis were not received in silence.

• Even the Masons write of this: "But he met with strong resistance when he wanted to implement certain American ways in Constantinople, as well as his innovative ideas regarding the calendar and the *Paschalion*, the marriage of clergy and other ideas that he promoted at the Pan-Orthodox Congress, which created problems and an outcry" (Alexander J. Zervoudakis, "Διάσημοι Τεκ.: Μελέτιος Μεταξάκης" ["Famous Freemasons: Meletios Metaxakis"], *Τεκτονικὸν Δέλιον: Ὅργανον τῆς Μεγάλης Στοάς τῆς Ἑλλάδος* [*The Masonic Bulletin: Journal of the Grand Lodge of Greece*], Vol. XVII, No. 71 (January-February 1967), p. 43 [*emphasis ours*]).

• Archbishop Chrysostomos (Papadopoulos) of Athens does not conceal the reaction that resulted: "Unfortunately, the Eastern Patriarchs who refused to take part in the Congress rejected all of its resolutions *in toto* from the very outset. If the Congress had restricted itself only to the issue of the calendar, perhaps it would not have encountered the kind of reaction that it did" (see Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens, *Ἡ Διόρθωσις τοῦ Ἰουλιανοῦ Ἡμερολογίου ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ τῆς Ἑλλάδος* [*The Revision of the Julian Calendar in the Church of Greece*] [Athens: 1933], pp. 31-32 [*emphasis ours*]).

• Specifically, with regard to the "Congress's" resolution on the calendar, it was rejected by almost all of the Orthodox world ([Metropolitan] Germanos of Sardis and Pisideia, "Τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸν Ζήτημα" ["The Calendar Question"], *Ὁρθοδοξία*, No. 3 (30 June 1926), pp. 59-70; cf. Delembasis, *Πάσχα Κυρίου*, pp. 671-674).

• Very telling are the words of Patriarch Photios of Alexandria, who, writing to Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens (Protocol No. 2664, 1/14 August 1923), speaks "about all of the other issues, both the decrees that are being hurled from Constantinople with a zeal not according to knowledge, to the detriment of the whole Church, and the machinations and threats that are being made, with the rapacious ferocity of our eternal enemies, against the most holy Mother of the Churches..." (Archimandrite Theokletos, *Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλλάδος Ἱστορία*, Vol. II, pp. 1161-1162 [*emphasis ours*]).

• For the tragic events of 1 June 1923, which took place at the Patriarchate, when the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress was in session, under the presidency of Meletios Metaxakis, and for Metaxakis's conduct in general, which was catastrophic for both Church and nation, see [Deacon] Demetrios Mavropoulos, *Πατριαρχικὲς Σελίδες/Τὸ Οἰκουμενικὸν Πατριαρχεῖον ἀπὸ 1878-1949* [*Patriarchal Archives: The Ecumenical Patriarchate from 1878-1949*] (Athens: 1960), pp. 154-198, esp. pp. 188-190; see also the article "Ὁ οἰκουμενικὸς πατριαρχικὸς Μελέτιος Μεταξάκης (1871-1935): α) ὁ Μασῶνος, β) ὁ Νεωτεριστής, γ) ὁ Οἰκουμενιστής," *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία*, Nos. 18-21 (January-December 1990), pp. 148-160 (for an English translation of this article, see "Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis (1871-1935): Freemason, Innovator, and Ecumenist," *Orthodox Tradition*,

Vol. XVII, Nos. 2-3 [2000], pp. 2-11).

45. “This hasty decision, which was not preceded by a detailed exchange of opinions with the Patriarchates or by an effort to enlighten the conscience of the Church, which was being disturbed by contradictory actions, provoked a negative reaction from the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and from the Church of Cyprus; this attitude was espoused by the most conservative and intransigent elements, which have devoted themselves, ever since, to arousing the conscience of the Orthodox to overturn the decision of the Hierarchy” (Aristeides Panotis, “Ἐκκλησία τῶν Ἰνθισίων Ὁρθοδόξων Χριστιανῶν ἢ Παλαισημερολογιτῶν” [“The Church of the True Orthodox Christians or Old Calendarists”], in *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεύσα* [*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*], Vol. I (Athens: 1962), col. 817).

46. “The ever-memorable Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow, on learning of the decision to introduce the New Calendar, initially accepted it and issued an encyclical on the subject to the Russian Orthodox people, which was, however, subsequently rescinded on account of the strong reaction against it, particularly on the part of the monastics” († S.G., “Ἐορτολόγιον–Νέον Ἡμερολόγιον,” p. 114).

- Patriarch Tikhon evidently learned of the “decision to introduce the New Calendar” from the Patriarchal letters (Nos. 3124 and 3126/25 June 1923), through which the Patriarch made known and communicated the adoption by the Church of Constantinople of the resolutions of the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress.

- Later on, the President of the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Nicholas of Cæsarea, sent “a telegram on the subject (1 September 1923) to all of the Autocephalous Churches, requesting that they expedite their responses” regarding acceptance of the New Calendar († S.G., “Τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸν Ζήτημα,” p. 62).

- The “Encyclical” issued by Patriarch Tikhon is mentioned in another Encyclical of his (10 December 1923), published on 19 December 1923 in the Moscow newspaper *Izvestia*, where, however, the implementation of the New Calendar is proposed only as a possibility (*ibid.*, p. 63).

47. The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (the Karlovci Synod) objected right from the outset both to the calendar innovation and to the ecumenical movement (see Fitzgerald, *Οἱ σχέσεις*, pp. 133-138 [“Relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople”], pp. 138-145 [“Relations with the Christian West”]).

- The exiled Russian Hierarchs expressed synodally (25 July 1923) the opinion that the decision of the self-styled Pan-Orthodox Congress (10 May-8 June 1923, in Constantinople, under Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis) to change the calendar “was unacceptable, since it was contrary to the Canons,” and ever since then the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad “has been steadfastly opposed to using the New Calendar” (*ibid.*, pp. 135-136).

- More specifically, responding, through a letter of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev (8/21 August 1923), to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was in a hurry to implement the calendar change, the Russian Hierarchs announced that “in general, the decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Congress and, among others, in particular those concerning reform of the calendar and the introduction of the New Calendar for Church use from 1 October 1923, cannot be accepted by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, since they contradict the Sacred Canons and the ancient ecclesiastical practice sanctioned by the Ecumenical Synods...” and that “such matters can be examined and decided only by an Ecumenical Synod, for it is perilous and inopportune to alter the Church’s method of reckoning time” († S.G., “Τὸ Ἡμερολογιακὸν Ζήτημα,” pp. 63-64).

- In fact, at a later Synod of the Russian Church Abroad (11/24 August 1938), a very critical report was heard from the Blessed Bishop John (Maximovitch), a contemporary Saint, against the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in which, among other things, “he accused the Patriarchate

of provoking a schism within Orthodoxy by its adoption of the New Calendar,” of “having entered into contact with the ‘Renovationists’ in Russia,” and of “having lost its prestige as the pillar of truth and of being possessed by an inordinate love of power” (Fitzgerald, *Οἱ σχέσεις*, p. 138).

*48. At that time in Russia, in 1900, to be precise, there were proposals to introduce the New Calendar.

*49. *Noveye Vremia*, No. 702 (1923).

*50. See Professor K. Glagolev, “Δεισιδαιμονία εἰς τὴν ἐπιστήμην” [“Superstition in Science”], *Θεολογικὸς Κήρυξ*; Glubokovsky, “Περὶ μεταρρυθμίσεως τοῦ Ἡμερολογίου,” pp. 266-267.

*51. These tables were lost at the Bulgarian Synod during a fire caused by a bomb in 1944.

*52. Report to the Russian Astronomical Society of the conference on the question of reforming the calendar p. 34; *Tserkovnoe Vedomosti*, Nos. 7-8 (1926), p. 10.