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[29] Panayiotis Nellas, *Deification in Christ: The Nature of the Human Person* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987), 30.

[30] Ibid., 33-34.

[31] P. Sherrard, *The Eclipse of Man and Nature*, 41.

[32] Serge S. Verhovskoy, *The Light of the World: Essays on Orthodox Christianity* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press 1982), 82.

The Harmonization of Canonical Order

LEWIS PATSAVOS

Presuppositions

Any discussion of an administrative model for the Orthodox Church in America must first begin with the study prepared by the faculty of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in 1977 at the request of our venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate.[1] Since that study has pan-Orthodox unity in mind as a model, it is under this assumption that the issue of canonical order is raised. As one involved in the preparation of that study, the author of this article presents its contents – updating, clarifying, and expanding upon them where necessary.

In our discussions of pan-Orthodox unity, it was made clear that the ethnic consciousness of Orthodox Americans is an all-important factor which cannot be underestimated when referring to Orthodox unity. In fact, it does not seem likely that this consciousness will weaken to such a degree as to eliminate ethnicity as a concern in the foreseeable future.

It would appear that no solution to the canonical problem with which we are confronted will work if it is based on past tradition or precedent alone. We are part of a new situation which will require radically new adjustments. The initiative for these "radical" solutions must come from the "mother churches." However, before one can address the issue of solutions, it is first necessary to identify the diverse

jurisdictions comprising SCOBA (Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America).[2] They are the following:

a) *Jurisdictions Comprising SCOBA*

1. Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America (under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, with parishes in Boston and Chicago; headed by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Ilia of Philomelion).
2. American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese in the U.S.A. (under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople; headquartered in Johnstown, Pennsylvania; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Nicholas of Amissos).
3. Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America (under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch; headquartered in Englewood, New Jersey; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Philip).
4. Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church (under the jurisdiction of the Church of Bulgaria; headquartered in New York, New York; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Joseph).
5. Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople; headquartered in New York, New York; headed by the Most Rev. Archbishop Demetrios).
6. Orthodox Church in America (independent status; headquartered in Syosset, New York; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Herman).
7. Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada (under the jurisdiction of the Church of Romania; headquartered in Detroit, Michigan; headed by the Most Rev. Archbishop Nicolae).[3]
8. Serbian Orthodox Church in the United States and Canada (under the jurisdiction of the Church of Serbia; headquartered in Libertyville, Illinois; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Christopher).
9. Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the U.S.A. (under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople; headquartered in South Bound Brook, New Jersey; headed by the Most Rev. Metropolitan Constantine).

In addition, parishes under the Patriarchate of Moscow which elected not to become part of the Orthodox Church in America are in communion with the member churches of SCOBA. They themselves, however, are not a member.

b) *General Canonical Requirements*

Having identified the diverse jurisdictions comprising SCOBA, we must acknowledge the presence not only of ethnic identification among these jurisdictions, but also of conflicting ethnic identities. The result is that diverse groups have diverse jurisdictional allegiances along ethnic lines. This fact, then, leads to the realization that no ethnic jurisdiction is strong enough to dominate Orthodoxy in America. In addition, we must concede that the holy canons do not offer a clear, recognizable solution to all. For this reason, a solution must be initiated by the Church of Constantinople in cooperation with the other autocephalous churches.

The challenge put before us in America at this time is establishing the Orthodox faith in one of the most highly developed and tolerant lands of our age, promising a great future for Orthodoxy. At the same time, however, the strength of Orthodoxy is fragmented into groups of varying canonicity, ethnic origin, administration and size. This is to say that ecclesiastical practice does not reflect the doctrine of ecclesiology. For this reason, any deliberation regarding the harmonization of canonical order must begin with a study of the nature and unity of the Church.[4]

Although the Church is one, it is made up of numerous local churches whose boundaries, as a rule, coincide with the nation-states in which they exist. Despite the existence

of numerous local churches administered independently, the essential unity of the Church remains intact. Thus, St. Paul likens the indissoluble bond existing among the members of the Church to each other and to their Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, with the relationship existing among the members of a living body to each other and to its head.[5]

Historically, the multiplicity of local churches can be traced to the very beginnings of the Christian era. The apostles founded churches in which they installed pastors to continue the work which they had begun. These pastors were at the same time invested with the necessary authority to regulate the affairs of their churches in accordance with local needs.

The existence of numerous local churches administered independently applies only to the external organization of the Church. The inner spiritual unity which permeates the Church finds expression in the following: 1) a common confession of faith by the entire body of the Church; 2) participation in the same sacraments; and 3) submission to the same canons and ecclesiastical decrees.

The teachings of the church fathers, as well as longstanding ecclesiastical practice, support the above. St. Cyprian,[6] St. Irenaeus,[7] and St. Athanasios,[8] among others, express this ecclesiological principle clearly. It is in the acceptance of Christ as Head of the Church and in the concord of all bishops that the unity of the Church is preserved by the "overseers" (*episkopoi*) of the local churches. Unity is achieved mainly through the relationships of the local churches among themselves. The purpose of these relations is primarily to obtain a general consensus on issues concerning the entire Church rather than consensus on local issues.

When there is need, practically, for the mind of the entire Church to be heard, the local church may take the initiative in raising consciousness regarding such need. The response of all the hierarchy to the issue at hand is considered to be a decision of the entire Church. This is one practical way in

which the unity of the Church is maintained.

Another practical way in which the unity of the Church is maintained is through the mutual recognition of one another's acts, be they sacramental or legal. Thus, for instance, one who is baptized in a local church is at the same time a member of all local churches and of the Church universal. Furthermore, the local churches are obligated to preserve legislation adopted by the entire Church, as well as customs and traditions emanating from the apostolic era. Such preservation refers not only to issues of faith and morality, but also to issues of ecclesiastical discipline, order, and worship.[9] Therefore, in the practical sphere, the Church universal recognizes the right of the local churches to exist independently of each other, while they in turn preserve the unity of the Church according to mutually accepted principles.

Corresponding to these ecclesiological and canonical principles of unity is the territorial principle, according to which there is one church and one bishop in one place. All members of the local church constitute the Body of Christ – the Church – headed by one bishop, through whom they are integrally united with the Church universal.

In this way, canonically, there can be only one bishop in one place. According to canon 12 of Chalcedon and canon 1 of Nicaea I, two metropolitans may not coexist in the same province. In the same spirit, canon 2 of Constantinople I, Apostolic canon 35, and canon 13 of Antioch all prohibit extraterritorial ordinations, thereby affirming the right of only one provincial bishop to perform sacramental acts within his own province. Hence, the canonical principle of one bishop in one place reflects the ecclesiological principle of one Church headed by our Lord Jesus Christ.

c) *Patriarchal Privileges and Authority*[10]

In reference to the "Diaspora," the privileges and authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch invoked by the Church of

Constantinople are based on canon 28 of Chalcedon (451) and other related canons, as well as on tradition and the long-standing practice of the Church. A primacy of honor (*presveia times*) had already been conferred upon the Bishop of Constantinople by canon 3 of Constantinople I (381), elevating his see to first place (*protothronos*) among the churches of the East. This primacy possessed genuine power and authority (*exousia*), as can be seen in the appeals from other churches, the importance of the resident synod (*endymousa synodos*), and the authority exerted by the patriarchs, who concerned themselves with issues beyond the territorial limits of the Patriarchate (e.g., evangelizing Goths and Scythians, and reforming the independent dioceses of Pontus, Asia and Thrace). These examples are supported by historical fact.[11]

The primacy accorded the Ecumenical Patriarch, however, becomes clearer in canon 28 of Chalcedon.[12] Whatever privileges and authority the Bishop of the Elder Rome had up to then were now also conferred upon the Bishop of the New Rome. The first part of the canon repeats and ratifies canon 3 of Constantinople I; the second part legalized and codified a *de facto* situation, but with a new meaning. It recognized the authority of the Bishop of Constantinople over the dioceses of Pontus, Asia and Thrace, as well as over the "barbarian bishops" (*varvarikous episkopous*), an expression which has over the years been the subject of varied commentary. It has been interpreted by the Church of Constantinople to mean the people and churches beyond the Empire; i.e. all those in the then-Diaspora who were not under the jurisdiction of autocephalous churches. More than two hundred years later, canon 36 of Trullo (690-691) ratified canon 28 of Chalcedon without causing a controversy among the churches of the East.

From the eighth century onwards new churches were established in Serbia, Bulgaria, Russia and Wallachia. This created a new ecclesiastical sphere of influence in a period when the other patriarchates of the East (Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem) were declining. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople was extended further. Under the new political reality, the Patriarch was considered both a religious and a political leader. Throughout this period he was frequently involved in the internal affairs of the other patriarchates for their welfare and because of extreme necessity.

In the sixteenth century the Church of Russia became autocephalous and acquired patriarchal status. The Patriarch of Moscow was ranked after the Patriarch of Jerusalem and was obliged to commemorate the names of the other patriarchs, the Ecumenical Patriarch first among them. In fact, the Apostolic Throne of Constantinople has been accorded first place in rank among all the Patriarchs of the East since the fourth century. This primacy of the Bishop of Constantinople is evident in the tome granting autocephaly and patriarchal status to the Church of Russia. It is evident in the tomes granting autocephalous status to other churches in the Diaspora as well.

With the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century came the emergence of several independent states. As a consequence, new churches were created which appealed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate for autocephaly. This was a clear sign that these churches in the Diaspora acknowledged the seniority and primacy of the Bishop of Constantinople. New problems, however, were created by the concept of excessive nationalism as reflected in the term "ethnophyletism." Proponents of this concept justified the claim to jurisdiction beyond the boundaries of their local church based solely on ethnic identity. This caused strained relations between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and some of the national churches involved. As a result, a major synod was convened in 1872 which condemned ethnophyletism. However, excessive nationalism was not thereby eradicated.

It appeared thereafter in the New World, complicating a difficult situation already apparent in the various church jurisdictions of the Diaspora there.

Although cognizant of its primacy and privileges, the Ecumenical Patriarchate was unable to prevent this. Thus, in the historical document known as the ecclesiastical "tomos" of 1908, it authorized the Church of Greece to supervise temporarily the Greek Orthodox communities in Europe and America. However, Ecumenical Patriarch, Joachim III, and the Holy Synod of the Church of Constantinople made clear to the Church of Greece and other patriarchates that they had defined jurisdictional boundaries. As such, they could not claim authority beyond the boundaries of their jurisdiction. Later in 1927, Meletios Metaxakis, as Patriarch of Alexandria, chastised the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile for violating canonical order by ordaining and installing bishops in the Diaspora and in provinces of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.[13]

Thus, from the fourth century to the present, we see that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has exercised special authority over Orthodox churches in new lands and territories. A tradition of responsibility and vigilance for the well-being of these churches on the part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is therefore longstanding in the history and practice of the Orthodox Church.

d) *Present Ecclesiastical Reality*

The multiplicity of Orthodox ecclesiastical jurisdictions is by no means unique to North America. Parallel situations, although with noticeably lesser numbers, exist in Central and South America, Western Europe, and Australia.

Except for converts whose ethnic and cultural background is not derived directly or indirectly from a traditional Orthodox native land, few Orthodox Christians think of themselves as exclusively Orthodox. They at the same time think of themselves as Greek, Russian, Romanian, Syrian, etc. This is not to imply that American is not an ethnic identity as well. To a lesser or greater degree, nationalism or ethnicity has been prevalent in the world since the end of the eighteenth century. To ignore this fact is to approach the whole question of the Diaspora here and elsewhere in a less than realistic way.

The holy canons make no mention of nationalism, since this phenomenon – like others of our day – did not exist as we know it today at the time of the early councils. There is no doubt whatsoever that an unequivocally clear directive in those canons which address the issue of ecclesiastical jurisdiction would be most welcome. However, in our present situation the truth of the matter is that no one interpretation – historical precedent or scholarly opinion aside – would be convincing enough to resolve existing differences. Each jurisdiction will continue to claim canonical privilege and precedent, while remaining steadfast in its current position.

Despite the predicted success of a conformity of the many ethnic communities in this country to the prevalent culture, America has retained to a large degree its conscious diverse ethnicity. This situation has in fact been reinforced by the large influx of immigrants during the past few decades. The direct relationship between this immigration and the ecclesiastical scene in the United States is evident from the increase in ecclesiastical jurisdictions following the Second World War. Old immigration quotas were abolished and new ones introduced, thereby contributing to the present reality.

It does not appear likely that the ethnic consciousness of Orthodox Americans will weaken to such a degree as to become obsolete in the foreseeable future. However, were this to happen within the next twenty-five years, other differences would undoubtedly surface to take the place of those in existence today. It would seem, then, that any solution to the canonical problem of the Diaspora based exclusively on past tradition or precedent alone is destined to fail. This is

due to the fact that ours is a new situation not foreseen in the past, one requiring radically new and innovative adjustments. Such adjustments can come only from the "mother churches," with the Ecumenical Patriarchate serving as coordinator in a spirit of pan-Orthodox consensus.

In summary, it would appear that the reality of the present situation requires acknowledgment of the following:

1) The continued presence of a multiplicity of jurisdictions;

2) The presence not only of jurisdictional ethnic affiliations, but also of conflicting ethnic identities;

3) The inability of any one ethnic jurisdiction to dominate Orthodoxy in America;

4) The absence in the canons of a clear, recognizable solution acceptable to all; and

5) The need for a solution to be initiated by the Church of Constantinople in collaboration with the other autocephalous churches.

Recommendations

a) *The Place of the Diaspora*

Orthodoxy in the Diaspora is at once both a hope and a problem for the Church. It is a hope, because the Diaspora is the planting of the Orthodox faith and life in new lands. In fact, these new lands are the most highly developed of our age which grant religious freedom promising a great future for Orthodoxy. It is a problem, however, because the strength of the Church is fragmented into many groups of great variety from the point of view of canonicity, ethnicity, administration, and size. This problem threatens the future well-being of Orthodoxy in the Diaspora.

The Diaspora is one of ten topics on the agenda of the future Great and Holy Council. As such, it will receive the attention of the entire Orthodox Church. In this historic and critical period in the history of the "Diaspora," its concerns will be studied within a pan-Orthodox context under the leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.[14] It is within the purview of the Great and Holy Council alone to take the drastic measures required to overcome the present crises and to establish the foundation for a canonical solution to the problem of the Diaspora.

The unacceptable situation in the Diaspora violates the ecclesiological principle of one Church in the same place. In America, the existence of more than ten "canonical" churches dependent upon mother churches abroad (Constantinople, Antioch, Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria) is a clear denial of the canonical order of the Orthodox Church. In addition, it is a stigma which compromises the love and communion which ought to characterize the relations between fellow Orthodox Christians. This basic ecclesiological principle requires an administratively and spiritually united Orthodoxy wherever there are Orthodox Christians in the Diaspora from two or more traditionally Orthodox lands. Such a unified Orthodoxy requires a restructuring of ecclesiastical order on a universal scale. The final goal has to be one Orthodox Church in each nation of the Diaspora with its own primate, episcopacy, synod, clergy, and laity.

b) *The Ecumenical Patriarchate and Its Role*

No matter how the privileges of the Ecumenical Patriarchate may be understood, it is a simple fact that the reality of the situation requires that it be addressed primarily by way of persuasion, cooperation, and dynamic leadership. The situation is so fluid, so unaccepting of traditional solutions, that it demands unusual initiative and an innovative spirit to be met and solved. The Patriarchate cannot act, practically, in a unilateral way. All Orthodox churches with interests in the countries of the Diaspora must participate in the solution, as must the local churches within those lands. However, moral,

canonical and spiritual leadership must be exercised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

One issue pertaining to Orthodoxy in America which cannot be ignored is the disputed autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), granted by the Patriarchate of Moscow in 1970. This is so because it has established itself in the consciousness of both its own members, as well as those of the smaller Slavic jurisdictions. Its appeal to many Orthodox Christians in other jurisdictions is also undisputed. There are those who feel that its establishment among non-Greeks would be widespread were it not for the reservations of the Antiochian Archdiocese. There is reason to believe, however, that the OCA still desires a unified Orthodoxy in America under the direction and guidance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate based upon pan-Orthodox collaboration. This would undoubtedly entail a redefinition of their "autocephaly," an action which they do not deny. Nevertheless, this situation cannot be expected to last indefinitely. Consequently, it calls for quick action on the part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to seize this opportunity for resolution.

It is generally acknowledged that the Greek Archdiocese is the strongest of all the Orthodox churches in America. This is due to several factors, including its unity with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its large number of faithful, its economic strength, and thirty-seven years of stability and growth under the charismatic leadership of Archbishop Iakovos. If it is to retain its prominence, however, it must have a strong administrative structure fully supported by the Patriarchate. Should the Greek Archdiocese enter into any kind of formal, canonical relationship with the other Orthodox churches, it must do so from a position of strength in order to promote the cause of Orthodox unity in America. An essential step toward a canonical solution amenable to the interests of all concerned requires an archdiocese whose administrative structure can deploy its resources to the best possible advantage.

c) *The Situation in America and a Proposed Solution*

The various Orthodox churches in America are, as is known, by and large of ethnic origin. Together with their traditional liturgical languages, they maintain the popular languages, traditions, and national consciousness of their peoples. Responding, however, to the powerful forces of assimilation, nearly all of them use English to a lesser or greater extent. Even though their ethnic consciousness is strong, it is a fact that all are being Americanized to a certain extent. In addition, the great percentage of mixed marriages (said to have reached the rate of over 80%) foreshadows an even more rapid rate of Americanization. National traditions and consciousness are a positive element which should be strengthened, but which, according to Orthodox ecclesiology and canon law, should not replace canonical ecclesiastical unity. Any solution to the problem of the Diaspora must deal concurrently with the issue of ecclesiology and the reality of ethnicity. However, both the facts and faith together demand that ecclesiological truth take precedence.

There is need for pan-Orthodox action to bring an end to the canonical chaos in which we find ourselves in the Diaspora. This action must have two dimensions: 1) It must provide for a formal unification of the church in America; and 2) It must provide for the gradual development of true canonical order. Essential unity in the hearts and minds of the clergy and laity of the various jurisdictions will require a long time to be realized. It is most likely that the ethnic character of many parishes in all jurisdictions will be maintained, albeit in less intense form, for years to come. The first task at hand must be to find a method by which the ecclesiological unity of Orthodoxy in America can be achieved, while giving due consideration to the realities in our parishes.

The uncanonical situation of the Diaspora is not subject

to traditional canonical solutions. Although the end has to be traditional canonical order, the means must be characterized by both imagination and an incremental program of application. The constituent steps must be directed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in conjunction with a pan-Orthodox effort. The steps might be characterized in the following way: 1) Preparatory Period, 2) Autonomy (Phase One), and 3) Autonomy (Phase Two).

The first period would require that there be understanding regarding the structure of the new church in each of the countries of the Diaspora. This would require the establishment of a council of the several jurisdictions in each country similar to the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA). The preparatory period would allow for the first working arrangements to be made so as to permit the creation of an ecclesiastical organization with the formal designation of an autonomous church. Such negotiations could be aided by a central committee to be established by pan-Orthodox consensus, which would be responsible for the oversight of each of the developing autonomous churches.[15] Such a committee might be called "Pan-Orthodox Committee on the Diaspora." It would aid the Ecumenical Patriarchate in dealing with ethnic problems or jurisdictional complexities which may arise. The Ecumenical Patriarchate would have the leading role, but participation in the solution of the problem of the Diaspora would be afforded to all other patriarchates and autocephalous churches with interests in the Diaspora as well. The "Pan-Orthodox Committee on the Diaspora" would also want to consult with the faithful who make up the new autonomous churches.

From all that has been said thus far, it would seem appropriate for the new autonomous churches to be canonically dependent upon the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In practice, however, pan-Orthodox concerns would be expressed through the "Pan-Orthodox Committee on the Diaspora."

Each of the new autonomous churches would have an equivalent body to that of SCOBA. This body would serve as the synod of the new autonomous church, and its presiding hierarch would serve as primate. The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America, it is felt, should be elevated to the status of a synod when an autonomous church is established here.

In this period of autonomy, two clearly-defined stages would emerge. The first stage would most likely see the Church maintain separate jurisdictional structures, hierarchies, institutions and ethnic identities. The major task during this first stage of autonomy will be to prepare the way for a genuinely united Church. It will be a very difficult task, demanding patience, love, understanding, spiritual insight, and the cultivation of a nuanced sense of justice. People must be instructed and enlightened about the need for Orthodox Christian unity. It is likely that appeals to ethnic identity will be very strong. Furthermore, some clergy may attempt to form purely ethnic enclaves in schism from the newly-established autonomous church. It will require great effort not to offend ethnic sensitivities and to show that the new autonomous structure is no threat to identities. The first stage will require as well the spiritual preparation of all the faithful – both clergy and laity. All plans imposed from above cannot succeed if the spirit of Christian love is not cultivated from below. Efforts must be made to encourage mutual understanding and respect among the various ethnic groups.

Ways must be found, for example, to promote inter-Orthodox contacts and activity. One possibility might be that the meetings of SCOBA, for as long as it functions as a standing conference, take place in areas heavily populated by Orthodox faithful to encourage participation of local clergy and laity. Also, local pan-Orthodox committees could be formed to assist in the effort towards promoting mutual sharing. This first stage of cultivation would eventually in-

clude the development of plans by SCOBA as synod for the gradual replacement of the current multiplicity of jurisdictions with a canonical episcopal structure.[16]

The second stage would come into effect with the appointment of a single bishop in each of the dioceses of the new autonomous church. There is need for much hard work during this period. He who leads the Church as primate must be a man of great love, understanding, and openness, free of even the slightest hint of "ethnophyletism." One of the greatest problems during this period would be dealing with potential ethnic problems and differences. If this were to arise, traditional American tolerance could prove to be important and useful. A system must be devised whereby the ethnic interests of each parish can be addressed effectively. It is felt that the new autonomous church would be able to respond adequately to this need.

d) *Other Considerations*

The issue of liturgical uniformity need not be a matter of concern at the very beginning. A slow process of cooperation can be set into motion which will permit the introduction of liturgical uniformity eventually into the life of ethnic parishes. This process can begin with the publication of new liturgical books, translations, and music. Insistence upon the use of a uniform *typikon* by all parishes may have an opposite result than that desired.

The new autonomous church will retain relationships with all the churches of Orthodoxy canonically through the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, however, could determine to facilitate these relationships through the "Pan-Orthodox Committee on the Diaspora." In any event, it is expected that the new autonomous church would continue many of the contacts which existed previously with the mother churches. These may occur among other things through pilgrimages, financial support, and mutual visits of clergy and lay leaders.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate may wish to develop a timetable for implementing a plan such as that articulated above for each of the new autonomous churches. A schedule which reflects fulfillment of conditions leading to canonical order and status would indicate seriousness of purpose, thereby encouraging enthusiasm and commitment. The Patriarchate might then want to consider whether the autonomous churches of the Diaspora should ultimately become autocephalous. In any event, one's impression is that the process towards a final solution of the ecclesiastical situation in the Diaspora should be finalized during the lifetime of those undertaking its implementation.

It is to be hoped that the proposed plan contained herein encourages a realistic response to the longstanding problem of the Diaspora and that it will become in due time to a reality within world Orthodoxy.

Notes

[1] It was with deep gratitude to our venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate that the faculty undertook the awesome task of drawing a blueprint for the future of the Orthodox Church in America. This was at a time when preparations were fully underway for the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church, a dream as yet unrealized. As such, opinions were sought which would help in finding a solution to the problems which face the Church in the 21st century. In the desire to preserve the documents related to such an important mission for our Church in America, this study is now being made public. Although prepared almost 25 years ago, the proposal contained herein is as valid today as when it was first written.

[2] *Yearbook of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America* (New York: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, 2004), 90. Several hierarchs, currently members of SCOBA, were not part of its composition when this study was originally prepared.

[3] Since the writing of this article, the earlier vacant see of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada has been filled by the Most Rev. Archbishop Nicolae.

[4] See my article "Unity and Autocephaly: Reality or Illusion?" *Festschrift for Metropolitan Barnabas of Kitros* (Athens, 1980), 313-20.
[5] Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:27; Eph 1:22, 23, 5:23; Col 1:18, 2:19.
[6] Epistle 52 (*Ad Antonium*), and Epistle 65 (*Ad Rogatianum*).
[7] *Contra Haereses* 5, 20, 1.
[8] Socrates, *Eccl. Hist.* 1, 6.
[9] Apostolic canon 64, canons 12 and 13 of Nicaea I, and canon 56 of Trullo.
[10] For a detailed account of these, see my article "The Primacy of the See of Constantinople in Theory and Practice," in *Primacy and Conciliarity* (Lewis Patsavos; Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1995), 1-30.
[11] Patsavos, "Primacy of the See of Constantinople," 1-6.
[12] Patsavos, "Primacy of the See of Constantinople," 8-12.
[13] He was, of course, echoing the views of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as articulated in George Bebis, "Metaxakis in Profile," in *History of the Greek Orthodox Church in America* (New York: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 1984), 93-113.
[14] The several pre-Conciliar, Pan-Orthodox Conferences which have convened periodically since 1976 have already provided the context for the discussion of this and other related issues. Once a consensus has been achieved, it is expected that a date can be set, at least in theory, for the convocation of the Great and Holy Council.
[15] Ideally, this might be accomplished at a special session of the Great and Holy Council.
[16] The creation of episcopal assemblies was in fact adopted as a viable model of ecclesiastical administration for the Diaspora as a first stage of normalization by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission for the Great and Holy Council in 1993.

"A Spiritual Warrior in Iron Armor Clad": Byzantine Epigrams on Saint George the Great Martyr

Nicholas Constas

Introduction

It is an honor for me to contribute to this volume of essays in memory of Professor George Pilitsis. I had the great privilege and pleasure of working with George during my tenure at Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (1993-1998). As is well known, those were difficult years for that institution, and in an atmosphere charged with mutual suspicion and mistrust, George was a true and much treasured friend. In calling to mind the moments of brightness which from time to time broke through the clouds of those dark days, I see George standing in the light: quick to smile, affable in conversation, earnest at the mention of Homer, and animated over a passage in a poem by Ritsos. That same smile greeted me when I saw him a few days before his death. Once again, light broke through the gloom, and, as so often happens, the living were comforted by those about to die. To honor the life, work and struggles of my beloved colleague, I gladly offer the following study of Byzantine epigrams on Saint George the Great Martyr, written by the Paleologan court poet Manuel Philes.

Manuel Philes

The poet Manuel Philes was the most renowned member of a Byzantine noble family which flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Philes was born in Asia Minor around 1270, and studied under the patriarchal official and