

The Post-Ecclesial Convivencia of the Churches in Europe (The emergence of post-ecclesiological modernity)

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The 16th century opens a new period in History and the Theology of the Church and Christianity. A period which could literally be characterised as “post-ecclesiological”, for reasons which will be discussed below. The beginning of this period could, indicatively, be dated back to the time of the Reform (1517), though, of course, many precursory signs had already appeared much earlier, especially in the ecclesiology formed at the time of the Crusades (1095-1204).

The five following centuries (16th-20th centuries) provide us with enough historical evidence and theological facts to define this *new* and *innovative* – compared to the completely different ecclesiological practice which preceded it – but also *unprecedented* age, hitherto unknown, which sealed the end of the Ecclesiology, as lived and developed her by the Church during the first 15 centuries.

After this observed ecclesiological deviation and its introduction, *de facto* and not *because of some ecclesiological evolution* towards a “post-ecclesiological” age, it was natural for various new ecclesiologies to appear/emerge, such as *confessional* ecclesiologies (Protestants), *ritualistic*¹ ecclesiologies (Catholics), and *ethno-phyletic* ecclesiologies (Orthodox Christians), or better yet, to respect the order of their historical appearance, ritualistic, confessional and ethno-phyletic ecclesiologies. These are essentially *hetero-collective* ecclesiologies, which were constituted according to militant and surrogate principles, which, dominating since then, not only characterise all of ecclesial life, but also dictate the statutory texts shaping the existence and functioning of all Churches of that age and of today.

¹ By the term *ritualism*, we mean the different *rites* (the ancient liturgical traditions) which continued to *coexist* in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church and on which are founded religious groups or ecclesial entities, in parallel, overlapping and universal.

Today, being in a historico-theological position to distance ourselves from the facts of the historical and ecclesiological past and to re-examine the causes which provoked these ecclesiological deviations, we propose to directly study, *in a purely dialectic and critical mindset and without any polemic temptation*, these three ecclesiologies which, so different in their origin and their perspective yet having a common denominator, are alike, contiguous and coexisting, albeit without any communion or identification between them. This common denominator goes by the name *co-territoriality*, a grave ecclesiological problem recorded during the whole second millennium, the same millennium which was confronted with numerous unsolvable *issues* of exclusively *Ecclesiological* nature, in contrast to the first millennium which had dealt with *Christological issues* and resolved most of them. In other words, when a Christological problem appeared, the Church during the first millennium intervened conciliarly and resolved it, something which, as will become clear, does not occur in the second millennium. These three ecclesiologies are the following:

1. The Ecclesiology of the Crusades (13th century).
2. The Ecclesiology of the Reform (16th century).
3. The Ecclesiology of Ethno-Phyletism (19th century).

Let us now examine this interrelated, newly appearing and heterocentric ecclesiological trilogy in more detail.

1. THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF THE CRUSADES (13TH CENTURY)

As an ecclesiological fact, the reciprocal *rupture of communion of 1054* only concerned the two Patriarchates of the Church, i.e. the Patriarchate of Rome and the Patriarchate of Constantinople. However, this rupture extended itself *de facto* to the other Patriarchates of the East, as the Crusades quickly characterised it as a *Schism*. It was proven later that this term referred to a unique fact which, from an ecclesiological and canonical point of view, could legitimise the establishment of new *homonymous Churches* on territories of already existing Patriarchates and Churches of the East, given that the *rupture of communion*, by itself, could not legitimise such a thing.

Indeed, the political movement of the Crusades gave a new twist to the *rupture of communion of 1054* and, proclaiming it to be a *schism* – ie. the canonical and ecclesiological fact which considers an ecclesial body as being *detached* from the whole and, consequently, *inexistent* in a given location – created and pushed the order of ecclesiological things in a new direction. Thus two categories of Churches were created alongside the two pre-existing Patriarchates of the East. *Homonymous Latin Patriarchates* are established in the East (the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem [whose establishment is traced back to the end of the first crusade, 1099]), but later also the Latin

Patriarchate of Antioche [1100], and the *non-Autocephalous*² Catholic Church of Cyprus [1191], etc), and this fact, by itself – if we accept that we have a *rupture of communion* and not a *schism* – officially engenders *the ecclesiological problem of co-territoriality* (1099).

However, this unprecedented emergence of co-territoriality does not stop here. Alongside all these *Latin ecclesial entities*, are also established *Latin ritualistic Patriarchates* and *Eastern Catholic Churches* (Maronite Patriarchate, Melchite Patriarchate, Syrian Catholic Patriarchate, etc), under the *hyperoria* (“across the boundaries”) and the hierarchical *isosceles* (equivalent) jurisdiction of the Patriarchate and the Pope of Rome, *on one and the same territory*.

The *jurisdiction was hyperoria* – always in the case of the *rupture of communion* – since new latin and ritualistic Patriarchates were being created in the canonical territories of the Eastern Church, but it was also *isosceles*, because, although the Patriarchates were all equal amongst each other, they were all *subordinate* to, and *commonly dependent* on the Patriarchate of Rome. This ecclesiological aberration, also unheard of, has been maintained to this day (cf. the existence of two different types of Church in the same territory (*conviventia*) but also of two totally independent Codes of Canon Law not communicating with each other). It is during this very time that a new conception of the Primacy of the Patriarch and the Pope of Rome appeared, one quite different to the ecclesiological experience of the first millennium. We can consider that the Patriarch and the Pope of Rome are in fact “*Primus inter inferiores*” (*mono-jurisdictional primacy*), while, in the ecclesiology and praxis of the Church of the first millennium, the First Patriarch (the President) of the *ecclesial communion of the five Patriarchs (conciliar Pentarchy)*, established during the 4th Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), was “*Primus inter pares*” (*communional and synodal primacy*). This, however, is a different issue, and is beyond the scope of the present text. In other words, one structure of type pyramid came to replace the structure of the type constellation.

From the 13th century onwards, the Ecclesiology of the Catholic Church of the time introduces, for the first time in history, an ecclesiological form (establishment of a Church at a location) of *dual co-territoriality*: on one hand, co-territoriality with Patriarchates with which it is not – or even may be – in *rupture of communion*, and on the other hand, co-territoriality with other self-established Churches of different *ritus*. The latter, however, are in complete communion or, as it is usual to say, *united* with Rome, though they all coexist together as ecclesial bodies and entities in one and the same land. This is how we end up, already from the end of the middle ages, having Catholic Churches of different *ritus* on the same land. This is what we could call much more precisely *internal co-territoriality (ad intra)*. But we also end up with a Latin Roman

² See our article entitled “The time of Xenocracy in Cyprus (1191-1960). Historico-canonical note”, in *Hydor ek Petras* [Crete], vol. XII-XVI (2000), p. 205-209 (in French).

Catholic Patriarchate together with other ritualistic Roman Catholic Patriarchates at a place a Patriarchate already exists (recall for example the case of Jerusalem). This is *external co-territoriality (ad extra)*.

This *dual co-territoriality*, resulting from the political situation created by the Crusades, imposed and perpetuated itself with this homogeneous structure until the Reform. In other words, from the 13th century to the 16th century we have, on one side, ecclesiastic *mono-territoriality* and *mono-jurisdiction* in Western Europe, on the land of the Patriarchate of Rome, and on the other side, the encouragement by the latter of *ecclesiastic co-territoriality* followed by the exertion of *hyperoria (multi)jurisdiction* on the territories of other Churches of the East, on which, from that point onwards, both *internal* and *external* co-territoriality is established (and coexisted). In these new ecclesiological idioms, one could perceive the beginnings of the development of *global ecclesiology*, starting primarily after the Reform.

However, despite the political pressure of the time, the stance of theology, which lives with the vision of re-establishing *ecclesial communion* and resolving the ecclesiological problem, remains strong in the Western Christian world. The two Councils, i.e. the Council of Lyon (1274) and of Ferrara-Florence (1438-39), which gathered together bishops – who called each other *brother* during these Councils – who were in *rupture of communion* and not in a situation of *schism* (otherwise there would be no point in summoning such Councils), but also the continuing settlement of monks from the East on Mount Athos until the beginning of the 14th century, clearly show that the desire for an ecclesiological solution to the *rupture of communion* was still alive, despite all the *politically dictated, though still solvable, co-territorial behaviour*.

2. THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF THE REFORM (16TH CENTURY)

It was the Reform which caused the emergence of the ecclesiological problem of co-territoriality on the territory of the Patriarchate and Church of Rome. Indeed, in the 16th century, this ecclesiological aberration of co-territoriality is for the first time conveyed to Central and Western Europe, fragmenting, both internally and territorially, the Patriarchate of Rome, just as the other Churches of the East had previously been internally fragmented. Here, it is worth remembering³ how *co-territoriality* emerged *confessionally* and how it contributed to the aggravation of this ecclesiological problem.

³ See our article entitled “The oppositional relationship between the locally established Church and the ecclesiastical ‘Diaspora’ (Ecclesiological unity faced against ‘co-territoriality’ and ‘multi-jurisdiction’)”, in *Synaxis*, vol. 90 (4-6/2004), p. 28-44, and in Archim. Grigorios D. PAPATHOMAS, *Ecclesiologico-Canonical Questions (Essays on the Orthodox Canon Law)*, Thessaloniki-Katerini, “Epektasis” Publications (series: Nomocanonical Library, n° 19), 2006, chap. III, p. 107-144 (in Greek). Also, “La relation oppositionnelle entre *Église établie localement* et “*Diaspora*” *ecclésiale* (L’*unité ecclésiologique* face à la *co-territorialité* et la *multi-jurisdiction*)”, in *L’Année canonique* [Paris], t. 46 (2004), p. 77-99, in *Contacts*, t. 57, n° 210 (4-6/2005), p. 96-132, in Ast. ARGYRIOU (Textes réunis par), *Chemins de la Christologie orthodoxe*,

The ecclesiological experience of the first millennium was that, in a given location, the unique *canonical* criterion permitting the establishment and existence of a ‘local’ or ‘locally established’ Church was that of *exclusive territoriality* and *ecclesiological mono-jurisdiction*. The Reform, then, not so much because of its *spatial* separation from the Church of the West, from whence it came, but rather because of its different *mode of existence*, introduces a new criterion needed for the establishment of a Church, a criterion ecclesiological and canonically inconceivable until that time. Indeed, the newly formed ecclesial communities of different confessions, whose existence at that time was entirely autonomous, needed an ecclesiological hypostasis, which, however, could neither be based on the ecclesiological experience of the Church, such as it was until then, nor on the institutional structure of the *local Church-diocese*. The reason for this was simple: these communities started existing and *coexisting* on a territorial region where a Church was already present, a Church already endowed with ecclesiological territorial identity (Church at a location - *Ecclesia in loco*: Church *that is at Rome*).

It was crucial however to find a way, on one hand, for these Communities to be *Church*, which is in fact why the Reform took place, and on the other hand, to have *some element to differentiate them* from the pre-existing Church, with which they did not want any identification whatsoever. M. Luther did not have any intention to create a new Church, but it was impossible to do differently. The use of any local designation would not only cause confusion, but would also require the adoption of equivalent institutional structures (bishop, diocese and territorial name). That was what happened in the Crusades, as in that case a *schism (sic)* had already been declared *a priori*, which legitimised the exact reproduction of the pre-existing structures and designations of the Patriarchates and the Churches of the East.

However, the Reform neither outwardly proclaimed a *schism* with the Church of the East, from whence it “came”, nor engaged in an ecclesiological procedure of *rupturing communion*, or any analogous process. *It was interested in obtaining an ecclesiological hypostasis but, as a Reform, definitely wanted to differentiate itself*. In Lutheranism and Calvinism, ie. in traditional Protestantism, where dogma is emphasised above all, a dependence of the Church *exclusively* on the *Confession of Faith (Confessio Fidei* [cf. Confession of Augsburg – 1530]) is observed. So the Reform chose, fatally but necessarily, the *adjectival designation* coming from the *confession* of each protestant leader, avoiding at first the use of a *local designation*, and so the need for *confessionalism* in Ecclesiology was established as well as the *confessionalisation* of the Church, first inside Protestant area, and then outside it. In short, the scission of

Paris, Desclée (coll. Jésus et Jésus-Christ, n° 91), 2005, XX, p. 349-379, in Ast. ARGYRIOU (Textes réunis par), *Chemins de la Christologie orthodoxe*, Paris, Desclée (coll. Jésus et Jésus-Christ, n° 91), 2005, chap. XX, p. 349-379, and in Archim. Grigorios D. PAPATHOMAS, *Essays on Orthodox Canon Law*, Florence, Università degli Studi di Firenze Facoltà di Scienze Politiche “Cesare Alfieri” (coll. “Seminario di Storia delle istituzioni religiose e relazioni tra Stato e Chiesa-Reprint Series”, n° 38), 2005, chap. II, p. 25-50 (in French).

ecclesiological unity in the West caused the emergence of *confessionalism* and resulted in the newly formed Churches being designated by their *confession* rather than their *territory*; not after the name of a location, therefore, but using a *confessional designation* and an *adjectival designation* (eg. *Lutheran Church*, *Calvinist Church*, *Methodist Church*, *Evangelist Church*, etc).

In summary, the Reform unintentionally enlarged and systematised *co-territoriality* as a form of ecclesiological existence, but, subsequently, its self-fragmentation into further confessional Churches revealed, within Ecclesiology, the same corruptive symptom. With astonishing similarity, the same characteristic ecclesiological symptom of *dual co-territoriality* appeared here as well: *external co-territoriality* due to the coexistence of each confessional Protestant Church with the Catholic Church from which it came forth, and *internal co-territoriality* since several Protestant Churches *coexist* on the same territory and in the same city (*conviventia*), without achieving the fullness of communion attained by an ecclesial body in one location, as envisioned by the *Pauline Ecclesiology* of the New Testament, the *exclusive basis* (*sola scriptura* and *fundamentum fidei*) of Protestant Ecclesiology. Therefore, there is not even more *mono-confessionalism* within the *Protestant Family* (*Confession*), in the beginning however only one and unique, but confessionalistic self-fragmentation and non-formal proliferation. And so, despite the vigorous proclamation on behalf of the Protestants that Pauline Ecclesiology is the only New Testamentary truth, the confessional Ecclesiology of co-territoriality is nevertheless found within it, not only annihilating every Pauline and New Testamentary vision of the establishment of a Church at a given location, but also relativising the constantly repeated position of the *sola scriptura*.

3. THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF ETHNO-PHYLETISM (19TH CENTURY)

For Orthodox Christians, things are even more complex, and much can be said about the issue. However, we will limit ourselves to two aspects: a) the existence of *internal co-territoriality* in Orthodox Ecclesiology, to which an extra negative ecclesiological characteristic is added: the *multi-jurisdiction*, and b) the non-existence of *external co-territoriality*. We will begin by the latter since, in practice, the choice of this ecclesiological position appears first historically.

First of all, despite contradictory views between Orthodox Christians on the Orthodox Church today, the year 1054 is not characterised as a *schism*, but rather as a *rupture of communion*. The Orthodox Church has never declared it as such throughout the whole second millennium; we have an ecclesiastical event as a schism which is not justified by the historical and canonical sources. So “interruption of the communion” and not an accomplished schism. Since, apart from the fact that «all lasting schisms lead to heresy» (John Chrysostome) and consequently to the complete detachment from the ecclesial body, the Orthodox Church, should a schism have been declared, would

have had to take the same ecclesiological actions as the Church of Rome after the Crusades, and to establish an “Orthodox Patriarchate of Rome”, something which, staying completely consistent with itself, it has not done for the last millennium and unwaveringly continues to refuse to do. In addition, for the same reason, it would not have accepted that the three common Councils of the 2nd millennium be held, or at least it would not have taken part in them (Lyon [1274], Ferrara-Florence [1438-39], Brest-Litovsk [1596]). (Actually, the third Council of Brest-Litovsk [1596] was summoned during the same century as the beginning of the Reform). However, from the Council of Trento (1545-1563) which gave the definitive *coup* to the politics of church union promoted until then, and from the 17th century onwards, ecclesiological disruption within the bosom of the Catholic Church, in conjunction with the religious wars in the East, engendered other priorities and things took a different turn, something which clearly showed in the 2nd Vatican Council [1962-64]).

Therefore, it is an ecclesiological error when Orthodox Christians use the term “schism” to refer to the events of 1054. It is about a borrowed terminology and a characterisation from homeopathic reaction. This is another characteristic of the “Babylonian captivity of Orthodox Theology” (G. Florovsky). Thus, the refusal of the Orthodox Church to declare the “rupture of communion of 1054” as a “schism”, but also, by extension, the consequent refusal to establish an “Orthodox Patriarchate of Rome”, reveals that it lives in hope of *re-establishing communion* and, for this and only reason, does not practice *external co-territoriality*. We ought to recognise then, regarding this issue, that *Pauline Ecclesiology* but also *conciliar* and *patristic Ecclesiology* “of a single Church at a given location” are clearly preserved in the Orthodox Church and its Ecclesiology.

However, the same does not apply to the case of *internal co-territoriality*. We ought to say, even, that in this issue, the Orthodox Christians have even surpassed the Catholics and Protestants’ ecclesiological deviation, since, apart from co-territoriality, they also exert and practice *co-jurisdiction* as well as *multi-jurisdiction* (*multilateralist* and *hyperoria*). (We pretend to be in communion, without there being actual communion since, as we shall explain, extreme care and vigilance are taken to privilege *ethno-phyletic assets* and not *ecclesiological communion*). This precisely shows that contemporary orthodox ecclesiology is an ecclesiology with stratifications and symmetrical deviations, revealed not only in orthodox ecclesiological practice across the world today, but also in the statutory practice of the Orthodox National Churches, as we shall see immediately below. Just one double example of statutory dispositions with non-ecclesiological content suffices to highlight the enormity of the existing ecclesiological problem. To this end, it would be useful to recall just one article from the Statutory Charters of a hellenophone and slavophone Church, ie. the Statutory Charter of the Church of Cyprus and the Statutory Charter of the Church of Russia, in order to put them in the perspective of our ecclesiological research.

- «Members of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus are:
 - all Cypriot Orthodox Christians, who have become members of the Church through baptism, and who are *permanent residents* of Cyprus⁴ as well as.
 - *all those of Cypriot origin*⁵, who have become members of the Church through baptism, and *are currently residing abroad*» (Article 2, Statutory Charter of the Church of Cyprus-1980).
- «The jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church extends to
 - people of *orthodox confession* residing in the USSR [1988]; residing on the *canonical territory* of the Russian Orthodox Church [2000], as well as.
 - *people*⁶ *who reside abroad and who voluntarily accept its jurisdiction*» (Article I, § 3, Statutory Charter of the Church of Russia-1988 and 2000).

These articles are representative of Statutory Charters with three main and common non-ecclesiological properties:

a) The jurisdiction of these Churches extends itself, deliberately and principally, to *people* – just as in the ecclesiology of the Reform... – and not exclusively to territories. In other words and without further analysis, the exertion of ecclesiological jurisdiction on people simply means that this single statutory fact gives these Churches the right to penetrate, by definition, into the canonical bounds of other locally established Churches... While we all know that autocephaly, according to Pauline Ecclesiology, is granted on a given location, to a territory with explicit boundaries and on purely geographic criteria – nowadays usually *geo-state* – and not to a nation. So the notion of autocephaly is essentially that found in the New Testament Ecclesiology, in contrast to the Old Testament insofar as the latter identifies the chosen people with the nation. Consequently, the jurisdiction of a locally established Autocephalous Church is exerted on a specific territory and never on an entire Nation, much less on scattered people. On “people” therefore, and not on “canonical territory”, which a Church invokes only in self-defence against “intruders” who, conforming to their Statutory Charter, plan to instate an *exterior (hyperoria) co-territoriality* on its “canonical territory”. This is done to prevent external ecclesiastical interventions on its own ecclesial territory on the part of some other jurisdiction (or some other “confession”) acting according to the same principles, since this Church itself statutorily practices such ecclesiastic interventionism on the canonical territory of other Churches.

⁴ Cf. the juridical principle of *jus soli*.

⁵ Cf. the juridical principle of *jus sanguinis*.

⁶ This presumably implies the *faithful*.

b) The Churches in question statutorily declare that they are unwilling, for any reason, to limit the exertion of their jurisdiction to territories situated within their canonical boundaries (as they should ecclesiologically since, not only are they both locally established Churches, but also because of the principle of Autocephaly, which determines their ecclesiological and institutional existence, demands it), and insist on expanding beyond their canonical boundaries, since their Statutory Charters gives them this right⁷. In ecclesiological practice, this is called *institutional interference* and, most of all, *institutional and statutory confirmation of co-territoriality*. In other words, this is an institutional ecclesiastic attempt to reinforce co-territoriality within ecclesiology.

c) Most importantly, these Churches, when referring to territories *outside their boundaries*, knowingly and purposely make no distinction between territories plainly of the “Diaspora” and principal “canonical territories” of other locally established Churches. By extension, this particular statutory reference to *people* obliterates the elementary canonical distinction of “canonical territories” and “territories of the Diaspora”, thus creating not only the definition of *internal co-territoriality* – this time founded on a statutory basis with the consequences of multilateral *hyperoria* multi-jurisdiction – but also another anti-ecclesiological phenomenon and characteristic: the notion and practice of *global ethno-ecclesial jurisdiction*. This newly formed idiom, just like in the case of the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages, starts founding a *global Ecclesiology*, limited to a national(ist) level this time, or, better yet, brings about the formation of numerous *global orthodox national Ecclesiologies*.

Consequently, despite the inherent contradiction, the Statutory Charters of the Churches of Cyprus and Russia introduce a dual ecclesiological-canonical system for the exertion of their ecclesiastic jurisdiction, a system which bears, ecclesiologically speaking, on in inherent contradiction:

- **Internally**, within the boundaries of the body of the locally established Church, they *ecclesiologically* exhibit “canonical territory”, ie. *territoriality* and *mono-jurisdiction*.

But

- **Externally**, outside the boundaries of the body of the locally established Church, they *statutorily* claim “*hyperoria jurisdiction*”, ie. *co-territoriality* and *multi-jurisdiction*.

⁷ In the same mindset, the Patriarchate of Russia has easily kept its recent promises, given everywhere (Western Europe, Estonia, Russian “hyperoria” Church, etc.) to provide a “large (sic) ecclesiastic autonomy”. A recent event explains this mindset. Four documents were published, concerning the restoration of unity between the Patriarchate of Russia and the Russian “hyperoria” Church. From these published documents, it transpires that the current leaders of the Russian “hyperoria” Church have abandoned all previous grievances against the Patriarchate of Moscow. In exchange for recognising the Patriarchate of Moscow’s jurisdiction, the Russian “hyperoria” Church has, “with respect to economy”, obtained a status of “auto-administration”, allowing it to exist as a specific ecclesial structure in different parts of the world where it is established, in parallel to the diocesan structures of the Patriarchate of Moscow already existing on these same territories. (*SOP*, n° 300 (7-8/2005), p. 21-22; italicized by us).

This fact in itself, by definition, constitutes a corruption and an alteration of the Ecclesiology of the Church and, in two words, causes, if I may to use the expression, an *ecclesiological hotchpotch*. On this point, the Ecclesiology of the Church of the New Testament, of the Canons and the Fathers, bears no relation – none at all – to the Statutory Charters, and vice versa. In this way, we confirm the famous adage which underline the eonistical priorities of the Christians: «Siamo primo Veneziani e poi Christiani».

«The fullness of time has come»⁸, and we must realise that the statutory ecclesiology of National Orthodox Churches is deeply problematic. The deficiency of the Statutory Charters is not so visible inside a country, although the recent theory about *ethno-cultural “canonical territory”* – which reminds of the international juridical principle of the *jus soli* – does expose a few problems. However, this deficiency is more tangible outside the country, in the territories which we refer to, though we should not, as the “diaspora”⁹. The problem also lies in the fact that these Statutory Charters contain elements which are not only *ethno-phyletic*, but also of *confessional, juridical* and most of all, *non-canonical* and *non-ecclesiological*. They remind more of a section from a more general ethnocratic manifesto than they reflect the Ecclesiology and Theology of the Church. These official statutory texts of the 20th century once again attest the “Babylonian captivity of Orthodox Theology” of the Church, this time related to the state nationalism and the dominant national ideology, and to its metamorphosis into an *ethno-theology* which consequently engendered *ethno-ecclesiology*, the dominant characteristic of the post-ecclesiological age for Orthodox Christians. Of course, the age is not characterised by the term itself, but by the reality the term reflects, a reality which, on a more profound level, can be found in the priority given to *ecclesiastic ethno-culturalism (ethnoculturalismus)*.

As actors of “multilateralism” (*multilateralismus*), for reasons which today are known, clear and obvious, Orthodox Christians today blame the Crusades of Western Christians, but they are unable to recognise that their ecclesiological stance, *statutorily* and *institutionally*, follows in the footsteps of the Crusades and their Ecclesiology. An *ecclesiological* – not *ethno-phyletic* – look at the cases of co-territoriality, eg. in Estonia, in Moldavia or in the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), suffices to

⁸ Cf. Gal 4, 4.

⁹ The term “diaspora” (*sic*) is erroneously used to designate territories on which the Church wanted to establish *local Churches*. This remains, to this day, an ecclesiological matter that we examined introductorily in a previous publication (see our article, *op. cit.*). It would be judicious to make an addition. When the Church accepts, from an ecclesiological point of view, the use of the term foreign to her nature “diaspora” – and now even acceptable without critics – to designate the Body of Christ, its own Body, it is as if it gives priority, not to the eschatological existence of the Church of Christ, but to the *national ecclesiastic centre* of a people, ie. to the national State representing the people. This phenomenon can be traced back to the time when *national Churches* started to exist, and not to the times of *Patriarchate Cities*. In other words, every ecclesial body that gives priority to the national centre of the State of a people, and not to its eschatological vision is committing a theological error... And for the Church, there are no centres other than the altar of every local Church across the world...

point out the ecclesiological-canonical confusion which rules over orthodox geo-ecclesiastical circles today.

For completion, let us examine a related issue associated to the mentality that the ethno-phyletic content and ethno-cultural perspective of such statutory Charters spreads.

«Essentially, the Church has always been *Eucharistic* and, as far as geographical areas are concerned, *territorial* in the expression of its identity and its presence in history. Paulinian ecclesiology, as well as the whole patristic ecclesiology which followed, has never designated a “local” or “locally established” Church in any other way but through a geographical name, as the terms themselves indicate. The defining criterion of an ecclesial community, an ecclesial body or an ecclesiastic circumscription has always been the *location* and never a racial, cultural, national or confessional category. A Church’s identity is described, and has always been described, by a local designation, ie. a local or locally established church (eg. Church which is at Corinth¹⁰, Church of Galatia¹¹, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Patriarchate of Rome, Church of Russia, etc), but a Church preceded by a qualitative adjective (eg. Corinthian Church, Galatian Church, Jerusalemite Church, Roman Church, Russian Church, etc) has never previously existed as it exists today. And this is because, in the first case, we always refer to the one and only Church, but established at different locations (eg. Church being at Corinth, at Galatia, at Rome, in Russia, etc), whereas in the second case it appears not to refer to the same Church, since it is necessary to describe it using an adjective (ethno-phyletic or confessional category) in order to define it and to differentiate it from some other Church: Serbian, Greek or Russian Church – just as we say Evangelic, Catholic, Anglican or Lutheran Church. We have seen that the Lutheran Church, having lost its local “canonical” support for reasons which were confessional and related to the expression of its identity, resorted to other forms of self-definition. Similarly, within the territory of the “Orthodox Diaspora”, while we cannot in any way say “Church of Serbia of France”, which would be ecclesiologically unacceptable, specifically because it would cause total confusion between the Churches, we can instead, for purely ethno-phyletic reasons relating to the expression of its identity, easily say – as we do, not only orally but also in institutional and statutory texts – “Serbian Church of France”¹², or “Russian Church of Estonia”.

The conclusion of this brief ecclesiological analysis of the usage of adjectival designations is that we have one, and only one, Church in Corinth, only one Church in Galatia, and only one Church in Jerusalem. However, these are not three different Churches, but *one Church, the one and the same Church of the Body of Christ*, which is found in Corinth, Galatia and Jerusalem. In this sense there are no, and cannot be any,

¹⁰ 1 Cor 1, 2 ; 2 Cor 1, 1.

¹¹ Gal 1, 2.

¹² Extract from our article, *op. cit.*, in *Synaxis*, vol. 90 (4-6/2004), p. 32-33, in Archim. Grigorios D. PAPHOMAS, *Ecclesiologico-Canonical Questions (Essays on the Orthodox Canon Law)*, chap. III, p. 115-116, in *L'Année canonique* [Paris], t. 46 (2004), p. 81-82, in *Contacts*, t. 57, n° 210 (4-6/2005), p. 102-103, and in Archim. Grigorios D. PAPHOMAS, *Essays on Orthodox Canon Law*, chap. II, p. 29-30.

“sister Churches” as separate ecclesial bodies, but *one unique Church* in different locations. In this ecclesiological context, the word “sister” is completely unwarranted, because it creates two bodies where only one can exist. This designation does not exist in the Ecclesiology of the first millennium. The use of this term presupposes and, most of all, implies unsaid *confessional* or *cultural* projections in the one indivisible Body of the Church. In precisely the same way, we do not have a Russian Church, a Bulgarian Church, a Jerusalemite Church; these would be three Churches and not one. But we have *one Church, one and the same Church of the Body of Christ*, found in Russia, Bulgaria, Jerusalem. This explains why each ethno-ecclesiastic Statutory Charter is heading, through its position and its premises, towards a deviant perspective – and not towards *the communion of locally established Churches*, as was the case beforehand with the Canons of the Church which were *universally common* and *the same* for everyone.

Comparing the principles which govern the three aforementioned Ecclesiologies, it is remarkable to note the external elements they have in common. With the Catholics, for example, the adjectival designation of the locally established Church stems from the *ritus*, ie. the designation of the respective Church as “Maronite”, “Melchite”, “Greek Catholic”-“Uniate”, etc. With the Protestants, similarly, the adjectival designation of the locally established Church stems from the *confession*, ie. the designation of the respective Church as “Lutheran”, “Calvinist”, etc. By exact analogy, the same happens in the *National Orthodox Church*, where the *messianism* of the Nation, another form of a *confession* of faith, consciously or subconsciously prevails, while, at the same time, a perverse relation and dependence of the Church on the Nation and the dominant national ideology is observed. And so, derived from this dependence on the State-Nation, the adjectival designation follows naturally, ie. Serbian, Romanian, Russian, for each Church respectively.

This new and unheard of phenomenon of ecclesiastical adjectival designation can be explained with little difficulty as, subconsciously, since the ecclesiological centre of gravity moved from being *territorial* to *ethno-phyletic*, or, in the corresponding case in the west, *ritualistic* or *confessional*, we have replaced the *local* designation with an *adjectival* designation, corresponding to the deviant ecclesiological experience, and, if adjectival categories are used, this is driven by precisely the same need for self-designation motivating the use of confessional adjectival categories. However, as far as Ecclesiology is concerned, there is no such thing as a *ritualistic* or *confessional* Church or, in the corresponding case, a *national ethno-phyletic* Church.

Even though these terms may appear to be equivalent (isomorphic), eg. the *Church of Romania* or the *Romanian Church*, and though the difference in terminology may seem quite superficial, we maintain, according to what we have seen above, that there is a real and significant difference between using the name of a place, and using an adjectival epithet, because these reflect two different conceptions of the Church, revealing either ecclesiological or deviant and heterocentric subconscious intentions. However, as far as

the actual content is concerned, the chasm separating them is very vast, just as is the chasm between the “ecclesiological” and the “non-ecclesiological”.



These three divergent ecclesiologies, developed during the last eight centuries of the second millennium (13th-20th centuries), have essentially led the Church into the post-ecclesiological age. This is the age in which we live, in which we try to give superficial solutions, either through Councils like the 2nd Vatican Council and the proposition to increase Ecumenism, or through increasing efforts to federalise Protestant Churches, or even by the fruitless attempt to summon a Panorthodox Council, which has been in preparation, to no avail, for almost half a century. It is certain that the solution will neither be ritualistic or ecumenistical, nor confessional or *federative* (fusion within the confusion), and certainly not ethno-phyletic or multi-jurisdictional, but will definitely have to be ecclesiological and canonical, and so may appear distant, if not utopic, in today’s age of post-ecclesiality which has been characterised as the age of modern Christianity, a Christianity which remains woefully multilateralist and non-ecclesiological.

In this comparative approach to the issue, we could add the fact that the emergence of the Reform imposed a *de facto situation of co-territoriality*, creating, where a Church (Patriarchate) of the West already existed and after the passing of the Religious Wars and, much later, with the emergence of Ecumenism, the evident and uncontested *asset of co-territoriality* of modern ecclesiology. From then on, co-territoriality becomes the exclusive *de facto* ecclesiological situation for everyone and a perennial ecclesiological fact, unanimously accepted, and, finally, a *constitutive element of territorial expression* of every locally established Christian Church and Confession. From then on also, all the ecclesial locally established communities give the impression that they prefer to be and to live *in statu confessionis* more than *in statu Ecclesiae*. And so today co-territoriality constitutes the basic common characteristic of all the Ecclesiologies of Christian Churches:

- For the Catholic Church, let us recall an example: in Jerusalem there are *five Catholic Patriarchates*, all coexisting, governed by *two unilateral Codes of Canon Law*¹³.

¹³ The pathology of the Ecclesiology of the Catholic Church is evident due to the existence of two Codes of Canon Law, the Latin Code and the Eastern Code, which both allow *ritualistic and cultural (personal) co-territoriality* as an ecclesiological given for the establishment of a Church or an Ecclesial Community, irrespective to the pre-existence of another Church, not only of another confession (*hetero-confessionalistic*), but even of the same confession (*homo-confessionalistic*) or of the same rite (*homo-ritualistic*). In our opinion, the coexistence of two Codes, independent from each other (cf. priest marriages, forbidden by one but allowed by the other, according to a purely geocultural criterion), fully reflects the mentality of the post-ecclesiological age. It was inconceivable for every Church Council, ecumenical or local, to formulate two categories of dogma or two categories of canons, tailored to two different categories of people, according to

The emergence of Uniatism is also part of the same ecclesiological problem, as well as Rome's efforts to sustain co-territoriality, born by the practice of Uniatism...

- Protestant Churches multiply themselves informally on the same land and across the world, trying to solve the problem through federalisations.

- For the Orthodox locally established Churches, let us also recall an example: in Paris there are six coexistent orthodox bishops, with equivalent or synonymous – sometimes even homonymous – overlapping ecclesiastic jurisdictions (despite this being explicitly forbidden by the Ecclesiology of the 1st Ecumenical Council of Nicea [325]¹⁴ and the 4th Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon [451]¹⁵), and all the aforementioned *statutory facts of co-territoriality*.

- To these few representative examples could be added the Ecclesiology of the World Council of Churches (WCC), with its conscious deliberate *pluralistic coexistence* as dominant ecclesiological criterion, and, let us not forget, the communion of Anglican Churches, the Armenian Churches and the self-called “Orthodox Catholic Church of France” (ECOF).

- Also, the 17 different Old Calendarist Churches in Greece exhibit, to an astonishing degree, the same characteristic symptom of *dual co-territoriality* (*external* with respect to the Orthodox Church of Greece, but also *internal* with respect to the relations these 17 homonymous and self-proclaimed “Genuine (*sic*) Orthodox Churches of Greece” have between each other), and, let us do not forget the “Russian Hyperoria Church” with the exercise of a world ecclesiastical jurisdiction and with a behaviour, by definition, of co-territoriality.

Consequently, the problem for the Churches face is not primarily *ritualistic*, *confessional* or *ethno-phyletic*, but above all an ecclesiological problem and a problem of ontological communion of the Churches in Christ.

cultural, ritualistic or confessional criteria, as happened during the Second Vatican Council. The same preaching of Christ addresses also the Primitive Church either to the Jews either to the Pagan. In this sense, Vatican I, which published a Code, was more progressivistic than Vatican II, which published two Codes – indeed, two divergent Codes. This is not a matter of inculturation, but of the discriminatory behaviour vis-à-vis faithful and peoples. However, it is true that the Second Vatican Council undertook numerous attempts and positive efforts to escape from the disastrous situation which the post-ecclesiological age imposed, and relentlessly continues to impose. The adoption of two Codes, *unilateral* and independent from each other, shows that there is still a lot of work left for the Catholic Church to resolve the *ecclesiological problem of co-territoriality*, firstly in its own bosom, then beyond it, by an ecumenical cooperation with the other Churches.

¹⁴ Canon 8/1st: «[...] For in one church there shall not be two bishops».

¹⁵ Canon 12/IVth: «It has come to our knowledge that certain persons, contrary to the laws of the Church, having had recourse to secular powers, have by means of imperial prescripts *divided one Province into two, so that there are consequently two metropolitans in one province*; therefore the Holy Synod has decreed that for the future *no such thing shall be attempted by a bishop*, since he who shall undertake it shall be degraded from his rank». Italicised by us.

Remarks – Conclusion

Never before during the two thousand year history of Christianity has there been such a broad and far-reaching violation of the Church's Ecclesiology as the one experienced during the "post-ecclesiological" age of the last eight centuries (13th-20th centuries). The blame lies with all of us, Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox Christians. The organisation of the Churches according to a code, a confession or a national status has ignored, and continues to ignore, repeatedly and deliberately, the ecclesiological canonical tradition stemming from the vital ecclesiastical praxis of the Church of Christ, as inherited from the New Testament, the Ecumenical and Local Councils and the Fathers and instead draws its inspiration, though it ought not to, from the realities and conditions of the *eonistic* "post-ecclesiological" age, without there being the possibility or even the slightest will to find our way back from "how far [we] have fallen"¹⁶.

As can be concluded from the previous analysis, if it really proves to be true, the Crusades effectively created, *de facto*, a new ecclesiastic situation that influenced – not to say imposed on – Ecclesiology and its evolution. The Reform brought forward the problem of ecclesiological co-territoriality, a problem which had already been present since the time of the Crusades (1st Crusade - 1099). The main characteristic of this new ecclesiological situation was the establishment of *co-territorial* Churches instead of *territorial* Churches. Therein lies the *ecclesiological problem of co-territoriality*. In other words, Churches not being in *full communion* but rather *coexisting* with other Churches. Churches with a *ritualistic, confessional or ethno-phyletic* and, most of all, non-ecclesiological basis and hypostasis (*ritualistic, confessional and ethno-phyletic conviventia*). A ritualistic, confessional or ethno-phyletic hypostasis which, however, defines and dictates the Codes of Canon Law, the official texts of Protestant Confessions, the Statutory Charters of Orthodox National Churches but also their underlying ecclesiology. These constitute the image and the characteristics of the currently prospering and flourishing "post-ecclesiological" age.

This brief research shows that, in Modern Times, Orthodox Ecclesiology has strongly been influenced by fully developed protestant Ecclesiology, and less so by Catholic ecclesiology, due to the latter's unidimensional ecclesiastical structure on a global scale, engendered by the *rupture of communion* of 1054 and the ulterior ecclesiological development centred on a single Patriarchate-Church across the world. Perhaps this also explains the easy coexistence of Protestants and Orthodox Christians in the World Council of Churches (WCC), the crowning achievement of the post-ecclesiological age.

A representation of this age can be sketched in the table below:

¹⁶ Rev 2, 5.

The Ecclesiology during the post-ecclesiological age

- **Catholic Church: *Poly-ritualism; Co-territoriality:***

External: Establishment of Churches on the territories of other Churches (*intraecclesial conviventia*).

Internal: Churches of *ritus* form, acceptance of the *co-territorial Uniatism* and mutual territorial overlap at a single location (*intracatholic-ritualistic conviventia*).

- **Protestant Churches: *Multi-confessionalism; Co-territoriality:***

External: Establishment of Churches on the territories of other Churches starting from the day of their confessional birth (*intraecclesial conviventia*).

Internal: Churches formed by the informal multiplication of Communities and their mutual territorial overlap at a single location (*intraprotestant-confessional conviventia*).

- **Orthodox locally established Churches: *Multi-jurisdiction; Co-territoriality:***

External: ∅

Internal: Churches and ecclesiastical jurisdictions of ethnophyletic and cultural multi-jurisdictional form and their mutual territorial overlap at a single location (*intraorthodox-ethnophyletic conviventia*).

This is the **ecclesiological puzzle** illustrating the meaning, the characteristics, but also the perspectives of the “post-ecclesiological” age...

One more remark. Out of these three Ecclesiologies:

- The Catholic Church has never condemned *ritualistic Ecclesiology* (13th century) as a deviation from the Ecclesiology of the Church. On the contrary, *Ecclesiological ritualism* even continues to inspire the different *ritualistic* Catholic Churches and to determine their beginnings.

- Protestants also never condemned *confessional Ecclesiology* (16th century) as deviating from Pauline Ecclesiology. On the contrary, *Ecclesiological Confessionalism* even continues to inspire Protestant Churches and to determine their beginnings, after moving definitely from the Biblical Pauline Ecclesiology.

So, although theologically unjustified, the very absence of any condemnation diminishes their responsibility...

• Orthodox Christians, however, when *ethno-phyletic Ecclesiology* started flourishing and prospering (19th century), immediately summoned the Panorthodox Council of Constantinople and condemned *Ecclesiological Ethno-phyletism as heresy* (1872). Heresy! Out of all Christians, only Orthodox Christians had the theological courage to take action conciliarly and to condemn such a deviating form of Ecclesiology as heresy, revealing the magnitude of the ecclesiological awareness pervading them, at least at that time. After that Council, however, almost all National Orthodox Churches have nothing to show for themselves, statutorily or canonically, other than *ethno-phyletic Ecclesiology*, ie. statutorily speaking, the heresy they condemned conciliarly. So today, everyone behaves ethno-phyletically, acts ethno-phyletically, and organises their “ethno-ecclesial diaspora” (*sic*), continuing to organise themselves ethno-phyletically to this day (21th century).

This is why Orthodox Christians, in contrast to the Catholics and the Protestants, will be held inexcusably responsible for having adopted such an anti-ecclesiastic behaviour, despite the *ad hoc* conciliar decisions and recommendations, thus contributing to the fragmentation of the Church body everywhere it is invited to be established over the world.

This clearly and strongly attests to the fact that the age we are living through is unmistakably *post-ecclesiological*, in the time when we know very well that Ecclesiology concerns the mode of existence of the Church. If this is really so, at a time where everyone (Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox Christians) speaks of *Eucharistic Ecclesiology*, the following question can be asked: in the time of improper Ecclesiology, how far is the Eucharist possible? For the Fathers of the Church, if faith was improper, the Eucharist was impossible! But what of the case of Ecclesiology?

Finally, the three Ecclesiologies we have explored share the same pathology, regardless of differences in their theology, confession or even Church, so that when speaking of the pathology of a Church’s ecclesiology, the same principles are generally valid for the ecclesiology of other Churches too, including all their consequences, taking, nonetheless, the specifics and proportions of each Church into account. Consequently, there are three “*sister*” *ecclesiologies* (by analogy to “*sister Churches*”), sharing similar and analogous characteristics... three Ecclesiologies which are not in *communion*, simply because they are *disjoint*. Three “*sister*” *Ecclesiologies* which are completely unrelated to the Ecclesiology of the Church...The New Testament will have to be...rewritten, to theologially justify contemporary Ecclesiologies and their practice...The reestablished in Christ people of God in the New Testament is against every exclusiveness and foreign vis-à-vis any isolationism (*particularismus*).



The cultural demands of peoples today in our multicultural society are more powerful than the ontological answers Churches provide. Churches will have to choose whether to

conserve the Pauline Ecclesiology of the New Testament which has guided them for fifteen centuries, or to give in to the confessional, ritualistic, cultural or nationalist demands of the post-ecclesiological age, which have become the unquestionably established ecclesiology of the present – certainly – and by the look of things, of the future. In the latter case, the Church of Christ will be trailing behind the tragically *eonistic* course of the peoples – *and the fault will lie with the Churches* – rather than leading the eschatological way, already traced out by the Resurrection¹⁷.

The vote of France and of Holland during the European referendum (29/5/2005 and 31/5/2005 respectively) demonstrated that Countries, who have freed themselves from nationalism and rigid “*etatism [statism]*”, who have played a leading role in the European ideal and construction, who have genuinely fought the nationalist past in Europe, were finally unsuccessful in escaping it... So how could Countries still under its influence ever succeed? Not only did these countries not free themselves, but, to this day, they also, by some ecclesiastic institutional means or other, claim that it is the idea of the State-Nation, in other words, the *nationalism of the State*, or better yet, the *phyletic nationalism*, which determines the ecclesiology of the Church and the canonical resolution of every ecclesiological issue. In this case, the voice of the Canons of the Church and her Ecclesiology can scarcely be perceived in the face of the powerful echo of the current Orthodox ethno-ecclesial Statutory Charters. So this voice can nary be heard in the turmoil caused by the corrupted ecclesiological echo in this post-ecclesiological age.

¹⁷ Rev 22, 20.