
THE BALAMAND UNION

A Victory of Vatican Diplomacy



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THE UNION OF BALAMAND¹

A Virtual “Triumph” of Vatican Diplomacy in the Orthodox-Catholic “Dialogue”

Official Recognition by the Orthodox Ecumenists of Papism as a “Sister Church”

In February of 1992, on account of the great disturbance caused to the Orthodox by the renewed activity of the Unia in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, a noted Professor at the University of Athens wrote:

“The present juncture...is truly a *God-given opportunity* to re-examine *the problem of the essence* (that is, *the ecclesial nature*) of the ‘*Latin Church*’—the Vatican—, so that theological dialogue, if the Vatican still desires it, *might be evaluated anew*. We believe that...none of the leaders of the local Orthodox Churches would ever doubt that *the problem of the ecclesiastical character of the ‘Roman Catholic Church,’* as well as theological dialogue with Rome, should be placed *on a secure footing*. And we must never allow an opportunity to be lost.... *Every withdrawal of the Orthodox amounts, then, to a crime*. Our activities are not only recorded in the pages of history, but will also be judged at the end of History *by the Lord of History*, Who is at the same time its Saviour and Judge.... ”²

¹Translated from the Greek periodical *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἐνημέρωσις*, published by the Holy Monastery of Saints Cyprian and Justina, Fili, Attica, Greece, No. 14 (July–September), 1993.

²Protopresbyter George Metallinos, “The Unia (Face and Façade),” in *The Unia: Yesterday and Today* [in Greek] (Athens: “Harmos” Publications, 1992), pp. 46–47 [emphasis ours].

—*Have* the Orthodox in fact taken advantage of this truly “God-given opportunity” provided by the debate over the Unia?

—*Have* they re-examined the essence, or ecclesial nature, of the Vatican and the ecclesiastical character of the “Roman Catholic Church”?

—*Have* they re-evaluated the theological dialogue with Rome and placed it on a secure footing?

—*Have* they avoided being subject to the charge of withdrawing from dialogue?

—*Have* they shown fear because of the accounting that they will give on the Day of Judgment?

Anyone who with attention, sobriety, objectivity, prayer and fear of God has followed the development of the so-called “Ecumenical Movement” (from 1920 and following), and especially of Roman/Papist Ecumenism (1962–1965/Second Vatican Council, etc.), as well as the corrosive and destructive impact of both on the theological and ecclesiological self-awareness of the Orthodox ecumenists, would be very hard-pressed to detect even traces of hope for an affirmative answer to these questions, and, moreover, would scarcely be able to restrain himself from expressing perplexity at the “naïveté” of the learned and Reverend Professor, who otherwise commands respect in every way!

Are we perhaps exaggerating?

1. The Union at Balamand, Lebanon

In June (17–24) of this year, the 7th Plenary Session of the “Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue” between Orthodox and Papists convened in Balamand, near Tripoli, North Lebanon, at the St. John of Damascus Orthodox

Theological School, which is located near the Patriarchal Monastery of Our Lady of Balamand (12th century).

Twenty-four Papists and 13 Orthodox, representing only 9 of the 15 Orthodox Churches, took part in the sessions (**present**: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Russia, Romania, Cyprus, Poland, Albania, and Finland; **absent**: Jerusalem, Serbia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, and the Czech and Slovak Republics). The co-presidents were Archbishop Stylianos of Australia and Cardinal Edward Cassidy, and the joint secretaries were the ecumenist Metropolitan Spyridon of Italy, for the Orthodox, and Father Jozef Maj, for the Papists.³

The Joint Commission dealt with the theological and practical questions that have arisen because of the existence, as well as the pastoral activity, of the Uniate communities which have been recently revived in Central and Eastern Europe. To this end, the commission elaborated upon a text that had been prepared by a joint co-ordinating committee in June 1991, in Ariccia (Rome), with the title "The Unia, a Past Method of Union, and the Present Search for Full Communion,"⁴ following the disputes about the

³ **Sources:** (1) *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), pp. 1–2, 3–4, and no. 2706 (July 27, 1993), p. 2; (2) *Irénikon* 66:2 (1993), pp. 210–215; (3) *Ecumenical Press Service*, no. 19 (93.07.02); (4) *Middle East Council of Churches News Report* 6:7–8 (July–August 1993), p. 2; (5) *Episkepsis*, no. 493 (June 30, 1993), pp. 11–12; (6) *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 366 (July 16–August 16, 1993), p. 9; (7) *One World*, no. 189 (October 1993), p. 25; (8) "Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church: Seventh Plenary Session, Balamand School of Theology (Lebanon) June 17–24, 1993;" (9) Fr. John Romanides, "Agreement between the Orthodox and the Vatican: Balamand, Lebanon," 4 pp. (brief critical observations from his own historical and theological standpoint); (10) Metropolitan Christodoulos of Demetrias, "The Unia: 'Only an Outdated Method of Union?'" in *Peiraike Ekklesia*, no. 32 [139] (October 1993), pp. 35–37.

⁴ See *Episkepsis*, no. 464 (July 8, 1991), pp. 6–12: "Meeting of the Joint Co-ordinating Committee on Dialogue between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches," and no. 465 (July 15, 1991), pp. 5–6; *Katholike*, no. 2618 (July 23, 1991), pp. 1–2: "The Critical Phase in Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue;" *He Kathemerine* (July 28, 1991), p. 10: "Rapprochement of the Two Churches;" *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no.

Unia that had occurred earlier in Vienna (January 1990)⁵ and in Freising (Munich) (June 1990).⁶

The definitive text of Balamand, consisting of thirty-five paragraphs and occupying nearly five pages of A4 [standard European paper, slightly longer than the standard 8 1/2 x 11 American stationery], contains:

- (a) an Introduction (§§ 1–5),
- (b) an exposition of Ecclesiological Principles (§§ 6–18),
- (c) a statement of Practical Rules (§§ 19–35),

and fulfills two goals: the *complete* overturning of Orthodox Patristic ecclesiology and the acceptance of a Papist interpretation of the so-called Uniate Churches, even though the Unia is rejected as a model and method for union that belongs to the past (a “bridge theology,” a unifying “model”), a matter otherwise insignificant and innocuous for Rome, as long as she achieves more and realizes her age-old desires:

(1) full ecclesiological recognition for herself, on the part of the

333 (August 1–16, 1991), p. 8: “The Co-ordinating Committee on Dialogue,” *Ho Soter*, no. 1434 (October 9, 1991): “The Harsh Reality.”

⁵ See *Orthodoxos Typos*, no. 872 (February 16, 1990), p. 4: “The Tool of the Unia is Rejected as a Model for the Union of the Churches” and no. 873 (February 23, 1990), p. 1: “Let the Unia be Abolished;” *Katholike*, no. 2553 (February 20, 1990), p. 1: “The Newly-established Joint Sub-Committee of Catholics and Orthodox Holds Discussions about Eastern Catholics;” *Ho Soter*, no. 1363 (March 7, 1990), p. 152: “Concerning the Unia;” Protopresbyter Theodore N. Zissis, *The Unia: Its Condemnation* [in Greek] (Thessaloniki: “Bryennios” Publications, 1993), pp. 22–26, 61–66.

⁶ See *Episkepsis*, no. 443 (July 15, 1990), pp. 12–15: “Meeting of the Joint Theological Commission on Dialogue between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches (Freising, June 6–15);” *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 313 (July 16, 1990), pp. 1, 15: “The Unia is a Dominant Topic in Dialogues between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism;” *Katholike*, no. 2571 (July 10, 1990), p. 1: “The Problem of the ‘Unia’ is the Focal Point of Theological Dialogues between the Churches,” no. 2571 (July 17, 1990), pp. 1–2: “A New Phase in Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches,” no. 2574 (July 31, 1990), p. 1: “Rejection of the Method, Respect for Persons” (an analysis of the Freising text), and no. 2576 (September 18, 1990), p. 3: “The ‘Unia’ etc. under the ‘Microscope’ of the Church’s Radio Station;” Zissis, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–35, 67–71.

Orthodox, as a “Sister Church;”

(2) recognition on the part of the Orthodox of the right of the Uniate communities to exist;

(3) the maintenance in force of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council concerning the “Eastern Churches;”⁷ or rather, to be precise, a passing beyond the limits of those decrees.

2. Anti-Orthodox Decisions at Balamand

In concrete terms, through the approved text of the 7th Plenary Session at Balamand (apart from other absurdities), the following completely anti-Orthodox ideas are upheld:

I. “*Catholics and Orthodox...are once again discovering each other as Sister Churches*” (§ 12) and “*recognizing each other as Sister Churches*” (§ 14).⁸

The ecumenists, Orthodox and Papist alike, here explain the real meaning of the theology of “Sister Churches,” which is certainly not understood as a polite expression, but as a fundamental ecumenist ecclesiological category or idiom.

Let us review certain of their statements in chronological order, statements which cannot be misinterpreted, since they speak for themselves.

• **October 26, 1967. Patriarch Athenagoras to Pope Paul VI in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome:** “With such emotion we give You

⁷ See the Decree of the Second Vatican Council, “On the Eastern Catholic Churches,” vol. 5, pp. 109–127, in the edition published by “Grapheion Kalou Typou” (the Decree was approved by the plenary session of the Second Vatican Council on November 21, 1964 with 2110 votes for and 39 against. The title is taken from its first words “Orientalium Ecclesiarum” [“Of the Eastern Churches”]).

⁸ We have before us the Greek text, which is published in *Katholike* (no. 2705 [July 20, 1993], pp. 3–4).

the kiss of the love and peace of the Lord Jesus, and we offer You *our profound honor*. We are especially fortunate *to be doing this*, not simply and solely *to the honored Hierarchy of Rome, bearer of apostolic grace and successor of a multitude of holy and wise men, who occupies this throne that is first in honor and rank in the company of Christian Churches throughout the world... .*⁹

• **December 7, 1975. Patriarch Demetrios to Pope Paul VI on the tenth anniversary of the lifting of the anathemas:** “To Paul, the Most Blessed and Holy Pope of the Elder Rome, greetings in the Lord... . In this very Word of God, the Holy Church of Christ in Constantinople *embraces the Bishop of Rome and the Holy Church in Rome, in the incense, acceptable to the Lord, of the pentarchy of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church*, in which the Bishop of Rome is defined as presiding in love and honor, ascribing all honor to Your Holiness, in accordance with that definition.... Sharing in such fraternal sentiments and edifying pronouncements with Your Holiness, *first in rank and honor in the universal Body of the Lord*, we greet You with a holy kiss... .”¹⁰

• **June 5, 1990. Father Demetrios Salachas, member of the Papist Commission on Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue:** “And the two Churches, as they engage in dialogue, *are conscious of their identity*, their ecclesial nature and their sacramental structure: the Catholic Church, as much as the Orthodox, *believes unswervingly and is profoundly aware* that they continue the undivided Church, that is, that *in them there subsists the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.*”¹¹

• **June 29, 1990. Metropolitan (now Patriarch) Bartholomew to Pope John Paul II at the Patronal Feast of Rome:** “It is commonly recognized today that ‘the solutions of the future are

⁹ Athanasios J. Delicostopoulos, *Outside the Walls: Athenagoras I the Ecumenical Patriarch* [in Greek] (Athens: n.p., 1988), p. 226.

¹⁰ *Episkepsis*, no. 139 (January 13, 1976), pp. 13–15.

¹¹ *Katholike*, no. 2566 (June 5, 1990), p. 1: “The Tenth Anniversary of Dialogues between the Catholics and Orthodox.”

found elsewhere': in the model of 'Sister Churches,' within the context of the eucharistic ecclesiology of communion."¹²

• **June 5, 1991. Pope John Paul II in Bialystok, Poland:** "They [Orthodoxy and Papism] are Sister Churches, *not in the sense of a polite expression*, but in the sense of a *fundamental, ecumenical ecclesiological category*, on which the mutual relations of all Churches must be based."¹³

• **June 29, 1991. The same Bartholomew of Chalcedon to the same Pope, and again at the Patronal Feast of Rome:** With historic changes, especially in the last two years, "opportunities for coöperation have been created for the common witness and a deeper unity of *our Sister Churches*.... Your Holiness, on the occasion of the Patronal Feast of the Church of this historic city over which you gloriously preside, the delegation of the (Ecumenical Patriarchate *congratulates Your Holiness and with You 'all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints'* and adds, with Paul: 'Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ' (Romans 1:7)."¹⁴

• **December 5, 1992. Metropolitan Damaskenos of Switzerland, "Chief Secretary for the Preparation of the [so-called Eighth] Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church":** "What is missing [in the relations between Catholics and Orthodox] is an appropriate outlook, that is to say, the thing that would allow us to overcome our problems. This means that, as long as those participating in a dialogue of love and official

¹² *Episkepsis*, no. 443 (July 15, 1990), p. 4. • It is precisely *these* statements of the then Metropolitan of Chalcedon at Rome that were highlighted so sensationally on the first page of the official publication of the Papists in Greece: see *Katholike*, no. 2573 (July 24, 1990), Fr. Demetrios Salachas: "In the New Situation of the Churches in Eastern and Central Europe, the Model of 'Sister Churches' is the Only Solution to the Question of Union."

¹³ *Episkepsis*, no. 465 (July 15, 1991), p. 7 (homily by the Pope in the Orthodox Cathedral in Bialystok, Poland, on June 5, 1991, at a special ecumenical ceremony) [emphasis ours].

¹⁴ *Episkepsis*, no. 464 (July 1, 1991), pp. 4-5.

theological dialogue discover once again *the truth that we are Sister Churches, as long as we are ready to recognize one another as 'Churches' in the full sense of the word 'Church,'* and as long as we mutually lift the Anathemas—then we shall, on such grounds, bring the theological and ecclesiological consequences of this discovery to bear on a local and global level. This, however, has not come to fruition.”¹⁵

• **July 20, 1993. Father Demetrios Salachas, papal representative at Balamand:** “In reality ‘Sister Churches’ means a recognition of the ecclesial nature and sacramental structure of each church, in the sense that each, in and of itself, provides the means of grace and salvation.”¹⁶

• Related to the theology of the “Sister Churches” and synonymous with it, but also elucidative of it, is the theology of the “*two lungs*” and the “*double tradition*” (Eastern and Roman/Latin), on the basis of which the Papists hold out vigorously against the abolition of the Unia.

—**December 7, 1991. The Pope, at an ecumenical ceremony in St. Peter’s:** “Catholicism and Orthodoxy constitute in reality *the two lungs* of the Christian heritage of a United Europe.”¹⁷

—**Cardinal Achilleo Silvestrini, president of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Catholic Churches:** “*The Church of Christ breathes with her two lungs, the Eastern and the Western.*”¹⁸

¹⁵ *Epispepsis*, no. 488 (January 31, 1993), pp. 11–12. A lecture by Metropolitan Damaskenos of Switzerland, given on December 5, 1992, with the title “The Claims of the Churches to Absoluteness and their Conceptions of Salvation,” at an academic ceremony where he was awarded the “Abt Emmanuel Heufelder” prize for distinction in ecumenism at the Papist Monastery of Niederaltich (Benedictine Monks).

¹⁶ *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), p. 2 (an analysis of the Balamand decision) [emphasis ours].

¹⁷ *Katholike*, no. 2635 (January 7, 1992), p. 6. • These words were spoken during the extraordinary Synod of the Papist Bishops of Europe, in Rome, concerning which cf. footnotes 18, 30 and 53 of the present work.

—**December 1991. The same Cardinal Silvestrini at the Synod in Rome:** He chimed in with his homily, the subject of which was, “The Heritage of the Eastern Churches: an Essential Element in the Fullness of Christian Tradition,” and put forth the reasons why “*he judged* the existence of Churches of the Eastern tradition within the Catholic Church *indispensable*.”¹⁹

—**February 1993. Patriarch Bartholomew:** Orthodoxy and Papism “constitute the two lungs of the Body of Christ.”²⁰

• It is easy to understand how profoundly and swiftly the Orthodox ecumenists have been undermined, when one takes into account the fact that, until recently, they have upheld positions completely contrary to the articles of the “Balamand Union.” The co-president of the Joint Commission of the 7th Plenary Session in Lebanon, Archbishop Stylianos of Australia, made the following claims in 1985 and 1987:

—*that* Rome “had dared to alter the common faith in crucial articles;”

—*that* “in a Church divided into Eastern and Western and whatever else, in a divided Christianity, the Pope *is not first among equals, nor even equal among equals*, ... to the extent that the present Pope is *in schism and heresy*;”

—*that* “Papism introduced *unheard of heresies*, at various

¹⁸ *Katholike*, no. 2643 (March 3, 1992), p. 1: “The Two Lungs of the Church of Christ.” • These statements of Cardinal Silvestrini were made in a French periodical, where he acknowledged the *great concern* of his special Synod for the Eastern Catholics (Uniates): “The Orthodox Church reacts against them *en masse*, but we hope that these reactions will be diminished or obliterated with the mellowing of time and the mutual respect of Catholics and Orthodox”!

¹⁹ *Katholike*, no. 2635 (January 7, 1992), p. 4: “Double Tradition is Indispensable in the Church.” • *This* foregoing statement of Cardinal Silvestrini is a hermeneutical key to the “Balamand Union,” as will become fully comprehensible from what follows.

²⁰ *The Orthodox Church* [OCA] (February 1993), p. 6. • Patriarch Bartholomew referred likewise to the “fundamental ecclesiological truth” of the “two lungs” in his address to Cardinal Edward Cassidy at the Patronal Feast of the Phanar on November 30, 1992 (see *Ekklesia*, no. 1 [January 1–15, 1993], p. 14).

times, into the Roman Catholic world;”

—*that it is impossible “for us to consider the Roman Catholic Church equal in status to any autocephalous or local Orthodox Church whatsoever, or as a place from which we can derive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and salvation.”*²¹

II. “On each side, it is acknowledged that what Christ has entrusted to His Church—profession of apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, and above all, the one priesthood celebrating the one sacrifice of Christ, the apostolic succession of bishops—cannot be considered the exclusive property of one of our Churches” (§ 13).

The Orthodox ecumenists no longer believe in the soteriological and ecclesiological exclusivity of Orthodoxy as the One and Only Church of Christ, especially when we take into account the fact that in Vienna, in 1990, they agreed unanimously with the Papists on the following astounding point:

“*In no way should we espouse any kind of soteriological exclusivity, nor should a narrow confessional interpretation be given to the expression *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (“outside the Church there is no salvation”). Such soteriological exclusivity clashes with the ecclesiology of Sister Churches”!*²²

*III. “All rebaptism is proscribed” (§ 13).*²³

The “theology of return” *is rejected*, that is, the theology of calling the heterodox Papists into the One and Unique Baptism of

²¹ *On the Margins of Dialogue (1980–1990)* [in Greek] (Athens: “Domos” Publications, 1991), pp. 37, 44, 158–159 [emphasis ours].

²² Zissis, *The Unia*, *op. cit.*, p. 65 [emphasis ours].

²³ This clause, which comes exactly at the end of § 13 of the Balamand Text, is missing from the English text. *What does this mean?* But even if it is not in the definitive text, however, this exclusion of all “rebaptism” derives from the contents of § 13 of the Balamand Agreement and from the rejection on both sides of ecclesiological and soteriological exclusivity.

Orthodoxy: “The new ecclesiological basis of communion, which the two Churches have embraced in their dialogue, *dictates that they both reject the ‘theology of return’.*”²⁴

At the same time, however, the Orthodox ecumenists reject the very broad Patristic and Synodal consensus—which has expressed the self-conception of the Orthodox Church for almost ten centuries—, that the Latins are “*heretics,*” “*unbaptized,*” “*in need of Baptism,*”²⁵ and that “those who return from the Latins should be Baptized, *unquestionably, indispensably and necessarily.*”²⁶

²⁴ *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), p. 2.

²⁵ See Protopresbyter George D. Metallinos, *I Believe in One Baptism* [in Greek] (Athens: n.p., 1983), pp. 37, 41; and *The Unia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–46, where the author notes that Franco-Papism was condemned by two (Ecumenical Synods: the eighth, in the time of St. Photios the Great, and the ninth (14th century), in the time of St. Gregory Palamas and the hesychastic Synods. • See also: Archimandrite Basil (Karagiannis), “Is the Synod in Constantinople of 879–880 an (Ecumenical Synod?,” *Apostolos Barnabas* (Cyprus), no. 10 (October 1991), pp. 307–319; Protopresbyter John Romanides, *Dogmatic and Credal Theology of the Orthodox Catholic Church* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras Publications, 1981–1982), vol. I, pp. 342–378 (“The Condemnation by the Eighth (Ecumenical Synod of the Heresy of the Franco-Latins Concerning the Procession of the Holy Spirit”), vol. II, pp. 164–187 (“The Eighth (Ecumenical Synod in Constantinople: 879–880”), pp. 226–342 (“The Synods in Constantinople of 1341, 1347 and 1351).

²⁶ Athanasios Parios, *That Those Returning from the Latins...and Epitome...of the Divine Dogmas of the Faith...* (Leipzig, 1806) (extracts from Monk Theodoritos Hagioritis, *Monasticism and Heresy* [in Greek] [Athens: n.p., 1977], p. 263ff. [emphasis ours]). • For a very profound and readable historical, theological, and canonical presentation of the question at issue, and in general of the Orthodox view of the nature of the Church, Mysteries and Grace outside the Church, see *The Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christian Communities* (Montreal: Monastery Press, 1975), pp. 26–68, by the new Hieromartyr Hilarion (Troitsky [† 1929]). This volume, which we warmly recommend to our readers, is a treatise in the form of a letter, dated January 18, 1917, by the then Archimandrite and Professor of the Theological Academy of Moscow, and subsequently Archbishop, Hilarion to the American Protestant Mr. Robert Gardiner, secretary of the nascent “World Council of Christian Communities” (a precursor of the World Council of Churches).

Ecclesiological schizophrenia

The declaration of the foregoing principles (§§ I, II, III) has been called *the most important aspect of the Balamand Agreement*, since the “mutual recognition of the apostolicity and ecclesiological and sacramental structure of the two Churches makes them in reality ‘Sister Churches,’ in spite of the dogmatic differences that still exist and which do not permit their full canonical communion.”²⁷

We consider it necessary to underscore the *ecclesiological schizophrenia* of this view and its obvious *dogmatic syncretism*: according to the Orthodox ecumenists, it is possible for there to be a difference of faith between two Christian communities—that is, they can have different teachings about the Holy Trinity, the Church and salvation, as, for example, is the case between Orthodox and Papists (the *Filioque*, Papal primacy, Papal infallibility, sprinkling, Mariolatry, created Grace, etc.)—without this divergence indicating any compromise with regard to the catholicity of the Faith, without it having any ecclesiological or soteriological repercussions, while at the same time the two Christian communities have all “that Christ entrusted to His Church,” and yet do not have full communion in the Mysteries (*communicatio in sacris*)!

And yet only the institution of the Papacy, considered a dogma of faith among Latins, is crucial for soteriology: “*If someone is not faithful to the Pope, it cannot be thought that he is faithful to Christ*”! (Papal Encyclical of 1943, “*Mystici corporis Christi*”).²⁸

And yet the *Filioque*, this central touchstone of the differences between Orthodoxy and Papism, as it has been very

²⁷ *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), p. 4, § 5: “A new Theological Scrutiny of the Relations between the Two Churches” (“Notes on the Text” by Fr. Demetrios Salachas) [emphasis ours].

²⁸ Archimandrite Spyridon E. Bilalis, *Orthodoxy and Papism* [in Greek], vol. I (Athens: “Orthodoxos Typos” Publications, 1969), p. 52.

correctly observed, “completely colors ecclesiology, sacramental theology and eschatology, and everything in the Church.”²⁹

From an Orthodox point of view, this issue is very clear and does not admit of any pettifogging interpretation: the acceptance of the theology of “Sister Churches” and the rejection of ecclesiological and soteriological exclusivity straightforwardly indicates an acceptance of the notorious Protestant “Branch Theory,” which is “unacceptable to the Orthodox,”³⁰ who believe that they constitute the One (and Only), Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

IV. The so-called Oriental Catholic Churches [the Joint Commission carefully avoided the apparently problematic term “Uniate Churches”] are a “part of the Catholic Communion” and “have the right to exist and to respond to the spiritual needs of their faithful” (S 3).

This declaration indicates that the Orthodox Church “recognizes the Catholic Church in her entirety as a Sister Church, and indirectly recognizes also the Oriental Catholic Churches,”³¹ and consequently the Uniate Churches are now “Sister Churches” in the full sense of the term!

That is to say, the Uniates emerged from the “Balamand Union” *with greater rights to existence and activity than those that were foreseen by the decree “Orientalium ecclesiarum” of Vatican II*, insofar as they will exist with the approval of the Orthodox and will be considered “Sister Churches”!

What a fall!...

The unanswered questions posed by the Balamand “recognition” of

²⁹ Archbishop Stylianos, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

³⁰ Metropolitan Christodoulos, “The Unia,” p. 36.

³¹ *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), p. 4, § 7: “The Right of the Oriental Catholic Churches to Exist for the Pastoral Care of their Faithful” (“Notes on the Text” by Fr. Demetrios Salachas) [emphasis ours].

the Uniates are very peculiar:

“How, indeed, will Uniates exist without the Unia? And if the Unia is condemned as a method of union, in what capacity can it be justified? How can the existence of Uniate Churches in Orthodox countries not contribute to the exercise of proselytism at the expense of the Orthodox?”³²

How, that is to say, can we ignore or pass over the undeniable truth that the Unia is not expressed only in activities characteristic of militant proselytism—with force and the “enticement of charity”—, but also in activities of an indirect or “benign” character—with the use of Orthodox attire, *typica*, vestments, architecture, iconography, psalmody, etc., which belong exclusively to the Orthodox and consequently mislead and confuse the Orthodox multitudes?

Moreover, we should not ignore the fact that the way has been paved by the Phanar for the recognition of the Uniates—despite a previous Pan-Orthodox rejection of such—, and in a wholly official way at that, foregoing or forestalling the consent of the Orthodox as a whole.

At the Synod of the Catholic Bishops of Europe (Rome, November 28–December 14, 1991) the representative of Constantinople, Metropolitan Spyridon of Italy, *proclaimed* the right of the Uniates to exist,³³ and in addition, at the Phanar in March 1992, in response to a related question from a French Catholic journalist, Patriarch Bartholomew categorically declared that he *most assuredly* recognized the right of the Uniates to exist,³⁴ while in May, 1992, Constantinople sent her representative to a Ukrainian Synod of Uniate Bishops in Ukraine, who in deed and in word trumpeted both the right of the Uniates

³² Metropolitan Christodoulos, “The Unia,” p. 36.

³³ *Katholike*, no. 2635 (January 7, 1992), p. 4.

³⁴ *Katholike*, no. 2651 (May 5, 1992), pp. 1–2: “There is No Frenzy Against Catholics in Constantinople” (interview with Patriarch Bartholomew in the French Papist newspaper of Paris, *La Croix*).

to exist and their full ecclesial validity, as well as the equal status of Uniates and Orthodox...!³⁵

V. The so-called Oriental Churches, i.e., the Uniates, “should be fully incorporated... into the dialogue of love..., and should also enter into theological dialogue with all of the functional rights that accrue thereto” (§§ 16, 34).

The acceptance by the Orthodox of this position, as well as the preceding one, betokens a *complete denial* of the very strict stance of the so-called Third Pan-Orthodox Consultation (Rhodes, November 1–15, 1964), which severely censured the decree of Vatican II concerning “The Oriental Churches” and made the abolition of the Uniate communities an indispensable stipulation for beginning dialogue:

“It demanded the total removal from Orthodox countries of all Uniate agents and Vatican propagandists, before dialogue could begin, and the subordination and incorporation of the so-called Uniate Churches into the Church of Rome,” because “the Unia and dialogue are simultaneously incompatible.”³⁶

But eventually there was a complete capitulation by the Orthodox with regard to their original demand that the Uniates not participate on the Papal commission to the dialogues (Rhodes 1980),³⁷ so that out of their “magnanimity,” the Orthodox accepted them by *oikonomia*, inasmuch as the Uniate question remained open to discussion at the time:

³⁵ See more details in section 3 of the present work, “Are We Perhaps Exaggerating?”

³⁶ J.N. Karmiris, *Dogmatic and Credal Statements of the Orthodox Catholic Church*, vol. II (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1968), pp. 1007–1008 [emphasis ours].

³⁷ See Zissis, *op. cit.*, p. 44; Constantine P. Kotsiopoulos, *The Unia in Greek Theological Bibliography* [in Greek] (Thessaloniki: “Bryennios” Publications, 1993), pp. 60–62.

“When the list of the names of Roman Catholics who would participate in theological dialogue was being prepared, *Rome was especially requested not to include Uniates among her representatives. Unfortunately, among the twenty-eight representatives of Rome, eight were Uniates.* When they came to Patmos and Rhodes, a *tremendous dispute was created* in an electrified atmosphere, and the dialogues were in danger of being shipwrecked at their inception, as a result of the carelessness and obtuseness of Rome. Eventually the magnanimity of the Orthodox saved the dialogues... .”³⁸

In the present instance, the triumph of Vatican diplomacy has reached its zenith, when we take into account the fact that today even committed ecumenists, Orthodox and Papists, strongly and fervently support the full abolition of the Unia, propose ways and methods for this, and urge the Pope to undertake its abolition with “*boldness, imagination and good will!*”³⁹

VI. The local Orthodox and Catholic pastors are asked to avoid misunderstandings and suspicions, to organize their pastoral activities jointly, to consult, communicate and work with each other, respecting each other’s authority, which was given to them by the Holy Spirit, and to take turns in using common places of worship (§§ 24, 29, 28).

Complete, *de facto* dogmatic minimalism, syncretism and the abrogation of the sacred canonical law of Holy Orthodoxy! An implementation of the ecumenist Patriarchal Encyclical of 1920 in its most perfect form...!⁴⁰

³⁸ Archbishop Stylianos, *op.cit.*, p. 46 [emphasis ours].

³⁹ See Evangelos Theodorou (*Emeritus* Professor at the University of Athens), “Boldness, Imagination and Good Will are Required,” *Ekklesia*, no. 6 (April 1–15, 1993), pp. 180ff (preceding and following this article are a number of very illuminating articles about the expansionist “*Ostpolitik* of the Vatican”).

⁴⁰ “Synodal Encyclical of the Church of Constantinople to the Churches of Christ Everywhere” (January 1920), in Karmiris, *op.cit.*, pp. 957–960.

We should note at this point, in order clearly to portray the triumph of the Papists at Balamand, that all of these “guide-lines” for coöperation are purely of Vatican provenance, and have been included as a whole in the “New Guide-lines of the Vatican to the Bishops of Eastern Europe,” which were issued exactly a year before (June 1, 1992),⁴¹ and in part in the “Manual for the Application of the Principles and Regulations Concerning Ecumenism” from the Vatican (June 8, 1993).⁴²

The lamentable thing is that the Orthodox ecumenists, particularly in the present case, are not “dependent” only on Rome, but also on Geneva, the theological “line” of which they accept within the spirit of so-called “ecumenical rapprochement,” as is further demonstrated by the “Inter-Christian Conference” organized by the World Council of Churches on the subject of the Unia (Geneva, June 30–July 6, 1992, with two proposals by Professors Vlasios Pheidas and Herman Koltz). This Conference:

—*hammered out* a report with sixteen concrete proposals for solving the problem of the Unia, which was presented to the Central Committee of the W.C.C. (Geneva, August 21–28, 1992) and at the 10th General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (Prague, September 1–9, 1992);

—*adopted* the resolution of the Joint Theological Commission in Freising (1990) and Ariccia (1991);

—*declared* that the Unia had failed as a “model of unity;” and finally,

—*observed* that “the sought-after union of Orthodox and Roman Catholics *should* be constructed on the basis of the

⁴¹ See *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 350 (September 1–16, 1992); *Katholike*, no. 2662 (July 21, 1992), pp. 1–2, and no. 2663 (July 28, 1992), pp. 1–2: “Rome on the Behavior of Catholics towards Orthodox in the European Community” (the full text: Introduction, General Principles, Practical Guide-lines).

⁴² *Episkepsis*, no. 493 (June 30, 1993), pp. 12–18: “Meeting of the Delegates of the Ecumenical Commissions of the Episcopal Assemblies and Synods of the Roman Catholic Church;” *Katholike*, no. 2708 (September 28, 1993), p. 4: “The Catholic Church in More Recent Ecumenism.”

principle of ‘Sister Churches,’” since “this ecclesiology presupposes the mutual recognition of the ecclesiastical substance of the Churches in dialogue and avoids any attempt by one Church to entice [into its ranks] individuals or groups who belong to the other Church, as well as antagonism in the area of mission and Christian witness.”⁴³

The conclusion is easily drawn:

Rome decides; Geneva approves; the Phanar subscribes...: the three centers of dogmatic syncretism are walking hand-in-hand....

VII. Special attention should be given on both sides to the preparation and education of future priests with regard to this “new ecclesiology,”⁴⁴ so that they may “be informed of the apostolic succession of the other Church and the authenticity of its sacramental life,” and so that “the use of history in a polemical manner” may be avoided” (§ 30).

Yet another step down the ladder of concessions....

The Pope sometimes expresses repentance and asks for forgiveness *in a general and vague manner*, strictly in a “collectivist” context, which is consequently insignificant, since concrete events and the real culprits are not mentioned.

The Orthodox ecumenists now come along and *subscribe to the eradication of the criminal history of the Vatican and the Unia*, accepting the *Papist myth* about a supposed “purging of memory” on both sides, a “misunderstanding of motives,” an “equal weight of responsibilities,” a “common responsibility” for

⁴³ *Enimerosis*, E-1992/7, pp. 5–7: “The Unia, Topic of the Inter-Christian Conference in Geneva,” and E-1992/8, pp. 1–4: “The 44th Session of the Central Committee of the W.C.C.,” *Episkepsis*, no. 481 (July 31, 1992), pp. 14–15, and no. 482 (August 31, 1992), pp. 9–12.

⁴⁴ *Katholike*, no. 2706 (July 27, 1993), p. 1, § B 8 (“Notes on the Text” by Fr. Demetrios Salachas).

the “historical mistakes” and errors, and “mutual forgiveness,” etc.⁴⁵

3. Are We Perhaps Exaggerating?

In conclusion, we repeat our original question: *Are we perhaps exaggerating?*

After sixteen months (February 1992–June 1993), the “truly God-given opportunity” for the Orthodox to re-examine the essence of the Vatican and to re-evaluate theological dialogue with Rome has proved to be a “wonderful opportunity” for the recognition of the Papacy, by the ecumenist Orthodox, as a “Sister Church” with saving Mysteries; for the full justification of the Unia; and for the promotion of “dialogue”—an opportunity that has been used by the Latins as a wooden horse for the capture of Orthodoxy, thereby restoring a supposedly already existent or established “deep and sacramental communion,”⁴⁶ based on the theology of “Sister Churches”⁴⁷ and so-called “Baptismal

⁴⁵ See Evangelos Theodorou, “Purging of the Memory,” *Ekklesia*, no. 17 (November 15, 1992), pp. 641ff. • Also, “Letter of Metropolitan Panteleimon of Corinth...to the Presidency of the Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops (Rome, November 28–December 14, 1991),” in Zissis, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁴⁶ See the Decree of the Second Vatican Council “Unitatis Redintegratio” (“On Ecumenism”), §§ 14, 15, *op. cit.*, vol. 7, pp. 26–28. • Also the Papal Bull “Anno Ineunte” (July 25, 1967), which Pope Paul VI delivered to Patriarch Athenagoras on his journey to Constantinople, in P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, vol. 2 [in Greek] (Athens: n.p., 1978), pp. 111–115. • Pope Paul VI repeated these words about “deep communion” in Rome in 1975 (December 7) at the ceremony for the tenth anniversary of the lifting of the Anathemas (see *Episkepsis* no. 139 [January 13, 1976], p. 20.) This has been repeated in many other instances by both sides.

⁴⁷ The so-called theology of “Sister Churches,” which has its roots in Vatican II (cf. the Decree “Unitatis Redintegratio”) and was used as a snare by the Latins, will especially occupy us in due course, since its significance is tremendous and the relevant bibliography large. • For the present, we remind our readers, so that they may gain a deeper understanding of the foundations of the theology of “Sister Churches,” that in the General Communiqué of the “1st Ecclesiological Symposium of Catholics and Orthodox” (Vienna, April 1–7, 1974; thirty

Theology”!⁴⁸

The Orthodox-Catholic Theological Dialogues, which are very clearly a means for the promotion of the Papocentric politics of Rome and the realization of the ecumenist visions of the neopapism of the Phanar, had been broken off because of the volcanic eruption of the Unia and the justified reluctance of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches to participate in the Joint International Commission.

The following questions, then, are rightly raised:

—*how was the “severe blow” to dialogue, “that is hard to cure,”*⁴⁹

theologians, five proposals, general theme of “Communion”), the following typical comments were made: “It was ascertained that the lifting of the Anathemas between Rome and Constantinople did not restore full ecclesiastical communion, but *it did bring to an end the situation of essential schism*, dispelled misunderstandings and overcame many obstacles that were blocking the path to future unity. *The overcoming of separation would be facilitated if, in the spirit of the theology of Sister Churches advocated by the Second Vatican Council and the blessed Patriarch Athenagoras I, the fundamental Christian relations of the Churches were restored.*” One of the proposals of this unofficial ecclesiological Conference had the peculiar title: “‘Sister Churches,’ Ecclesiological Consequences of the ‘Tomos Agapis,’” and was developed separately by the Orthodox theologian Father John Meyendorff and the Papist Father Emmanuel Lanne of the Uniate Monastery of Chevetogne in Belgium (see *Katholike*, no. 1863 [May 7, 1974], pp. 1, 2; *Episkepsis*, no. 99 [April 16, 1974], pp. 2–4; *Eastern Churches Review* 6:2 [1974], pp. 198–199). • “*Orthodox participation*” (Metropolitan Damaskenos of Tranoupolis) in the “meeting of theologians in Rome with the Encyclical ‘Ecclesiam Suam’ as its theme” (October 24–26, 1980) constitutes a crucial landmark in the development and consolidation of the theology of “Sister Churches” and underlies the Uniate basis of the sought-after union of Orthodox and Papists by means of theological dialogues (see *Episkepsis*, no. 240 [November 1, 1980], pp. 2–5, 10–17; *Orthodoxos Typos*, no. 436 [December 19, 1980], pp. 1, 4).

⁴⁸ “Through Baptism ‘we are one in Christ Jesus’” (Pope Paul VI, Bull “Anno Ineunte” [July 25, 1967], *op. cit.*). • See also the article: “The ‘Baptismal Theology’ of the Ecumenists: Another form of the Protestant ‘Branch Theory,’” in *Orthodoxos Enstasis kai Martyria*, nos. 26–29 (January–December 1992), pp. 34ff.

⁴⁹ From the “Message of the Presiding Hierarchs of the Most Holy Orthodox Churches,” Phanar, March 15, 1992 (see *Enimerosis* E-1992/3–4, p. 4, § 4; *Ekklesia*, no. 7 [April 15–May 1, 1992], p. 224a).

healed within one year?

—*how* was dialogue resumed at Balamand?

—*how* did they accomplish its continuation?

—*how* was the 7th Plenary Session held, given the fact that there was no Pan-Orthodox representation at it, and that the Churches that abstained from it constituted a significant minority?

—*Without* overlooking the fact that the ringleaders in the dialogues are the most fervent ecumenists,⁵⁰ we should underscore the literally unique contribution of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, not only to the promotion of the Balamand dialogues,⁵¹ but also to the total acceptance by all of the Orthodox of the Papist positions put forth there!

Are we perhaps exceeding even the limits of hyperbole? Let us see....

The pious should be informed of the following astounding event, the “key” to the “Balamand Union,” which has been carefully hushed up, as regards the Orthodox.

Why? The event speaks for itself.

• **In May 1992**, a Synod of Uniate Bishops was held in Lvov (Lviv), Ukraine.⁵²

⁵⁰ Symptomatic of this is the fact that the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Antioch convened in January (25–28) 1993 under the presidency of Patriarch Ignatios and, apart from other things, “expressed their desire for the swift resumption of the dialogue between Orthodox and Roman Catholics and, as well, for the promotion of a dialogue with Islam, which would facilitate the harmonious co-existence of Christians and Muslims in the area of the Middle East, and specifically in Lebanon” (*Episkepsis*, no. 491 [April 30, 1993], p. 11).

⁵¹ For the “*salvaging*” of dialogue at its most crucial point (June 1992), Archbishop Iakovos of America was chosen by the Phanar and sent to the Patronal Feast of Rome. In connection with this, Cardinal Cassidy said smilingly to a journalist: “The Patriarch (Bartholomew) could not have picked a better representative of his to send to us in Rome....” for “who would be better than Iakovos to come to the Vatican at such a delicate point in our relations?” Thus it is demonstrated “one more time that the diplomacy of the Vatican leaves nothing to chance and scrutinizes all persons and things in advance” (Edo dall’ Ara, “How We Will Extract the Thorn of the Unia,” in *Eikones*, no. 401 [July 8, 1992], p. 28).

⁵² Regarding the Uniate Synod in Lvov, Ukraine, and what took place there, see: (1) Father Serge Keleher, “In Search of Unity,” *Frontier* [Keston College]

—For the first time in four centuries, the Ukrainian Uniates invited a Bishop from Constantinople to one of their Synods.

—The Phanar ruptured the unbroken unity of Orthodox Christians against the aggressions of the Unia, a unity which was given expression in a Pan-Orthodox manner precisely two months earlier (March 1992), and sent to Lvov Bishop Vsevolod (Pangratos) of Scopelos, a Bishop of Ukrainian origin who is responsible for the Ukrainian Orthodox parishes of America and Canada under the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

—Bishop Vsevolod of Scopelos was enthusiastically received by the Uniate Bishops, who exchanged the kiss of love with him in the Liturgy at the opening of their Synod, beginning with Cardinal Lobachevsky, appointed by the present Pope as leader of the Ukrainian Uniates!

—At this Synod, the Uniate Bishop Basil Losten of Stamford, Connecticut, presented a major proposal and offered ways for the Ukrainian Uniates to participate in the Orthodox-Papist Dialogue!

—On May 26, 1992, Bishop Vsevolod of Scopelos delivered a speech in the Cathedral Church of St. George, which the Uniates had recently seized by force from the Orthodox!

—*The speech of Bishop Vsevolod*: utterly misrepresented the historical truth about the Ukrainian Unia and its imposition at the famous “union” by treachery of the Synod of Brest (1596); proclaimed a Uniate confession; totally accepted the Papist version of the Unia; did not find anything that would separate Orthodox and Uniates; praised the Uniates and their “witness” in exalted tones; and fully recognized the ecclesial nature of the Uniates—*it placed all things on equal ground!*

—Strangely enough, the address of Bishop Vsevolod, which was enthusiastically received by the Uniates and the Latins in attendance, and which was regarded as a “gift” at the moment

(September–October 1992), pp. 28–29; (2) “Address of the Orthodox Bishop Vsevolod to the Ukrainian Catholic Synod of Lviv,” *Irénikon* 65:2 (1992), pp. 200–206.

that the general outcry against them had steered them to a stalemate, concluded as follows:

“Beloved brothers! Here for the first time in four hundred years, a Hierarchy of Constantinople is addressing a speech to you, the Greek Catholic Hierarchs of the Church of Kiev. You are preserving an ecclesiastical treasure that belongs to all of us. Your Synod is heir to the Metropolitans of Kiev. Your structure affords the potential for restoring our divided Church of Kiev. For this reason, you have great responsibility. The Great Church of Constantinople has always attempted, as far as possible, to help the Ukrainians. She is ready to help Ukraine today. I was especially fortunate to have prayed with you during this Synod....”⁵³

- In the meantime, Bishop Vsevolod of Scopelos, we add parenthetically, has also engaged in Uniate activities following his appearance in Lvov: (1) **August 1992**. At Keston College there was a theological meeting (proposals, discussion) of Orthodox (Bishops Kallistos of Diokleia, Vsevolod of Scopelos, *et al.*); (2) **October 1992**. A similar meeting took place in Stamford, Connecticut, where, aside from the aforementioned, Father Emmanuel Clapsis (of the Holy Cross School of Theology, Boston) and the “soul” of the Ukrainian Uniates, Bishop Pavel of Ivano-Frankovsk, were present. They decided to continue the meetings in 1993, in April in Ottawa, Canada, and in August in Oxford.⁵⁴

Perhaps, at long last, when it comes to accusing someone of political double-dealing with regard to the Unia and theological dialogue, we need to lower our voices against the Vatican and raise them against the Phanar.

How else can these “astounding” activities of the Phanar be construed?

Why did Patriarch Bartholomew not inform even the

⁵³ *Irénikon*, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

⁵⁴ *Irénikon* 65:4 (1992), pp. 578–579; also “Christian Unity for Ukrainians,” in the pamphlet *The Right to Believe*, Keston College (Autumn 1992).

“Assembly of the Ruling Hierarchy of the Ecumenical Throne” about these things (August 29–31, 1992)?⁵⁵

- Are we wrong, then, when we speak of an actual “triumph” of Vatican diplomacy in Lebanon?
- Are we making a mistake, when we see at Balamand the continuation and the realization of the “dreams” of Vatican II?
- Are we being careless, when we speak of a “Balamand Union,” of a union that is Uniate in form?
- Are we wrong when we denounce the Athonite Fathers, as well as the other “conservative” New Calendarists, as jointly responsible for the astonishing fall of these Orthodox ecumenists, and especially those of the Phanar?

With good reason, the pious can ask the Athonites and these other “conservatives”:

—*When* did a Church council deliberate and decide in a Pan-Orthodox way that Papism constitutes a “Sister Church” in the full and traditional sense of the term, a term that is rightly used to describe relations between local Orthodox Churches *solely within the Unity of Orthodox and our Faith?*

—*When* and how were the most serious problems of union solved, “all of those” problems “observed in recent years in the bosom” of the Latins and so burdensome to the Orthodox, as the then Metropolitan Spyridon of Apameia (now of Italy) described them in 1991,⁵⁶ such that Orthodox and Papists have now progressed towards full agreement?

—*When* did the Vatican redress all of the accusations lodged against it, in a spirit of intense criticism, by the aforementioned Metropolitan Spyridon of Italy at the extraordinary Synod of the Catholic Bishops of Europe, in Rome (November 24–December

⁵⁵ *Episkepsis*, no. 483 (September 30, 1992), pp. 2–18.

⁵⁶ See *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 326 (April 16, 1991), pp. 4–5: “Progress in Dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.” Reference is made to a related lecture by Metropolitan Spyridon and to “the things observed” recently in the Vatican, summarized in eight “chief signs” which are truly “apocalyptic.”

14, 1991), which finally decided on a “*positive appraisal of the Unia*,” thereby torpedoing the decisions of earlier dialogues (Vienna, Freising and Ariccia) and going beyond “even the decree of the Second Vatican Council concerning the Oriental Churches”?⁵⁷

—*When* and how did the Orthodox respond to the Encyclical of the Pope to the Catholic Bishops of Europe (December 20, 1991), in which he upheld all that was subscribed to eighteen months later at Balamand, that is, that Orthodoxy and Papism are “Sister Churches,” that they are discovering “the failure of a method (i.e., the Unia)” and “the inadequacy of an ecclesiology,” and that, “while the method of the past has been abandoned, the already established Oriental (i.e., Uniate) Churches deserve our respect”?⁵⁸

—*When* and how were the problems pointed out by Metropolitan Daniel (Ciobotea) of Moldavia, in his article “Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue: Between Failure and Hope,” settled?⁵⁹

—*When* was there a cessation of unacceptable Papist demands on behalf of the Unia, which have recently increased, so that the Orthodox should trust Rome?⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Zissis, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–90, 92, 95; see *Katholike*, no. 2635 (January 7, 1992), pp. 4–5: “A Bittersweet Taste of ‘Orthodoxy’ by the Catholics of the West.” • The Papal synod commenced its activities on November 28, 1991, in the presence of “fraternal delegates” of other Churches with the right only to speak; Spyridon of Italy expounded upon the subject “The Evangelization of Europe is the Work and Duty of all of the Christian Churches” (see *Katholike*, no. 2634 [December 17, 1991], pp. 1, 7: “The Synod of the Catholic Bishops in Rome Studies the Evangelization of a United Europe”).

⁵⁸ Metropolitan Damaskenos of Switzerland, “Orthodoxy and the Balkans,” *Episkepsis*, no. 489 (February 28, 1993), p. 14.

⁵⁹ *Episkepsis*, no. 465 (July 15, 1991), pp. 14–17.

⁶⁰ See *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 342 (February 16, 1992): “Roman Catholic Demands on Behalf of the Unia at Bari.” On the tenth anniversary of the dialogues, there was a theological symposium in Bari (December 16–17, 1991) with the main topic: “What Problems Impede Dialogue between Orthodox and Roman

—*How* was the great scandal occasioned by the Pope's recent provocative step of visiting Albania, in April 1993, been resolved among the Orthodox?

Even the ecumenists and the Latin-minded were scandalized and wrote accordingly: "At last, a long-standing aspiration of Old Rome has been realized, that her Presiding Hierarch should tread on the soil of ancient Illyricum.... In Albania, His Holiness had on either side representatives of *two propaganda tools from the more ruthless periods of the Papacy: Uniatism and the 'enticement of charity.'* These two tools, as the past has demonstrated, did *more harm than benefit* to Christian unity, and for this reason the Orthodox East *rejects them as works of fratricide*, and this with the agreement of many Roman Catholic historians"⁶¹

—*Will* the Athonites, who attempted in 1988 to "persuade" the unfortunate Patriarch Demetrios that the Papists are heretics,⁶² now resume their attempt in the case of Patriarch Bartholomew and the co-president of the Joint Commission, Archbishop Stylianos of Australia, or will they wait for the 8th Plenary Session of the Commission on Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue, in order to take part in it themselves as former Orthodox who will by then have been "uniatized"?

—*Would* the Athonites put up with a repetition in their monasteries of the liturgical hobnobbing and the joint prayers that took place at Balamand?

"The activities commenced with an official service of vespers in the Church of the Virgin Mary, in the Monastery of Balamand, with Archbishop Stylianos of Australia officiating. Every day the

Catholics?" A distressing impression was created as much by the pronouncements of this symposium as by the excessive fanaticism on behalf of the Unia shown by the Papist Dominican priest Cioffari.

⁶¹ Aristeides Panotis, "The Pope in Albania," *Ekklesiastike Aletheia*, no. 362 (May 1-16, 1993), p. 9 [emphasis ours].

⁶² See the relevant letters (2 and 3) of the Athonites to Patriarch Demetrios in *Orthodoxos Typos*, no. 798 (August 12, 1988) and no. 799 (August 19, 1988).

Catholic and Orthodox members celebrated the Divine Liturgy or some other divine service separately. At the official Hierarchical Liturgies—Catholic and Orthodox—, which *were celebrated in the monastery Church*, in addition to the members of the Joint Commission, clergy and laity, Catholics and Orthodox, from Lebanon were in attendance....⁶³

—*Will they boldly denounce and repudiate the “Balamand Union,” as well as the ecumenist framework of its theological and ecclesiological presuppositions?*

4. Immediate Practical Results

We are sincerely and most profoundly grieved, and we pray that the Athonite Fathers, as well as all the “conservative” New Calendarists, will reflect on the gravity and sin of silence in the face of the now indisputable apostasy of the Orthodox ecumenists, a typical specimen of which—indeed a corollary to the aforementioned—is the following:

In response to an address of ecumenist character delivered in France by a Latin clergyman, Father Michalon, on the subject of the *mutual recognition of the Baptism of Catholics and Orthodox and of its ecclesiological repercussions* for the Ecumenical Movement, Bishop Stephen of Nazianzen, Assistant to Metropolitan Jeremiah of France (Patriarchate of Constantinople), expressed his agreement with what was said and added:

“The fact of not repeating Baptism is not regarded any longer by the Orthodox as an *act of oikonomia*; moreover, the two Churches in 1990 signed an official act of mutual recognition of *Mysteries*.” Bishop Stephen, whose very open views are well-known, added on a personal level that *he happened to have*

⁶³ *Katholike*, no. 2705 (July 20, 1993), p. 1 (an analysis of the Balamand decision by Fr. Demetrios Salachas). See also the “Communiqué” of the 7th Joint International Commission, where mention is made of the fact that the Latins liturgized in the Monastery on Saturday afternoon (June 19) and the Orthodox on Sunday morning (June 20).

*celebrated the Mystery of Chrismation by taking the chrism from a Catholic parish...”!*⁶⁴

* * *

*The Thirteen Orthodox members of the Joint International Commission on Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue who, as representatives of only nine Orthodox Churches, signed the “Balamand Union”.*⁶⁵

1. **Patriarchate of Constantinople:** Archbishop Stylianos of Australia.
2. **Patriarchate of Alexandria:** Metropolitan Dionysios of Nubia, Professor Constantine Patelos.
3. **Patriarchate of Antioch:** Metropolitan Georges (Khodre) of Byblos, Archimandrite Youhanna.
4. **Patriarchate of Moscow:** Igumen Nestor (Iliayev).
5. **Patriarchate of Romania:** Metropolitan Antonie of Transylvania, Professor Dumitru Radu.
6. **Church of Cyprus:** Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Morphou, Professor Makarios Papachristophorou.
7. **Church of Poland:** Hieromonk Varsanufy (Doroszkievicz).
8. **Church of Albania:** Professor Theodore Papapavli.
9. **Church of Finland:** Bishop Ambrose of Joensuu.

⁶⁴ See *Foi Transmise et Saint Tradition*, no. 72 (September 1993), p. 8.

⁶⁵ *Irénikon* 66:2 (1993), p. 211, n. 1.