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The Orthodox Church in Rumania versus Ecumenism

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The excerpt below has been taken from the Minutes of the Inter-Orthodox Convention which took place in the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki, on the 20-24th September 2004.

"....By remaining steadfastly in the Faith of the Holy Fathers of Orthodoxy, we stand today as the carriers of the words of most monks and nuns of Rumania who are opposed to Ecumenism, by conveying the desire for unity in Orthodoxy and the true witness of the Apostolic Traditions of the Holy Fathers, and in order to inform the Orthodox faithful of the world that the heresy of Ecumenism is striving to undermine the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The hypocrisy by which the New Age mentality is daily becoming rooted in our lives is indescribable. Beneath the mask of man-centred love and not of the love of Christ-centred Humanism, Ecumenism with its promotion of syncretism, religious socialism and common prayer with other religions and Christian confessions, is striving - thanks to this immense apostasy - to establish the reign of the Antichrist on earth. The biggest temptation is that the evil spirit is seeking fervently to break us away from Orthodoxy and render us labourers of the new Babylonian temple, for the material rule of the Antichrist in this world.

Before moving on to any kind of judgment regarding the things of the Faith, we must not overlook the testimonies of our predecessors, who knew how to "fight the good fight" and be victorious to the end. The Holy Prophets, Evangelists, Apostles, Hierarchs, Confessors, Martyrs and Saints have, throughout the ages and in every place, unanimously confessed that the Orthodox Church is the Bride of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Ark of our Salvation.

With an unshaken belief in all the above, we came here as representatives of our Orthodox monasticism, to present with clarity how Ecumenism is manifesting

itself in Rumania, and to determine the roots from which this heretic tree has sprouted near the walls of our Orthodox Church.

Based on historical facts, the official and "legitimate" accession of the Orthodox Church of Rumania to the World Council of Churches took place in 1964, together with other Churches which were at the time captives of the then ascendant communist regimes. However, in order to have a clear picture of the present, we shall present to you the intrinsic factors that prompted the Orthodox Rumanian Church to reach the decision to join the World Council of Churches. In this way, we can discern the present state of Ecumenism in Rumania more objectively and impartially.

The period from the 13th century up until the 18th is regarded as the Golden Age for Rumanian Orthodoxy, given that a series of pious Orthodox Leaders had fought at the side of the Clergy to protect the Church and safeguard our Christian nation from its subjugation to the Turks and the Latins. This happened, because their love for the Nation was the same as their love towards Christ and the Church. Furthermore, their life was an exemplary sample and an Orthodox testimony of in-Christ life, which has remained alive to this day in the conscience of the Orthodox Christians of our land.

However, the biggest changes to ecclesiastic matters were noted in the middle of the 19th century, through the Rumanian "enlighteners" who, albeit Rumanian Orthodox, had moved to the West, had entered the ranks of Masonry, studied in the schools of the Renaissance and upon their return to Rumania, had brought along with them the humanistic spirit of the West. This spirit was -and is- clearly opposed to the Church of Christ, and is outrightly fighting Her with the aim to alienate Her from Her Patristic Traditions and the wealth of Her theology.

The prevalence of Communism in Russia also had as a result (and on the basis of its world theory of becoming universally widespread) the subjugation of the Rumanian country in the year 1945. This was achieved, through a violent elimination of the existing political parties of our land, and through the imposition with aggressive means of a socialist, atheist regime which confined to a very minimum every activity of the Church. After 44 years of Communist ideology and practice in Rumania, our Orthodox Church came out, perhaps wounded, but still strongly preserving the Faith of the Gospel and with our people's religious conscience still unimpaired.

During this dark period, thousands of Clergymen were driven out of their Sacred Altars and after being forcefully defrocked, were imprisoned: High priests, Priests, Monks and pious Christians. Through the prayers and the sacrifices of those contemporary martyrs of our Faith, the Church withstood and survived, in spite of Her many tribulations. However, the majority of the population fully embraced "the benefits of the dictatorship", through the systematic teaching of atheism, through the continuous propagandist conventions of the Communist leadership, and under the unsleeping gaze of the relentless secret police (Securitate).

Unfortunately, the strategy of the official representatives of the Church in this battle proved to be a utopia. Because of their outreach towards para-ecclesiastic and religious organizations of the West, they deflected the Church from Her traditional lines. It was for this reason that a mentality of abhorrence came to grow within the people against Communism, coupled with another deceptive mentality, that everything originating from the West is good and welcome. And it was along this mentality that the first communications of the Patriarchs of the Orthodox Rumanian Church began with the prince of the Vatican and his representatives, followed by the development of inter-church relations with the Anglicans and other Protestant groups. Then the World Council of Churches made its appearance, like a bridge, promising recognition of the Orthodox values that were being persecuted and subjugated to the spirit of secularization imposed by the Communist regime. Thus, the West -with all its apostasy- meant freedom for Orthodox Rumania, which was groaning under the atheist yoke of Communism.

As of the year 1990, the period of cessation of persecutions began, without this meaning that the Church was entirely free, because all sorts of heresies had in the meantime infiltrated our country. The new democratic state of Rumania

-as it is called- neglected all the fighters and the martyrs of the Church and the Homeland, and still does, to this day. This fact indicates that the Communist spirit had caused serious damage to the comprehending and the experiencing of our Orthodox Faith. And yet, within this turmoil of persecution, the Faith was preserved as a sacred trust by the pious Rumanian people, who had stood up against this life-and-death battle with the "red beast" - which they eventually defeated, with the power of Christ.

That is why, for us Orthodox Rumanians, Ecumenism has its roots in the ideals of Communist socialism, which in its time had fought for a utopia. According to that utopia, mankind's welfare would have been perfect, only after the disappearance of all the class, racial and religious differences. All this brainwashing of the Communist era was perceived as feasible to the sons of apostasy, while the presentation of their ideas was being served with the cloak of democratic freedom. Nowadays, Ecumenism has replaced Communism and it has done so with remarkable success, however, the price being paid by the Orthodox Rumanian Church on account of tolerance and condescension is tremendous:

- Communism brought terrorism and oppression, whereas Ecumenism has come bearing freedom, religious tolerance and dogmatic renewal

- Communism denied Christ, whereas Ecumenism has marshalled all the gods of the world.

- Communism attempted to disorganize and exterminate the Church, whereas Ecumenism has been building a new church from the start; one that is a mosaic of all the pseudo-churches.

- Communism was demonic, whereas Ecumenism is anti-Christ

In Rumania, Ecumenism has introduced itself with a deceitful illusion of "revival" of the supposed lost unity, and has grafted itself onto the Communist mentalities of fundamental supporters, who happen to be the political leaders and some of the high-ranking ecclesiastic personages. These persons see the Church as a kind of religious party with a Christian orientation, or as personal property. To be precise, the Church to them is an establishment, in which anti-Ecumenist perception is regarded as a sin of disobedience; in other words, a transgressing of the laws of the Party, or a deviation, which is punishable by the methods of Communist ideology.

But, History does tend to repeat itself. It all began in 1994, when, by means of official ecclesiastic decisions, Ecumenist propaganda appeared in some of Rumania's schools of theology; then, with the help of the Mass Media, the brainwashing spread to the popular masses. More specifically, the fruits of Rumanian Ecumenism became evident during the signing of the Balamand Agreement in 1994, when it became obvious who were the ones that blatantly confessed their apostasy from the dogmas of our Orthodox, true Faith, what their objectives were, and how the Ecumenists' pursuits will be focused in the future. Immediately after the signing of the Balamand Agreement, the premeditated dogmatic "poisoning" of the analytical program of theological education was put to work. In this way, submission to the new European programs for the incorporation of Ecumenism has been striving - among other things - to reduce the number of students enrolling and the number of years required for the teaching of theological studies, and also the elimination of elementary apologetics lessons. Hence today there are no apologetics lessons, in most of the theological schools in Rumania. In the more than 14 theological schools of Rumania, ever since 1996, one new lesson has become compulsory: Ecumenism, which has - by taking advantage of the historical misinterpretations in the lessons of Apologetics, Orthodox Spirituality and Mystic Theology - placed within Orthodoxy a new kind of perception; one that is obliged to discard its dogmatic teachings as well as its (obsolete, according to them) Canons. Instead, the Church is obliged to accept the misled "saints" of the West and believe that She will be complete and true,

only if She embraces the canons and the decisions of the other "churches".

The bait called "Orthodox Ecumenism" was swallowed by quite a number of Hierarchs also, who could not discern the desecration of Christ's Church with this opening, or the desolation of our Orthodox Faith; instead, by seeking a secular and pope-governed glory for Orthodoxy, they are governing the Church as though She is their own, personal property. In this way, they have provided a perfect framework for the creation of a new pan-religion - one that is renewed according to the laws of our secularized society. In parallel with the programs of theological, university-level education, of late there have appeared certain so-called "ecumenical institutions", all adjoining to the existing theological schools; this is where - with funds from the West - all the bases are being laid and the infrastructures are being built for the future, orthodox ecumenist Church, by means of the inter-religious conventions, the series of theological discussions, excursions and mutual visits, all for the purpose of a rapprochement and recognition of the various seminars, camps, future plans, ecumenist radio-TV broadcasts, whose messages and manifestos undermine the sentiment and the conscience of our Rumanian, Orthodox population.

An important place in the propagation of Rumanian Ecumenism is taken up by the so-called "Week of Ecumenical prayer", which has been scheduled to be observed on the third or fourth week of the month of January every year, when our Holy Orthodox Church commemorates -in that very same month- all Her major champions and confessors, such as Saints Athanasius and Cyril, Maximus the Confessor, Mark of Ephesus, Saint Meletios Galisiotis, the three Hierarchs and others. During that ecumenist week, the clergymen of Rumania (i.e. Orthodox, Armenians, R/Catholics, Uniates, Anglicans and Protestants) and multitudes of laypeople, all congregate in Orthodox or heterodox churches in the various main cities of Rumania, and they all pray together, using specific texts, all adjusted to appeal to the psychology of the popular masses. Through these prayer meetings, they are projecting into everyone's conscience -and especially in the conscience of the ignorant population- all the blasphemous dogmas of the union of all religions and the unity of all the Christian Churches. This phenomenon has provoked the ecclesiastic conscience of the properly-minded Orthodox Clergymen, Monks and pious Christians, who have been protesting about the incompetence of such rash actions, and their continuous propagation into other areas of Rumania.

With the reception of the Pope in 1999 in Rumania, the endeavour for honorary veneration also of "saints" of the Western "church" - such as Francis of Assisi and Anthony of Padova - was validated through suitable speeches, by Rumanian Orthodox Christians. So, this year (2004), in the month of June, the Papal Cardinal Anthony - bishop of Padova, Italy, brought over the bronze bust of their saint Anthony, a monk of Padova, who lived after the time of the Schism. This bust supposedly held his undeteriorated tongue in his right hand (according to their rumours), inside a special silver case, and was paraded about in litanies by Catholic and Orthodox churches. It was venerated not only by Orthodox Christians, but also by several Orthodox Clergymen.

By examining the aforementioned facts with the spirit of Patristic discernment, we can say - without erring - that the affirmative desire of mankind has undergone such distortion, that it is (and will continue to be) a steered course and an opus focused on the establishing of the reign of the Antichrist. We need to become aware here of the damage being caused by Ecumenism throughout the world: it is something like a theological and anti-Christ fallacy that has been embedded as a basis in every social stratum. Thus, all good for mankind (supposedly) no longer comes from the Church, but from the care of social or state organizations. Spiritual progress is no longer attained through the Grace of the Holy Spirit, Who resides inside the Church, but through the rebirth of the idolatrous deities of our age. According to all the above, the opus of the Church is not made incarnate by Christ, but by Ecumenism.

However, all of the above are only forms and manifestations of the phenomenon. Ecumenism itself is basically a demonic spirit, which is expressed as a multiform plague that infects man's psychosomatic world, the boundaries of his religious community and the nation or the countries that it infiltrates, but is thereafter regarded as being the product of his own thought processes. To the

Orthodox, Ecumenism wants to be -and to be called- a "church"; a purpose that it is constantly working towards, for its promotion. It constantly changes its principles and adjusts its objectives (depending on the circumstances, exactly like a chameleon), towards a Pan-Ecumenism. This fabrication however is only an illusion; a collection of utopian ideas that deceive like a magic act and attract only those who are not aware of (or shun) the Orthodoxy of the Holy Fathers. Ecumenism seeks to supposedly promote the true face, the Tradition and the virtue of Orthodoxy, without knowing anything about these things. If we do not look upon Ecumenism as a heresy, then that Ecumenism will be identified as Orthodoxy, and from then on, people will believe that Ecumenism is in fact the Orthodox Church and will embrace it, without any distrust. Ecumenism is a virus (a microbe) with a thousand faces; it gleams like a golden idol of mankind, and it strives for the anti-Christian desires of every person on earth.

After all the above, we need to reply to the question: "Is Rumania an Ecumenist country?" The answer that we give can only be this: "Not yet." In our country, only the infrastructure of theological education and our Hierarchy are Ecumenistic. The majority of our monasticism - with the Elders and the Eldresses in the lead - as well as our pious population, are Orthodox and are fighting against this forerunner heresy of the Antichrist.

Here are the proposals that our Rumanian Monasticism has to offer, for a mutual collaboration between all those who believe that Ecumenism is the pan-heresy of the last centuries:

- **1.** A strengthening of communications - in the framework of the catholicity of the Orthodox Church - between hierarchs and other Orthodox Churches, for their brotherly and discerning intervention in the specific problem of the Ecumenist tendencies displayed by a portion of the Clergy and the people of the Rumanian Church. It is important for us to understand in time that deviations and downfalls of any local Orthodox Church into schismatic or even heretic teachings are simultaneously deviations and downfalls of their own Churches, given that we are all part of the one, same Body - the Body of the Church of Christ.
- **2.** The creation of a documented theological basis against the heresy of Ecumenism, with a Scriptural and Patristic content that will be accessible to those who want to study contemporary Orthodox Apologetics. This basis should furthermore provide the necessary weapons for defeating this heresy as well as other theological aberrations. To better inform our readers, we propose the composing and posting in various languages on the internet the appropriate theological Patristic texts that prove how rotten the edifice of Ecumenist pan-heresy is. At the same time, we would like to propose that there be updates on a permanent basis covering the daily course of events of the Orthodox Church in every part of the world, so that the guardians can watch out for their folds.
- **3.** The drafting of a letter on behalf of a pan-Orthodox theological committee, pointing out the danger inherent in the appearance and the spreading of Ecumenism. This Encyclical letter should be sent, if possible - and translated - to all the Patriarchates and the Autocephalous Churches of Orthodoxy everywhere.
- **4.** This Encyclical letter should also primarily contain the precise Orthodox teaching regarding the condemnation of Ecumenism and, in the event of endangerment of a Church, a Pan-Orthodox Council should be convened, for the clear formulation of the Orthodox dogma and the jubilant condemnation of the heresy.
- **5.** The transmission of the proposals and decisions of the present convention to every Orthodox country, while for the Orthodox of the Diaspora it should be done by printing relative books and distributing them.

All the Holy Fathers confess the following unanimously: Through the Crucifixion of Christ, the Church acquired a sacrificial nature; through His

Resurrection, She became the conqueror of death; and through the Descent of the Holy Spirit into Hades on the Day of the Pentecost, the Church thereafter became the fulfilment of the Truth, of Grace, and Salvation of mankind. Only the Orthodox Church has given true Saints, sanctification and holy relics to the world, and She will be, throughout Time, the solitary Church that will fight against all the pseudo-churches that attempt to usurp Her status. The Orthodox Church alone embodies all these charismas, because She alone was made the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, by Her Founder and Her Head - the Godman Jesus Christ. Only the Orthodox Church has remained unaltered and unshakeable throughout the ages and the guardian of the once-delivered, to the Saints, Faith[2]...."

1. On behalf of a group of Orthodox monks of the Orthodox Rumanian Church
2. Judas 3.

Translated by:**ORTHODOX OUTLET *for* DOGMATIC ENQUIRIES.**