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The Manner of Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church

**with Special Reference to the Decisions
of the Synods of 1484 (Constantinople),
1755 (Constantinople), and 1667 (Moscow)¹**

1 Introduction: The Ancient Canons

The manner of reception of heterodox into the Orthodox Church was specified by various ancient Canons,² which have been incorporated into the Canon Law of the Orthodox Church. These include Apostolic Canons 46, 47, and 50, Canons 8 and 19 of the 1st Ecum. Synod, Canon 7 of the 2nd Ecum. Synod, Canon 95 of the 6th Ecum. Synod, Canon 66 of the Local Synod of Carthage, and Canons 1, 5, and 47 of St. Basil. Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council (381)³ and Canon 95 of the Fifth-Sixth Ecumenical Council (691) are particularly important.⁴

¹ This paper was prepared for and read at the Orthodox/Roman Catholic Dialogue (USA) in 1998.

² All of these can be found in *The Rudder (Pedalion)*, ed. by Agapios the Hieromonk and Nikodemos the Monk, transl. from the 1908 Greek Edition by D. Cummings and published by The Orthodox Christian Education Society in Chicago Illinois in 1957, which also contains elaborate and illuminating comments (cf. especially pp. 68-76, 217-220 and 400-402).

³ Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council reads as follows: "Those who embrace Orthodoxy and join the number of those who are being saved from the heretics, we receive in the following regular and customary manner: Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, those who call themselves Cathars and Aristeri, Quartodecimans or Tetradiies, Apollinarians— these we receive when they hand in statements and anathematize every heresy which is not of the same mind as the holy catholic and apostolic Church of God. They are first sealed or anointed with holy Chrism on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears. As we seal them we say: The Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit. But Eunomians, who are baptized in a single immersion, Montanists (called

According to these canons there are three ways of receiving heterodox into the Church:

- a) by re-baptism (actually, baptism), when the celebration of heterodox baptism is considered deficient or invalid either on account of deficient faith and/or practice,
- b) by Chrismation and signing of an appropriate Libellus of recantation of the particular heresy that the converts previously held, and
- c) by simply signing an appropriate Libellus or Confession of faith, whereby the errors of heterodoxy of the person received are properly denounced and the Orthodox faith is fully embraced.

The reception of Roman Catholics into the Eastern Churches, which occurred after the great Schism of 1054, was done in any one of the three above-mentioned ways. Practice varied according to times and circumstances. The key issue in determining the manner of reception was the Orthodox perception of the Roman Catholic baptism. This perception changed for various reasons, including Roman Catholic practice, and it seems that such a change became an important factor in determining the manner of reception of Roman Catholics into Orthodoxy.

Phrygians here), Sabellians, who teach the identity of Father and Son and make certain other difficulties, and all other sects— since there are many here, not least those who originate in the country of the Galatians— we receive all who wish to leave them and embrace orthodoxy as we do [pagan] Greeks. On the first day we make Christians of them; on the second catechumens; on the third we exorcise them by breathing three times into their faces and their ears; and thus we catechize them and make them spend time in the church and listen to the scriptures;and then we baptize them.”

⁴ “Those who from the heretics come over to Orthodoxy and to the number of those who should be saved, we receive according to the following order and custom: Arians, Macedonians, Novatians, who call themselves Cathari, Aristeri, and Tesareskaidecatitae, orTetraditae, and Apollinarists, we receive on their presentation of certificates [libelli] and on their anathematizing every heresy which does not hold as does the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of God: we first anoint them with the holy Chrism on their foreheads, eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears; and as we seal them we say: The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit. But concerning the Paulianists who afterwards turned to the Catholic Church a rule was set up that they should by all means be rebaptized. The Eunomeans also, who baptized with one immersion, and the Montanists, who here are called Phrygians; and the Sabellians, who hold the Son to be the identical with the Father, and are guilty in doing certain other grave things, and all the other heresies, for there are many heretics here, especially those who come from the region of the Galatians, all of their number who are desirous of coming to Orthodoxy, we receive as [pagan] Greeks. And on the first day we make them Christians, on the second Catechumens, then on the third day we exorcise them, after breathing thrice upon their faces and ears; and thus we catechize them, and we make them spend time in church and hear the Scriptures; and then we baptize them. And those who come from the Manichaeans, and the Valentinians and that Marcionites and from all similar heresies we rebaptize receiving them as [pagan] Greeks. As for Nestorians, Eutyrians and Severians, and those from other such heresies, they need to give certificates and to anathematize their heresy and Nestorius and Eutyches and Dioscorus and Severus and the rest of the Exarchs of such heresies and those who think with them, and all the aforesaid heresies, and so they become partakers of the Holy Communion.” For the original Greek see, Vlasios Phidas, *Ieroi Kanones*, Athens 1997, s. 176.

Acceptance of some validity of Roman Catholic baptism meant that Roman Catholic converts would be received by the economy of Chrismation, whereby what was lacking in Roman Catholic baptism would be supplied by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Non-acceptance of such validity, on the other hand, meant that the *akribeia* of the canons had to be applied, on which occasion Roman Catholic converts were (re-)baptized. What, however, made Roman Catholic Baptism partially valid or invalid was not always clearly spelled out, although it was implicitly suggested.

Already at the time of the great Schism (1054) the baptism of the Latins came under severe criticism. The Ecumenical Patriarch Michael Kerularios wrote on that occasion to Patriarch Peter of Antioch, about the deviations of the Western Church from the ancient tradition and included in them “the unlawful administration of Baptism.”⁵ The problem was the Roman Catholic practice of single immersion, which had been condemned by the ancient canons, and the use of strange new customs like the use of salt.⁶ It is interesting to note here Cardinal Humbert’s anathematization of the Eastern Church because of Patriarch Kerularios’ practice of re-baptizing Latins who entered the Greek Church, which is reminiscent of Arian practice.⁷

The renowned canonist Theodore Balsamon, who in 1193 argued on the basis of Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council that Latin baptisms, based on one immersion, ought to be considered as invalid because their case was similar with that of the Eunomians, shared the view of Kerularios.⁸

That the Orthodox re-baptized Roman Catholics after the Schism of 1054 is also confirmed by the 4th canon of the Western Council of Lateran IV, which was summoned in 1215 by Pope Innocent III.⁹ In the 13th century, especially after the sacking of Constantinople by the crusaders in 1204, the practice of re-baptizing Western converts to Orthodoxy was intensified. Metropolitan Germanos of Ainos pointed out that the reason for this strict practice was the

⁵ PG 104:744.

⁶ See Will’s *Acta et Scripta quae de controversiis Ecclesiae graecae et latinae*, Lipsiae 1861, p. 182: *to theion baptisma epitelontes, tou baptizomenou baptizontes eis mian kata dusin, to onoma tou Patros kai tou Hyiou kai tou agiou Pneumatos epilegontes, alla kai alatos pros toutô ta tôn baptizomenôn plêrousi stomata*, See also, Oikonomou K., *Ta sôzomena...* tom. 1, (1862) s. 490.

⁷ See Migne PG 104: 744: “*hôs oi areianoï anabaptizousi tous en onômati tês agias Triados bebaptizomenous kai malista tous Latinous*”. Cf. also PG 120:793 (Kerularios’ Letter to Peter of Antioch) and PL 143:1003 (the Rapal Bull of Excommunication).

⁸ Ralli-Potle, *Syntagma... Kanonôn*, vol. 2, p. 10.

⁹ See Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum... Collectio*, tom. 22, p. 1082 In cl. 990 we read: “*Baptizatos etiam a Latinis et ipsi Graeci rebaptizare ausu temerario praesumebant: et adhuc, sicut acceptimus, quidam opere hoc non verentur*”.

violent aggression, which the Western Church showed towards the Eastern Church at that time. Part of that aggression was the attempt to proselytize the Orthodox by using various devious means, including the declaration of the union of the two Churches through a pseudo-synod.¹⁰ In 1222 the (lawful) Patriarch of Constantinople, Germanos II, who was based at Nicaea because of the sacking of the Royal City by the crusaders, wrote a treatise¹¹ which identifies three types of Western Baptism: the authentic and Apostolic one, which is acceptable to the Orthodox, the Baptism of single immersion, and the Baptism by affusion (pouring) or aspersion (sprinkling), which are highly questionable. At the time of Michael Palaiologos (1261), Meletios the Confessor exposed the invalidity of the Latin Baptism that was based on single immersion and suggested by implication the re-baptism of the Latin converts.¹²

During the 13th century re-baptizing Latin converts was a universal practice in Russia and it must have been transferred there from the Greek Church. Thus, Pope Honorius III (1216-1227) and Pope Gregory IX (1241) accuse the Russians for re-baptism practices.¹³

In the first half of the 14th century (around 1335) Matthaios Vlastaris underlines the same problem.¹⁴ In 1355 Patriarch Kallistos of Constantinople (1350-4, 1355-63) writes to the clergy of Trnovo that those Latins who have been baptized by single immersion should be re-baptized.¹⁵ At the end of the 14th century, however, Makarios of Ancyra states that the Latin converts to Orthodoxy should be received only by Chrismation in accordance with Canon 7 of Constantinople I (381).¹⁶

In the 15th century Metropolitan Mark of Ephesus informed the Orthodox that the Latins have two types of Baptism, one with triple immersion and another with affusion.¹⁷ Gregory Mammas

¹⁰ Cf. Germanos of Ainos, *Peri tou k?rouV...* bibliography below (1952), p. 303.

¹¹ This is mentioned by Leo Allatius in his *De Concessione...*, p.712: "*De azymis, purgatorio, et de tribus modis administrandi baptismi.*" Constantine Oikonomos cites this reference and adds that the Latin baptism by affusion (*kat' epichusin*) should be repeated (p. 465). See also Miklosich-Mueller, *Acta et Diplomatica Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, tom. ii (1862) p. 81.

¹² PG 144: 22. Germanos of Ainos, *Peri tou kyrouV...* bibliography below (1952) p. 304.

¹³ Cf. M. Jugie, *Theologia Dogmatica...* bibliography below (1930), p. 92.

¹⁴ Patriarch Dositheos, *Tomos Katallagés...*, p. 144. Cited by Germanos of Ainos, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ "He calls the baptism by one immersion most improper and full of impiety (*pragma atopôtaton kai dussebeian anameson*). His view is based on the Apostolic canons which clearly state that those baptized by one immersion (*eis mian katadusin*) are not baptized (*hôs mh baptisthentas*) and should be rebaptized (*anabaptêzesthai parakeleuontai*)." See Miklosich-Mueller, *Acta et Diplomatica patriarcharum...*, I (1860) p. 439. Cf. Kattenbusch, *Lehrbuch der vergleichenden Confessionskunde*, Freiburg 1892, p.404.

¹⁶ In Constantine Oikonomos, *Ta sôzomena...*, tom. I (1862) p. 468. Also Dositheos, *Tomos Katallagés* ss. 203-204.

¹⁷ Dositheos, *Tomos Agapés*, lassi 1698, p. 582, 584.

(1469) showed that St. Mark favored Chrismation.¹⁸ Constantine Oikonomos, however, believes that St. Mark was using “economy.” This explains why Orthodox practice of receiving Latin converts varied: those who have had apostolic Baptism (triple immersion) were chrismated, while those who had been baptized by affusion were rebaptized. This differentiation explains the comment of Vryennios which is cited by Syropoulos that the Latins are “unbaptized.”¹⁹

2. The Decision of the Great Synod of Constantinople in 1484.

This Synod was summoned at the sacred Church of Pammakaristos by Patriarch Symeon (1472-75, 1482-1485) in 1482 and again in 1484. In the first instance it issued an Horos denouncing the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438) and its doctrine of the Filioque, and in the second, it published an Acolouthy for the reception of Latin converts into the Orthodox Church. This Synod called itself Ecumenical presumably because all four Eastern Patriarchs were present. It denounced the Council of Florence and decided that “the Latin converts to Orthodoxy should be received into the Church only by Chrismation and by signing an appropriate Libellus of faith which would include denunciation of Latin errors.”

The basic text of the Synod of 1484 is the Acolouthy (Service) for the Reception of Latins which is as follows (my translation from the Greek original):²⁰

ACOLOUTHY (SERVICE)

for the Reception of Latins into the Orthodox Church

Published by the same holy and great Synod, for those who return from the Latin heresies to the orthodox and catholic Church of Constantinople, but also to the three most holy patriarchs of the East, i.e. those of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.

¹⁸ Gregory Mammas (1469) showed that St. Mark favored Chrismation (PG 160: 137). Constantine Oikonomos believed that “St. Mark was using economy”.

¹⁹ Section 9, ch. 9. Joseph Vryennios, a Studite monk and master of Mark Eugenicos, condemns baptism by one immersion in his treatise, *Dialexis peri tês tou agiou Pneumatou êkporouseôs meta tou latinophronou Maximou tês taxeôs tôn kêrykôn*. He relies for this on the Canons of the Apostles and on the authority of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. He also notes that the Latins wrongly do this (*eis mian katadusin baptizousi, hês mê ophelon*): *Îsêf Bryenniou ta Eurethênta*, edited by Eugenios Voulgaris, Leipzig 1768, vol. 1, pp. 418-9. Vryennios also referred to an untitled work *Kephalala Heptakis Hepta*, which exposes Latin confusion on Baptism. “Some use triple immersion, repeating the names in each immersion and immersing successively first the feet, then the body, and last the head. They also look to the West:” *Ibid.* vol. III (1781) p.106.

²⁰ See Dositheos of Jerusalem, *Tomos Agapês*, Iassi 1698; or Ralli and Potli, *Syntagma Ierôn Kanonôn*, tom. 5, pp. 143-147; or M. Gedeon, *Kanonika Diataxeis*, tom. 2, Constantinople 1889, pp. 65-69. Karmires, *Ta Dogmatika kai Symbolika Mnêmeia*, vol. ii, pp. 987-991. For a French translation of this Acolouthy see, L. Petit, *Ichos d’ Orient*, 2 (1899) pp. 130-131.

This Acolouthy was published in Constantinople in the year 1484 during the patriarchy of the most holy Patriarch Lord Symeon. Let it be known, also, that this Synod, being ecumenical, is the first one with God's help, to bring down and overturn that most unlawful Synod that was summoned in Florence, as one that proceeded in an evil and unconstitutional manner; and as having failed to follow the holy and ecumenical Synods which preceded it; therefore, we included the Statement (Horos) of this Orthodox and holy Synod of ours, i.e. that one of Constantinople, in the present sacred codex of Christ's holy and great Church, since it was summoned during our days.

The High-priest, or a Priest who has been ordered by the former, puts on a stole, and says, "Blessed is our God..." standing before the Gates of the Holy Bema. Then, we immediately start with: "Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee". "Heavenly King...". The "Trisagion". The "All-Holy Trinity... ". The "Our Father... ". The "Kyrie Eleison" (12 times). The "Come let us worship...". The "Psalm 50". And then, after these things have been said, they bring forward the person who returns to Orthodoxy from Roman Catholicism before the holy gates of the Bema and the Priest asks him with his head uncovered, as follows:

Question: Do you want, O man, to become Orthodox, and do you renounce all the shameful and alienated dogmas of the Latins, i.e. concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit, namely that they think and declare erroneously that he also proceeds from the Son; and besides, concerning the azymes which they use in the liturgy, and the rest of the customs of their Church, which are not in agreement with the Catholic and Orthodox Church of the East?

The Latin: Yes, O holy Master, I do this from all my heart.

Question: Do you embrace our holy Symbol of the Faith, and do you keep it unchanged, and without a possible addition of any word to it, or subtraction? but as it was written by the holy and great ecumenical councils, the one which was gathered first at Nicaea in Bithynia, and the one that was summoned in Constantinople, the second Ecumenical, and was subsequently affirmed and ratified by all the Ecumenical Councils?

Response: Yes, holy Master, this is what I love from all my heart and I keep it unchanged.

Question: Do you submit to an anathema, as our holy and divine Fathers did, those who dared to say the Creed with some sort of addition, bubbling that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as he proceeds from the Father?

Response: I confess this to be necessary from all my heart, and I subject to an anathema those who do not embrace this.

Question: Do you reject and do you consider null and void the Synod, which was previously summoned in Florence of Italy and those fraudulent things, which this Synod erroneously embraced against the catholic Church?

Response: I reject this Synod, my Master, and I consider it as if it had not been summoned or taken place.

Question: Do you turn completely away from the gatherings of the Latins in their churches, or even of those who are Latin-minded, and of those who use azymes in a Jewish fashion, or celebrate these [mysteries] in an Apollinarist way, regarding them as heretics?

Response: Yes, my Master, and I do this from all my heart.

Question: Do you vow that from now on by God's grace you will remain firm to the end of your life in this Orthodox Faith of our holy Church, immovable and unshakable no matter what might happen to you?

Response: Yes, honorable Master, I promise this with God helping me.

The High-priest or the Priest: Confess, therefore, the holy Symbol (Creed) of our faith without any addition. He then confesses with a loud voice, "I believe in One God..." and he says this to the end. Then, when he has completed the entire Symbol, the priest anoints him with the holy and great Myrhon (Chrism) of the Church. The priest inscribes a cross on his forehead and likewise on his ears, his chin, his hands, as well as on his breast and the knees, saying as he anoints each one of the senses: "The Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, Amen". After the anointing with Chrism, the Priest offers above the head of the person who has been anointed with the Chrism the following prayer:

Let us pray to the Lord O Lord our God, who has inclined the heavens and has sojourned with those on the earth out of infinite mercy, who has taught human beings to confess the true and immaculate confession, the knowledge of the consubstantial and coeternal Trinity, and the worshipful and all-powerful Spirit, having pronounced through Your unerring mouth that he proceeds from and owes his hypostasis to Your Father and God who has no beginning, Uou, o Master, receive, as merciful and compassionate, Your servant _____ who returns from the Latin heresy to the truth of Your Gospel and of Your unerring mouth, and to the exact theology of piety of Your holy Apostles and teachers, conjoining him and uniting to the true dogmas of Your holy, catholic and apostolic Church,

making him worthy of the endless and eternal kingdom of heaven through the knowledge and declaration of the dogmas of piety. Pass over, then, as compassionate and merciful whatever trespasses he committed in his life in knowledge or in ignorance; secure him to remain steadfast in the orthodox faith and in the confession of Yourself; broaden his mouth that he may extrapolate against the heresies of the gates of hades and of the rest of the impieties; open wide the eyes of his mind so that he might comprehend Your wonders; teach him to pursue sanctity in the fear of Uou; do not recall his iniquities; purify his soul from heretical mists and every other kind of impiety; gather him through us as he runs to Your orthodox flock; For to Uou belongs all glory, honor and worship together with Your Father who has no beginning and with Your all-holy good and life-creating Spirit, always now and ever and in the ages of the ages, AMEN.

Then, he says the Psalm: "I will exalt You O my God, my King..." Then, "Glory ..., both Now...". "More Honorable than the cherubim...". "May God have mercy on us ... "

Then, the Ektenes and the Dismissal.

LIBELLUS

which the Latin converts are asked to produce in writing

Since we were asked by our most holy Master or High Priest _____, to produce a pure confession in the codex of the Church, which is kept by the Catholic Church of the Greeks, already according to his divine and worshipful order, we return our present written libellus, whereby we fully confess that we embrace all that has been pronounced and embraced by the divine and holy canons, the apostolic ones and those of the seven holy ecumenical councils, and of the particular ones which are fully confessed by the holy Church of the Greeks, rejecting all the unacceptable customs of the Latins and every other sacrilegious innovation; for the sake of which our present written confession was handed in to the great, catholic and apostolic Church of Constantinople, in the month of _____, of the indict _____, of the year _____.

What is particularly important to observe in this Acolouthy is the prayer following the Chrism, which differs from that used in the second Sacrament of Initiation. It is clear that this is an extraordinary action of the Spirit, which domesticates, as it were, the person who joins the Church. The absence of any reference to baptism or re-baptism does not imply validity or invalidity. There is perhaps a concealed reference to it in the rejection of the "unacceptable customs of the

Latins” and “the other sacrilegious innovations,” but, somehow, there is an asymmetry here between baptism and this act of Chrismation.

Some authors assumed that this new policy was due to the new circumstances that the Fall of Constantinople brought about. The Church wanted to avoid further aggravation of relations with the West. In accepting this economy, however, the Church did not endorse the unlawful Latin practice of single immersion, but simply accepted Latin baptism as valid by economy.²¹ Thus, in 1575 Patriarch Ieremias II (1572-1594) explicitly criticized in his correspondence with the Lutheran theologians of Tübingen the Baptism of single immersion or Baptism by sprinkling, but did not pronounce it as invalid.²² But in 1715 Dositheos of Jerusalem stated that the Latins who are not baptized by triple immersion run the risk of being regarded as un-baptized.²³ In 1708 Patriarch Kyprianos (1708-1709) regards the Baptism of the Latins valid by economy. In 1718, Patriarch Jeremias III (1716-1726) was asked by the Russian Tsar Peter the Great about the baptism of the Westerners. In his letter to the Tsar dated 31 Aug. 1718 the Patriarch referred to a synodical decision by his predecessor Kyprianos (1708-1709, which stipulated that Chrismation should be the means for receiving Lutherans and Calvinists into Orthodoxy after their renunciation of their errors.²⁴

As the time went by, however, and conditions changed in the life and relations of the Churches in East and West, liturgical practice also changed. Western aggression in East called for a new policy. In 1722 a Synod in Constantinople, in which Athanasios of Antioch (+1724) and Chrysanthos of Jerusalem (1707-1731) participated, decided for the rebaptism of the Latins as retaliation for the schism that the Latin missionaries caused in Syria.²⁵ This retaliation reached its height in 1755, due to continuous Latin aggression in Antioch and generally in the East. A Synod summoned in Constantinople produced a Statement (Horos) which demanded rebaptism of Latins.

²¹ Cf. Oikonomos, *op. cit.* p.406.

²² See Mesolôras, *Symbolika*, Athens 1883, p. 226.

²³ See his *Istoria peri tôn en Ierosolymois Patriarcheuontôn*, 1715, p. 525.

²⁴ See Gedeon, *Kanonika Diataxeis, op. cit.*, tom. 1, p.148 where mention is made of this decision but no text is given. Gedeon reports that the text was published in Russian Translation in the Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire, vol. 5, art. 3225. The Uniate author A Palmieri has published the Russian text in his article “La Rebaptisation des Latins chez les Grecs,” *Revue de l’Orient Chretien*, 7 (1902) p. 640. For the Greek text see *Nea Sion*, 19 (1924) 258-259. According to Oikonomos, this decision was simply a matter of “economy” (See his *Ta sôzomena...*, tom. i, Athens 1862, p. 509. Cf. also pp. 431 and 476).

²⁵ See Gedeon, *Patriarchikoi Pinakes*, p.626. Cf. also Neale’s *History of the Eastern Church: The Patriarchate of Antioch*, London 1873, pp. 184-186.

3. The Decision of the Synod of Constantinople in 1755²⁶

Patriarch Cyril V who ascended the throne of Constantinople for the first time in 1748 having formerly being Metropolitan of Nikomedia summoned this Synod.²⁷ The circumstances, which dictated it, were most probably the attempts of the Latins to convert the Orthodox in the Middle East and elsewhere by declaring that there were no substantial differences between Greeks and Latins. This situation of devious proselytism, especially in the Middle East, is clearly set out by the historians Makraios and Hypsilantes.²⁸ The occasion arose in 1750 when Cyril received a number of Latins by re-baptizing them. The Western politicians resident in Constantinople were deeply displeased and plotted against Cyril achieving eventually his removal from the throne of Constantinople (1751). Paisios II, his successor, who was returned to the Ecumenical Throne for the fourth time, did not re-baptize the Latins, but this brought about his downfall, because the people opposed him as Latin-minded.²⁹ This came about through a certain monk Auxentios³⁰ who claimed to have received a heavenly vision confirming his views on the re-baptism of the Latins and supporting Cyril V. Cyril V returned to his throne fifteen months after Paisios II's downfall, in 1752, by popular acclaim. The conflict that ensued between him and the Latins who lived in the City and some of the 'Latin-minded' Hierarchs who were aligned with them led him to summon a Synod in 1775 which decided on re-baptizing Latins converts who wished to join the Orthodox Church. This Synod issued an Horos (Statenient) which reveals the perspective of Patriarch Cyril and his followers; that is, a perspective which had already been expressed in a book by Christophoros Aitolos, a contemporary supporter of Cyril, entitled *A denunciation of Sprinkling*. The text of the Horos is as follows.³¹

²⁶ For the Minutes of this Synod see, Johannes Dominicus, "Synodi Constantinopolitanae de iterando baptismo a Latinis collato 1755 a mense ianuario ad iulium," in his *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, tom. xxxviii (1908) cls. 575-585.

²⁷ See Gedeon *Patriarchikoi Pinakes...* 1888, and 2nd edition, bibliography below (1996). Cf. also the essays in the bibliography below of Savrames (1933) and Gritsopoulos (1959).

²⁸ See Bibliography below: Paranikas (1875), Sathas (1885), Hypsilantes (1872), Georgiades (1882) and Alexandros Lavriotes (1900).

²⁹ See the account of the historian Makraios in Sathas, bibliography (1885).

³⁰ On the monk Auxentios see especially Dapontes, bibliography for (1766), Georgiades (1882) and Germanos Ainou (1952); also the historians Makraios and Hypsilantes cited above. See also DM Paschali, "Auxentios the ascetic from the island of Andros..." *Theologia* II (1933) 302-318. [in Greek]

³¹ For the original text, see Eustratios Argenti, *Rantismos Stêliteusis*, 1756. Also Gedeon's, *Kanonika Diataxeis*, *op. cit.* tom. i (1888) pp. 252-255. The translation provided here is based on Fr. Metallinos' book *I Confess One Baptism...*; *op. cit.* in bibliography below (1984); with a few changes.

HOROS

of the Holy and Great Church of Christ on the Baptism of Converts from the West

Since many are the means by which we are made worthy of attaining to our salvation, and some of these are interconnected and form a sequence with each other in a ladder like manner, so to speak, all aiming at one and the same end. First of all, then, is the Baptism, which God delivered to the sacred Apostles, such being the case that without it the rest are ineffectual. For it says: "Unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven "(John 3:5). The first manner of generation brought man into this mortal existence. It was, therefore, imperative, and necessarily so, that another more mystical manner of generation be found, neither beginning in corruption nor terminating therein, whereby it would be possible for us to imitate the author of our salvation, Jesus Christ. For the baptismal water in the font takes the place of the womb, and there is birth for him who is born, as Chrysostom says (PG 59:153); while the Spirit which descends on the water has the place of God who fashions the embryo. And just as he was placed in the tomb and on the third day returned to life, so likewise they who believe, going under the water instead of under the earth, in three immersions depict in themselves the three-day grace of the resurrection (Gregory of Nyssa PG 46: 585), the water being sanctified by the descent of the All-holy Spirit, so that the Body might be illumined by the water which is visible, and the soul might receive sanctification by the Spirit which is invisible. For just as water in a cauldron partakes of the heat of the fire, so the water in the font is likewise transmuted, by the action of the Spirit which is invisible (Cyril of Alexandria, PG 73:245). It cleanses those who are thus baptized and makes them worthy of adoption as sons. Not so, however, with those who are initiated in a different manner. Instead of cleansing and adoption, it renders them impure and sons of darkness.

Just three years ago, the question arose: When heretics come over to us, are their baptisms acceptable, given that these are administered contrary to the tradition of the holy Apostles and divine Fathers, and contrary to the custom and ordinance of the Catholic and Apostolic Church? We, who by divine mercy were raised in the Orthodox Church and who adhere to the canons of the sacred Apostles and divine Fathers, recognize only one Church, our holy catholic and apostolic Church. It is her sacraments, and consequently her Baptism, that we accept. On the other hand, we abhor, by common resolve, all rites not administered as the Holy Spirit commanded the sacred Apostles, and as the

Church of Christ performs to this day. For they are the inventions of depraved men, and we regard them as strange and foreign to the whole Apostolic tradition. Therefore, we receive those who come over to us from them as unholy and unbaptized. In this we follow our Lord Jesus Christ who commanded his own disciples to baptize, "in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19); we follow the sacred and divine Apostles who order us to baptize aspirants with three immersions and emersions, and in each immersion to say one name of the Holy Trinity (Apostolic Canon 50); we follow the sacred Dionysius, peer of the Apostles, who tells us "to dip the aspirant, stripped of every garment, three times in a font containing sanctified water and oil, having loudly proclaimed the threefold hypostasis of the divine Blessedness, and straight a way to seal the newly baptized with the most divinely potent chrism, and thereafter to make him a participant in the super-sacramental eucharist (On Ecclesiastical Hierarchies, II: 7, PG 3:396); and we follow the Second (canon 7) and Penthekte (Canon 95) holy Ecumenical Councils, which order us to receive as unbaptized those aspirants to Orthodoxy who were not baptized with three immersions and emersions, and in each immersion did not loudly invoke one of the diuine hypostaseis, but were baptized in some other fashion.

We too, therefore, adhere to these divine and sacred decrees, and we reject and abhor baptisms belonging to heretics. For they disagree with and are alien to the divine Apostolic dictate. They are useless waters, as St. Ambrose and St. Athanasius the Great said. They give no sanctification to such as receive them, nor avail at all to the washing away of sins. We receive those who come over to the Orthodox faith, who were baptized without being baptized, as being unbaptized, and without danger we baptize them in accordance with the Apostolic and synodical Canons, upon which Christ's holy and apostolic and catholic Church, the common Mother of us all, firmly relies.

Together with this joint resolve and declaration of ours, we seal this our Horos, being as it is in agreement with the Apostolic and Synodical dictates, and we certify it by our signatures.

In the year of salvation 1755,

+CYRIL by the mercy of God Archbishop of Constantinople

+MATTHEW by the mercy of God Pope and Patriarch of the great city of Alexandria and Judge of the Oecumene

+PARTHENIOS by the mercy of God Patriarch of the holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine.

It is clear from this Horos that the main objection to Roman Catholic Baptism was primarily the manner in which it was celebrated. There are clear references by nuance here to the absence of triple immersion and to the Western innovation of celebrating baptism by aspersion, which was sanctioned by the Council of Trent. The historian Sergios Makraios particularly stresses this point.³² The Kollyvades of Mount Athos, Eustratios Argenti and, in the nineteenth century, the erudite scholar priest Constantine Oikonomos also defended it. The distinguished contemporary professor of Athens University, Protopresbyter George Metallinos, has produced a sustained defense of this position. His book, *I Confess One Baptism...*,³³ also recently published in English translation by St. Paul's Monastery of the Holy Mountain (1994) is extremely valuable for the strict canonical view (or *akribeia* view) on the reception of converts into Orthodoxy. The only weakness of this book lies in its failure to review carefully the arguments for the lenient canonical view (or economic view) which utilizes Chrismation for the reception of converts into Orthodoxy along with confession of the Orthodox Faith and denunciation of heterodox errors. Fr. Metallinos would have provided a fully convincing argument, had he produced as careful an analysis of the view of the 'opponents,' as it were, of Cyril V and the Synod of 1755 and had he exposed its canonical deficiency (i.e. one-sidedness).

The Latin opposition to Cyril V intensified after his Synodal decisions of 1755 and so his second downfall was brought about in 1757.³⁴ Kallinikos III or IV³⁵ (previously Metropolitan of Proilavou) replaced him but he too was overthrown by the people as "a Frank" and "Latin-minded" and replaced by Seraphim formerly of Philippoupolis. Kallinikos' views were set out in a treatise, which was written in 1753 while the controversy over re-baptizing Latin converts to Orthodoxy was at its height. This treatise was published from Cod. 122 of the Library of Zagora in 1931, and it is important to review it here in order to gain a real insight into the view of the opponents of Cyril V.³⁶

The text is divided into two sections: one dealing with the Armenians and the way they were always received into the Orthodox Church and the other, with the Latins and how these too were received into Orthodoxy. It argues that Chrismation and Confession, or signing of a Libellus (Statement) of faith, were the main norms for accepting converts into the Orthodox fold in both cases. Particularly interesting is the discussion over the Latin baptism by aspersion,

³² See Makraios' text in Sathas, *op. cit.* in bibliography below (1885).

³³ *Op. cit.* Bibliography (1983) and (1994).

³⁴ See Makraios *op. cit.* and bibliography Savrames (1933) and Gritsopoulos (1959).

³⁵ Apart from Makraios' and Hyspilantes' accounts see Dyovounites, bibliography (1915).

³⁶ See Kallinikos Proilavou, bibliography (1931).

which included sealing with saliva and putting salt in the mouth of the candidate for baptism. Kallinikos explains that Thomas Aquinas first introduced these customs in the West at the time of the Emperor Ioannis Vatatzis i.e. some 530 years since this innovation started. Symeon of Thessaloniki, says Kallinikos, had already criticized the Latins for not using a triple immersion. The objections then, raised against Western Baptism were not something relatively new, but had had earlier roots. Why was it that previously the Church of the East tolerated such Western practices, Kallinikos asks, and now it finds them intolerable?

The decision of the Synod of 1755, however, continued to be normative for many cases but not without exceptions: In 1760 Ioannikios III allowed Ananias of Pringipos to receive into the Orthodox Church an Armenian by Chrismation alone.³⁷ In 1786 Patriarch Prokopios issued a Canonical Regulation to Gerasimos formerly of Raska, whereby he was given the right to baptize the Uniate Narkissos who willingly and without any external pressure sought to join the Orthodox Church.³⁸ A similar Regulation was issued in 1803 by Patriarch Kallinikos formerly Metropolitan of Nicaea, who remarked that Roman Catholic baptism does not procure salvation.³⁹ Constantine Oikonomos, writing to his friend Alexander Strouzas in Russia in 1846 refers to the reception of two Latin priests by Patriarch Germanos in 1844 by re-baptism.⁴⁰ In 1846, however, Patriarch Anthimos VI, formerly Metropolitan of Ephesus, received Makarios of Amida (Djarbekir) and many other Roman Catholics by the signing of an appropriate libellus of faith.⁴¹ A year later Patriarch Anthimos VI received a certain Latin named Athanasius who was a close friend of Makarios of Amida by the signing of a libellus.⁴² In 1860 under Patriarch Ioakim II of Constantinople (1860-3, 1873-8) the Antiochian Throne received 50,000 thousand Roman Catholics and Melchites by Chrismation and the signing of an appropriate libellus, dated: Constantinople, 26 November 1860 and signed by Oikonomos Jean Habib and Gabriel Pjibaras.⁴³

All these examples clearly indicate that the decision of 1755 did not become a universal norm. This was formally acknowledged in 1875 when a Patriarchal and Synodal Decision was sent to

³⁷ Gedeon, *Kanonika Diataxeis*, *op. cit.*, tom. 2, p. 256.

³⁸ Cf. *Ekklesiastike Aletheia* 1906, p.47. Cited by Germanos of Ainos, *op. cit.*

³⁹ Gedeon, *Kanonika Diataxeis*, *op. cit.*, tom. 2, p. 88.

⁴⁰ Cited by Germanos of Ainos, *op. cit.* p. 375.

⁴¹ Germanos of Ainos, *op. cit.* p. 315. See further details on this in L. Petit, *op. cit.* pp. 132ff.

⁴² *Ibid.* p.315. Also Delikanes *Patriarchika Eggrapha* ii, (1904) pp. 323-327.

⁴³ See. L Petit, *op. cit.* pp.133f where the text of the Libellus is produced in French translation. See also ZN Matha, Athens 1884, p. 182. For the original Greek document of the Patriarchal and Synodical Memorandum for this occasion see Karmires, *Ta Dogmatika kai Symbolika Mnêmeia*, vol. ii, pp. 993-998.

all Bishops everywhere, whereby the manner of reception of Latin converts was left to the judgement of the local Bishops.⁴⁴ In 1878, however, another Synodical Epistle (dated 24 Apr. 1878) stipulates that not merely Chrismation but re-baptism as well should be the norm for receiving Latins into Orthodoxy.⁴⁵ In 1879,⁴⁶ 1880⁴⁷ and 18[??]⁴⁸ other Synodal Decisions adopt the economy of receiving Latin converts only by Chrismation and the signing of a libellus.⁴⁹ Yet, rebaptisms of Latin converts did not vanish. They were practiced especially in the Holy Land and in Syria.⁵⁰

I believe that collecting and carefully reviewing these Patriarchal Synodical documents exposes the real nature of the 'problem' and opens up the way towards an adequate solution. To my mind, there is here a sort of asymmetry that deals in an either/or way with the ecclesiological paradox of schism and heresy, which cannot be either explained away or rationalized in a way that an one-track solution tends to promote. The document that has attracted my attention more than any other in this connection is the Patriarchal and Synodical Encyclical of 1875.⁵¹ I believe that it has grasped the whole issue in the most responsible and realistic way. Its strength lies in that it recognizes the true nature of the problem and refrains from providing a clear-cut solution. This implies sensitivity, maturity and charisma that elevate the Great Church of Christ to the pedestal, which belongs to it by sacred tradition and divine favor.

PATRIARCHAL AND SYNODICAL LETTER (26 MAY 1875)

“Having considered in synod the matter under discussion, namely, the baptism of the Latins, that is, whether it can be regarded as valid or not, we saw clearly in the historical facts and the ecclesiastical enactments of various times, that this matter bears many pros and cons and has had many advocates and opponents, which certainly has not escaped Your Excellency. For even before the Schism, Patriarch Kerularios used to baptize the Latins who converted to Orthodoxy, as it is stated in the Pittakion which Humbert, the Exarch of Leo IX left on the Table of St. Sophia against Patriarch Michael, and from an epistle of this Patriarch to

⁴⁴ Theotokas, *Nomologia*, bibliography (1897) p. 369, cited by Germanos of Ainos, p. 316.

⁴⁵ Theotokas, *Ibid.* p. 370.

⁴⁶ Theotokas, *Ibid.* p. 370.

⁴⁷ Theotokas, *Ibid.* p. 371.

⁴⁸ Theotokas, *Ibid.* p. 371.

⁴⁹ Theotokas, *Ibid.* p. 316.

⁵⁰ See, L. Petit, *op. cit.* p. 135.

⁵¹ For this text see, MJ Gedeon, *Kanonika Diataxeis, op. cit.* tom. ii (1889) pp. 365-373. Cf. also M.G. Theotokas, *Nomologia...* and Agathangelos of Chalcedon, bibliography (1931).

Patriarch Peter of Alexandria and from the fact that this act of Kerularios appears to have found many imitators as time went on. Indeed the Lateran Synod of 1215 criticized the Orthodox for re-baptizing the Latins, i.e. the converts from the Latin Church. After the Schism, however, we have, among the many others, Mark Eugenikos, who pronounces that we should only anoint the Latins with Myrthon, and besides, there are synodical decisions, such as that summoned in 1207, and that summoned in 1484 under Patriarch Symeon in which the other three Patriarchs were present, on which occasion the well known Acolouthy was composed, and also another one in 1600 summoned in the Royal city and another one summoned in Moscow by Patriarch Ioasaph of Moscow in 1667 on which occasion two other Patriarchs from the East were present, Paisios of Alexandria and Makarios of Antioch. All these declared that only with Myrthon (Chrism) should we perfect the converts from the Western Church. On the other hand we have the Decision taken in Moscow in 1622 by Philaret Patriarch of Russia and the Horos which was issued under Cyril V, Patriarch of Constantinople in 1755 and which became accepted by all the then Patriarchs, which indicates that they [the Latin converts] should be baptized. Thus, the baptism of the Westerners, was sometimes regarded as valid, because it was done in the name of the Holy Trinity and was referred to the proper baptism, and sometimes as invalid, because of the many irregularities of form with which it was clothed with the passage of time by the constantly increasing vain study of the Western Church. Hence, the Most Holy Russian Church, taking its lead from obvious reasons makes use of the Decisions of the newer Synod of Moscow under Patriarch Ioasaph of Moscow, discerning that they are contributive to the benefit of the Church in that place, whereas the Churches in the East consider it necessary for the benefit of Orthodoxy to follow the Horos which had been issued under Cyril V. Since these things happen to be such, it is left to the spiritual discernment of Your Excellency and of the rest of the Synodical members to accept or reject the use of economy which another Church has upheld for more than two centuries without waning, if, as she writes, this economy implies many benefits to the Church there and secures her from encroaching dangers. Whenever, then, the local orthodox Churches might be able to gather together, then, with God's help, the desired agreement on this subject will take place, as with others as well."⁵²

⁵² The text was taken from the Memorandum of Metropolitan Agathangelos of Chalcedon to His All-Divine All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Photius, published in *Orthodoxa*, 6:66 (1931) pp. 418-9. The translation is mine. Another edition is in Karmiris, *Ta dogmatika kai Symbolika Mnêmeia*, vol. ii, pp. 977f.

In the above document, the Holy Synod looks to the future for a unanimous Orthodox solution to the 'problem' of reception of converts from the Western Church into Orthodoxy. I believe that the solution is already there. It is not uniformity, but the freedom, which characterizes the Orthodox position. Such position lays stress on the act of the Holy Spirit who perfects (teleioi) in us all that the Lord has accomplished for us objectively.

4. The Russian Synods of the 17th century: especially those of 1620 and 1667.⁵³

The earliest norm in Russia for the reception of Western Christians, first Roman Catholics and later Protestants, into the Orthodox Church was by (re-)baptism.⁵⁴ In doing this, the Russian Church was in line with the Church of Constantinople. The Popes Honorius III (1216-1227) and Gregory IX (1227-1241) reproached the Russians for re-baptizing the Latins. This position was officially and synodically instituted by a Synod summoned in Moscow by Patriarch Philaret Nikititch in 1620. This Synod stipulated the rebaptism of Latins, Uniates and the Orthodox of Little Russia (Ukraine) who had been baptized by Uniate priests. Another Synod summoned in Moscow by the same Patriarch in 1621 reiterated the same position. The main arguments for this position were as follows:

- 1) The Trullan Canon 95 specifies that heretics are to be re-baptized in order to enter into the Church.
- 2) Latins are heretics and as such they must be re-baptized.
- 3) Re-baptism of heretics is specifically ordered by the apostolic canons 46 and 47.
- 4) All Russian Orthodox Bishops have followed the practice of re-baptizing Latin converts.
- 5) All Ecumenical Patriarchs have concurred with this practice.

These decisions were based on the *akribeia* of the ancient canons, but also on the aggression of the Roman Catholic Poles against the Russian Orthodox that reinforced the view that Roman Catholics were heretics. Indeed such was the Latin aggression against the Orthodox that the Russians believed that Latins were totally corrupted heretics and even atheists. The 1620 and 1621 Synodical decisions were first questioned by Synods that were summoned in Moscow in 1655 and 1656, when Macarius of Antioch argued that Roman Catholics were not heretics but schismatics and as such they should be received by economy. This view prevailed in the

⁵³ See *Pravoslavny Sobieseidnik* 1 (1884) pp. 153-180 and 3 (1863) 348-351.

⁵⁴ See L.Petit, *op. cit.*, p.135. Also M Jugie, *Theologia Dogmatica*, Bibliography (1930), pp. 92, 107.

Moscow Synod of 1667, which was attended by Patriarch Macarius of Antioch and Paisios of Alexandria.

The 1667 Synod of Moscow actually reversed the decisions of the Synod of 1620. The practice of re-baptizing Latins who returned to Orthodoxy was abandoned and reception by Chrismation was adopted. Precursors to this were the Synods of 1655 and 1656 as well as the publication of Peter Moghila's Trebnik (Prayer Book) in 1646, which accepted Roman Catholics by Chrismation. The decrees of this Synod were published in Pravoslanny Sobieseidnik⁵⁵ and can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Latins baptize not by one immersion but by triple infusion and by invocation of the Holy Trinity.
- 2) Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council (381) and Canon 95 of the Trullan Council accept the baptism of heretics who have committed far graver errors than the Latins.
- 3) The ancient apostolic Canons are applicable to those who do not have true baptism. The Latins, however, do observe a true baptism.
- 4) The Eastern Church accepted the Latin Baptism in 1484 as true. Thus, they ordered that Latin errors should be wiped out and amended through an appropriate confession of faith and Chrismation.

According to Constantine Oikonomos the measures adopted by this Synod of Moscow were not as amazing as they appear. Firstly, they were in line with the rest of the Eastern Church, which did not wish to aggravate East/West relations. Secondly they were demanded by the particular circumstances. Political prudence demanded no overexcitement with the Poles. Patriarch Philaret had in 1620 opted for a position based on theological exactitude (*akribeia*). At this historic juncture, however, the Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich (1645-1676) wanted a decision based on lenience (*synkatabasis, oikonomia*). He wanted to win the Latins over to Orthodoxy.⁵⁶

It is also interesting to recall here the case of the Protestant converts who were differentiated from the Latins at these Synods and were treated in a different way. This lasted until 1718 when Peter the Great asked Patriarch Ieremias II of Constantinople about Protestant (Luthero-Calvinist) baptism and was told that he could receive Protestant converts by an appropriate confession of faith and Chrismation. The case of the reception of Protestant converts first arose in 1644-5 when Irina, the daughter of the Tsar Michael Feodorovich, was to marry with Valdemar, the son of king Christian IV of the Danes. Valdemar was re-baptized because Lutheran baptism was deemed unacceptable at this point for the following reasons:

⁵⁵ *Op. cit.* vol. 3 (1863) 348-351.

⁵⁶ Cf. his statement: "Hina tous Latinous dia tês oikonomias exêmer?sê roV ?nôsin robib?zousa". *op. cit.*p.508.

- 1) It was by infusion and not immersion and as such could not incur forgiveness of sins.
- 2) There was no priest to celebrate it because Lutherans did not have true priesthood.
- 3) It was the baptism of heretics.
- 4) It was not the true baptism specified by the early canons.⁵⁷

Besides, Peter Moghila (a Latinizer) made sure that Ecumenical Patriarch Parthenios had agreed to have Valdemarus re-baptized.

The liturgical rite for receiving Latins and Protestants by confession of faith and Chrismation first appeared in 1757. It was reprinted many times and reached its final form in the Trebnik of 1895.⁵⁸

5. Conclusions

The above review of events and documents clearly shows that using baptism or chrismation in order to accept Latins into the Orthodox Church has been a matter that was determined by different applications of the ancient canons due to the variety of historical circumstances in the relations between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism and to the wavering practices of Latins concerning the administration of baptism. This, I believe, in no way minimizes or jeopardizes the canonical integrity or consistency of the Orthodox Church. The two principles of *akribeia* and *oikonomia*, which clearly lie behind the different applications, are not inconsistent with each other I suggest that they are asymmetric to each other, although the result they produce is one and the same. The decision for the employment of the one, or the other, rests with the Church of each time, which acts through its lawful structures of authority. Metropolitan Chrysostom of Ephesus has recently focused on these two canonical principles of *akribeia* and *oikonomia* in dealing with the recognition of the sacraments of the heterodox in the diachronic relations between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism.⁵⁹ These are the two canonical lungs of orthodox practice, which have been and are being used by the ruling authority of the Church. To illustrate this he cites Dositheos of Jerusalem, Cyril IV of Constantinople and St Nikodemos the Hagiorite. Dositheos wrote: “the ecclesiastical affairs are seeing in two ways, in the way of *akribeia* and in the way of *oikonomia*; whenever they cannot be dealt with in the way of the *akribeia* they are dealt with in the way of *oikonomia*”.⁶⁰ Cyril IV, writing to the Patriarchs of Antioch and

⁵⁷ Cf. *Pravoslavny Sobieseidnik*, vol. 2 (1861) 241-276, 391-418.

⁵⁸ For a French translation see L Petit, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-137.

⁵⁹ See my review of this book, “The Recognition of the Sacraments of the heterodox in the diachronic relations of Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism”, Editions Epektasi, Katerini 1995, which was written for the International Orthodox Roman Catholic Dialogue, in the *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 42:3-4 (1997), 569-572.

⁶⁰ See his recent book, p. 222.

Jerusalem, specified more clearly that “*oikonomia* is used from time to time ... in an obvious manner... whenever, that is, loss or danger of soul is to follow by necessity.” Finally St. Nikodemos points out in his *Pedalion* “that two kinds of administration and correction are kept in the Church of Christ, the one is called *akribeia* and the other *oikonomia* and condescension; it is by these two that the ministers (*oikonomoi*) of the Spirit regulate the salvation of the souls, using sometimes the one and sometimes the other.”⁶¹

6. Postscript

The above view was presented to the American Orthodox Roman Catholic Dialogue in 1998. The Joint Committee finally opted for reception of Roman Catholic converts to Orthodoxy only by Chrismation. This American option is defended in an official document called *Baptism and Sacramental Economy: An Agreed Statement of the North American Orthodox-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation*, St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Seminary, Crestwood, New York, June 3, 1999.⁶² This document, which has the nature of a proposal, raises several questions which do not pertain so much to the manner of receiving Roman Catholic converts to Orthodoxy (i.e. by Chrismation), since as we have seen this is canonically admissible on economic grounds, but to the reasons which have been adduced in its defense. This Postscript is no place for a full discussion on this, but one or two questions are perhaps appropriate.

One obvious question relates to the rejection in this document of the distinction between *akribeia* and *oikonomia* as a ‘Greek innovation’ that was introduced by St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite!⁶³

⁶¹ See *Pédalion (The Rudder)...* *Agapiou kai Nikodémou*, ed. 2, Athens 1841, s. 30.

⁶² See the web sites of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese (goarch.org) and of the Orthodox Church in America (oca.org).

⁶³ Prof. John Erickson of St. Vladimir’s Theological Seminary, a member of the North-American Orthodox Roman Catholic Theological Commission, has propounded this view. See his essay “On the Cusp of Modernity: The canonical hermeneutic of St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite (1748-1809), *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 42:1 (1998) 45-66 which was presented to the Dialogue. Dr. Erickson finds St. Nikodemos a sort of ‘modernist innovator,’ at least as far as his edition of the Canon Law of the Orthodox Church (the *Pedalion or Rudder*) goes. His ‘innovation’ is the distinction between *akribeia* and *oikonomia* which, in Erickson’s view, is not warranted in the patristic tradition of Orthodoxy. Indeed for Erickson this modern and false distinction, which has been mistakenly employed by Greek canonists, is unknown to the Russians who follow the tradition of the Fathers. For us the implications of Erickson’s view are far reaching, if one considers that both St. Nikodemos and his *Pedalion* have been sanctioned by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. For a completely different assessment of St. Nikodemos’ legacy, especially in relation to his *Pedalion*, see the essay of the Greek Canonist Professor Vlassios Phidas of Athens University, “*Pédalion kai ekkhlesiastikê syneidêsê*,” *Orthodoxê Martyria*, 45 (1995) 78-84.

Another question, which is really derived from the previous rejection, is the characterization of the varied nature of Orthodox praxis on the issue of the reception of Roman Catholic converts as inconsistent, especially when compared to the Roman Catholic praxis, which is viewed as consistent! Is it not true that consistency or lack of consistency are established on the regular praxis of the Church in receiving non-Christians into the *Una Sancta* and not on exceptional cases, such as those of the reception of schismatic and heretical Christians into the Church? Have the Roman Catholics kept the praxis of the ancient undivided Church, i.e. the *akribeia* of the ancient canons concerning the administration of holy Baptism? Is it not the case that Roman Catholics have been inconsistent, if not innovatory and even contradictory, in the celebration of Baptism at different times and places? Or is it unjust to view as inconsistent the Roman Catholic indiscriminate 'openness' towards Orthodox and other Christians concerning their Baptism (and now their Eucharist) from the point of view of the received apostolic faith and practice?

Finally, if the Orthodox doctrine of Baptism is indeed the same with the Roman Catholic one as the Agreed Statement claims, and if it is true that sacramentology goes hand in hand with ecclesiology, as the Geron Metropolitan Chrysostom of Ephesus has reminded us in his recent book, could it be claimed *pari passu* that Orthodox ecclesiology is the same with the Roman Catholic one? Has then the ecclesiological issue that divides Orthodox and Roman Catholics been resolved? Is it not fair to maintain that as long as there is division between these two (and indeed any other) Churches, the Cyprianic-Augustinian dilemma, which is somewhat parallel to the Orthodox *akribeia-oikonomia* dilemma, is bound to exist?

It seems to me that such questions are unavoidable, but hopefully the recent suggestions/issues of the Agreed Statement of the American Orthodox-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation will be finally determined by the Great and Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church which is *ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς*. Better still, one may hope to find the answers to these problems by an ecclesial rapprochement of Orthodox and Roman Catholics (and indeed of all other Christians) on the basis of the venerable Holy Tradition which was once delivered to the Saints from the Apostles and the Fathers in the course of the new millennium which lies ahead of us.

A Select Bibliography Chronologically Arranged

[Not all of this was available to me when the article was written, but now it is and I hope to produce in due course a revised and more detailed essay on the topic]

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