

Looking Back on Harare*

The Eighth General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe

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The Presence of Orthodox Ecumenists a Disappointment

“In the end, the crisis in the Orthodox Church is every bit as deep as the crisis in the Protestant Churches. It is a crisis of self-awareness, of responsibility, of consistency between words and deeds, of self-respect, of true unity, and perhaps above all, of theology.”¹

I

A Unique Opportunity Lost

We have dealt in other essays with the profound crisis in the World Council of Churches (wcc), examining the question of what the Orthodox stand towards the ecumenical movement should be—a stand which is being reassessed in a charged atmosphere at the pan-Orthodox level. We earlier came to the following conclusions:

- The profound crisis in the ecumenical movement and the wcc has, in essence, uncovered an internal crisis among the Orthodox ecumenists, a crisis which is focused chiefly on the following problems:
 - a lack of unified thinking on matters of ecclesiology and a lack of unanimity in responding to pastoral issues;
 - the transformation of the administrations of the official Churches into bureaucratic bodies that pass themselves off as religious, with a structure and mentality resembling that of the Vatican;
 - and the absence of any real pan-Orthodox unity, on account of the heresy of phyletism and the influence of Western trends in theological education and spirituality.²

Unfortunately, these observations were fully confirmed yet again at the Eighth General Assembly of the wcc in Harare, Zimbabwe (December 3-14, 1998), which, since it marked the first fifty years in the life of this primary institutional organ of the ecumenical movement (1948-1998), was truly a unique opportunity for an Orthodox witness.

And the opportunity was *indeed* unique, because it came in the

wake of the critical stand taken by the Orthodox ecumenists towards the WCC at the Inter-Orthodox Summit, in Thessaloniki, Greece (April 29-May 2, 1998), and at the Theological Symposium in Damascus, Syria (May 7-13, 1998),³ which stand—even though it was not entirely satisfactory—had repercussions among the ranks of many of the heterodox churches (the Old Catholics, Lutherans, and African Protestants), who for precisely this reason were waiting “with sincere longing to hear a word from the Orthodox.”⁴

Unfortunately, however, the hope of the West was betrayed for the umpteenth time, to the judgment and condemnation of the Orthodox ecumenists....

A brief report, for the time being, on certain aspects of the Eighth General Assembly in Harare will bear out the fairness and accuracy of this observation.

II

“We went naked to Harare”

A member of the Orthodox delegation, who took part in the Eighth General Assembly as an “adviser” to the Church of Greece, sincerely posed the question, “How did we Orthodox go to Harare?” And with equally striking bluntness he responds:

Without the holiness that bears witness to Christ ineffably, without the personalities that rivet people’s attention, without the unity that binds together (but, rather, with petty rivalries of a phyletistic or, more often, a personal kind), without theological arguments, without goals, strategy, or coordination. We went naked to Harare and our nakedness...was exposed. [See note 4.]

III

The Orthodox Ecumenists Were Exposed Again and Again

• “*Unprepared*” and *uninformed*. The Orthodox were exposed at Harare when, at one session, it emerged that “none of the Orthodox had even read the latest basic ‘Faith and Order’ documents.”⁵

What precisely transpired?

Apart from the sessions held in the auditorium, “open meetings” were also held—outside of the official program—at “*padares*” [the Shona word for “meeting-place”—*Trans.*]; in the framework of these “meetings,” “more general issues of a theological, moral and social, missionary, and political kind” “were further discussed.”⁶

At one of these “meetings,” in which six Orthodox delegates participated, it became evident that “*the work on Scripture and Tradition done by the WCC Commission on Faith and Order, which led to a breakthrough at its 4th World-Conference in 1963 in Montreal, was*

*completely unknown to all panelists.”*⁷

Likewise, at this *padare* an Orthodox clergyman admitted that “*most of the Orthodox Churches did not really engage in the Apostolic Faith study, focusing on the Ecumenical Creed of 381, which is very much at the core of orthodox faith and self-understanding.*” [See note 7.]

And disappointment was occasioned by the discovery that “*almost all Orthodox churches do not even know that there has been such a long-term project (since Lima, 1982 until now), as can be recognized in the most recent statement on The Nature and Purpose of the Church.*” [See note 7.]

- *A lack of sobriety.* The two Patriarchates of Georgia and Bulgaria were exposed, since, although they had withdrawn from the wcc for supposedly serious reasons, now—through their observers at Harare—they declared their loyalty, on the one hand, to the ecumenical ideal and, on the other hand, justified themselves on the grounds that their decisions to withdraw from the wcc were prompted by pressure from “conservative elements”!

A Georgian clergyman, Father Vasili Kobakhidze, revealingly stated that

...the Georgian Orthodox were, are, and always will be your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Patriarch Ilia and the Orthodox Church of Georgia were forced to leave the ecumenical movement on account of fanatics and fundamentalists and in order to avoid an internal schism, but they always pray for Christian unity.⁸

In one of his delegation’s documents, the Bulgarian theologian Ivan Dimitrov (one of seven Bulgarian observers), expressed “sorrow for their Church’s withdrawal from the wcc,”⁹ saying that “*the Bulgarian church’s decision to withdraw from the wcc had been taken, ‘not out of anti-ecumenical convictions, but under pressure from the [ultra-conservative breakaway] Old Calendarist church.’*”¹⁰

Are these not serious issues? Is it acceptable for two local Churches to degrade themselves in this way, before the heterodox world, in such an official forum?

The following observations have been quite correctly made in this regard:

Is it acceptable for an Orthodox Patriarchate to withdraw from the wcc and for His Beatitude, the Patriarch, to send a message to the General Assembly, by way of an observer, that he himself always has been, and is, positively disposed towards the ecumenical movement, but that both he and the Synod were under pressure from conservative elements? We either agonize and put off making a decision, or we respect the opinion of the majority and remain silent, or we give up. Attitudes like ‘you know, I’m not at fault’ do not sound particularly sober. ^{11,12}

- *Without preparation or planning.* The Orthodox ecumenists were also exposed at the two joint general meetings with the Non-Chalcedonians or Monophysites:

The chairman did not know English and had not seen to the provision of a simultaneous translation. The meetings did not have any daily bulletin, and had no beginning or ending, and no goals. There was no dialogue, only an exchange of monologues.^{12a}

- *“Do not pray at all.”* The Orthodox ecumenists were exposed for not giving a witness of prayer and prayerful concern for the vision of unity.

*No one made provision for the celebration of Orthodox services for the Orthodox, outside of the official program, on the Assembly grounds, although the organizers had made times and places available for such services. If we had love and faith, our knees should have been bleeding from prayer and our eyes should have been red from tears. This is the word that the Western world was expecting from Orthodoxy, and not poor imitations of their own methodologies.*¹³

The Orthodox, who were absent even from the few opportunities for (purely Orthodox) worship that there were, *“in all probability confused the injunction [regarding] ‘not praying with heterodox’ with [an injunction] ‘not to pray at all.’”*¹⁴

- *“They vied with each other in pride and with disdain.”* The Orthodox ecumenists were exposed for not giving a witness marked by an Orthodox ethos: a witness of love and humility.

“Many of the official delegations, and particularly the five Greek Orthodox ones, vied with each other in pride and with disdain for those ‘who were not like them.’”

Because of this it has been quite correctly observed that, *“‘God resisteth the proud’ is not a saying without application, but it means, on the contrary, that if one is to ‘teach’ an Orthodox ethos, he must live and breathe it.”*¹⁵

- *“A persecution complex.”* The Orthodox ecumenists were exposed for their customary ethnic frictions and rivalries.

*As long as we Greeks do not shed the persecution complex that we have in whatever international environment we find ourselves, we will isolate ourselves and continually weaken our position. No! The other Orthodox are not plotting every day to topple us from our seats. On the contrary, we undermine ourselves on our own, when we do not handle our talents as responsible people and when we forget that we are, first and foremost, members of our Church, that is, members of Christ, and secondarily members of our nation, which we ought to serve only to the extent that the saving work of our Church is not impeded or neglected.*¹⁶

- *“The Orthodox did not take a joint stand.”* The Orthodox ecumenists were exposed for failing to provide a show of unity, whether by a unified program of action or by *“a common strategy of protest,”*¹⁷

something which was especially evident in the issue of participating in the worship services of the Protestants.

What happened in Harare, with regard to participation by the Orthodox, “testifies to what was a markedly uneven reception of the Thessaloniki Statement,”¹⁸ the concluding recommendations of which proposed reduced participation in the Eighth General Assembly, in such a way as “to voice Orthodox dissatisfaction with the WCC in a united, pan-Orthodox way.”¹⁹

A divergence of views was already known in Geneva before the Assembly, because a well-known Orthodox ecumenist had made the revealing statement that the question (of how the Orthodox should participate) “is open; I have the feeling that each delegation is going [to the Assembly] with its own interpretation of the Thessaloniki recommendations.”²⁰

On December 3, 1998, the first “closed meeting”²¹ between Orthodox and Non-Chalcedonians, or Monophysites, took place in Harare; its most fundamental issue was the interpretation of the resolutions adopted in Thessaloniki. At this meeting, “two interpretations of this Statement emerged” [see note 21]: a literal one (complete abstention from the scheduled prayer services of the General Assembly—the position taken by the delegations from Russia and Greece), and a broader one (participation in prayer services, but without taking a leading rôle—the position of the remaining delegations).

What was the result of these diverse interpretations and of “the mixed approaches to Thessaloniki”?²² “...The Orthodox did not take a joint stand on this question until the conclusion of the Assembly proceedings.”²³

In the final analysis, the “progressives” “ignored the inter-Orthodox agreements and went ‘whole hog’”; “what, one wonders, is their understanding of inter-Orthodox coöperation and of respect for synodal procedures?”²⁴

In any case, to be precise, “all of [the Orthodox], without exception, took part in the votes, and the overwhelming majority attended the common prayers and devotions.”²⁵

Indeed, all of the Orthodox delegations were present at the worship services and the special “Recommitment Service,” and together with the Anglicans and other Protestants made the following characteristic declaration, among others, during the “concluding commitment”: “We intend to stay together”; “we are restless to grow together in unity.”²⁶

IV

“Unworthy of Our Calling”

This depressing spectacle of the Orthodox delegations at the WCC’s Eighth General Assembly, which certainly entailed anything

but an Orthodox witness, leads us, in fact, to the roots of the profound crisis of the Orthodox ecumenists.

“The Orthodox presence, more generally, and the greater part of the Greeks in attendance, more specifically,”²⁷ caused “*disappointment*” even to the Orthodox ecumenists: “*We left with heads bowed. When we lose the opportunities that are given to us, we prove unworthy of our calling.*” [See note 27.]

The Harare Assembly, exactly fifty years after the founding of the WCC, demonstrated, in essence, that

*In the end, the crisis in the Orthodox Church is every bit as deep as the crisis in the Protestant Churches. It is a crisis of self-awareness, of responsibility, of consistency between words and deeds, of self-respect, of true unity, and perhaps above all, of theology.*²⁸

V

Are the Orthodox “threatened and marginalized”?

The Seventh General Assembly in Canberra (February 7-20, 1991) brought the very profound crisis of the WCC forcefully into the limelight; since then, the Orthodox ecumenists have not ceased to express their anxieties over the structure of the Council, the ordination of women, the homosexual movement, religious syncretism, etc.

Now, however, the Eighth General Assembly in Harare has highlighted with particular emphasis the equally profound crisis of the Orthodox ecumenists, who, unfortunately, are entirely lacking in critical self-awareness and who put all of the blame for their situation on the WCC, believing, as they do, that “unless this situation [within the Council] is remedied, the Orthodox will always feel themselves threatened and marginalized.”²⁹

• But this gives rise to another crucial question: When will the situation of the Orthodox ecumenists be “remedied”? If the Orthodox ecumenists are incapable of giving a unified and credible Orthodox witness, how can they earn respect and, consequently, “heal” the Geneva-based Council? Since they are themselves “unhealed,” how can they feel “secure” when they are at its “epicenter”?

“Tensions” within the WCC have always been “high”³⁰ and will continue to be high, no matter what structural changes are proposed and undertaken, since—to express ourselves in a different way—, by the best scenario, if there were any likelihood of this man-made religious association in Geneva being “healed,” it would presuppose that the Orthodox ecumenists had themselves been “healed.”

The demands that are made by the Orthodox ecumenists for “changes” in the Council are quite unrealistic, given that they them-

selves, as “organic members” of the wcc, come to its General Assembly naked: without holiness, without personalities, without unity, without theology, without goals, and—of course—without the Grace of our Lord and without the blessing of our Holy Fathers, since they walk down the avenue of ecumenism, contrary to “every ecclesiastical tradition, both written and unwritten.”³¹

- Now, is it possible for the Orthodox ecumenists, without being clad in the comely garment of Holy Tradition, but being literally “naked,” to reiterate the words of the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Holy (Ecumenical) Synod: “We are children of obedience, and we glory in the countenance of our mother, the Tradition of the Catholic Church”?³²

VI

The “Special Commission”

On the basis of the proposals made in the first “Report of the General Committee,” which studied the question of Orthodox participation in the wcc in detail, the plenary session of the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the “Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the wcc,” and the Commission was granted a period of three years in which to carry out its work.³³

The Orthodox ecumenists themselves are posing serious questions regarding this issue, which we had also raised prior to the Assembly and to which we have given an appropriate response; these questions, by another route, clearly underscore, once again, the profound crisis that exists in the Orthodox wing of the wcc.

These are the questions that the Orthodox ecumenists are asking:

- “Why did we Orthodox ‘wake up’ so late and why did the Thessaloniki Summit not meet at the start of 1997, so that there would be time for the Commission to be formed, to deliberate, and to hammer out proposals for submission to the General Assembly?”³⁴

- “The instructions which it [the aforementioned Commission—*Trans.*] has now received, and which the Orthodox have gladly accepted, are that it should work ‘for at least three years’ (!) and submit proposals to the next General Assembly in seven years’ time; but, if the Orthodox had such a great problem, as the Thessaloniki document indicates, why is it that, for so many years, they allowed matters to go as far as they have without any strong protest? And how is it that they are now satisfied with such a long-term solution?” [See note 34.]

- “And why did an additional Orthodox consultation not take place between Thessaloniki and Harare that could have submitted a document or testimony at Harare, making it clear what we were demanding and serving as a basis for the work of the Special Commission?” [see note 34.]

- “How will the Orthodox now go to the Commission? Will we

first deliberate together and, at long last, clearly formulate our concrete demands? Or will we again lay ourselves open?" [See note 34.]

VII

“The battle was fierce....”

It was very evident at Harare that the agenda of the Orthodox ecumenists in Geneva is to continue shifting the center of gravity of the problems that concern all Orthodox more generally towards the ecumenical movement itself, and thus to confine themselves merely to “salvaging” the wcc.

In connection with this, the findings of the delegation from the Church of Greece at Harare are significant:

- *“For a variety of reasons, the theological character of the wcc has been undermined and transformed, for the most part, into an enfeebled religious, and, to a greater extent, political and social organization which professes to be disposed towards some kind of spirituality, whereas it is strongly inclined towards ‘syncretism,’ because it attempts to form its spirituality on a basis or amalgam of bizarre ideas and varied notions.”*³⁵

- *“The future of the wcc can be salvaged only if this organization returns to and recovers its historical roots, from which it began its historical journey.”* [See note 35.]

- *“It is necessary that the Charter and the character of the wcc be altered and that this organization become more ecclesiastical and not a political, social, and economic organization.”* [See note 35.]

It should be noted, while we are on the subject of this truly strange and baffling *Report* by the leader of the Greek delegation, which literally does not “hold water,” that if the wcc is to “return to and recover its historical roots,” it must return to its founding Assembly (Amsterdam, August 22-September 4, 1948), at which the first General Secretary, Dr. Visser’t Hooft, made the following statements, among others: “Our pluralism [in the wcc] is immoral in the deepest sense..., and consequently, our Council is an emergency solution, a stage on the road, and a fellowship.”³⁶

The struggle of the ecumenists to “salvage” the Geneva-based Council has led them to a grave divergence of opinions:

- On the one hand, the “conservatives” propose the “remedy” of returning to the founding roots of the Council, that is, a recovery of its identity as a corporate organization;³⁵

- On the other hand, the “progressives” propose a complete replacement of the present structure of the wcc and the establishment of a “Forum of Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organizations,”^{36a} or a “forum with no fixed membership” and without responsibilities and obligations for those taking part in it.³⁷

- And a third solution, finally, envisions the formation of the wcc

into a brotherhood, in which the member-churches “coöperate,” “hold theological conferences,” “provide a common witness,” and have “a common understanding of what the Church is.”³⁸

In any case, the endeavor to “save” the WCC and to devise acceptable forms of participation in it has embroiled the Orthodox ecumenists in time-consuming and interminable proceedings, which have, as a result, obscured the vision of substantially promoting Christian unity by means of a truly charismatic Orthodox witness.

Among other indications of the obfuscation of this vision, of the prevailing situation within the Geneva-based Council, and, as well, of the “climate of coöperation” by the member-churches for a “common witness,” was the issue of “eucharistic practice” at Harare.

The question of “eucharistic practice” “was the subject of several long and painful debates in the Central Committee [before the Assembly], in connection with plans for worship at the Harare assembly. In the end, it was agreed that an ecumenical eucharistic service would not be part of the assembly program (as was the case at previous assemblies).”³⁹

Commenting on this decision, an Orthodox theologian from America, Paul Meyendorff, emphasized that “*this was a victory for us, but the battle was fierce.*”⁴⁰

We instinctively pose our final question: Was this “fierce battle,” perhaps, in the end, the answer that “clarifies” the problem of “the brotherhood that has been or is experienced,” which was set forth by the Church of Constantinople in 1995?

At that time the Patriarchate said: “After fifty years of fruitful coöperation within the WCC, its members ought to clarify the meaning and the extent of the brotherhood which they experience in the WCC....”⁴¹

VIII The Orthodox Ecumenists Should Leave the WCC

In concluding our critique, we address ourselves in a brotherly spirit to the Orthodox members of the WCC, and we yet once more remind them of their duty:

If they want to preserve their Orthodox identity, and if they are concerned about their salvation and that of their heterodox colleagues, they ought to leave the WCC and cease to be members of a man-made, “worldly” religious association, because, in ecclesiological and soteriological terms, it is impossible and inconceivable for Orthodoxy to be a “member” of “something,” while at the same time calling on everyone to participate in her Catholicity and wholeness—to become members of her Body, members of the Body of Christ, which is the Orthodox Church.⁴²

Notes

1. Emmanuel Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις για τήν 8η Γενική Συνέλευση τοῦ Παγκοσμίου Συμβουλίου Ἐκκλησιῶν» [“Reflections on the Eighth General Assembly of the World Council of Churches”], *Σύναξη*, No. 69 (January-March 1999), p. 97.

2. *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνημέρωσις*, No. 29 (July-September 1998), p. 122a.

3. Regarding these two consultations, see the extensive discussion in *ibid.*, pp. 117-122.

4. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», p. 96.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

6. Great Protopresbyter George Tsetsis, «Χαράγε 1998. Χρονικό τῆς Η' Γ.Σ. τοῦ Π.Σ.Ε.» [“Harare 1998. A Chronicle of the Eighth General Assembly of the WCC”], *Ἐνημέρωσις*, 14-1998/12, p. 8.

7. Dr. Hans-Georg Link, “Unmasking Orthodox claims,” *e-Jubilee* [bulletin of the Eighth General Assembly of the WCC in Harare], No. 8 (December 12, 1998) [Internet document].

8. Tsetsis, «Χαράγε 1998», p. 8.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 10; *e-Jubilee*, No. 9 (14 December 1998): “Bulgarian Orthodox quit WCC” [Internet document].

10. Andrei Zolotov and Stephen Brown, “wcc agrees to set up commission to try to resolve Orthodox grievances,” *ENI News Service* (December 13, 1998) [on the Internet document].

11. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», p. 97.

12. • The ecumenists in the Phanar, referring to Emmanuel Koumbarelis’ opinion, and supposedly attempting to demonstrate “the tragedy of the position which the leaders of some of them [the Orthodox Churches] have reached, who groan under the captivity of extreme fundamentalist groups, which threaten them with schism,” maintain that “it is unfair for anyone to condemn Orthodox Church leaders—such as Patriarch Ilia of Georgia—for allegedly ‘not being sober,’ because he endeavored, through the historic and lively intervention of the Priest whom he sent, Vasilii Kobakhidze, to take the edge off the negative impression created by his failure to send an official delegation” (see Deacon Elpidophoros Lambryniades, «Ἡ Ὁρθόδοξία στὸ Π.Σ.Ε. μετὰ τὸ Χαράγε» [“Orthodoxy in the WCC after Harare”], *Σύναξη*, No. 70 [April-June 1999], p. 109).

12a. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», p. 97. • The two joint general meetings were held on December 3 and 6; a third meeting, on December 10, involved only the chief representatives of the Orthodox delegations [“Eastern” and “Oriental”] (see Chrestos Tsiornis, «Π.Σ. τῶν Ε. - 8η Γενική Συνέλευση - Harare, Zimbabwe, 3-14.12.1998» [“The WCC—Eighth General Assembly—Harare, Zimbabwe, 3 14.12.1998”], *Καθ’ ὁδόν*, No. 15 [May 1999], pp. 100, 101, and 103).

13. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», p. 97.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

17. Richard N. Ostling, “Orthodox Boycott Churches Assembly,” *The Associated Press* (December 3, 1998) [Internet document].

18. Peter Bouteneff, “The Orthodox at the Harare Assembly,” English translation from the Internet French original in *Service Orthodoxe de Presse* (March 1999). • In the communiqué of the Inter-Orthodox Summit in Thessaloniki (April 29-May 2, 1998), the following provisions were made: “The Orthodox conferees [at Harare] will not participate in ecumenical services, common prayers, worship, or other religious ceremonies during the Assembly”; “in general, the Orthodox will not take part in the voting procedures, except in special cases that pertain to the Orthodox and with the prior agreement of all the Orthodox” [§ 13.4, 6] (see *Ἐνημέρωσις*, 14-1998/5, p. 5).

19. *Idem*, “The Orthodox at the Harare Assembly.”
20. Edmund Doogue, “WCC takes measures to improve relations with Orthodox,” *ENI News Service* (November 24, 1998) [Internet document].
21. Tsironis, «Π.Σ. τῶν Ε.,» pp. 100b-101a. • Also see the website of the Church of Greece: “Meeting of the Canonical Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches at the WCC, Harare Assembly” (3 December 1998).
22. “The Orthodox at the Harare Assembly,” *op. cit.*
23. Tsironis, «Π.Σ. τῶν Ε.,» p. 101a. • See also Ostling, “Orthodox Boycott Churches Assembly.”
24. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», p. 98.
25. Lambryniades, «Ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία στὸ Π.Σ.Ε. μετὰ τὸ Χαράγε», p. 111.
- It should be noted that Deacon Father Elpidophoros, obviously refuting the criticisms of Emmanuel Koumbarelis, offers the following justification: “Taking all of these points into consideration [i.e., the positive atmosphere for the Orthodox at Harare], the majority of the Orthodox delegations *correctly understood* that the statements regarding the implementation of those two much-discussed resolutions of the Thessaloniki Summit were no longer *relevant*, since it was already clearly stated in the resolutions that they would only be put into effect if the Orthodox demands were not accepted (see point 13d of the resolutions).”
- This opinion, however, is *misleading*, because the text of the communiqué, which we cited above verbatim (footnote 18), *makes absolutely no provision* for any annulment of the resolutions (no such thing is “stated in them,” and certainly not “clearly”); but even if a provision had been made for the non-implementation of these prohibitions, this would have taken effect only if the Orthodox demands were accepted; but these demands are to be discussed for the next three years by the joint Special Commission, which has yet to be established and which will propose changes in the WCC’s constitution at the Ninth General Assembly in 2005!
26. Jerry Van Marter, “Churches recommit themselves to the WCC at worship celebration,” *ENI News Service* (December 13, 1998) [Internet document]; see also the press release of the Eighth General Assembly of the WCC, No. 57 (December 15, 1998): “‘Together, under the cross in Africa,’ eighth Assembly comes to a close” [Internet document].
27. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», pp. 95 and 97.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
29. Website of the Church of Greece: “Deliberative Plenary: Moderator’s Report, Section 56” (4 December 1998) [this is the opinion of the President of the Central Committee of the WCC, the Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia (Lebanon), Aram Keshishian].
30. Peter Bouteneff, “Holy Work: The Orthodox Churches, the WCC and the Upcoming Assembly” [WCC Anniversary and Eighth Assembly Feature Service No. 5; Internet document].
31. Cf. Seventh Holy Œcumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. XIII, col. 400C; *Πρακτικὰ τῶν Ἁγίων καὶ Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων*, ed. Spyridon Melias, Vol. II (Holy Mountain: Kalyve of the Venerable Forerunner Publications, 1981), col. 879a (Ὁρὸς).
32. *Idem*, Mansi, Vol. XIII, col. 128C; *Πρακτικὰ*, Vol. II, col. 805a (Fourth Session).
33. Tsetsis, «Χαράγε 1998», pp. 9-10; see Zolotov and Brown, “WCC agrees to set up commission to try to resolve Orthodox grievances.”
34. Koumbarelis, «Σκέψεις», pp. 96-97.
35. *Πληροφορία* [a publication of the Synodal Commission on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations of the Church of Greece], Vol. III, No. 1 (January-April 1999), pp. 6 and 7, §§ 6, 9, and 10.
36. W.A. Visser t’Hooft (ed.), *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held at Amsterdam, August 22nd to September 4th* (Toronto: 1949), pp. 28-

29.

36a. Tsetsis, «Χαράγε 1998,» p. 8 (the proposal is that of the General Secretary of the WCC, Konrad Raiser).

37. Zolotov and Brown, “WCC agrees to set up commission to try to resolve Orthodox grievances.”

38. Tsetsis, «Χαράγε 1998,» p. 4 (from the “Message” of Patriarch Bartholomew to the Eighth General Assembly in Harare).

39. *From Canberra to Harare: An Illustrated Account of the life of the WCC, 1991-1998* (Geneva: 1998), p. 5.

40. Sergei Chapnin, “Crisis of Ecumenism and the position of the Orthodox at the VIII Assembly of WCC,” (December 4, 1998) [Internet document].

41. *Ὁρθοδοξία* [Constantinople] (April-June 1997), p. 203: «Σκέψεις τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου ὅσον ἀφορᾶ εἰς τὴν ἀντίληψιν καὶ τοὺς ὁραματισμοὺς αὐτοῦ περὶ τοῦ ΠΣΕ εἰς τὰς παραμονάς τῆς τρίτης χιλιετίας» [“Reflections of the Œcumenical Patriarchate Regarding Its Understanding and Visions Concerning the WCC on the Eve of the Third Millennium”].

42. *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνημέρωσις*, No. 29 (July-September 1998), p. 120c.

* Source: *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. XVII, No. 4 (2000), pp. 2-13.