

On the Occasion of the  
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the  
Rest of the Ever-Memorable Elder  
Philotheos (Zervakos) (†1980)



## Text II

# Extracts From Anti-Ecumenist Letters\*

### *Abstract*

*Elder Philotheos brought a charge to the Holy Synod against Patriarch Athenagoras, Meliton of Chalcedon, and Iakovos of America for their anti-Orthodox actions and convictions. The Synod rejected the charge, and also those brought by others, because it was in agreement with all of the anti-Orthodox actions committed by the accused. The Synod also proceeded to introduce additional innovations. Those taking such actions are thus enemies of Orthodoxy and will be punished by God; and they also used force against those opposed to them. When the Faith is despised, silence is forbidden. The Lord will preserve His Bride, the Church: "Do not bow your knee to the Antichrist Pope and to his Pope-loving, ecumenist partisans." "Stand" firm in the Faith "until the end, until death." Woe to the Church for this current of innovation.*

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## I

*Paros, 1 November 1970*

*To my spiritual child Athanasios, joy and happiness.*

*I received your letter and read it with attention. You write me to inform you about the status of my charge to the Holy Synod<sup>1</sup> against the*

*Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, Meliton,<sup>2</sup> and Iakovos<sup>3</sup> for their anti-Orthodox actions and convictions.*

*When the charge was initially brought, it was not accepted; but later it was sent by means of a bailiff and they accepted it. Approximately four months have passed, and to this day I do not know what has happened with it.*

*Did they tear it up, burn it, throw it in the wastebasket? Only they and God, Who knows all things—the past, the present, and the future, the secrets of everyone’s hearts and the thoughts of the mind—know.*

*I know and have heard only one thing from information given me by reliable and very truth-loving people: that after my own charge and those of others were brought,<sup>4</sup> the Synod dismissed them; and, in order to show that it was in agreement with all of the anti-Orthodox works, words, and deeds put forward in the charges concerning the accused, certain Papist and Lutheran-Calvinist sympathizers proceeded to the abolition and elimination of Byzantine Temples<sup>5</sup> and sacred and venerable Icons, which they made to vanish by storing them away in cellars. They also dismantled holy Altars and built new ones, similar in style with the Western, Papist and Protestant ones, in order to demonstrate that they are of one mind with them and that they are not “behind the times.”*

*Some clergy shed their rases<sup>6</sup> and beards and transformed their male appearance into a female one; and neither were they ashamed nor did the Holy Synod discipline them.*

*[The Synod] gave Roman Catholics freedom to receive Communion (as I have been informed) in the Church of the Metropolis.<sup>7</sup> There is nothing worse!*

*Little by little, since they have encouraged the observance of the carnival (Mardi Gras),<sup>8</sup> there is fear that they will bring [the carnival] within the Church. And they have many other things in mind to do.*

*But He Who breaks up the counsel of the lawless,<sup>9</sup> who looks on the earth and makes it tremble,<sup>10</sup> will look also on them and will rain down on their heads fire and brimstone and wind of tempest,<sup>11</sup> and tribulations and anguish upon all who work evil: on the Jew first and also on the Gentile,<sup>12</sup> and on every person of every race and condition.*

*So these great and powerful people—those falsely bearing the titles ‘infallible’ and ‘His All-Holiness,’ puffed up with Luciferian pride, and enemies of Orthodoxy and of those who faithfully follow the Orthodox*

*Faith and the Apostolic and Patristic Traditions—persist in fighting us and exercising force. But we must remain firm in the faith and not be frightened by those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Let us chant: “God is with us; know, ye nations, and be vanquished, for God is with us....”<sup>13</sup> These, as babblers, will be dispersed; and, as dust, scattered; and will be shattered as a potter’s vessel<sup>14</sup> by the Lord of glory, strong and mighty in war.<sup>15</sup>*

*The mouth of Christ, the Apostle Paul, commands: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”<sup>16</sup>*

*In instances in which our Holy Orthodox Faith is despised and reviled, reproof and even righteous, and most righteous, anger are permitted, while silence is forbidden.<sup>17</sup>*

*But reproof should also be made with discernment and discretion, not with disturbance and inordinate anger. It should be done with godly anger, for God also tells us, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.”<sup>18</sup>*

*[God] is often angered against the impious and blasphemous, the heretics, and the proud, about which anger the Prophet David said in fear: “O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath.”<sup>19</sup>*

*Now the anger of God is great, for sinners are everywhere, throughout the world. The Panagia and all of the Saints restrain [God’s anger] by their prayers and supplications on behalf of sinners, as do certain chosen ones in monasteries and in the world, as the Wayfarer describes in his vision.<sup>20</sup> But until when? Until many cities will be deserted rather than to be inhabited by people....*

*With paternal love and best wishes,  
† Archimandrite Philotheos Zervakos”*

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## II

*To the Abbot, Archimandrite Bessarion  
Gregoriou Monastery,  
Holy Mountain,*

*Paros, 22 February 1971*

*...I believe and hope that the Founder of the Church, the Captain of our salvation, the One strong and mighty in war,<sup>21</sup> will shatter like a potter's vessel<sup>22</sup> all of those who war against His Bride, the pure and spotless Church,<sup>23</sup> which He has purchased with His precious blood,<sup>24</sup> and will protect and preserve It pure. And you who remain, stand well, stand with fear, stand valiantly and do not bow your knee to the Antichrist Pope and to his Pope-loving, ecumenist partisans, Athenagoras,<sup>25</sup> Iakovos of America,<sup>26</sup> Meliton of Chalcedon,<sup>27</sup> and the rest of these cowards and traitors. Stand until the end, unto death, that you might receive the incorruptible crown<sup>28</sup> in Heaven....*

*Least among Hieromonks,  
† Archimandrite Philotheos Zervakos”*

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## III

*29 June 1930*

*...I wrote a second time to the Patriarch,<sup>29</sup> but there was no reply, nor [did I receive] a hearing. If he, too, has been dragged along by the current of innovation, woe to the Church!*

*A pre-synodal conference is going to be convened on the Holy Mountain.<sup>30</sup> It is uncertain what will be discussed. May God guide them to what is good, for the Church is imperiled by the clergy and, especially, by the majority of the Hierarchs....”*



\*Source: Ὁ Ὅσιος Φιλόθεος τῆς Πάρον, No. 13 (January-April 2005), pp. 181-184, 184-185, 138.

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## Notes

1. The Venerable Elder brought a charge BEFORE the Holy Synod under Archbishop Hieronymos (Kotsones) of Athens (1967-1973, †1988) in **July of 1970, against Athenagoras, Meliton, and Iakovos, for “unorthodox actions and teachings.”**

See Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος, No. 121 (10 June 1970) p. 4; Nos. 122-123 (1 and 20 July 1970), pp. 1, 4.

2. **Meliton (Hatzes)** (†27 December 1989), Metropolitan of Chalcedon, Imbros, and Tenedos, and later of Helioupolis and Theira, of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. A veteran ecumenist, he “gave a seal of approval to the ecumenical movement” during the period 1965-1990. He was the voice of Athenagoras—literally the “first after the first one,” that is, the first after the Ecumenical Patriarch. During the discussion of the matter of the *Lifting of the Anathemas* of 1054 at a Patriarchal Synod, he advocated that they be lifted (he had met privately with Pope Paul VI on 5 July 1965 about this matter) **and participated in deliberations of the Joint Commission on this issue at the Phanar (21-22 November 1965).** “*He presided over the Patriarchal delegation and received the Act of the Lifting of the Anathemas from the hands of Paul VI of Rome on 7 December 1965, at a highly publicized session of the Second Vatican Council.*” He was the Elder, guide, and inspirer of his successor to the throne of Chalcedon (January 1990), **Bartholomew (Archontones), Metropolitan of Philadelphia (1973), the future Patriarch (1991).**

■ **Meliton of Chalcedon** delivered an ecumenical and pro-carnival (!) sermon on Cheesefare Sunday of 1970 at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Athens, which caused an uproar. Charges were brought against him to the Holy Synod by Hierarchs and professors. A “Synodal Committee” dealt with this matter.

(See Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος, No. 117 [20 March 1970], p. 2 [reprinted from the newspaper Ἐστία, 14 March 1970]; p. 3 [letter from a student of theology]; p. 4: “His Eminence, Meliton Charged”; No. 118 (10 April 1970), p. 4: “Deliberation of a Synodal Committee Concerning His Eminence, Meliton”; No. 121 (10 June 1970), pp. 1-2: “What Became of the Charge?”

3. **Iakovos (Koukouzes)**, Archbishop of North and South America (1959-1996, †2005), of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a veteran ecumenist.

4. See note 2.

5. On **12 May 1970**, it was noted that the *Templon* at the Holy Monastery of the Bodiless Powers (or “Petraki”) had already been removed **three months before; and, in September of 1970**, it was noted that *Templa* had already been removed **from other Churches.**

• (See Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος, No. 122-123 [1 and 20 July 1970], p. 5 [a letter dated 12 May 1970]; No. 125 [1 September 1970], from a series of articles on this subject; No. 126 [20 September 1970], p. 1: “Towards A New Iconoclasm”)

6. These things in fact occurred under the innovationist Archbishop Ieronymos, and were denounced and criticized repeatedly by the ecclesiastical press.

■ See, for example, *Ἐορθόδοξος Τύπος*, Nos. 122-123 (1 and 20 July 1970): “Orthodox Hierarchs Commemorate the Pope”; “Twenty Papists Receive Holy Communion in an Orthodox Church in Athens,” No. 126 (20 September 1970), p. 1: “Towards A New Iconoclasm.”

7. See note 6.

8. See note 2.

9. Cf. Psalm 32:10 and Isaiah 8:10

10. Cf. Psalm 103:32.

11. Cf. Psalm 10:6.

12. Cf. Romans 2:9.

13. Cf. Isaiah 8:9-10.

14. Cf. Psalm 2:9.

15. Cf. Psalm 23:8-10.

16. Ephesians 5:11.

17. Cf. **St. Theodore the Studite**: “*It is a commandment of the Lord not to be silent at a time when the Faith is in jeopardy. Speak, Scripture says, ‘and hold not thy peace....’*” (*Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1321AB).

18. St. Matthew 11:29.

19. Psalms 6:2; 37:2.

20. The “Wayfarer” is the Venerable Elder Philotheos himself, who authored, as is well known, the autobiographical book, *The Wayfarer*, in which are related many miracles, revelations, prayers, and trials. Elder Philotheos was sixty-three years old when he wrote *The Wayfarer*.

21. See note 15.

22. See note 14.

23. Cf. Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17.

24. Cf. Acts 20:28.

25. **Athenagoras I**, Patriarch of Constantinople (1948-1972, †1972).

26. See note 3.

27. See note 2.

28. See St. James 1:12; I St. Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10.

29. **Photios II**, Patriarch of Constantinople (1929-1935, †29 December 1935); He gave impetus to the idea of the convocation of a Pan-Orthodox Synod, which was appointed for 19 June 1932 on the Holy Mountain, having been preceded by a Preliminary Committee meeting (1930). See the following note.

30. At the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople (1923) under Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis), the matter of a convocation of a Pan-Orthodox Synod was proposed for the year 1925, on the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Synod. Because of a lack of time for preparations, the convocation was postponed. A further proposal for the year 1926 under Patriarch Basil III came to nothing. In the meantime, it was deemed advisable for a pre-synodal conference to be organized first, in preparation for a “Pan-Orthodox” or “Great” Synod.

Finally, in June of 1930, the Preparatory Committee convened a meeting at the Monastery of Vatopedi on the Holy Mountain.

■ The Venerable Elder Philotheos **had in mind this movement**, which had the innovationist Patriarchate of Constantinople as its center and which had clearly ecumenical perspectives. Filled with apprehension, but also Patristic zeal, he composed a booklet in the year 1926, entitled “*The Pre-Synodal Conference on the Holy Mountain. A Refutation of Its Program*,” which we intend to present in the current “Special Series.”

■ **It is** noteworthy that the ever-memorable Elder Daniel Katounakiotes (1843-1929) was also alarmed by the prospect of an *Ecumenical Synod* that would introduce innovations. The fruit of his unease was his composition of a critical memorandum entitled: “*A Voice From the Holy Mountain Concerning the Forthcoming Ecumenical Synod*” (6/19 May 1925), to which we will return in due course.