

OLD CALENDARISTS

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‘Any change in the calendar will cause confusion among the ignorant and introduce a division into the Church.’
The Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1324)

A dispute about thirteen days?

On 3 March 1924 Chrysostomos I (Papadopoulos), Archbishop of Athens (1868–1938), despatched a telegram to all the diocesan bishops of the Church of Greece. In this he announced that the Church of Greece, which hitherto had followed the Old Style or Julian Calendar, would now change to the New Style Calendar, which had already been adopted by the Greek civil authorities in February of the previous year. In the words of the Archbishop’s telegram:

The Church of Greece, in accordance with the decision of the Holy Synod, has accepted the correction of the Julian Calendar as specified by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whereby 10 March in the Church calendar will be reckoned as 23 March. . . In this way from the 23rd of the present month of March there will exist one single calendar in Greece for both Church and state.

When he issued this fateful telegram, did Archbishop Chrysostomos feel any misgivings? Almost certainly he did. In 1924, the Greek nation and Church were both in a troubled and uneasy situation. The past nine years had proved a divisive and traumatic period, first because of the ‘National Schism’ (*Ethnikos Dikhasmos*) between the Royalists and the Venizelists, and then much more because of the military catastrophe in Asia Minor, with its tragic aftermath of institutionalized ‘ethnic cleansing’. Inevitably these events had repercussions on church life. Indeed, Chrysostomos had himself

been appointed Archbishop in March 1923 under disputed circumstances. His predecessor, Archbishop Theoklitos I, had been deposed by the revolutionary government of Plastiras and Gonatas. Chrysostomos had been elected, not by the total hierarchy of the Greek Church, but by a group of only five bishops, hand-picked by the government; and, of these five, no more than three had voted for Chrysostomos. Although he was a distinguished scholar, who as Archbishop turned out to be a gifted pastor, he was from the start a controversial figure.

The revolutionary government that had engineered Chrysostomos's appointment placed him under heavy pressure to introduce the New Calendar in the Church at the earliest possible opportunity. Left to himself, he would almost certainly have preferred to wait. He knew that very little had been done to prepare the parish clergy and the laity for the calendar change, and he was also aware that a number of bishops were unhappy about the alteration, although in the event none of them in 1924 voted directly against it. He must surely have foreseen difficulties, at any rate in the period immediately following the change. What, however, neither Archbishop Chrysostomos himself nor anyone else in March 1924 can have anticipated was that the introduction of the New Calendar would bring about within Greek Orthodoxy a lasting schism, which seventy-five years later still remains unhealed. As a result of the 1924 calendar change, there exist in Greece today substantial numbers of *Palaioimerologitai* or 'Old Calendarists' – sometimes they are styled *Palaioeortologitai* or 'Old Feasters' – who have their own bishops, parishes and monasteries that are totally independent of the New Calendar State Church. They call themselves *Gnisioid Orthodoxoi Christianoi*, the 'True Orthodox Christians' of the Greek land. Undoubtedly in the past the Old Calendarists constituted the largest religious minority within Greece, and probably they still do so today. They are a minority, we may add, that was for a long time subjected to persecution.

Should we dismiss the calendar controversy in twentieth-century Greece as a dispute utterly devoid of genuine religious significance, a misunderstanding that simply concerns technicalities of astronomy and chronology? Surely, it will be said, the thirteen-day discrepancy between the Old Style (Julian) and the New Style (Gregorian) calendars has nothing to do with Christian doctrine or morality. In the words of Metropolitan Anthimos of Alexandroupolis, 'The calendar problem is primarily scientific and in no way spiritual, and so it provides no justification whatsoever to those who make it grounds for schism from their Church.' The Old Calendarists, he continues, are nothing more than *khronolatrai*, 'time-worshippers'.¹ The mentality of the *Palaioimerologitai*, so their opponents maintain, exemplifies in a striking fashion the failure – all too common in the history of Eastern Christendom – to draw a proper distinction between the essential and the incidental, between the unchanging faith and transitory customs that are historically and culturally conditioned. Out of ignorance and superstition,

it is argued, the adherents of the Old Style have elevated the Julian Calendar into a dogma.

The *Palaioimerologitai*, for their part, view matters from a radically different perspective. The calendar controversy, they believe, is very far from being merely a dispute about thirteen days. For the Orthodox Church there is an essential interconnection between doctrine and prayer, between theology and liturgical symbolism; any distortion in the Church's worship will therefore have direct consequences upon the way in which the Orthodox faith is understood and lived. The introduction of the New Calendar in 1924 is to be seen as an unauthorized innovation that has broken the continuity of Holy Tradition and shattered the unity of the Orthodox world. In the words of the chief leader of the Old Calendarist movement from 1935 until his death, Chrysostomos (Kavouridis), formerly Metropolitan of Florina (1870–1955): 'We see the calendar reform as involving the exactness of the norms of Orthodoxy and the age-old practice of the Orthodox Church; and we prefer to remain faithful to the decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils.' If any alteration in the calendar is to be made, Metropolitan Chrysostomos argues, this can be done only by the decision of a Panorthodox Synod, representing the entire Orthodox world, and not by individual Orthodox Churches acting unilaterally.²

We shall not begin to understand the viewpoint of the *Palaioimerologitai* unless we recognize that for them the Julian Calendar possesses a profound symbolical significance. It is to be seen as the touchstone of loyalty to the Orthodox faith in its true and full integrity. 'For the Church', writes Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina, 'the issue of the calendar is not merely a question of chronology and dating, but it is a question of ecclesiastical unity and concord in matters relating to faith and divine worship. . . . Every deviation from the Julian Calendar, of whatever kind, introduces confusion and destruction into the whole system of church order and of proper rhythm that governs the expression of Orthodox divine worship.'³

For the Old Calendarists it is no chance coincidence that, four years before the calendar change, the Patriarchate of Constantinople issued in 1920 an encyclical advocating closer unity with Western Christians. The abandonment of the Julian Calendar, according to the *Palaioimerologitai*, has been accompanied by a broader abandonment of the Orthodox tradition as a whole through involvement in the ecumenical movement. According to Professor Dimitri Kitsikis of Ottawa, a New Calendarist sympathetic to the Old Calendarist position, this constitutes 'the essence of the conflict'.⁴ The calendar change, writes the Old Calendarist Metropolitan Kyprianos of Oropos and Fili, 'is not simply part of an extensive religious and ecclesiastical reformation, but it is one with ecumenism, which aspires to the assimilation of Orthodox by heretics and the submission of Orthodoxy to the Papacy.'⁵ . . . Our adherence to the traditional church calendar is first and foremost bound up with the struggle against the heresy of ecumenism.'⁶

Such is the Old Calendarist case. Even if the change of calendar was not in itself a direct change of doctrine, it violated the Church's oneness by disrupting its liturgical unity. Moreover, the calendar change was only 'step one' in the *rapprochement* with the 'heterodox' through involvement in ecumenism; and this is a doctrinal issue, because such involvement has led to a progressive betrayal of the Orthodox faith. Are the Old Calendarists justified in making these claims? And how did the calendar schism originate?

Calendar controversies: from the first to the twentieth century

It is no easy task to provide a full and fair account of the Greek Old Calendarist movement. It is a complex story, and only an outline can be attempted here; I am conscious of many omissions. The interpretation of the evidence is frequently disputed, and so any treatment such as the present is likely to provoke the ire of either the New or the Old Calendarists, and possibly of both of them at once. Moreover, there is a dearth of systematic and well-researched studies on the subject. Most of the existing works are written from a predominantly ecclesiastical perspective, with little demographic or sociological analysis. It is difficult, for example, to obtain information about the number of Old Calendarists, their geographical distribution within Greece, and their educational and social background.⁷

The calendar has proved a contentious issue from the earliest beginnings of the Christian Church. Already in the 50s of the current era St Paul rebuked the Galatians for 'observing special days, months, seasons and years' (Galatians 4: 10), while a slightly later epistle, possibly not by St Paul, deplores arguments about the calculation of 'annual festivals and new moons' (Colossians 2: 16). Controversies during the second and third centuries concerning the date of Easter were largely resolved by the First Ecumenical Council, assembled at Nicaea in 325. This specified that the Christian Pascha should be kept on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring (i.e. the first full moon after the vernal equinox). This means that Easter is a moveable feast, primarily dependent upon the moon, but also involving the solar calendar, since it must invariably follow the equinox.

The Nicene Fathers placed the vernal equinox on 21 March. In calculating this date, they relied upon the Julian Calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 BC. Presumably they employed this reckoning because it was the calendar followed by the civil authorities within the Roman Empire, not because they attributed to it any intrinsically sacred character. What interested them was the astronomical fact of the equinox, rather than the accuracy of any particular calendar. The *Palαιοimerologitai*, however, argue that the adoption of the Julian Calendar by the First Ecumenical Council and its subsequent use within the Church has conferred upon it a religious significance which it did not originally possess.⁸

The Julian Calendar presupposes a year of 365¼ days; but this is not strictly accurate, since the actual length of the year is 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45 seconds,⁹ and so the Julian year is slightly more than 11 minutes too long. This results in an error of approximately one whole day in every 128 years. In consequence, as the centuries passed, Easter was sometimes no longer being observed by the Church on the date intended by Nicaea, that is to say, on the first Sunday after the full moon following the true astronomical equinox. In eighth-century Northumbria the Venerable Bede realized that something had gone wrong with the Paschal computation, but nothing was done at the time to correct the errors that he had detected. Five centuries later Roger Bacon succeeded in calculating the length of the year with astonishing accuracy – he reckoned it as 365 days, 5 hours and 49 minutes, which is only a few seconds in excess of the true figure – and in his *Opus Maius*, sent to Pope Clement IV in 1267, he proposed a thorough revision of the calendar, including the date of Easter. But once more no action was taken.

The Byzantines of the Palaeologan era were likewise aware of the inaccuracy of the Julian Calendar. In 1324, exactly 600 years before the adoption of the New Calendar by the Church of Greece, the learned humanist Nikiphoros Gregoras submitted a scheme for calendar reform to the Emperor Andronikos II; but the latter, with a prudence that was certainly prophetic, decided to make no change for fear of causing a schism within the Church.¹⁰ When in 1371 the monk Isaakios Argyros made similar proposals for correcting the date of Easter, the canonist Matthaïos Vlastaris reacted as Andronikos II had done. 'It is better to make no change', he wrote, 'for any such innovation . . . will cause no small conflict within the Church.'¹¹ In the next century Georgios Gemistos Plethon (ca. 1360–1452) suggested a far more radical reformation of the calendar, linked to his secret schemes for a revived paganism; but there was never any prospect that his fantastic notions would actually be adopted.¹²

By the late sixteenth century the Julian Calendar was in error by a full ten days. The true astronomical equinox now fell not on 21 March but on 11 March according to the Julian reckoning; but the Church, both Eastern and Western, continued to date the equinox to 21 March according to the Julian Calendar. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII eliminated the inaccuracy by introducing the New or Gregorian Calendar named after him. Ten days were omitted from the month of October in that year, so that henceforward the date 21 March once more corresponded to the true equinox. To prevent anomalies in the future, the Pope decreed that the century years were only to be leap years when divisible by four hundred (for example, 1600, 2000). Thus the difference between the Julian and the Gregorian Calendars, amounting to ten days in the sixteenth century, was still ten days in the following century. In the eighteenth century it increased to eleven days, in the nineteenth to twelve, and in the twentieth to thirteen. In the twenty-first

century, since 2000 will be a leap year, the difference will remain at thirteen days. There is a slight inaccuracy in the Gregorian Calendar, which results in an error of one day in approximately every 3,300 years; but this is of course negligible in comparison with the error of one day in every 128 years according to the Julian Calendar.

Pope Gregory XIII hoped that the Orthodox East would agree to adopt the New Calendar, and in 1582–83 he made approaches to Patriarch Ieremias II (Tranos) of Constantinople.¹³ These met with no success. Synods held at Constantinople in 1583, 1587 and 1593 rejected the Gregorian Calendar; and when the Greek Orthodox bishop in Venice, Gabriel Severus, attempted to introduce the New Style in his church, he was sharply reprimanded by the Patriarch. Ieremias II's reasons for opposing the Gregorian Calendar were not scientific but religious. He objected to it because, in the first place, when reckoned according to the New Style the Christian Pascha sometimes precedes the Jewish Passover, and this he believed to be prohibited by the Council of Nicaea. Secondly, he feared that Rome would exploit the introduction of the New Calendar as a means of infiltration and proselytism. Thirdly, and most seriously, he saw the new Papal Calendar as an innovation, sundering what he termed the 'golden chain' of Holy Tradition. 'We preserve the rules concerning Pascha without calling them into question', he wrote, 'and we have an eternal ordinance, to be observed until the glorious coming of Christ.'¹⁴ For him continuity of Tradition mattered more than astronomical exactitude.

The New Calendar was gradually adopted throughout Western Europe – in England not until 1752 – but Greece, along with the other Orthodox countries, continued to follow the Julian Calendar not only in church worship but also in civil affairs. In 1902 Patriarch Ioachim III of Constantinople sent an encyclical letter to the heads of the other Orthodox Churches, in which with remarkable foresight he raised, among other things, precisely the two issues which have most greatly exercised the Orthodox Church in the twentieth century: reunion with the non-Orthodox denominations and the reform of the calendar. In their replies several Orthodox Churches did not rule out the possibility of adjusting the calendar at some future date, but none of them saw any pressing reason for a change in the immediate present. This is hardly surprising, since the Julian reckoning was still being followed by the civil government in the countries where they were located. Summing up the consensus of the Orthodox Church, Ioachim wrote in 1904 that any reform of the Julian Calendar was 'premature and quite superfluous at present'.¹⁵

Two decades later, following the Great War of 1914–18, the situation throughout the Orthodox world had dramatically changed. The civil authorities in the countries where most Orthodox were living, such as Greece, Russia, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia, had now changed or were in process of changing to the Gregorian Calendar. The continued observance

of the Old Style by the Church created obvious difficulties, particularly where Orthodoxy was still recognized by the government as the national Church. This new state of affairs is reflected in the encyclical issued by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in January 1920, entitled 'Unto the Churches of Christ everywhere', which reopened the questions raised by Ioachim III in 1902 concerning Christian unity and the calendar, but with a markedly different approach. While Ioachim had been cautious about inter-Christian *rapprochement*, insisting that the Orthodox Church is 'the pillar and the ground of truth', the 1920 encyclical boldly proposed the foundation of a 'League of Churches', similar in character to the 'League of Nations' that was in process of foundation.

The 1920 encyclical, which serves as a surprisingly complete blueprint for future developments in the Faith and Order Movement and the World Council of Churches, went on to propose eleven ways in which Christians of different communions could co-operate together. Significantly the first of these was 'by the acceptance of a uniform calendar for the celebration of the great Christian feasts at the same time by all the Churches'. Thus, whereas Ioachim III had concluded in 1904 that there was no need for any alteration of the calendar, the 1920 encyclical now openly supported the cause of calendar reform. Old Calendarist writers have frequently drawn attention to the connection which the 1920 encyclical established between the changing of the calendar and the promotion of Christian unity. This shows, in their opinion, that from the start plans for the adoption of the New Calendar were closely linked with the pursuit of ecumenism.¹⁶

Three years later the Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios IV (Metaxakis) (1871–1935) decided that the time had come to start carrying into effect the proposals of the 1920 encyclical. He therefore convened a Panorthodox Conference at Constantinople from 10 May to 8 June 1923, with calendar reform as the main item on its agenda. The delegates voted unanimously that both for fixed feasts, such as Christmas and the Annunciation, and for the Paschalion – the tables determining the date of Easter – the Orthodox Church should henceforward follow the 'Revised Julian Calendar'. For all practical purposes this is identical with the Gregorian Calendar, for the two coincide exactly until the year 2800. But, conscious as they were of strong anti-Catholic feeling throughout the Orthodox world, the participants at the 1923 meeting were anxious to make clear that they had not adopted the 'Papal' Gregorian Calendar, but had merely emended the Julian reckoning.¹⁷

Unfortunately the Constantinople conference of 1923 proved controversial and divisive. It was convened in haste, at a time of grave political insecurity following the Asia Minor disaster, when the future continuance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul was in serious doubt. Indeed, during the course of the conference, a group of rioters broke into the Phanar on 1 June and assaulted Patriarch Meletios. Moreover, Meletios himself was (to put

matters mildly) a problematic figure. Forceful and energetic, highly intelligent, dedicated to a programme of wide-ranging reform, he had made many enemies during his stormy years as Archbishop of Athens (1918–20); and his time as Ecumenical Patriarch (1921–23) proved equally tumultuous. He was widely suspected of being a Freemason, which did little to enhance his reputation among conservative Orthodox.¹⁸

Nor was this all. In addition to the revision of the calendar, the 1923 conference proposed other changes which alarmed Orthodox traditionalists. It decided that deacons and priests could delay marrying, if they so wished, until after ordination; that they could be allowed to contract a second marriage after the death of their wife; and that the fasts could be abbreviated. The proposals endorsed at the 1923 conference coincided closely with the programme of the 'Living Church' in Russia, which from 1922 onwards had set itself up in opposition to St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow.

Yet more disquieting was the gravely unrepresentative character of the 1923 conference. While claiming to be 'Panorthodox', it was in fact nothing of the kind. It was attended by delegates from no more than five Orthodox Churches: Constantinople, Serbia, Romania, Cyprus and Greece. Because of personal disagreements with Meletios, the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem refused to send representatives. Bulgaria was not invited, because between 1872 and 1945 it was out of communion with Constantinople. Most seriously of all, conditions of persecution made it impossible for the Church of Russia to send delegates. Two Russian bishops from the *diaspora* did in fact participate, but not as official representatives for the Russian Church; and one of these, Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky), a member of the Russian Exile Synod at Sremski-Karlovci (Serbia), openly expressed reservations about most of the proposals, including the calendar reform, and withdrew before the end of the conference.

Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow, on the other hand, although unable to send delegates, was by no means opposed in principle to the introduction of the New Calendar. In 1918 he had allowed the Church of Finland to change to the New Style; and, not long after the Constantinople conference, on 1st October 1923 he issued a decree, proclaiming the adoption of the New Calendar by the Russian Church as a whole. But, because of troubles caused by the reformist 'Living Church' movement, Tikhon never carried this decree into effect.

It was the hope of Patriarch Meletios and the other members of the 1923 Constantinople conference that the calendar change, as regards both the Paschalion and the fixed feasts, would be adopted simultaneously by the Orthodox Churches throughout the world. In the event this did not happen, and so a confusing situation arose, which regrettably has persisted up to the present day. On 10/23 March 1924 the only churches to introduce the New Style were Constantinople, Greece and Cyprus. Romania changed to the New Calendar in October 1924, Alexandria in 1928 (by this time the Patri-

arch of Alexandria was none other than Meletios [Metaxakis]), and Antioch also in 1928. Bulgaria adopted the New Style only in 1968. The New Calendar is also followed by Albania, Finland and the Orthodox Church in America (the former Russian 'Metropolia'), except in Alaska. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, on the other hand, partly out of a desire not to disturb the status quo in the Holy Places, has continued up to the present to keep the Julian Calendar. So also have the Churches of Russia, Serbia, Georgia and Sinai, together with the Holy Mountain of Athos (here one of the 'ruling' monasteries, Vatopedi, adopted the New Calendar in 1924, but returned to the Old Style in 1975). The Orthodox Church of Poland has wavered between the two calendars: at present it officially follows the Old Calendar, but some parishes use the New Style. In the Orthodox Church of the Czech Republic and Slovakia both calendars are followed.¹⁹

Here it will be helpful to make a terminological distinction between 'Orthodox Churches following the Old Calendar' and the 'Old Calendarists'. By 'Orthodox Churches following the Old Calendar' are meant Churches such as Jerusalem, Russia and Serbia. These, although adhering to the Julian reckoning, remain in full communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Church of Greece, and the other New Style Orthodox Churches. By 'Old Calendarists' are meant those Orthodox Christians, in Greece and elsewhere, who have broken off all communion, not only with the New Calendar Orthodox Churches, but also with the Orthodox Churches following the Old Calendar, such as Jerusalem, Russia and Serbia, which continue in communion with the New Calendarists. Thus the Orthodox Churches following the Old Calendar form, along with the New Calendar Orthodox Churches, a world-wide Orthodox communion that is single and undivided, whereas the Old Calendarists constitute a distinct and separate movement.²⁰

When in the autumn of 1923 it became clear that the change of calendar was not going to be adopted simultaneously by all the member Churches throughout the Orthodox world, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens proposed a compromise, which was accepted by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece and by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Let the New Style be introduced, he suggested, solely for fixed feasts such as 25 December (Christmas) and 25 March (Annunciation, the Greek National Day); on the other hand, the Paschalion, determining the date of Easter, should for the time being be left unchanged, with the vernal equinox (21 March) still reckoned according to the Old Calendar. This satisfied the Greek civil authorities, who wanted the Church to celebrate Christmas and the Greek National Day at the same time as the state, whereas the date of Easter was not a problem for them, because it falls on a Sunday. At the same time, it ensured that Easter, the chief feast of the Christian Year, would continue to be observed on the same date by virtually all Orthodox Churches. This intermediate arrangement – New Style for fixed feasts, Old Style for the Paschalion – continues

until now to be followed by all the New Calendar Orthodox Churches, except for the Church of Finland and a few Orthodox parishes in the Western world, which keep Easter on the same date as the West. Like most such compromises, it involves certain irregularities. For example, in New Calendar Churches the fast preceding the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul (29 June) is abbreviated, and in certain years it disappears altogether.

The unrepresentative character of the 1923 Panorthodox Conference, and the mixed reception which its decisions received in the Orthodox world at large, paved the way for the future calendar schism in Greece. There is no good reason to doubt the sincerity of Archbishop Chrysostomos, who endeavoured to serve the Church as best he could in a troubled era. But his telegram of 4 March 1924 was to have far-reaching and unhappy consequences.

The emergence of organized opposition

At first resistance to the introduction of the New Calendar was muted. In 1927 *Ekklisia*, the official journal of the Church of Greece, claimed that the number of those who continued to follow the Old Calendar was 'very few'; they had no more than two or three chapels in Athens, with small groups in five places elsewhere in Greece.²¹ But by 1933 the New Calendarist hierarchy had begun to take a more serious view. In a letter to the government dated 14 October, the bishops referred to the *Palaioimerologitai* as 'a sizeable minority', which constituted 'a threat to national unity'.²² A year later, in their declaration of 16 November 1934, they used yet more alarmist language. There was, they said, 'a state of lamentable ecclesiastical anarchy . . . an immediate danger of schism and division, not only within the Church but within the nation'.²³

For their part, the Old Calendarists claimed to possess by the mid-1930s no less than 800 *parartimata* or branches.²⁴ Doubtless some of these were small, comprising perhaps one or two families worshipping in their own homes and served occasionally by itinerant priests. But even authors hostile to the *Palaioimerologitai* concede that their numbers may have risen at this time to about 300,000.²⁵ If we include, alongside active Old Calendarists, others who sympathized with them but did not break openly with the official New Calendarist Church, then their numbers in the 1930s may well have exceeded a million.

Initially no bishop in Greece espoused the Old Calendarist cause. The *Palaioimerologitai* were at first served largely by priest-monks coming from Athos. The movement, especially before 1935, was overwhelmingly a 'grass roots' phenomenon, dependent upon lay leadership. Most of its supporters, as Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina later pointed out, belonged to the poorer and less-educated strata of society.²⁶ But it had also some supporters in high places, such as Christos Androutsos, Professor of Dogmatic Theology in Athens University, the historian Pavlos Karolidis, and Manouil

Gedeon, Great Chartophylax of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Outside the Greek world Metropolitan Antony (Khrapovitsky), head of the Russian Exile Synod at Sremski-Karlovci, was a particularly outspoken opponent of the New Calendar.

Two formative events occurred in 1925. First, on 6/19 January, the feast of Theophany according to the Julian Calendar, the *Palaioimerologitai* went in solemn procession to the harbour of Piraeus, to conduct the customary blessing of the waters. From that time onwards this became a regular annual event. Observed with great outward pomp – with banners, brass bands, and children in Greek national costume, followed by hundreds of nuns and thousands of the faithful – the Theophany blessing has come to constitute the chief visible demonstration of the Old Calendarist presence. As the Old Calendarist movement split into rival factions, the service began to be conducted simultaneously at a number of different points along the coast.

A second formative event, part of the shared memory of all *Palaioimerologitai*, took place during the night preceding the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14/27 September 1925. A group of Old Calendarists had gathered outside Athens to celebrate an all-night vigil at the chapel of St John the Theologian on the slopes of Mount Hymettus. Shortly before midnight, according to the testimony of witnesses – including members of the police who had been sent to stop the service – a great Cross of light appeared in the sky above the chapel and remained plainly visible for more than an hour. Here, for the *Palaioimerologitai*, was striking testimony of divine blessing upon their struggle.

Before long the movement began to develop its own martyrology. On the feast of the Archangels, 8/21 November 1927, as the police tried to break up an Old Calendarist service at Mandra in Attica, a young married woman, Katerina Routis, was badly wounded, dying in hospital seven days later. She is honoured by the *Palaioimerologitai* as the New Martyr Katerina. A somewhat different act of violence occurred on 21 May in the same year. As Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens entered the Church of St Constantine and St Helena in Piraeus, to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the patronal feast, he was attacked by an Old Calendarist barber, who tried to cut off the Archbishop's long white beard. Chrysostomos's cheek and hand were cut by the barber's scissors, but his beard escaped largely intact. The Old Calendarist leadership was quick to disown this assault, but it served to fix in the mind of the general public the impression that the *Palaioimerologitai* were bigoted fanatics.

For the first eleven years of their existence the Old Calendarists were hampered by lack of Episcopal leadership, which meant among other things that they could not ordain their own priests. The situation changed in a spectacular way on 13/26 May 1935 when three bishops – Metropolitan Germanos of Dimitrias, Metropolitan Chrysostomos, formerly of Florina, and Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Zakynthos – announced, before a large

congregation at the Old Calendarist Church of the Dormition in central Athens, that they were joining the *Palaioimerologitai*. If we read between the lines in the various proclamations which the three issued at this time, it was clearly not their intention simply to assume leadership of a separate Old Calendarist movement. They hoped that other bishops in the New Calendarist hierarchy would join them, thereby creating a situation in which Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens would be deposed or forced to resign.²⁷ Metropolitan Germanos of Dimitrias would then replace him, and in this way the Greek Church as a whole would return to the Old Style and the calendar schism would be brought to end. What has never been properly clarified is how far the three bishops, before coming out into the open, had consulted the political leaders and obtained at any rate tacit support. The attempted *coup d'église* by the three occurred shortly after the Venizelist defeat in March 1935, at the height of the ensuing Royalist reaction. Did that influence the three in choosing this precise moment to take action? More specifically, did they consult the future dictator Ioannis Metaxas, as was suggested at the time?

Whatever the answer to these questions, we would certainly be unjustified in dismissing the Old Calendarist struggle as nothing more than a side-effect of the interwar conflict between Royalists and Venizelists. The truth is more complex. While many *Palaioimerologitai*, being conservative in their general attitude, were likely to be Royalists, this was by no means invariably the case. Venizelos on his side displayed no particular hostility towards the Old Calendarists. In a parliamentary debate on 22 January 1931, for example, he argued that, if the *Palaioimerologitai* were to found a Church of their own that was clearly distinct from the official New Calendarist Church, then they could be tolerated by the civil authorities. In reality the calendar dispute was always primarily a religious controversy. Political factors, while playing some part, were never decisive.²⁸

Acting promptly, the three bishops sought to consolidate their position by consecrating four other bishops in the early days of June 1935. But their hopes of support from the hierarchy of the New Calendarist Church of Greece were disappointed; not a single bishop joined them. Nor did they receive any help from the politicians. On 14 June the Spiritual Court of the New Calendarist Church declared all three to be deposed from sacred orders and reduced to the status of lay monks; they were also condemned to confinement for a five-year period in specified monastic houses. The decision of the Court was not unanimous, and several bishops sitting on it would have preferred a milder penalty.

One of the three bishops, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Zakynthos, recognizing that their 'take-over bid' had failed, sought pardon from the New Calendarist church authorities; and after a six-month period under discipline he was restored to his diocese. The other two, Metropolitans Germanos of Dimitrias and Chrysostomos of Florina, were duly conveyed

to their places of exile by the police. But by October 1935 they managed to make their way back to Athens, where they circulated freely in clerical dress. The civil authorities allowed them to continue largely unhampered in their efforts to organize the Old Calendarist movement. The attitude of *de facto* toleration continued under the Metaxas régime and during the German occupation. So the calendar schism remained unhealed.

Divisions among the *Palaioimerologitai*

In 1937 Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina, in what may be regarded as an eirenic gesture towards the State Church, drew an important distinction: the New Calendarist Church of Greece, he stated, although schismatic 'potentially' (*dynamei*) could not yet be regarded as schismatic 'actually' (*energeia*). Basically this signified that, in the eyes of the Metropolitan and of those *Palaioimerologitai* who agreed with him, the New Calendarist Church was not as yet altogether deprived of divine grace, nor were its sacraments to be considered invalid. While rejecting the New Calendar as an unauthorized innovation and breaking off all communion with those who had adopted it, Metropolitan Chrysostomos did not claim the right to pass judgement on their status. This, he believed, was a matter that could only be settled by a future Panorthodox Synod.

At times Metropolitan Chrysostomos spoke as if he considered that the Old Calendarist movement and the New Calendarist State Church, despite their mutual alienation, were still fellow members of a single all-embracing Church of Greece. He and his followers saw themselves as resisting the calendar change and, as it were, 'walling' themselves off from it. In this context he used the word *froura*, 'look out', 'guard' or 'watch': the Old Calendarists formed a group of *vigilantes* within the Church of Greece, keeping watch over the integrity of the truth which had been compromised by their New Calendarist brethren. But they did not claim to have definitively replaced the New Calendarist hierarchy as the true Church of Greece. Whereas various later leaders of the *Palaioimerologitai* have styled themselves 'Archbishop of Athens and All Greece', this was something that Metropolitan Chrysostomos never did. The only title that he employed was 'former Metropolitan of Florina'.

A much stricter position, however, was adopted by one of the Old Calendarist bishops who had been consecrated in June 1935, Matthaios (Karpadakis) of Vresthena (1861–1950), an ex-Athonite monk who was the founder of two large Old Calendarist monasteries in Attica: one for women at Keratea, established in 1927, and one for men at Kouvara, founded in 1934. Matthaios firmly rejected the *dynamei/energeia* distinction. In his opinion the New Calendarist Church of Greece was already fully schismatic; it was therefore without the grace of the Holy Spirit, and so all its sacraments, including baptism, were null and void. It should be noted that for its

part the New Calendarist Church took a similar view concerning Old Calendarist sacraments, which it rejected as invalid. Despite various attempts at reconciliation during 1937–50, a sharp separation developed between Chrysostomos and Matthaios. Shortly after Matthaios's death, during 1950–51 Chrysostomos seemed to adopt the stricter position of his departed colleague, but he then apparently returned to his earlier standpoint. In this way the *Palaioimerologitai* were split into two rival factions, the more moderate 'Florinites' and the more extreme 'Matthewites'. Initially the 'Florinites' were by far the more numerous.

Chrysostomos's main associate during the attempted 'take-over' in May 1935, Metropolitan Germanos of Dimitrias, died in 1944 during the Nazi occupation. Disappointed by the failure of the Old Calendarists to win wider support among the hierarchy of the Church of Greece, Germanos had gradually withdrawn from active involvement in the struggle; and in 1943 he appealed to the Holy Synod of the State Church, asking to be received back and reinstated in his Episcopal orders. No immediate action was taken by the Synod, perhaps because of the difficult situation prevailing in occupied Athens; but after his death the Synod granted him a posthumous pardon, and decreed that at his funeral he should receive the honours customarily given to a deceased hierarch.

Doubts have been expressed about the sincerity of Metropolitan Germanos in espousing the Old Calendarist cause in 1935, and it has been suggested that his real motive was personal ambition and the desire to replace Chrysostomos (Papadopoulos) as Archbishop of Athens. This is perhaps unjust. Throughout his ecclesiastical career Germanos had consistently upheld traditionalist views; and, even though he did not vote against the calendar change in 1924, he had certainly begun to express reservations about it by 1928. On the other hand, no serious misgivings have ever been expressed about the sincerity of Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina. Despite many personal privations he remained unwavering in his support of the Old Calendarist cause until his death in 1955. In his writings he always spoke with dignity and restraint, never insulting his opponents; and New Calendarist sources readily acknowledge his genuine nobility of character.

A major attack on the *Palaioimerologitai* was launched by government decree on 3 January 1951. Although during 1924–35, in the early years of the movement, they had been subject to sporadic and sometimes violent harassment from the police, this had diminished from 1936 onwards. In 1951, however, the civil authorities – acting under strong pressure from Archbishop Spyridon of Athens – decided that the moment had come to eliminate the *Palaioimerologitai* once and for all. The aged Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina was exiled to a remote monastery in Mytilini; Old Calendarist clergy were arrested, their beards cut off and their heads shaved; virtually all their churches were closed; monks and nuns were expelled from their monasteries. Even New Calendarist writers such as the present Arch-

bishop of Athens concede that the *Palaioimerologitai* were subjected at this time to 'intimidation, not to say terrorism'.²⁹

Although driven temporarily underground, the Old Calendarist movement was not destroyed. By the middle of 1952 the government tacitly acknowledged that the use of violence had proved a failure. The persecution was gradually relaxed, and Metropolitan Chrysostomos was allowed to return to Athens. Although the Holy Synod and many of the diocesan bishops went on appealing to the government and the police to use repressive measures, the civil authorities to their credit showed an increasing reluctance to employ force. Since the early 1970s there have been few instances of arrests or closure of churches, although Old Calendarist clergy continued for a time to encounter bureaucratic obstruction when seeking to open places of worship or when requesting passports for foreign travel.

The question naturally arises why, since the Greek constitution allows freedom of worship to what are termed 'recognized religions', the *Palaioimerologitai* were for so long subjected to repression and police harassment. The answer lies in the particular character of the Old Calendarist movement. The Old Calendarists claimed to be, not a sect newly founded in 1924, but nothing else than the 'True Orthodox Christians' of the Greek land. This meant that, from the viewpoint of the New Calendarist State Church, they were not a separate denomination clearly distinct from the Orthodox Church of Greece, but simply a faction within it – an assemblage of rebellious children who refused obedience to the properly appointed ecclesiastical leadership, but over whom the hierarchy of the Church of Greece could still claim canonical authority. In the words of a memorandum addressed by the New Calendarist Holy Synod to the government on 1 March 1980:

The *Palaioimerologitai* in Greece disagree with our Church for reasons that are not doctrinal. In consequence they are neither schismatics nor heterodox; and so they cannot claim the right to a parallel and independent existence as Orthodox Christians alongside the Church of Greece and within the limits allowed by the Constitution. . . . They have of course the right to leave the Church by their own free choice, in which case they would then be characterized as non-Orthodox. But they will not so much as envisage the possibility of such a course, since they consider on the contrary that they alone are genuine Orthodox.³⁰

Such is the reasoning which led the New Calendarist church authorities, and for a long time the Greek civil authorities as well, to deny freedom of worship to the *Palaioimerologitai*. A particularly vexatious disability to which they were subjected concerned the non-recognition of their marriages. Since the State Church regarded their sacraments as invalid, the civil authorities

refused to register their marriages, with the result that their children were considered illegitimate – a serious social stigma in Greece, at any rate in the past. It was not until 1969 that the state abandoned its negative stance and, despite protests from the New Calendarist Holy Synod, allowed the marriages of the *Palaioimerologitai* to be officially recorded. Paradoxically this occurred during the otherwise illiberal régime of the Colonels.³¹

On various occasions since the late 1920s, the New Calendarist Church of Greece and the Greek government have suggested a possible solution to the conflict: let the Old Calendarist congregations continue to observe the Julian reckoning, but let them be served by priests appointed by the local (New Calendarist) diocesan bishop. Any such compromise, however, was unacceptable to the *Palaioimerologitai*. From their point of view it would be a betrayal to submit in this way to the jurisdiction of a New Calendarist bishop and to commemorate his name in the Divine Liturgy. For them to enter into communion with the State Church, a minimum requirement would be that the latter in its entirety should return to the Julian Calendar. It would also be necessary, so most *Palaioimerologitai* would add, that the State Church should break off all relations with other Orthodox Churches following the New Calendar.

During the late 1940s, with the advancing age of Chrysostomos of Florina and Matthaïos of Vresthena, both groups of *Palaioimerologitai* grew increasingly concerned about the continuation of their episcopate. In 1948, two years before his death, Matthaïos proceeded on his own to consecrate four new bishops. According to the rules prevailing in the Orthodox Church, a new bishop must be consecrated by three or at the very least two existing bishops, not by one alone. There have, however, been rare occasions in the past when a consecration performed by a single bishop has been recognized as valid, even if irregular. Yet, bearing in mind the oft-repeated claim of the Old Calendarists to be strictly loyal to the Holy Canons, it is at the very least ironical that Matthaïos and his entourage should have acted in this way in open violation of the canonical tradition of the Orthodox Church.

Chrysostomos of Florina died in 1955 without consecrating any bishop to succeed him. The main group of Old Calendarists, the 'Florinites', were now left without an episcopate; for all four of the bishops consecrated in June 1935 had by this time died or returned to the State Church. In December 1960 the 'Florinites' therefore sent one of their number, Archimandrite Akakios (Pappas), to America, where he sought Episcopal consecration from the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) in New York. This body was the continuation of the Russian Exile Synod that had been resident at Sremski-Karlovci (Serbia) during the interwar period. But the Russian Synod, headed by Metropolitan Anastasy – who as a member of the 1923 Panorthodox Conference in Constantinople had expressed reservations about the calendar change – rejected the request of

Akakios, on the grounds that they had no authority to interfere in the internal affairs of the Church of Greece, and also because Akakios was personally unknown to them.³²

This, however, was not the end of the story. Later in the same month of December 1960, two bishops belonging to ROCOR, Archbishop Serafim of Chicago and the Romanian Bishop Teofil (Ionescu), in defiance of the decision by the New York Synod, proceeded to consecrate Akakios Pappas at Detroit under conditions of strict secrecy. A bizarre feature in this clandestine consecration was that Bishop Teofil was himself a follower of the New Calendar, a fact of which Akakios was fully aware. It was not until December 1969 that ROCOR gave its official approval to the consecration of Akakios; by this time Metropolitan Anastasy was dead. In May 1962 Akakios consecrated three further bishops, with the assistance of another member of ROCOR, Archbishop Leonty of Chile and Peru, who had travelled to Greece for this purpose. When Leonty's action came to the knowledge of the New York Synod, he was severely reprimanded for acting without its approval. In this way the 'Florinites' recovered the episcopate, albeit in a manner that was distinctly questionable.

During 1963–94 the 'Florinite' group was headed by Archbishop Avxentios (Pastras). The later years of his lengthy reign were marked by a series of schisms, with the result that by the 1990s the Old Calendarist movement as a whole had become split into at least eight subdivisions, with each group headed by its own synod of bishops, and with each synod excommunicating all the others. This unhappy fragmentation, along with the undignified polemic that has accompanied it, has greatly impaired the influence of the *Palaioimerologitai*. In April 1998 the number of rival jurisdictions was slightly diminished, when two Old Calendarist bishops in the United States, Paisios and Vikentios, were received into communion by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. They claim to have twenty parishes, with 30,000 faithful. They have been allowed to retain the Julian Calendar, but the two bishops with their clergy were reordained.

Among the existing Old Calendarist jurisdictions, the one which continues most directly the tradition of Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina is the group headed by Metropolitan Kyprianos of Oropos, with its centre at the Monastery of Fili in Attica. Its dependency in North America, under Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna, issues theological publications of solid value. The Fili group, which is affiliated with ROCOR, consistently refuses to condemn the sacraments of the New Calendarists as invalid. By contrast, most if not all of the other Old Calendarist jurisdictions – although for the greater part tracing their succession from Avxentios (Pastras), and therefore ultimately from Chrysostomos of Florina – now adhere to the 'Matthewite' standpoint, condemning the sacraments of the 'mainstream' Orthodox Churches as invalid and devoid of sanctifying grace. Thus the 'Matthewite' position, which initially was upheld by no more than a small minority of

Palaioimerologitai, has gradually become the majority view.

How numerous are the Old Calendarists in Greece? Spokesmen for the *Palaioimerologitai*, both in the 1930s and more recently, have regularly claimed about one million supporters.³³ But a double census, taken in 1969 independently by the civil authorities and by the State Church, suggests that the true figure is much lower. Here are the results (the statistics from the Church of Greece do not include Crete and the Dodecanese).³⁴

	<i>Government census</i>	<i>Church of Greece census</i>
Laity	57,229	30,110
Clergy	222	207
Churches and chapels	269	243
Monasteries and hermitages	43	107
Monks	180	146
Nuns	324	1,152

In both lists the Old Calendarists are concentrated mainly in Athens, Piraeus, Attica and Thessalonica. Old Calendarist sources reject these figures as unduly low, and in this they seem justified. Personally I would accept as not unreasonable the estimate given in the Fili/Etna publication, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece*: 'they still number in the hundreds of thousands'.³⁵

At no point in its history has the Old Calendarist movement in Greece possessed any seminary for the training of its clergy. But if the *Palaioimerologitai* have few theological centres, they possess numerous monastic houses. Indeed, the most striking feature about the entire movement is the dominant role played within it by monasteries and monastic clergy. What St Theodore the Studite said in ninth-century Byzantium is singularly applicable to the 'True Orthodox Christians' of the twentieth century: 'Monks are the sinews and foundations of the Church'.³⁶ Almost all the Old Calendarist bishops reside in monasteries of which in many cases they are the founders. Particularly impressive is the large number of nuns in the movement of the *Palaioimerologitai*; but it should be remembered that since the 1920s there has been a revival of women's monasticism in the New Calendarist Church as well. Perhaps the *Palaioimerologitai* have today (not counting Mount Athos) a total of about 2,000–2,500 monks and nuns, which is roughly equivalent to the number of monastics in the State Church.

The Old Calendarist laity have been profoundly influenced by the prevailing spirit of monastic piety. 'The Faithful', states Bishop Amvrosios, a member of the Fili group, 'who are, for the most part, simple and humble persons, are known for their old-fashioned modesty and Christian behaviour, their careful keeping of the regulations of the Church – in particular the fasts, which are now almost totally disregarded by the members of the State

Church – and their love of the Traditions of Holy Orthodoxy. . . . Many of these families could be better described as "little monasteries", which explains, in turn, the many monastic vocations'.³⁷

The primary source of this monastic ethos is the Holy Mountain of Athos. In its early years, as noted earlier, the movement was largely dependent on the ministrations of itinerant monk-priests from the Mountain, and but for this support the Old Calendarist cause might never have become firmly established. As regards the present situation within Athos itself, all the monks follow the Old Style, but of the twenty 'ruling' monasteries only one, Esphigmenou, is 'Old Calendarist' in the strict sense, that is to say, not in communion with the Church of Greece; the remaining monasteries all commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch during divine worship. Outside the twenty main monasteries, however, there are many smaller hermitages which refuse all ecclesiastical communion with the New Calendarists. Writing in 1982, Archbishop Christodoulos reckoned these 'zealot' monks, as they are known, to number about 300–400, out of an overall total of 1,146 monks on the Holy Mountain.³⁸

The Greek Old Calendarist movement also has supporters outside Greece itself. They are to be found in Cyprus and in most parts of the Greek diaspora: for example, in the United States (especially in the New York district of Astoria), in Canada (with large communities in Toronto and Montreal), in Australia, in Britain (here the number is exceedingly small) and elsewhere in Western Europe. In addition, there are non-Greek Old Calendarist groups in Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia and Kenya. Many members of the State Church of Greece, on emigrating to North America, are attracted to Old Calendarist parishes, not solely or primarily because of the calendar, but because they find in the churches of the *Palaioimerologitai* the Orthodox piety with which they are familiar in the Mother Country. In churches of the New Calendarist Greek Archdiocese, they are often bewildered by what they encounter: pews, fitted carpets, organs, mixed choirs dressed in coloured robes, clean-shaven clergy wearing suits and clerical collars. In the Old Calendarist churches, on the other hand, they discover a more congenial atmosphere: no pews but only stalls around the walls, perhaps no electric light but only beeswax candles and olive oil lamps, Byzantine chanting, clergy in *rason* and *kalymmafchion*. Let us not be too quick to dismiss these features as no more than 'cultural'. In the traditional Orthodox world view outward objects and gestures possess an inner and symbolical value, and every liturgical action finds its place within an all-embracing whole in which nothing is purely incidental. Deserving of particular mention, among the Old Calendarists in North America, is the important monastic centre at Boston, Massachusetts, consisting of Holy Transfiguration Monastery for men, and Holy Nativity Convent for women. These belong very definitely to the 'Matthewite' persuasion. Holy Transfiguration Monastery has

issued, among other publications, several volumes of liturgical translations and a fine edition of St Isaac the Syrian.³⁹

What future have the *Palaioimerologitai*? It is tempting to dismiss them as a survival from the past, doomed to gradual extinction. Their significance, it might be argued, belongs to the Greek world of the 1920s and 1930s. In that disturbed era – with the struggle between the Royalists and Venizelists, with the Asia Minor disaster and the collapse of the ‘Great Idea’, and with the many other changes in Greek society following the first world war – conservative Greek Orthodox clung in their bewilderment to the Julian Calendar, regarding it as a guarantee of continuity in a time of change; they saw it as symbolizing all the values in the traditional way of life which seemed to them under threat. The calendar fulfilled the same symbolic role, though to a lesser degree, in the late 1940s, another troubled time in Greek national life. But does the Old Calendar have the same power as a symbol in the late 1990s? What significance have the *Palaioimerologitai* today, weakened as they are by internal divisions, within a Greece that is part of the European Union?

Such a conclusion, however, may be premature. Following the collapse of Communism in 1988–89, there has emerged throughout Eastern Europe a growing conservatism within the Orthodox Church. This trend is especially evident within the Church of Russia. At several leading monasteries, for example, under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow – which is of course in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the other New Calendarist Churches – visiting clergy who follow the New Style are no longer invited to concelebrate and may even be refused communion. Conservative tendencies are also gaining strength within the Church of Greece and, still more, among the Orthodox in North America, whether Greek or non-Greek. Although at present marginalized, the Greek *Palaioimerologitai* – and their allies in Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia – may still have a part to play on the Orthodox world of the twenty-first century.

Notes

- 1 Anthimos D. Roussas, *To Palaioimerologiakon* (Athens, 1974), 14–15.
- 2 *Akrivis thesis tou imerologiakou zitimatos* (Athens, 1950), 11–12.
- 3 *To Proton Panelladikon Synedrion ton opadon tou Ioulianou Eortologiou*, (Athens, 1947) 16, 44.
- 4 *The Old Calendarists and the Rise of Religious Conservatism in Greece*, translated by Novice Patrick and Bishop Chrysostomos of Etna (Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, Etna, CA, 1995), 14; for the original French text of this article, see *Cahiers d'études sur la Méditerranée orientale et le monde turco-iranien*, XVII (1994), 17–51.
- 5 In Bishop Chrysostomos, Bishop Auxentios and Bishop Ambrose, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece* (4th ed.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, Etna, California, 1994), 103. This is the most balanced Old Calendarist treatment of the subject available in English.

- 6 ‘Schism’ or ‘Walling-Off’? A Pastoral Epistle, supplement to the periodical *Orthodox Tradition*, XV, 4 (1998) 15.
- 7 The most thorough existing study, written from a New Calendarist viewpoint, is the 460-page doctoral dissertation by Christodoulos K. Paraskevaïdis (now Archbishop of Athens), *Istoriki kai kanoniki theorisis tou Palaioimerologitikon zitimatos kata te tin genesin kai tin exelixin aftou en Elladi* (Athens, 1982), which is closely based on the archives of the Holy Synod at Athens. For Old Calendarist accounts in English, consult Bishop Chrysostomos and others, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece*, (see note 5); and *The Struggle against Ecumenism: The History of the True Orthodox Church of Greece from 1924 to 1994* (The Holy Orthodox Church in North America, Boston, Mass., 1998). These represent respectively the ‘Florinite’ and the ‘Matthewite’ standpoints. In Greek, consult also: Stavros Karamitsos-Gamvroulias, *I agonia en to kipo tis Gethsimani* (Athens, 1961); A. Panotis, in *Thriskeftiki kai Ithiki Enkyklopaideia*, I (Athens, 1962), 817–27; and Antonios M. Papadopoulos, *I Ekklesia tis Ellados enanti thematon panorthodoxou endiapherontos kata ton eikoston aiona* (Thessaloniki, 1975), 39–67 (the first of these is Old Calendarist, the second and third New Calendarist). There is a wealth of information in Irénée Doens, ‘Les Palaioimérológites en Grèce et leurs monastères’, *Irénikon*, XLIV, 4 (1971), 548–65; XLV, 1 (1972), 51–74.
- 8 The serious enquirer needs also to read the numerous writings of Archbishop Chrysostomos of Athens and of Metropolitan Chrysostomos, formerly of Florina: the main titles are listed in the very extensive bibliography of Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*.
- 9 Compare the title (which speaks for itself) of the work by Kallistos Makris, Old Calendarist Bishop of Corinth, *The God-Inspired Orthodox Julian Calendar vs. the False Gregorian Papal Calendar* (Slovo Publishing Co., Chicago, 1971).
- 10 That is the length in AD 2000; the year has slowed down by ten seconds since AD 1.
- 11 Nikiphoros Gregoras, *History*, VII, 13 (Bonn edition, 372).
- 12 Vlastaris, ‘On the Holy Pascha’, *Alphabetical Treatise* XVI, 7, in G. A. Rallis and M. Potlis, *Syntagma ton theion kai ieron kanonon*, VI (Athens, 1859) 424.
- 13 See C. M. Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986), 352–3.
- 14 See V. Peri, *Due date: un unica Pasqua. Le origini della moderna disparità liturgica in un una trattativa ecumenica tra Roma e Constantinopoli (1582–84)* (Milan, 1967). Compare G. V. Coyne, M. A. Hoskin and O. Pedersen, eds., *Gregorian Reform of the Calendar. Proceedings of the Vatican Conference to Commemorate its 400th Anniversary, 1582–1982* (Vatican City, 1983), especially 228–32, 261–2.
- 15 Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*, 20, note 21.
- 16 Ioachim III’s 1902 encyclical, and his further letter of 1904 commenting on the responses from the other Orthodox Churches, can be found in Constantin G. Patelos, *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement: Documents and Statements 1902–1975* (World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1978), 27–39. For the answer of the Church of Russia, see Athelstan Riley (ed.), *Birkbeck and the Russian Church*, (Anglican and Eastern Association, London/New York 1917) 247–57 (with W. J. Birkbeck’s comments, 258–67).
- 17 The full text of the 1920 encyclical is given in Patelos, *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, 40–3.
- 18 For the proceedings of the 1923 Conference, see *Praktika kai Apophaseis tou en Konstantinoupolei Panorthodoxou Synedriou (10 Maiou–8 Iouniou 1923)* (Constantinople, 1923); on the calendar, see 6–7, 13–14, 17–24, 36–40, 50–77,

- 80–84, 89, 129–31, 169–71, 189, 199–208, 211–15. The minutes are frank and vivid, with many fascinating details.
- 18 The Masonic connections of Meletios IV were confirmed by Athenagoras II (Kokkinakis), Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain during 1963–79, who was serving under Meletios as a deacon in Alexandria at the time of the latter's death in 1935. I was present at a diocesan clergy meeting in London on 7 November 1978, at which Athenagoras described how he had been an unwilling witness of the Masonic funeral given to Meletios. Compare Kitsikis, *The Old Calendarists and the Rise of Religious Conservatism in Greece*, 16–17, citing evidence from the Masonic Bulletin of the Grand Lodge of Greece. It is sometimes alleged that Archbishop Chrysostomos (Papadopoulos) of Athens was also a Freemason, but I know of no specific evidence to prove this.
- 19 The case of Serbia during the interwar period shows that, while doubtless inconvenient, it is by no means impossible for Church and state to coexist with different calendars, even when Orthodoxy constitutes the national Church. Might not Greece in 1923–4 have followed the same policy as Serbia?
- 20 In practice, however, the line of demarcation is sometimes blurred. For example, the Old Calendarist group headed by Metropolitan Kyprianos of Oropos and Fili is affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR); clergy of ROCOR concelebrate with clergy of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Church of Serbia; Jerusalem and Serbia are in full communion with the New Calendarist Orthodox Churches. Such instances of 'mediate' communion are relatively frequent in church history; a notable example is the fourth-century Melitian Schism at Antioch.
- 21 *Ekklesia*, V (1927) 21.
- 22 *Ekklesia*, XI (1933) 320–2.
- 23 *Ekklesia*, XII (1934) 369–70.
- 24 See *To Proton Panelladikon Synedrion*, 4; Karamitsos-Gamvroulias, *I agonía*, 103.
- 25 This is given as an absolute maximum by Metropolitan Ioacheim of Dimitrias, *To Palaioimerologiakon Zitima en Elladi* (2 parts: Volos/Athens, 1948–52), part II, 17. But elsewhere he suggests that the Old Calendarists were never more than 50–60,000 (part I, 8), or at the most 100,000 (part II, 15).
- 26 *Akrivis thesis tou imerologiakou zitimatos*, 75–76.
- 27 In statements to the press made during May 1935, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina mentioned by name nine other bishops who, he claimed, had promised to join the three (Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*, 237, note 395).
- 28 A somewhat different political matter also calls for mention. The Slav Christians in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria were, as already noted, still following the Old Calendar. The Greek government was alarmed that, as a result of Old Calendarist propaganda, the Slav-speaking minority in Northern Greece would establish closer links with the Slavs across the border who kept the Old Style; in this way the calendar dispute would strengthen Slav separatist movements on Greek soil. This possibility is mentioned by Metropolitan Chrysostomos (Kavouridis), who had served as Bishop of Pelagonia (Bitola) during 1911–18 and of Florina during 1926–32, and who was therefore well informed about the situation in these regions: see his comments in *Akrivis thesis tou imerologiakou zitimatos*, 53. He also mentions how Slav-speaking Orthodox in Greek territory would cross into Yugoslavia to keep church festivals according to the Old Calendar: see *Pragmateia peri tis anothēn ekpolitistikis apostolis tis Ellados kai ton aitōn tis kataptoseos aftis* (Mytilini, 1951), 113–14.
- 29 Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*, 304, note 601.
- 30 Memorandum of the Church of Greece to the Ministry of Education, 1st March

- 1980 (in *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia*, no. 82).
- 31 See the decree of Stylianos Pattakos, Minister of the Interior, dated 5 April 1969, specifying that the sacraments of the *Palaioimerologitai* should henceforward be recorded in the *lixíarchika vivlia*.
- 32 See the letter of Metropolitan Anastasy to the Greek Archbishop Iakovos of America, printed in the journal *Typos* (subsequently *Orthodoxos Typos*) July–August 1961.
- 33 See, for example, Kitsikis, *The Old Calendarists and the Rise of Religious Conservatism in Greece*, 30 (writing in 1994): 'The Old Calendar movement is estimated to approach a million Faithful in Greece, out of a population of ten million, not counting the sympathizers who prefer for the moment to remain in the bosom of the official Church.'
- 34 Full details, with the figures for each nomarchy or diocese, are given in Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*, 380–88.
- 35 Bishop Chrysostomos and others, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece*, 46.
- 36 *Short Catecheses*, 114: cited by J. M. Hussey, in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, IV, 2 (Cambridge, 1967), 184.
- 37 Bishop Chrysostomos and others, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece*, 45–46. Bishop Ambrose (in the world, Adrian Baird) is of British origin. Many members of the New Calendarist Church of Greece do in fact observe the fasts.
- 38 Paraskevaïdis, *Theorisis*, 396. The figure of 1,146 represents the number of Athonite monks in the year 1972. By 1999 the total had risen to about 2,000 and of these perhaps 400–500 are zealots; but this is no more than a guess.
- 39 *The Ascetical Homilies of St Isaac the Syrian* (Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, Mass., 1984). The translator and editor, Dr Dana Miller, has left the Monastery.