

Apostolic Anglo-Orthodox Unity Efforts in Multicultural Societies: The 1930 Lambeth Negotiations and Moscow's Opposition

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Abstract: *Inter-religious and inter-confessional dialogues are fundamental for fostering harmonious multicultural societies on an international scale. The Lambeth dialogues facilitated significant mutual recognition of baptism and priestly ordination between the Anglican Church and Orthodox Churches. However, the influence of the Moscow totalitarian regime on the Russian Orthodox Church, alongside other geopolitical factors, posed significant obstacles to efforts toward apostolic unity.*

Keywords: *Inter-religious dialogue, Apostolic unity, Lambeth Conference, Multicultural societies, Moscow regime influence*

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH'S ATTITUDE TOWARD UNITY WITH THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Anglican Church's approach to unity with the Orthodox Church was complex and multifaceted, deeply rooted in their apostolic traditions and longstanding desire to restore Christian unity. Throughout the 20th century, Anglicans made significant efforts to establish full communion with the Orthodox Church, motivated by a blend of apostolic, theological, historical, and ecclesiological factors.³ However, these efforts did not lead to full union due to Soviet regime geopolitical and ideologic hostility towards the West and few doctrinal differences between the two apostolic traditions.

MOTIVATIONS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH FOR UNITY

The Anglican Church, particularly influenced by the Anglo-Catholic movement, demonstrated a profound interest in uniting with the Orthodox Church. Several key motivations fueled this desire:

1. **Restoration of Christian Unity:** For many Anglicans, unity with the Orthodox Church was seen as a crucial step toward restoring Christian unity, understood as a return to **shared apostolic**

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roots. Leaders such as Bishop Charles Gore strongly promoted this vision, recognizing Orthodoxy as an unbroken continuity of apostolic tradition.

2. **Reaffirmation of Catholic Identity:** Faced with Protestant influences within the Anglican Church, some clergy viewed union with Orthodoxy as a way to strengthen Anglicanism's Catholic apostolic character. They believed such a union would clarify and reinforce Anglican doctrinal identity, particularly regarding apostolic succession and the sacraments.

3. **Mutual Recognition of Ordinations:** An essential aspect of Anglo-Orthodox dialogue was the mutual recognition of ordinations. Thousands of Anglican clergy saw this as a confirmation of the legitimacy of their apostolic succession. In 1923, a document titled *The Declaration of Intercommunion* was signed by 3,715 Anglican clergy, highlighting the widespread desire within the Anglican Church to establish full communion with Orthodoxy.

PROMINENT ADVOCATES OF UNITY

Notable supporters of unity included:

- **Bishop Charles Gore:** Known for his sustained efforts to foster closer relations between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches, Gore was an influential theologian who firmly believed in the necessity of unity between the two apostolic traditions.

- **Sir Arthur Headlam,** Bishop of Gloucester: Played a central role in many theological discussions between Anglicans and Orthodox leaders.

- **A. E. J. Rawlinson,** Bishop of Derby: Actively participated in ecumenical dialogues between the two traditions.

These leaders maintained that unity with the Orthodox Church would bring spiritual revitalization and strengthen the Anglican Church, contributing to broader Christian communion.⁴

OPPOSITION TO UNITY

Despite significant support for unity, opposition emerged from both Anglican and Orthodox circles, citing theological and practical obstacles:

1. **Doctrinal Differences:** One of the main challenges was the inability to reach a consensus on fundamental dogmas.

2. **Fear of Losing Identity:** Some Anglican leaders feared that union with Orthodoxy might undermine Anglican traditions and dilute the distinct identity of the Anglican Church, positioned between Roman Catholicism and Reformed Protestantism.

Reasons Unity Was Not Achieved

Efforts toward unity ultimately failed for several reasons:

1. **Persistent Theological Differences:** Despite prolonged discussions, divergences in the understanding of sacraments, apostolic succession, and other doctrinal matters could not be rapidly reconciled.

2. **Internal Opposition:** Within both the Anglican and Orthodox Churches, dogmatic factions opposed union, viewing it as either doctrinally risky or practically unfeasible.

3. **Political Context:** Geopolitical tensions, particularly Soviet Moscow's hostility towards the West and Soviet regime's influence over the Russian Orthodox Church, further complicated relations between the two Churches, hindering ecumenical dialogue.

⁴ Davidson, Randall Thomas. *Allocution on the Relations of the Anglican and Eastern-Orthodox Churches, Delivered to the Bishops and Clergy of the Convocation of Canterbury, Feb. 23, 1923.* Faith Press, 1923.

THE POSITIONS OF ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATES AT THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The Lambeth Conference of 1930 and the broader ecumenical dialogue in the first half of the 20th century marked pivotal moments in attempts at rapprochement between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches. Each Orthodox Church approached this dialogue with a unique perspective shaped by its specific political, theological, and cultural circumstances. Analyzing these positions reveals the complexity of interdenominational relations and the decisive impact of the individuals involved in these negotiations.

This analysis examines the roles played by the Orthodox Churches of Russia, the Russian diaspora, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania. It focuses on how each contributed to the dialogue process and subsequent developments.

THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople was one of the most active proponents of interdenominational dialogue with the Anglican Church throughout the 20th century. Under the leadership of Patriarch Meletios IV (Metaxakis) and his successors, Constantinople initiated and supported several ecumenical conferences, including those at Lambeth.

- **Patriarch Meletios IV (Metaxakis):** Known for his reformist vision and openness to modernity, Meletios IV played a key role in fostering closer relations with the Anglican Church. He strongly advocated adopting the Gregorian calendar and other reforms aimed at better synchronization with the Western Christian world.

- **Patriarch Athenagoras I (1948–1972):** Continuing this tradition, Patriarch Athenagoras was a fervent supporter of Christian unity. His initiatives included the historic 1964 meeting with Pope Paul VI, marking the mutual lifting of the 1054 excommunications between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. Athenagoras promoted dialogue with the Anglican Church based on mutual respect and the exploration of shared beliefs, aiming for deeper understanding and eventual unity.⁵

THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA

The Patriarchate of Alexandria, represented by Patriarch Meletios II Metaxakis at the 1930 Lambeth Conference, aligned with the ecumenical approach promoted by Constantinople. The recognition of Anglican ordinations by this Patriarchate in 1930 marked a significant moment in Anglican-Orthodox relations. Patriarch Meletios emphasized that, while doctrinal differences existed, these should not prevent closer collaboration and unification. His recognition was seen as a bold and necessary step toward Christian unity, especially in the face of modern challenges such as secularization and global political shifts.

THE PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH

The Patriarchate of Antioch, under the leadership of Metropolitan Ignatius of Epiphany, adopted a moderate stance in its dialogue with the Anglican Church. Representatives from Antioch emphasized the importance of preserving Orthodox traditions and apostolic succession as essential to the validity of ordinations. At the Lambeth Conference, Ignatius highlighted the need to clarify

⁵ Davey, Colin. *Anglican-Orthodox Relations during the Patriarchate of ... Athenagoras I, 1948-1972*. 1975.

these aspects before moving toward unity. Antioch's position was also influenced by the geopolitical challenges of its region, where Christians faced interreligious tensions.

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, represented by Archbishop Timotheos Temelis of Jordan at the Lambeth Conference, adopted a similar cautious approach to that of Antioch. Jerusalem, due to its central role in Christian history, held a unique status among Orthodox Churches. Archbishop Timotheos argued that any form of unity must be grounded in a shared understanding of doctrine and sacraments, reflecting a position that was very open to dialogue.

THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Serbian Orthodox Church, represented by Metropolitan Irinej of Novi Sad at the Lambeth Conference, took a conservative position. Irinej emphasized the necessity of safeguarding doctrinal integrity and apostolic succession, expressing concerns about the potential impact of union on Orthodox identity. This position was shaped by the political context of the Balkans, where nationalism and Orthodoxy were closely intertwined.

At the Moscow Conference of 1948, the Serbian delegation participated in discussions aimed at establishing clear guidelines for relations between Orthodox and Anglican Churches. The Serbian Church maintained that any potential union must be founded on full unity in faith and doctrine, emphasizing the need for Anglican conformity to Orthodox dogma.

THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Greek Orthodox Church took a conservative approach to dialogue with the Anglican Church. Represented by Metropolitan Athenagoras of Corinth at the Lambeth Conference, the Greek delegation insisted on clarifying Anglican doctrines and strictly adhering to Orthodox traditions. Athenagoras highlighted the importance of doctrinal transparency concerning sacraments and apostolic succession as prerequisites for any discussions on unity. This stance reflected broader concerns about protecting Greek Orthodoxy from external influences in a politically and socially tumultuous context.

THE BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church approached its dialogue with the Anglican Church cautiously due to its schism with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Represented by Bishop Paisios of Zrievitsa at the Lambeth Conference, the Bulgarian Church stressed the importance of broad consensus among all Orthodox Churches before making decisions on union with the Anglican Church. While willing to evaluate the possibility of intercommunion, the Bulgarian Church emphasized preserving its canonical and doctrinal integrity.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Russian Orthodox Church, profoundly affected by the Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent Communist regime, adopted a reserved and conservative stance in its external relations, including with the Anglican Church. By the time of the 1930 Lambeth Conference, the Russian Church faced severe persecution in the Soviet Union. Under Patriarch Sergius (Stragorodsky), the

Church sought limited autonomy within the Soviet state, but this came at the cost of significant compromises, such as the controversial 1927 Declaration of Loyalty to the regime.

While the Russian Orthodox Church did not send representatives to the Lambeth Conference, it maintained indirect communication, emphasizing the importance of doctrinal clarity. During World War II, Stalin permitted the Russian Orthodox Church to resume limited external relations, including with the Anglican Church, as part of an alliance against Nazi Germany. However, during the Cold War, these relations were curtailed by the Soviet regime.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE RUSSIA (ROCOR)

In contrast to the state-controlled Russian Orthodox Church, ROCOR adopted a firm stance against the Soviet regime and participated actively in theological dialogues with the Anglican Church. Under leaders like Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), ROCOR engaged in discussions at the Lambeth Conferences of 1920 and 1930, emphasizing the importance of preserving Orthodox traditions while exploring avenues for collaboration.

ROCOR leaders insisted on maintaining doctrinal integrity and viewed interdenominational dialogue as an opportunity to assert Orthodox values in the face of secularism and atheism. Despite their openness to dialogue, ROCOR firmly upheld the necessity of conversion to Orthodoxy for true union.

THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Romanian Orthodox Church played a central role in ecumenical dialogues at both the Lambeth and Bucharest Conferences. Patriarch Miron Cristea, a prominent figure in Romanian Orthodoxy, supported closer relations with the Anglican Church as an opportunity to strengthen Romania's ties with the West. However, Cristea emphasized the importance of preserving Orthodox doctrinal integrity amidst these efforts. Romania's interwar political context, where nationalism and Orthodoxy were closely intertwined, heavily influenced the Church's cautious but constructive engagement in ecumenical dialogue.

The positions of the various Orthodox Churches at the Lambeth Conference and in dialogues with the Anglican Church reflected their theological, cultural, and political contexts. While the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Patriarchate of Alexandria were particularly open to ecumenical dialogue, emphasizing its potential for fostering Christian unity, Churches like those of Russia, Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria adopted more conservative stances, prioritizing doctrinal integrity. The Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem maintained a balanced constructive approach, emphasizing the need for doctrinal clarification. These dialogues illustrate not only the diversity within Orthodoxy but also the broader challenges of interdenominational engagement in a tumultuous historical period.

THE LAMBETH DIALOGUES

The "Declaration of Faith" by Anglican clergy facilitated the positive decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in **Constantinople, which, on July 22, 1922, recognized the validity of Anglican ordinations.** Patriarch Meletios IV and the entire Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople stated in the act of recognition that they had examined the validity of Anglican ordinations from an Orthodox perspective. The synod concluded that, within the Orthodox Church, ordinations to the episcopate, priesthood, and diaconate within the Anglican Episcopal Church held

the same power and validity as those in the Roman Catholic Church, being derived from apostolic succession.⁶

This declaration, however, was not a general decree of the entire Orthodox Church. The other Orthodox Churches were invited by the Patriarch of Constantinople to adopt the same position. Patriarch Meletios sent an encyclical letter to the seven Orthodox Churches, encouraging them to follow the example of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. By March 1923, **Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem and Archbishop Kyprianos of Cyprus sent letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury, announcing that the synods of their Churches had recognized the validity of Anglican ordinations.**⁷

On July 28, 1922, Patriarch Meletios IV informed the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's decision regarding the validity of Anglican ordinations. The Romanian Orthodox Church, one of the seven sister Orthodox Churches, received the Patriarchate's decision on August 8, 1922, but did not adopt an immediate resolution. In a letter dated August 8, 1922, Constantinople Patriarch Meletios IV Metaxakis communicated the recognition of ordinations to the Romanian Church. In January 1925, under the leadership of Patriarch Miron Cristea, the Romanian Orthodox Church responded, requesting clarification from the Anglican Church on whether ordination was considered a sacrament.⁸

ARCHBISHOP CHARLES GORE AND THE PAN-ORTHODOX SYNOD

On May 23, 1923, Archbishop Charles Gore visited Constantinople and, during the sessions of the Pan-Orthodox Synod held there, presented two documents from the Anglican clergy to the Ecumenical Patriarch.⁹

1. **"Terms of Intercommunion"**: Signed by over 5,000 clergy, this document declared that the Anglican Church saw no difficulty in uniting with the Orthodox Church and becoming part of Orthodoxy. Archbishop Gore acknowledged that Anglicanism had its own historical development, influenced by Lutheran and Calvinist traditions, but he believed unity was achievable through recognition of mutual faith and practices.

2. **"Conditions for Unity"**: This second document outlined the terms for possible union and represented the collective ideas of the Anglican Church. While the Anglican Church demonstrated a spirit favorable to unification, doctrinal and sacramental divergences remained significant challenges.¹⁰

Archbishop Gore later visited Athens, where he was warmly received by the Archbishop and Synod of the Church of Greece. He expressed confidence that, despite the difficulties, unity would one day be achieved through mutual recognition.¹¹

PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS FOR THE 1930 LAMBETH CONFERENCE

Discussions on Anglican-Orthodox unity continued in 1925 during commemorations in London marking the 1,600th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325). Meanwhile, at the inter-Orthodox conference held between June 23 and July 23, 1930, at the

⁶ Ramureanu, Ion, "Direct Unity Negotiations Between the Orthodox Churches and the Anglican Church from 1920 to the Present" ("Tratative directe de unire dintre Bisericile Ortodoxe și Biserica Anglicană de la 1920 până azi"), in *Ortodoxia*, X, no.2, 958, Bucharest, p. 217-235.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ Ramureanu, Ion, *op. cit.*

Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos, it was decided to include relations with heterodox Churches among the topics for a future Pan-Orthodox Synod.¹²

THE SEVENTH LAMBETH CONFERENCE (1930)

On February 24, 1930, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Cosmo Lang, extended an official invitation to Patriarch Photius II of Constantinople, requesting that he, as "primus inter pares" among Orthodox patriarchs, coordinate with the heads of the sister autocephalous Orthodox Churches to organize an Orthodox delegation for the Lambeth Conference scheduled for July 1930.¹³

In response, Patriarch Photius II informed the Orthodox Churches of this invitation and urged them to designate representatives. On May 14, 1930, he assured the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Orthodox Churches' participation, listing the members of the delegation, which included representatives from:

- **The Ecumenical Patriarchate:** Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira, Patriarchal Exarch for Western Europe and liaison to the Anglican Church.
- **The Patriarchate of Alexandria:** Patriarch Meletios II Metaxakis, who presided over the delegation.
- **The Patriarchate of Antioch:** Metropolitan Ignatius of Epiphany.
- **The Patriarchate of Jerusalem:** Archbishop Timotheos Temelis of Jordan.
- **The Romanian Orthodox Church:** Metropolitan Nectarios of Bukovina.
- **The Church of Greece:** Metropolitan Athenagoras of Corinth and Archimandrite Michael Constantinides.
- **The Church of Cyprus:** Deacon Leontios, later elected Metropolitan of Paphos.
- **The Bulgarian Orthodox Church:** Bishop Paisios of Zrievitsa, later Bishop of Vratsa.¹⁴

PRELIMINARY MEETINGS

Before the official sessions, the Orthodox delegation held three preparatory meetings with the Permanent Commission of the Archbishop of Canterbury on July 9–10, 1930. Archbishop Gore, a fervent advocate of Anglican-Orthodox unity, emphasized the need for clarity on matters of doctrine and sacraments before formalizing unity. Patriarch Meletios II identified key issues requiring resolution:

1. What is the official Anglican body authorized to decide on matters of faith and doctrine?
2. What is the status of an Anglican who opposes official doctrine?
3. Does the Anglican Church recognize ordination as a sacrament and maintain uninterrupted apostolic succession?
4. Does the Anglican Church affirm the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and the Eucharist as a sacrificial offering?¹⁵

PLENARY SESSIONS

From July 15–18, 1930, Anglican and Orthodox delegates held four plenary sessions, presided over by Sir Arthur Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester. In the first session, Anglican representatives affirmed that their General Assembly or **Synod of Bishops held authority over matters of faith,**

¹² *Ibidem.*

¹³ *Ibidem.*

¹⁴ *Ibidem.*

¹⁵ *Ramureanu, I, op.cit.*

with decisions requiring approval from diocesan synods. Patriarch Meletios expressed satisfaction with this clarification.¹⁶

Discussions progressed to the Eucharist, with Anglican representatives affirming belief in the real presence of Christ. While Orthodox delegates **acknowledged Anglican baptism**, they noted that sacramental administration by Anglican clergy could not be permitted for Orthodox believers except under exceptional circumstances.¹⁷

OUTCOMES OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

Following these sessions, a summary of the debates was published in 17 points, approved by the Anglican Commission. A significant outcome was the **recognition of Anglican ordinations by the Patriarchate of Alexandria**. In 1930, Patriarch Meletios II communicated this decision to the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Anglican Primate, indicating that **Anglican clergy entering Orthodoxy would not require re-ordination, and baptized Anglicans would not need re-baptism**.

THE JOINT COMMISSION OF 1931

The Lambeth Conference requested the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury to participate in a meeting held in London between October 14–20, 1931, under the auspices of a joint commission.¹⁸ The commission consisted of 16 members representing both the Anglican and Orthodox Churches. The Orthodox delegation included representatives from the following religious institutions:

- **The Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem:** Represented by Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira.
- **The Patriarchate of Alexandria:** Represented by Archimandrite Michael Constantinides.
- **The Patriarchate of Antioch:** Represented by Metropolitan Theodosios of Tyre and Sidon.
- **The Serbian Patriarchate:** Represented by Metropolitan Irinej of Novi Sad.
- **The Romanian Patriarchate:** Represented by Metropolitan Nectarios of Bukovina.
- **The Archbishopric of Cyprus:** Represented by Metropolitan Leontios of Paphos.
- **The Church of Greece:** Represented by Metropolitan Polycarp of Tricca and Stagoi.
- **The Polish Orthodox Church:** Represented by Nicholas Arseniev, professor at the Faculty of Theology in Warsaw.

This diverse delegation underscored the broad commitment of Orthodox Churches to ecumenical discussions.

The Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union, though not represented at the Lambeth Conference in July 1930, expressed a vague agreement with the resolutions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In a letter dated September 30, 1931, Patriarchal Locum Tenens Sergius of Moscow

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ Geffert, Bryn. *Anglicans & Orthodox between the Wars*. 2003. Geffert, Bryn. *Eastern Orthodox and Anglicans: Diplomacy, Theology, and the Politics of Interwar Ecumenism*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2010. Hodges, H. A. *Anglicanism & Orthodoxy: A Study in Dialectical Churchmanship*. SCM Press, 1957. International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue, and Anglican Communion Office. *The Church of the Triune God: The Cyprus Statement Agreed by the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue*, 2006. Anglican Communion Office, 2006. Joint Doctrinal Commission on the Relations of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches. *Report of the Joint Doctrinal Commission Appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury for Consultation on the Points of Agreement and Difference between the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox Churches*. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1932.

wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch Photius II: "An elementary duty of Christian charity compels us to consider what we can do to assist the Anglican Church. The salvation of humanity inspires the Church's mission in this world."¹⁹

The Anglican delegation included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Cosmo Lang; Sir Arthur Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester; the Archbishop of Dublin; the Bishop of Northern Ireland; Professors Dr. Goudge and Dr. Greenslade from Oxford University; Canon J.A. Douglas; and Philipp Usher, a former Anglican priest in Athens. Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira and Sir Arthur Headlam served as secretaries of the commission.²⁰

The joint Anglo-Orthodox commission used the **13 official sacramental conditions** presented by the Anglo-Orthodox Commission in London in 1921 as the basis for discussion. However, three of these conditions had been addressed and integrated into the 17 points of the Anglo-Orthodox negotiations at the Seventh Lambeth Conference on July 18, 1930. As a result, the remaining conditions were streamlined into **six key points**:

1. **Recognition of Apostolic Succession**
2. **Scripture and Tradition**
3. **A Common Creed**
4. **Doctrine of the Sacraments**
5. **Diversity in Church Practices**
6. **Sacramental Intercommunion**

The joint Anglo-Orthodox commission acknowledged a significant mutual understanding between the two Churches, and consider this a matter to be decided by the higher authorities of each Church. This marked the end of negotiations between Anglicans and Orthodox representatives in London in October 1931.

THE BUCHAREST CONFERENCE OF 1935

Following the Seventh Lambeth Conference in July 1930 and the Anglo-Orthodox negotiations in London in October 1931, discussions between Anglicans and Orthodox leaders continued in Bucharest in June 1935. The Romanian Orthodox Church conditionally recognized Anglican ordinations on March 19, 1936.²¹

In April 1938, Archbishop Cosmo Lang of Canterbury, Primate of England, visited the Church of Greece and later the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He engaged in discussions with Ecumenical Patriarch Benjamin (1935–1946) and the Holy Synod on strategies to achieve real unity between the Anglican Church and the Orthodox Church.²²

THE MOSCOW CONFERENCES

The outbreak of World War II (1939–1945) interrupted Anglo-Orthodox negotiations for rapprochement and unity. However, in May 1940, at the invitation of the Bulgarian Church, a delegation of Anglican clergy and theologians visited Bulgaria to examine the validity of Anglican ordinations alongside a commission of Bulgarian Church representatives. On June 20, 1940, the Bulgarian Holy Synod postponed its final decision, awaiting the opinion of the Russian Orthodox Church.

¹⁹ Ramureanu, I, *op.cit.*

²⁰ *Ibidem.*

²¹ Ramureanu, I, *op.cit.*, Vintilescu, Petre, "Bucharest Conference in 1935" (in Romanian), in *Ortodoxia*, 1958.

²² *Ibidem.*

In September 1943, at the invitation of the Moscow Patriarchate, an Anglican delegation led by Archbishop S.F. Garbett of York visited Moscow to gain a closer understanding of the state of the Russian Orthodox Church during the war.

The Pan-Orthodox Conference held in Moscow on July 18, 1948, reaffirmed the need for a more detailed analysis of Anglican ordinations to ensure unity of faith and confession between the two Churches.²³

In July 1956, the Anglican Church sent a significant delegation, led by Archbishop A.M. Ramsey of York, to Moscow to discuss rapprochement and potential union. The theological discussions, held from July 19–23, 1956, included Anglican and Russian Orthodox representatives. The delegations emphasized the necessity of reaching complete agreement on Holy Scripture, Holy Tradition, the hierarchy, and the sacraments.²⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Direct theological negotiations between Anglicans and Orthodox Churches played an essential role in fostering rapprochement and potential union.²⁵ These discussions began with the Sixth Lambeth Conference (July 5–August 8, 1920) and continued through subsequent conferences and negotiations, including:

- The **Seventh Lambeth Conference** on July 18, 1930, which published the six points of faith.

- The **1931 London Joint Commission**, which furthered these discussions.

- The **Bucharest Conference** of June 1935.²⁶

As a result of these efforts:

- The Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the validity of Anglican ordinations on July 28, 1922.

- The Patriarchate of Jerusalem followed on March 12, 1923, and the Archbishop of Cyprus on March 20, 1923.

- The Patriarchate of Alexandria formally recognized Anglican ordinations on December 25, 1930.²⁷

- The Romanian Orthodox Church conditionally recognized Anglican ordinations on March 19, 1936.²⁸

The Pan-Orthodox Conference in Moscow (July 5–18, 1948) stipulated that union between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches would depend on unity in faith and confession.²⁹ The negative influence of the Stalinist Regime was obvious.

²³ Faith and Order Advisory Group. *Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue: The Church of the Triune God: Briefing Paper*. General Synod of the Church of England, 2008.

²⁴ Miller, Charles. *Toward a Fuller Vision: Orthodoxy and Anglican Experience*. Morehouse Barlow, 1984. Leopold, Robert K. *Strangers, yet Brothers: The Present State of the Anglican - Eastern Orthodox Dialogue*. 2008.

²⁵ Davey, Colin. *Anglican-Orthodox Relations during the Patriarchate of... Athenagoras I, 1948-1972*. 1975.

Leopold, Robert K. *Strangers, yet Brothers: The Present State of the Anglican - Eastern Orthodox Dialogue*. 2008.

²⁶ Miller, Charles. *Toward a Fuller Vision: Orthodoxy and Anglican Experience*. Morehouse Barlow, 1984. Moss, Claude Beaufort, and Anglican and Eastern Churches Association. "Our Ideas and Ideals." *The Orthodox Church*, 1935. Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos. *The Validity of Anglican Ordinations*. Faith Press ; Morehouse Pub. Co., 1931.

²⁷ Episcopal Church Advisory Council to the Presiding Bishop on Ecclesiastical Relations. *Orthodox Statements on Anglican Orders*. Edited by Edward Rochie Hardy, Morehouse-Gorham Co.; A.R. Mowbray & Co., Ltd, 1946.

²⁸ Miller, Charles. *Toward a Fuller Vision: Orthodoxy and Anglican Experience*. Morehouse Barlow, 1984. Moss, Claude Beaufort, and Anglican and Eastern Churches Association. "Our Ideas and Ideals." *The Orthodox Church*, 1935. Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos. *The Validity of Anglican Ordinations*. Faith Press ; Morehouse Pub. Co., 1931.

²⁹ Salomon, Richard G. *Orthodoxy, Ecumenical Movement, and Anglicanism: The Moscow Conference of 1948*. [publisher not identified], 1957.

The culmination of these negotiations demonstrated that five Orthodox Churches, alongside the Ecumenical Patriarchate, considered Anglican ordinations equivalent to those of the Roman Catholic Church and other Eastern heterodox Churches. They recognized the Anglican baptism as well. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Church retained the right to affirm or revoke such recognition as deemed necessary. Inter-religious and inter-confessional dialogues are fundamental for fostering harmonious multicultural societies on an international scale.³⁰

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