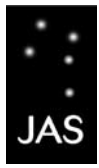
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Anglicans and Orthodox: The Cyprus Agreed Statement

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ABSTRACT

The article takes the form of a report on the current state of the international Anglican–Orthodox theological dialogue. It offers a critical reading of *the Church of the Triune God: The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican–Orthodox Theological Dialogue, 2006*, outlining the major issues considered, together with points of convergence and continuing disagreement. Starting from acknowledged areas of previous agreement on questions of the Triune God and the nature of the Church, the statement gives special consideration to the issues arising from the ordination of women in provinces of the Anglican Communion. It considers the historical practice of ministry in both churches and the possibility of reception of new expressions of ministry. The theological question at the heart of these considerations is whether the ordination of women constitutes a church dividing matter. For this reason the statement gives some consideration to the terminology of heresy, schism and reception.

KEYWORDS: Anglican–Orthodox dialogue, authority, ecclesiology, Heresy, Reception, Schism, women's ordination

Anglicans and Orthodox: The Cyprus Agreed Statement

A stone's throw from St Basil's Cathedral, just outside the Moscow Kremlin, stands a squat, whitewashed building with meter-thick walls and a high-pitched timber roof. It is the old 'English Embassy', the residence of Elizabeth I's emissaries to Ivan IV ('the Terrible') as well

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as a base for sixteenth and seventeenth century English traders along the Moscow River. It is also concrete testimony to the fact that Anglicans and Orthodox have been talking to each other for more than four hundred years, and — we can be sure — not just about trade and diplomacy.[2]

In more recent times, there has been a serious and intentional dialogue between the Anglican and Orthodox churches since the 1930s, and especially since the 1962 meeting between Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury and the Ecumenical Patriarch, Athenagoras I. These conversations, frosty at times and more encouraging at others, but always direct and open, had till 2006 produced two major agreed statements. On 30 January 2007 a further agreed statement was launched at Lambeth Palace, the outcome of solid theological discussion and debate over the previous seventeen years.[3]

The 1962 meeting between Archbishop Ramsey and Patriarch Athenagoras was followed in 1964 by the third Pan-Orthodox conference, in Rhodes, which endorsed the decision to renew an official dialogue. After six years of preparations, the joint conversations began in 1973 and issued in the Moscow Statement of 1976, containing agreements on a range of matters: knowledge of God, authority of Scripture, of tradition and of ecumenical councils, the *filioque* clause, the church as a eucharistic community and the invocation of the Spirit.

The following year, 1977, at a meeting in Cambridge, the matter of the ordination of women appeared, not just as a question for polite discussion, but as an impending reality in some churches of the Anglican Communion. Following discussions at the 1978 Lambeth Conference, there has been agreement within the Anglican Communion to maintain the highest degree of communion should provinces proceed to ordain women, either to the priesthood or the episcopate. The Athens meeting of 1978 resulted not in one agreed statement, but two opposed statements on this question, and Athenagoras declared the dialogue to be an academic exercise, no longer directed to the union of the two churches. Even so, in 1984 a much fuller agreed statement was published after the Dublin meeting. Till recently, the

2. For a useful history of the early stages of this relationship, see Judith Pinnington, *Anglicans and Orthodox: Unity and Subversion 1559–1725* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2003).

3. *The Church of the Triune God: The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican–Orthodox Theological Dialogue, 2006* (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2006).

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Moscow and Dublin statements[4] represented the two major Anglican–Orthodox agreements at an international level. It is the new agreed statement that I want to outline here, commenting on how the dialogue has progressed — especially with regard to the divisive issue of 1978.

The method has on the whole been not to tackle the issue head-on, but to work from first principles. The latest stages of this dialogue in particular represent a creative alternative approach that consciously and intentionally builds on the very wide foundation of common ground achieved on fundamental theological questions. The Cyprus statement has to be understood as an attempt to engage theologically with two ecclesiological issues: authority and the ministries of women. Expanding upon prior agreement on trinitarian theology and theology of the human person (including culture), it sequentially explores these two issues, and concludes by considering implications both negative (the accusations of heresy and schism) and positive (the practicalities of reception).

First Principles: Trinity and the Human Person

The Trinity and the Church (section I of the Cyprus statement) starts by noting that the Trinity structures the church, and that the community (*koinonia*) of believers is a function of their real participation in the triune life, leading to *theosis*. Each human being is also a person who participates in the whole of creation, and Christ is the one who reveals the life of the triune God and opens this life to creation, thus renewing humanity.

The church as the body of Christ is built up by the eucharist, and the church as an institution needs to be a visible sign of its own inner reality. Redemption is the work of the triune God, sharing God's life with us. The purpose of the church is to bring creation into communion with the triune life (*theosis*). The church is local and also universal — it is not a federation, but one communion of local churches, in which catholicity resides in each local church. The universal church exists only as a communion of local churches — this is a point shared by Anglican and Orthodox ecclesiologies. Primacy is thus relational, and ecclesiology intimately related to being and personhood, incorporated into Christ. The New Testament term for this, *hiouthesia*, adoption (2 Cor. 6.18), applies equally to men and women.

4. Both statements are published in *Anglican–Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984* (London: SPCK, 1984).

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The document goes on to speak of the hidden otherness of God and the inadequacy of human language. This is the location of the distinction between the unknowable essence and the personal communications, or energies, by which God is known. Theological language works metaphorically and is always provisional when in reference to God. The statement also proposes an 'iconic' form of language that transcends the dichotomy of subject and object typical of modern thought. Some theological language is held to be transparent in the way icons are transparent to God's grace. These terms cannot be discarded, but neither are we obliged to resort only and always to these. So the statement permits the use of feminine naming for God alongside the more traditional masculine imagery.

Christ, the Spirit and the Church (section II) starts out by locating Christ's identity in the Trinity. This starting point is for a soteriological reason — we are saved by God, but not in abstraction. It is just as true to say we are saved by one of the Trinity, but note that this 'one' is only to be understood personally, that is, in relation. The Spirit offers a participation in the divine life, so that both the Son and the Spirit have roles in the process of *theosis*. The Spirit, present in the church, transfigures human lives and all creation; christology opens the way to our reception, in Christ, into the life of God.

The section goes on to focus on Christ and the Spirit. Pneumatology constitutes christology, the Spirit being constitutive of Christ's humanity, and the humanity of Christ inconceivable without a relationship with the Spirit. Christ's ministry requires the presence of the Spirit. God's Spirit is manifest in Christ's weakness. The resurrection is an act of the Spirit and so Pentecost is a christological event. Pneumatology is to be seen in all aspects of christology. Any talk of an 'economy of the Spirit' challenges this essential association between Christ and the Spirit. This leads to a synthesis of christology and pneumatology, especially with regard to the new humanity. After acknowledging that the works of the Trinity are indivisible (*opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*), the statement goes on to say that particular persons have distinctive works. Trinitarian theology is about humanity, the mission of the Holy Spirit widening to encompass the whole creation. The new humanity is the goal of the Christian life; Jesus is not simply an example or pattern, but the source of our human vocation. Christ's humanity opens out our humanity to the future. Forgiveness thus needs to be seen in an eschatological perspective, setting our relationships on the basis of the future rather than the past. Because the Spirit transcends the boundaries of self and subjectivity it sets us free to take on a corporate likeness to Christ and establishes a

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life of friendship with God. But spiritual maturity may be without any sense of confirmation. Christ thus includes 'the many' as an element in his identity. If this were not so, we would be in danger of seeing Christ as an isolated individual, rather than a person — which is in itself a relational concept. It is the Spirit who forms the church, and constitutes the church as the body of Christ. It is the Spirit who gives gifts to those who are 'in Christ', and who are thereby empowered to become the new humanity.

The final paragraphs address the problem of the *filioque*, as the western method of holding together the Son and the Spirit. The paper acknowledges it is important to demonstrate the distinctiveness of the Spirit, which the *filioque* ensures, but that the Spirit's connection with the purpose of the Father must also not be forgotten. To set aside the *filioque*, as the eastern church does, is not to deny the relationship between the Son and the Spirit, for even without the *filioque* the work of the Son and the work of the Spirit are inseparable.

Christ, Humanity and the Church (sections III and IV) approaches the same set of ecclesiological issues from another direction, namely from the discussion of Christ's and our embeddedness in human culture. The gospel is always inculturated, and culture is important as a way of being human. Cultural differences play a part in communication between people of different cultures, and such questions as the role of women and the place of indigenous peoples. Christ enters human culture, and ecclesial life is a living in communion with Christ. This is the reason a theological understanding of culture is needed, and also a *diakonia* for the integrity of creation. The biblical story of the cultivation of the garden emphasizes the importance of understanding culture and engaging with the environment. Culture is further justified by the gift of creativity, and therefore related to human authenticity. Sin — alienation from God — causes a loss of vitality in human culture, but culture can and should be understood positively.

The early church endorsed a positive evaluation of human culture, and transvalued culture to create a new Christian culture. But Christians have often been critical of culture. Our response to particular issues is conditioned by cultural context, and we need to proceed in attentiveness to our ecumenical partners and to the insights of other faiths. Cultures can be a means of understanding the gospel, but never a substitute for it. There is no gospel apart from culture, but the gospel provides a prophetic critique of culture. Particular cultures are neither wholly good nor wholly evil, but the gospel appraises and transforms every culture.

Jesus exercised his ministry in a particular cultural setting. Christianity is not a set of maxims, but a way of living. Every expression of

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Christianity is grounded in a particular culture or combination of cultures, never in a vacuum. Culture as *praeparatio et interpretatio evangelium* is seen in the use of Greek culture to convey the gospel in the early church. Scripture and the historic formularies speak across culture, across time — this is a work of the Holy Spirit. Christians trust the Spirit to work in all cultural contexts — this is what both Anglicans and Orthodox call tradition. Gospel is counter-cultural, so the proclamation of Christ has affected and changed culture. Because the gospel is in dialogue with cultures, and inculturation is ambiguous, there must be a mutual accountability and respect, a vigorous interaction, between gospel and culture. Culture enables Christians to listen afresh to the gospel at every moment, and to proclaim anew the gospel in their own cultural settings.

The agreed statement moves on to consider the link between theology and anthropology, raising the issue of gender and language. The knowledge of God transcends human perception. Not only is the essence of God a mystery, but so is our own humanity. So theological language relates two mysterious realities. God is beyond gender and sexuality. To speak of Christ, as eternal Son, incarnate and risen, is not intended to suggest the eternal Son is gendered, but to emphasize that he is derived, in other words, is a person. The Son is the name that belongs most naturally to Christ. Son language is iconic — not analogous, metaphoric or symbolic. Christ's humanity, on the other hand, is gendered, because it is incarnated. But even here we should focus on the humanity of Christ, not his maleness, and redemption is universally available irrespective of gender. The risen Christ assumed human nature, and healed and transformed it. Humanity is thus perfected in communion, and eschatologically.

The church is characterized as the body of Christ, so that it becomes the means of Christ's presence in the world. The body of Christ suggests an organic community, albeit located in a contextual environment here and now. The proclamation of the cross speaks against triumphalism, and conveys rather an obligation to work for justice and peace as well as a mission to the gentiles.

The Issues: Authority and the Ministries of Women

Episcopos, Episcope and Primacy (section V). Anglicans and Orthodox share a notion of seniority or primacy, but not in terms of a global bureaucratic structure. Anglican and Orthodox delegates find their respective church structures, though not exactly the same, share greater similarities than either has with Roman Catholic polity. The Reformation in England was a reassertion of the rights of local or

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national churches to self-government, similar to the eastern rejection of papal supremacy in 1054. The Scriptures and ecumenical councils are important to both Anglicans and Orthodox.

Episcope was always present in the New Testament church, but there was no single church structure. Rather the picture is one of gradual development, with a major change in the fourth century with a new relationship to the state. Neither Anglicans nor Orthodox see the New Testament as offering a blueprint for church order, but a source to be elaborated upon by ecumenical councils. Episcope is seen as a means of transmitting the 'apostolic way of Christ', with the bishop in community a safeguard against gnosticism (or, we might say, individualism). Episcope was exercised pre-eminently at the eucharist with the elders of the local church. A change occurs in the West when Cyprian connects episcopacy with Peter rather than Christ, making the bishop one of an 'apostolic college' linking local churches. Synods of bishops did not stand over the local churches, but their decisions had to be received. In this sense, the bishop was not above the laity. From the fourth century on the bishop no longer presided at every eucharist, so that the bishop became a detached figure of power. Presbyteral collegiality suffered, and the bishops became a caste of their own.

Some ecclesiological consequences flow from all this. There is no normative or fixed structure of ministry. Anglicans see episcopacy 'locally adapted' as a sign of catholicity; Orthodox see episcopacy in communion as an eschatological representation of Christ. Important here is the link between episcopacy and the local church, though this disappeared later. Apostolic succession is a succession of communities (as suggested in the Anglican–Lutheran Porvoo agreement[5]). The section affirms the need for the eschatological note in apostolic and sub-apostolic ecclesiologies to be heard again in the church's self-examination, and the need for a recovery of the bishop as eucharistic president, a move that would lead to smaller dioceses. There is one important difference between Anglican and Orthodox ecclesial polities, Anglicans seeing lay people as important in synodical decision-making, Orthodox seeing the bishop as representative of the diocese or local church.

The question for Anglicans and Orthodox alike is whether to see this as a divine or human institution. For both communions

5. 'The Porvoo Common Statement', in Sven Oppgaard and Gregory Cameron (eds), *Anglican–Lutheran Agreements: Regional and International Agreements 1972–2002* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 2004), pp. 145–76.

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episcopacy is integrally linked with conciliarity, as is seen in the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) documents and the Anglican response to the encyclical *Ut unum sint*. Primacy must be understood as being in balance with conciliarity, and primacy refers to a diocese, not a person. The notion of a college of bishops has recently been introduced to Anglican ecclesiology, but such a college must never be seen as independent of its church. A further complementary concept to primacy is reception, in that decisions of councils and primates need to be received by local churches. Even if formally accepted by local churches, time must be allowed for conciliar decisions to be appropriated by the faithful.

Each church faces current issues, and this requires a mutual questioning in ecclesial charity and fellowship and the recognition that churches may be able to help each other more than they can imagine. There needs to be a proper theological, rather than sociological, approach to primacy and synodality and this means treating the notion of a 'college of bishops' with great caution. Anglicans and Orthodox share a eucharistic focus and an emphasis on the diocese as the local church. There is a need for more work to be done on the presbyterate in relation to the episcopate and the role of laity in synods, and indeed the representation of the whole people of God. The eschatological perspective on the church needs to be allowed to criticize any comfortable integration into secular structures and mores. The doctrine of the Trinity is of utmost importance here in developing appropriate models and structures of primacy and episcopacy.

Priesthood, Christ and the Church (section VI). The one priesthood in the church is the priesthood of Christ, and this means priesthood is an integral part of the ecclesial reality. Priesthood is neither simply a function, nor is it autonomous of the community. All characterizations of priesthood apply first to Christ. Hebrews sees Christ as both sacrificial priest and sacrificial victim. Priesthood is a precondition for the existence of the church, which offers itself responsively in the eucharistic anaphora, drawing us as participants into the life of the Trinity. Isaiah 53, read christologically, sees the Messiah as an intercessor. Christian priesthood is directly related to Christ's priesthood and extends it into time and place. Christ's priesthood, made present by the work of the Spirit, opens creation to the action and will of the Father. Priesthood is thus a Trinitarian reality, revealing the divine *koinonia*. The church is taken into the movement of Christ's self-offering, which culminates in the eucharist.

Women and Men: ministries in the church (section VII). The introduction states that all ministry is rooted in Christ, and situated within

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the context of baptism and eucharist. It goes on to state that this discussion is occasioned by the Anglican decision to ordain women to the presbyterate and episcopate, but also because the ministries of women as deacons and lay people need to be considered. The ordination of women should be seen in the context of the ministries of women in the widest sense. Lay ministry is ministry that is conferred by the Christian community, in the service of the church and its mission to the world.

Anglicans and Orthodox use the same initiation rites for male and female candidates and both men and women exercise the ministries of sponsors. Both traditions make provision for laymen and women (notably midwives) to act as the minister of baptism. There is no distinction between men and women in the rites of confirmation or chrismation, or in reception of communion. Both traditions affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and practice this one baptism, which is the basis of all Christian ministry, without distinction between men and women.

Laymen and women have long histories in both traditions in the maintenance and celebration of liturgical life. Laymen have long read the lessons in church, a ministry restricted to men in both churches till the 1920s when it began to be opened to women in Anglican churches and more recently in the Orthodox churches. Both traditions experience the ministry of lay people as servers, thurifers and crucifers. These ministries were restricted to men in Anglican churches till quite recently, and are still normally restricted to men in Orthodox churches, though with notable exceptions, for example in women's monasteries. The office of reader became a highly significant lay ministry in Anglicanism at from the Reformation. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the scope of this ministry in Anglicanism has increased, showing regional variations. In Orthodoxy, the office of reader also shows considerable regional diversity, but in most Orthodox traditions is restricted to men. The office of server in Anglicanism shows similar developments to other lay ministries. Until recently, administration[6] of the eucharist was restricted to the ordained, and this is still the case in Orthodox churches — where, however, the communion cloth is held by lay people, usually but not always, by men. Liturgical music is provided by both men and women in both Anglican and Orthodox traditions. The supportive and preparatory work for liturgy is carried out in both traditions by both men

6. Administration is an ambiguous and disputed term in anglican circles: it is used here to mean distribution of the consecrated bread and wine.

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and women. Lay people in both traditions have been active in mission and evangelism, Orthodox churches applying the title 'equal to the apostles' to evangelists, both men and women. Lay men and women have been involved in education at all levels in both traditions. Of special note is the role of lay theologians in Orthodox churches, noting that theology is essentially a communal, ecclesial undertaking. The monastic ministries of both men and women are exercised in both traditions, notwithstanding the break in continuity of monastic life in Anglicanism from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Both traditions experience the lay ministry of spiritual direction, distinguished in Orthodoxy as the ministry of elder (*staretz* or *geron*), usually a priest, but often a monk or nun. In summary: the life of contemporary Anglican and Orthodox churches would be unimaginable without the role of various lay ministries, and these ministries need to be the continuing subject of theological reflection as gifts of the Holy Spirit to the church.

The statement then moves on to consider the diaconate. It is important for both traditions to recognize deacons as embodying the *diakonia* of the whole body of Christ. Both Anglicanism and Orthodoxy have histories of the diaconate of women, though the practice of these ministries has differed. Both traditions recognize the ministry of women deacons in the New Testament, and beyond in the life of the church from the third century in the East and the fifth century in the West. In Anglicanism, the diaconal ministry of women was expressed in the order of deaconesses as restored in the nineteenth century. In Orthodoxy, the order of deaconesses (or women deacons) was never abolished, but fell into disuse from the eleventh or twelfth century. There have been recent attempts to restore the diaconate of women in Orthodoxy, especially since 1988 at the Inter-orthodox Consultation at Rhodes. Anglican and Orthodox delegates to the dialogue found themselves in agreement with regard to the ordination of women as deacons (or deaconesses).

The discussion here moves on to the ministries of bishops and presbyters. Anglicans and Orthodox find they diverge from one another on the sacerdotal ministries of women as priests and bishops, that is presidency at the eucharist. Since the 1970s, a growing number of churches of the Anglican Communion have ordained women as priests. Since the early 1990s, several provinces have ordained women as bishops. Even so, a significant minority within Anglicanism, often within rather than between provinces, continues to oppose these moves, and — as the Orthodox reminded the dialogue — some of the most persuasive arguments against ordination of women have come from Anglican writers. Orthodox churches have not ordained women, and have posed substantive theological questions to their ecumenical

dialogue partners who have. They are also aware, however, of the small but significant body of Orthodox opinion either in favour of women's ordination, or who see no theological reasons against it.[7]

Anglicans and Orthodox are well aware of the divisive nature of the question, and are concerned that their differing opinions may arise from a fundamental divergence on fundamental matters of faith. Do these differences reveal divergent or flawed doctrines of the Trinity or Christology? The previously agreed statements on foundational theological truths have led the Commission to assert this is not the case. Each tradition believes it has made its own decisions in fidelity to Scripture and tradition, but the question arises: how could the Holy Spirit lead one community to one decision and another community to another? Both groups are convinced they should search for the truth, and in readiness to risk their own certainties.

At this stage, the task is to understand each other's position on the place of women and men in relation to the priestly ministry, and to ask whether this is a church dividing issue. Does the ordination or non-ordination of women justify division in the body of Christ?

This is not a question the Commission asks in a vacuum, but against the background of previous theological discussion and agreement. The aim is not to arrive at a consensus either way, but to articulate theologically the reasons for the differing positions in such a way as to allow each to understand the other better, without recourse to caricature. The agreed statement reports the Commission's surprise at the degree of consensus shared, and its belief that careful theology may give both groups a healthier, more respectful perspective on their differences.

Theologically, both sides agree that the arguments for and against the ordination of women to the presbyterate and the episcopate are identical. Both ministries of eucharistic presidency are priestly, and both focus on the priesthood of Christ. The Spirit makes the priestly work of Christ present in the church, through time. Through baptism the human person enters this priestly movement of Christ's self-offering, and the church carries this out in its eucharistic life. Christian priesthood is not simply the result of Christ's ministry, nor is it a duplicate or parallel of his work, but is ontologically incorporated into and identified with his priesthood. Anglicans and Orthodox agree that women and men share equally in this priestly character of the church. The eucharist is never simply the priestly work of the ordained, but

7. See Urs von Arx and Anastasios Kallis (eds), 'Gender and the Image of Christ', *Anglican Theological Review*, 84.1 (2002), pp. 489–752.

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the work of the priestly community together. Priesthood in the church does not introduce division or classification into the church, but is rather a gift to the church, and to be understood within the ecclesial community.

Despite this high level of agreement, Anglicans and Orthodox find they disagree as to whether priestly ministry can be exercised in the church by women as well as by men.

Both Anglicans and Orthodox thus see the position of the other as introducing division or classification into the ecclesial body. Both groups are left wondering, given the large degree of consensus reached, why they continue to be divided on the issue of the priestly ordination of women. This leads to a return to the role of culture: is this simply in the end a cultural difference? Anglicans and Orthodox share an appreciation for the place of culture as an expression of a God-given human creativity. Human culture has lost its original vitality through sin, but has also been restored and recreated. It is intrinsic to our human life and integral to our relationships with God, other human beings and nature. Culture is thus to be affirmed and transformed, and above all discernment is to be exercised in the judgment of culture. To what extent, then, is the ordination or non-ordination of women bound to culture? How might culture relate to the theological grounds for disagreement here? To what extent do divergent practices constitute church dividing heresies? If the ordination of women is heretical, then some explanation of this must be given. Can *koinonia* be maintained and include a difference in practice like this? If the ordination of women does not constitute a heresy, what are the next steps towards unity?

The Commission regards it as very important that the disagreement about ordination of women is to be viewed within the context of the overwhelming consensus on the ministries of women and men and the ordination of both women and men to the diaconate in both Anglican and Orthodox traditions. The document ends with the affirmation that differences about ordination of women in no way threaten the previous agreements on Trinity, Christ and Spirit, Humanity, Church, and the episcopal and priestly ministries within the church. Even though the paths diverge, the dialogue is characterized by a profound consensus and sense of hope.

Dealing With the Consequences: Heresy, Schism and Reception

Heresy, Schism and the Church (section VIII). So the question is whether this diversity of opinion is church dividing, and for this the concepts

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of heresy and schism need to be examined. Heresy referred to a personal choice in the early church, and the term is so used by Justin to describe parties or systems of thought within Christianity on the analogy of philosophical schools. By time of Irenaeus, heresy has come to mean abnormal or false doctrine, undermining or distorting the witness of the apostles. The term 'heretic' referred to a dissident from the catholic faith. Orthodoxy has its origins in a community, but heresy begins with an individual who asserts one element of the truth at the expense of all others. For both Anglicans and Orthodox, the apostolic faith is that which continues to be defined by ecumenical synods.

Where heresy refers to a departure from the faith, schism (literally a split or tear) refers to a departure from the eucharistic communion of the church. Schism thus represents an ecclesiological anomaly. It is a physical, bodily separation, betraying Christ's prayer that all may be one. If we focus on the existential reality of the church (rather than ideas or teachings), this may mean we start to see schism rather than heresy as the fundamental sin we are called to overcome.

Loose uses of these terms have obscured their value in the process of discerning the apostolic faith in new situations. The terms themselves, however, may be very useful in helping Christians live the gospel and recover Christian unity.

The self-revelation of God cannot be understood in isolation from the community of faith, and this is expressed in fidelity to the Scriptures, the rule of faith, and the decisions of the councils, so any teaching or practice at variance from these must be considered heretical. But this places a very large limitation on the scope of the term heresy. Heresy is a denial of faith itself and a betrayal of the church as the community of faith: a merely deviant understanding of an article of faith should not be condemned as heresy. Even so, the church must at times dissociate itself from teachings and practices that it considers seriously subversive of essential Christian truths. Discernment of bad doctrine must involve convincing argument to the contrary, that is, the explanation of good doctrine. Individual Christians cannot declare other Christians heretical, as heresy affects the life of the church and can only be discerned by the church as a community. Like reception, the discernment of heresy takes place on the plane of the community. Innovation for the actualizing of the gospel must be received, or denied, by the community. Such discernment properly begins as an exercise of episcope, working within synods of local churches. In the end, only an ecumenical synod that has been received by the church can declare a teaching (or practice) heretical. Here the pastoral role of the bishop as interpreter of the faith is inseparable from the bishop's role as guardian of the church's unity. The discernment

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of heresy is closely related to the process of reception, and both depend on a fundamental openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean for one church to be out of communion with another where there is no formal condemnation of heresy and no departure from the apostolic faith? Anglicans and Orthodox can agree that our divisions impede our mission to the world as well as our relationships with each other. They harm but do not destroy our basic unity in Christ.

Reception in communion (section IX) begins by noting the usage of 'reception' in the earlier work of the Commission. It is important here with regard to how new forms of life and ministry are to be received and recognized, a question broader than, yet inseparable from, that of the reception of doctrinal formulations. Reception is a part of the church's life, for the church constantly receives and re-receives the gospel. Jesus himself received both from God the Father and from the history of the people of Israel, his mission from the Father and his identity both bodily and culturally for the people of Israel. The term reception cannot be dissociated from its technical meaning in relation to church councils and their decisions. It has been revived in the ecumenical movement, and now we must think of churches receiving *from* one another, and also receiving *one another*. Not only is doctrine to be received, but, so are ministries and structures and persons.

Theologically, the church receives and the church is received. Mission can be better understood in terms of reception — this avoids the aggressive connotation of mission, and opens a suggestion of hospitality and self-offering. Our question is about how churches can receive one another. The church also receives from the world, and above all from God — God's love for the world. In the eucharist the church receives a person. So long as the world rejects the church, or churches reject one another, there will be a need for reception. Such reception takes place in the Holy Spirit who is freedom: this reception is never forced.

There is a need to recover this classic notion of reception in our current situation. This would need to acknowledge that reception is not simply of texts, but of churches and communities, of churches re-receiving (and re-appropriating) their own traditions in the context of the apostolic tradition, and of this being a community rather than an individual matter.

Reception will involve the relationship between gospel and culture, or actualizing the gospel in every culture. This inevitably involves some sort of change in the expression of the faith and the embodiment of tradition as a charismatic principle. Questions arise as to the relationship between change and continuity. Anglicans and Orthodox can affirm both sides of this tension, seeing the church as a hermeneutical

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community, constantly interpreting and re-interpreting the gospel in new situations. This can involve quite different interpretations legitimately co-existing in one and the same communion. Dialogue in such cases needs to be conducted in deeply respectful listening to the other. Agreements should not seek to establish a uniformity of belief but rather a mutual understanding of each others' beliefs and practices, opening the way for communion within diversity. In general we should avoid closing any conversation between communities.

In none of this can reception of ecclesial structure be separated from the reception of faith. This has implications for the ordination of women: in what circumstances may the ministries of women priests and bishops be received? There are innovations that do not affect the structure of the church, for example the institution of monasticism, while others, for example the papacy, have affected the basic structure of the church. The latter variety of innovation is to be avoided as mutual reception is easier where the basic ecclesial structures of two churches are parallel to one another. The question of the ordination of women should be seen not as a matter of orthodoxy as against heresy, but in the context of the question of the mutual reception of ministries. Matters of faith can be discussed at length, but matters of practice call for a far more immediate response.

This paper has stuck very closely here to the content of the agreed statement. I have not explored the content of the earlier Moscow and Dublin agreed statements, nor have I considered the connection between this dialogue and other bilateral dialogues in which the Anglican Communion is involved. This latter theme deserves further exploration. Clearly there are links with the discussion among Anglicans and Roman Catholics on primacy,[8] and the recent ARCIC document on Mary,[9] which appeared in print during the 2005 meeting in Cyprus and was received with very great interest. There are obviously critical things that could be said about the draft agreed statement: is the Commission, for example, using the categories of gospel and culture in too static a way? Is culture, in particular, in realty a far more fluid and dynamic phenomenon? What connection is

8. Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Gift of Authority: Authority in the Church III: an Agreed Statement of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1999). See also *Bishops in Communion: Collegiality in the service of the Koinonia of the Church: an occasional paper of the House of Bishops of the Church of England* (London: Church House Publishing, 2000).

9. Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ: an Agreed Statement of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission* (Harrisburg/London: Morehouse, 2005).

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to be made between the ordination of women and reception, especially as reception has come to be understood and practiced within the Anglican Communion? Most theological dialogues have one or more prominent thinkers whose ideas place a stamp on the whole work of the commission. Anyone who is familiar with his work will undoubtedly see the influence of Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon on the Cyprus statement.

Two final things: first, the dialogue is built on long-standing trust and goodwill, not only between the two communions, but also on a personal level between members of the Commission. Second, the primary focus has shifted in this last 20 years from the *filioque* clause and its implications to the question of the ministries of women, especially — in the Anglican Communion — as priests and bishops. The difference of opinion and practice here has in effect become *the* difference, tending to negate all other differences between Anglicans and Orthodox. There may be more to be said about the *filioque* question, especially in terms of unpacking its broader implications. It is also a matter of great regret — and embarrassment — that the Anglican Church of Australia has found it impossible, for legal and constitutional reasons, to follow the advice of the 1978 and 1988 Lambeth Conferences and delete the *filioque* from the creed. On the question of women's ministries, what is especially apparent is the preparedness of the dialogue to work from first principles, so that the question of ordination is nested within the deeper-level discussion of ministry, which in turn is discussed in the context of ecclesiology, and this discussion in turn is built upon the common ground of christology, pneumatology and trinitarian theology. The discussion may seem painstakingly slow, but the result will surely be all the stronger for it.[10]

10. This paper is a shortened and updated version of a public lecture given at the Institute for Spiritual Studies, whose leadership I thank for the invitation to speak, at St Peter's Eastern Hill, Melbourne, in early 2006. In writing this paper I wish also to acknowledge my indebtedness to comments on the draft by Professor William Green, and to his at that stage unpublished paper 'The Anglican–Orthodox Dialogue and its Future', now published in Peter M. Doll (ed.), *Anglicanism and Orthodoxy 300 Years After the 'Greek College' in Oxford* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 379–93.

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