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THE CONCEPT OF TRADITION IN THE THOUGHTS OF THEOLOGISTS GEORGES FLOROVSKY AND DUMITRU STĂNILOAE

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**SUMMARY**

Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae through their work pleaded for rediscovering the beauty and fundamental importance of the thinking of the Holy Fathers. In the thinking of these two theologians, we find identified the slips of Orthodox and Western theology and its rupture with life, but also the solutions to follow by returning to the spirit and patristic thinking. Both theologians were fascinated by the work of the Holy Fathers and they followed the Holy Fathers’ example in order to seek first the experience and then the speech, the experience of God, and then the talk about God. In this sense, we identify in their work a theological discourse inspired patristically and openly creative to contemporary theology and society. The permanent and mobile character of the Holy Tradition it finds its proper example in the thinking of these fathers.

Both theologians went beyond the conception of the temporal limits of Tradition. In their thinking, the Tradition does not end with the end of a century, with the death of the last Apostle or with a Latin or Eastern Father. They look at the Tradition in its historical continuity and they always understand it in the context of ecclesiality. Tradition is in the Church, and the Church is in history, but the Church also goes beyond history. The work of Tradition is both seen and unseen, being underlined by this the charismatic and Christological character of the Tradition, in which the unseen intertwines with the seen, the historical time is at the same time mystical and it tends towards the eschatological time. Tradition is history, not purely human, but divine-human, so that within Tradition one can see highlighted, the work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In the work of both theologians, patristic thinking acquires a universal status through the permanent and mobile character of Tradition. The patristic period and its value have no limits in history, just as Tradition has no limits. Father Stăniloae and Father Florovsky made a dogmatic synthesis, whose concepts fall between the two dimensions of Tradition: static and dynamic. From this point of view, the Orthodox Tradition reveals its ecumenical or universal character.

This paper wants to show that through Tradition, the Church does not return Christians to the first Christian millennium, but it shows them the way to integrate and live in its catholicity. Orthodoxy is not the religion of the past, but of the future, a future that will be influenced by the present, as the present is as well influenced by the consequences of the past, that is, a future provided by the unity of Tradition or the millennial experience of the Church.

The purpose of this doctoral thesis is to present the main directions regarding the understanding of the theological thinking of Fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, in connection with the concept of Church Tradition. The present work wishes to expose the way which these two fathers updated in, the Patristic Tradition in modernity. This thesis aims to: a) make known the theology and work of Father Georges Florovsky in general and on the Tradition of the Church in particular, in the space of Romanian Orthodox theology, by approaching it in relation to the work of Father Dumitru Staniloae; b) open even more the horizon of knowledge of the theology and work of Father Stăniloae in general and on the concept of Tradition in particular, in theology outside the borders of our country, by approaching in relation with the work of the Romanian theologian, with the theology of Father Florovsky, a landmark of Orthodoxy in the Western and American diaspora and a prominent representative of Orthodoxy in the ecumenical dialogue.

Regarding the methodology used, I can say that for the beginning it is an analytical one, in which I researched the writings of both fathers, following the works whose contents are related to the Church Tradition and I tried to capture the essential aspects of this concept, using the synthetic method. Then I tried to highlight the connection between the teaching about the Church Tradition and ecclesiology, anthropology, eschatology, Christology and pneumatology, as it appears from the writings of Fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Staniloae. In the theoretical development I tried to highlight the patristic origin of the way in which the concept of Tradition is exposed by these two fathers, related to contemporary theological thinking. Throughout this work will be offered the positions of other Orthodox theologians and not only, on the main theological concepts of Fathers Georges Florovky and Dumitru Staniloae, which are related to the concept of Tradition.

In addition to the objectives specified along with the methods used, I would also add that, in this paper, I intended to bring a better clarification in relation to several issues. In this sense, I looked for a definition of Tradition; I presented the role of Tradition in the life of the Church and its connection with Scripture; the role of Tradition in the life of the people, showing the connection between Tradition and ethnicity; the role of Tradition in the importance of dialogue with other Churches and in preserving the identity of the Orthodox Church. I also tried to answer the questions: what is the limit of Tradition in the life of the Church and how long does it take for a teaching or practice in the life of the Church to become part of its Tradition? Who are the successors of the Tradition? How can the Tradition develop while remaining stable? How can the Tradition be capitalized in the socio-cultural context of our time?

Considering the fact that I used a varied bibliography, the emphasis being on the original writings of fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, I think I can argue that most of the objectives of the paper have been achieved.

The novelty, the topicality, and the importance of this thesis can be stated by several ideas: a) it is the first major work in Orthodox theology that deals in the relationship of the two great theologians of the twentieth century, Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Staniloae, to the concept of Tradition; b) considering the *ad intra* and *ad extra* mission of the Orthodox Church, the concept of Tradition exposed and updated in modernity by these two theologians, it can be the key to the missionary and ecumenical success of the Orthodox Church, as well as to a deeper theological self-definition and spiritual through the method of relating dogma to spirituality, theology and life; c) in this paper is highlighted the paradigm shift in the Orthodox theology of the twentieth century through the neopatristic synthesis, giving for the theologians of the XXI century the overall image of the method of this synthesis or the direction to follow, from the face (directions of the neopatristic synthesis highlighted by Father Florovksy) to resemblance (the realization of the most authentic update of the Patristic Tradition in modernity by Father Stăniloae).

The idea for the future would be to publish this thesis in English, to begin with on an easily accessible online platform (academia.edu). The reason for this approach is to offer theologians from outside our country, an accessible interpretation of the thought of Father Stăniloae.

Relating this doctoral thesis to the academic contributions in Romanian Orthodox theology and abroad, I can say that so far, there is no overall work on the concept of Tradition in the thinking of theologians Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Staniloae. Moreover, we have not identified any study that would relate the conception of Tradition of these two theologians. In Western Orthodox theology, apart from small studies and articles, there is no consistent work on the concept of Tradition in Father Florovsky's thinking, and in the case of Father Staniloae, I have not identified any such exclusive approach to Tradition, nor in Romanian theology, nor in theology outside the country's borders.

However, I have identified several works, studies and articles in which the conception of Tradition in the thinking of either Father Georges Florovsky[[1]](#footnote-2) or Father Dumitru Stăniloae[[2]](#footnote-3) is exposed to some extent.

In terms of structure, the thesis contains an introduction, four chapters each followed by conclusions, final conclusions and bibliography. Each chapter is structured in several subchapters, and each subchapter ends with a conclusion of those presented.

In the first chapter I presented a brief history of the neopatristic movement from which I note that Orthodox neopatristic was born as a reaction to Russian academic theology, due to the Western method of theology and theological speculations typical to Russian religious philosophy. The initiator of this movement, Father Georges Florovsky, proposed through this synthesis, the theological answer to the double pseudomorphosis that Orthodox theology went through, starting after the fall of the Byzantine Empire and continuing until today. I have shown here that, with the second half of the twentieth century, the orientation of Orthodox theology becomes neopatristic. The first representants of this movement are Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, Dumitru Stăniloae and Iustin Popovici. Seeking to identify the relevance of this movement in Orthodox theology in the context of the challenges of the twentieth and early twenty-first century, I concluded that the main goal of neopatristic and the key to its success is to restore patristic thinking and update Tradition in modernity. The alternative to a rationalized theology and rigid and lifeless Western philosophies is the elaboration of a theology based on the Patristic Tradition approached in a contextual and existential way. Patristic thinking becomes normative in current Orthodox theology. Rediscovering the Fathers, current theologians have rediscovered and creatively capitalized on three concepts: a) the apophatic tradition; b) the uncreated energies; c) the theosis or the deification. A unitary vision on these concepts becomes the hallmark of Orthodox theology in dialogue with other theologies. The final conclusion of the first part is that, although in the second half of the twentieth century significant steps were taken to recover the Patristic Tradition in a neopatristic synthesis, this is only the beginning of a long and difficult road. The fathers of the twentieth century indicated the directions that the theologians of the twenty-first century must follow in order to organically embody theology in life, in the worship and spirituality of the Church, in order to address the existential, current and effective contradictions of today's world. In this sense, I would propose to remember not only the concept of *return to the Fathers* expressed by Father Florovsky, but also the concept *together with the Fathers*. The neo-patristic approaches made so far show that this synthesis does not aim to delve into a fundamentalism of Tradition and patristic thinking, but together with the creative assumption of this thinking, it opens the horizons to the apologetic approach of postmodernity. Theologians such as Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae proposed an updated patristic theology, based on interfaith and intercultural dialogue and an interception of postmodernity through its Christianization within it. The second and third parts of this subchapter contain a brief synthesis of the intellectual and theological evolution of Fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, highlighting the neopatristic character of their theology. The common aspects that I identified by analyzing their life and theological thinking during more significant works would be that: a) they campaigned for the liberation of Orthodox theology from the tutelage of academic rationalism, they noticed the divorce between theology and life, and they proposed, by rediscovering patristic thought, a living theology, which they approached existentially and spiritually; b) the neopatristic synthesis of Father Stăniloae takes place in parallel with that of Father Florovsky; c) both focused theological thinking on Christology; d) they were open to Western theology and culture, being involved in ecumenical actions; e) they showed theological honesty, criticizing both Western and Orthodox theologians; f) they were open to the mission of the Church, but emphasized the importance of doctrinal truth, to the detriment of social actions and cooperation.

In the second chapter I presented the relationship between Church, Scripture and Tradition in the thinking of theologians Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, emphasizing especially the steadfast or normative character of the Apostolic, Patristic, and Liturgical Tradition of the Church. The conclusions I have reached in this chapter are that both theologians understood Revelation in a unitary way, keeping together the historical character with the eschatological one. Regarding the concept of Tradition, they showed that Tradition was born with the Church on Pentecost and it was the first form in which Revelation was preserved and capitalized in. Tradition, in the broadest sense - or the Apostolic Tradition - it is the normative form of the Tradition in which the books of the New Testament are also included within. The second form of Tradition is the Restricted Tradition or Church Tradition, which contains the concrete ways given by the Apostles to bring the Church to life and to put successive generations of Christians in relation to the same Christ as the Apostles and early Christians knew Him: creeds, dispositions regarding mysteries, worship, hierarchical organization and the life of the faithful, the writings of the Holy Fathers, the decisions of the Ecumenical Synods, the old liturgical texts. This restricted tradition or Church Tradition, it is born out of the Apostolic Tradition, it is contained in it and it includes a third form of the Tradition, called Dynamic Tradition. In the conception of both theologians, Tradition is alive, charismatic, ecclesial and necessary. The dynamism of Tradition is possible due to the stability and authority of the Apostolic Tradition or Tradition in the broadest sense, which contains the virtualities of advancing the Church Tradition, being by the rule of faith, the source of certification and defense of the true Tradition from wrong or useless traditions. The rule of faith, the consensus of the Universal Church and the Apostolic Tradition, are the methods of recognizing the true Tradition. In both theologians` thinking, Tradition is not a collection of ancient practices and artifacts, but, on the contrary, they emphasized the dynamic, the living, the charismatic, the historical, and the eschatological character of the Tradition. The work of the Holy Spirit is highlighted along with the work of the Son in the preservation and transmission of Tradition. Both theologians identify in patristic thought the liberating source of Tradition. Regarding the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and of the writings of the Holy Fathers, both theologians used the typological method, in which the emphasis does not fall on the letter of the text, but on the general context accompanied by an ascetic-existential deepening in the spiritual sense of writing. Father Florovsky used for the first time in theology, the expression: ecclesial experience, in the context of a theology about an unincarnated teaching in life and he designated by this expression: the experience of the universal Church, inexhaustible but reflected in Scripture and Tradition, and lived by the Church and its faithful. By virtue of this experience, one can approach and interpret the Revelation contained in Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. In the thinking of both theologians, the Church, the Scripture and the Tradition are in harmony, they enlighten, complete and strengthen each other. Although both fathers expressed the reciprocity amongst Church, Scripture and Tradition, Father Stăniloae understood the Church as the third form of Revelation and he identified it to Tradition in the work of interpreting Scripture. He used the term perichoresis in a unique way, in order to express the reality amongst the content of Revelation - Christ - and the Church, and he showed that the Church, the Scripture and the Tradition are united, but not confounded to one another. Father Georges Florovsky was the first theologian to argue that the age of the Fathers is not over, that the Fathers are not only the past, but they are also the present and the future of the Church. The role and the importance of the Fathers in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, in the defense of the true faith, and in the authenticity of a current theology, it has been highlighted by both theologians, to whom the theology of the Church does not remain a rigid and abstract mechanism, but its experience and knowledge surpass any system, dogmatic theology being, through patristic thinking and ecclesial experience, related to the kerygmatic theology.

In the third chapter, the emphasis falls on the dynamic character of the Tradition. In this chapter I tried to capture the way in which Tradition has been capitalized throughout history and the possibility of creative updating of Tradition in modernity. Father Staniloae quotes Father Florovsky on the charismatic nature of Tradition, and both theologians identify the presence and work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in the preservation, transmission, and renewal of Tradition. Although Father Florovsky emphasized the historical character more, and Father Staniloae the charismatic one, both theologians understood the Tradition in history and, at the same time beyond it, carried by the Holy Spirit to the eschatological time of the coming Kingdom. Both theologians emphasized the liturgical character of Tradition or the fact that Tradition is expressed and lived in the worship of the Church. Regarding the actuality of Tradition in contemporaneity, they talked about the actuality of patristic theology. The patristic period is constantly being completed, and the Tradition is developing remaining constant, said Father Stăniloae. Both theologians noticed in Byzantine theology and spirituality an organic continuation of the Patristic Tradition. The conclusion is that Father Stăniloae made a contemporary synthesis of Byzantine theology, by rediscovering the Palamite theology and the hesychasm, and Father Florovsky, although he fails to made such a synthesis, he still offered the main argument for the continuity and topicality of the patristic tradition in Byzantine tradition: the confession of truth within the common ethos of the Church. I also noticed two different forms of updating the Patristic Tradition in the current context, used by theologians Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae. G. Florovsky summarized the recourse to the Patristic Tradition in the concept of Christian Hellenism, and Father Stăniloae creatively rediscovered the Palamite theology and thr philokalist spirituality. In the first case, I believe that the thesis on Christian Hellenism must be appreciated more as a method, and Christian Hellenism seen not as a permanent and eternal philosophy of Christian existence, but as a paradigm of the Church's relationship with the world. The method extracted from this thesis would be the selective relation and integration in the Orthodox Tradition of the other traditions and cultures, which do not contradict the unitary Apostolic Tradition; the use of a non-specific conceptual framework (as the Fathers in their times put philosophy at the service of the Church's faith, and today's theologians can approach a new conceptual framework to shed light on new aspects of Revelation). In the second case, I noticed that Father Stăniloae realized by rediscovering Palamite theology, hesychasm and philocalism, an authentic recourse to the Church Tradition, creatively updating the Patristic Tradition in modernity. Father Stăniloae's neopalamite method consists of existentially updating the patristic thought and its connection to the life of contemporary man. In the thinking of both fathers we can speak of a renewal in theology only through a renewal of life and re-establishing the connection of theology with asceticism and Scripture. Today's theological thinking must be no less patristic than in the past. It remains open, provided that the new wording is an extension of and agrees with the old ones.

In the fourth chapter we highlighted the importance of Tradition in an ecumenical context, especially considering the anti-ecumenical and anti-Western positions wich are raising up in the Orthodox space. Father Florovsky and Father Stăniloae approached an open ecumenism or in other words capitalized on it, and understood the ecumenical character of the Holy Tradition and its importance in restoring Christian unity. In the thinking of both theologians there is a balance between fidelity to the Orthodox identity and openness to other Christian Churches. Although they never met, they were the preachers of the same faith and they expressed on every occasion the conviction that the Orthodox Church is the Church of Tradition and the Apostles. Although the Orthodox Church is the full Church, it is not perfect, and therefore both theologians have recognized the possibility of its enrichment from the unaltered spiritual and theological treasures of other Christian Churches. The identification of the elements of the other Christian traditions, in accordance with the Apostolic Tradition and their integration in the Tradition of the Orthodox Church it was one of the premises of their ecumenical activity. Both theologians disapproved the Eucharistic intercommunication and ecclesiology. In their thinking ecclesiology is centered Christologically, and the Eucharistic communion is the natural consequence of the dogmatic and moral communion of the Christian Churches. Father Stăniloae solved the dilemma of the ecumenism between love or truth, and he expressed a unitary understanding of them. Both theologians had as their center of ecumenical concern the affirmation of Christian truth and unity, understanding the ecumenism as part of the Church's mission. Father Florovsky was the first theologian to take Augustine's conception of the canonical boundaries of the Church, and to assert through ecumenism in time, the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in unorthodox churches, the existence of a single Church-Body of Christ, and the internal or charismatic character of catholicity of the Church. Father Stăniloae takes from Father Florovsky the idea of ​​the internal and charismatic character of the catholicity of the Church and both theologians argued that catholicity or the sobornicity designates the unity of faith through fidelity to Tradition, it’s a qualitative principle, and not a quantitative or geographical one and it involves an objective and a subjective aspect. Objectively, catholicity refers to the permanent work of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Church through the Holy Sacraments, and subjectively to the integration of all Christians and of each believer, in the life of communion and love of the Church, which has as source and model the life of communion and love of the Holy Trinity. Father Stăniloae included these considerations in his thesis on open catholicity. Both theologians upheld the importance of spiritual life and the acquisition of faith in life as conditions for integration into the life and unity of the Church, based on the principle of unity in complementary diversity. The final conclusion of this chapter is that Fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae offered through the concept of ecumenism in time and the concept of open catholicity, a model framework and source of inter-Christian dialogue.

Although specific conclusions are set out in each chapter, this thesis comes to an end with the Final Conclusions, which show that both theologians presented Tradition as alive, current in the life of the Church, always new and always the same, necessary and motivating in the manifestation of the church in the life of contemporary man. Along with the above, I believe that some more important aspects of those exposed throughout this paper could be highlighted. Following the synthesis on the life and work of the two theologians, I came to the conclusion that, for them, the work and thought of the Holy Fathers will become the foundation of the vision of the world and life, the task for a current and living theology and a precise and concise understanding of Holy Scripture. Despite the fact that the neopatristic synthesis is still in its infancy, these two parents outlined the main directions to follow to achieve this step. Through their work and thought, we are carried throughout the history of the Church's faith in a spiritual form. We see with our own eyes how the Church was born on Pentecost and, with it, the Tradition too. We see the dynamic action of Tradition in the Church, enlivened and sustained by the continuous presence of the Holy Spirit. We know that the same Holy Spirit who spoke through the Apostles was revealed in the acceptance of the faith of the new Christians and communicated to us the whole of Christ in Scripture and in the various ways of the Christian to unite with Him in the Church, extended and transmitted as Tradition throughout successive generations of Christians, it also inspires us to a deeper understanding and a greater knowledge of the mystery of salvation. Through Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, the Orthodox theology reveals its universal, patristic and spiritual character. By considering the thinking of these two fathers, there can be expressed a synthetic formulation of the concept of Tradition, as in the followings: The Holy Tradition is a) the way in which the supernatural Revelation is preserved in by the Church; b) the one that keeps alive the connection between Scripture and the Church and it updates Scripture in the life of the Church; c) the continuous dialogue and presence of Christ with the Holy Spirit in the Church; d) the key to inter-Christian dialogue.

A current neopatristic synthesis must be based on interfaith and intercultural dialogue, open and accessible to modern man and able to intercept modernity and post-modernity by transfiguring it from within. The current neopatristic synthesis is the best example of the crossing beyond the Fathers, together with the Fathers. Through the thinking of Fathers Georges Florovsky and Dumitru Stăniloae, the Patristic Tradition it has been brought back to us in modernity so that the dynamics of the Tradition reveal its authentic apologetic character. We learn from these theologians how to maintain fidelity to Tradition, while we approach the Fathers creatively. We learn that the main purpose of our theological approach is to go beyond the recovery of the writings of the Fathers and to enter their way of thinking, their way of life and sacrifice, and this to learn what is the selection between truth and falsehood, between the thinking of the Apostolic Church and the one outside it. Both fathers fought for the liberation of Orthodox theology from the influences of Western theology and Westernization in general and they appreciated, by using the criterion of Tradition, the positive and negative aspects of Orthodox theology up to them. It can be stated as a conclusion here that both theologians contributed significantly to the renewal of Orthodox dogmatic theology through the recourse to the Church Tradition and intertwined modern theological language, philosophy and culture of the time with the voice and writings of the Holy Fathers. They proposed an orthodox theology united with the life of prayer and open creatively to contemporaneity.

The neopatristic synthesis offered by Father Stăniloae can be considered the standard of current neopatristic approaches. It unites in a spiritual, patristic and modern way, the patristic thinking with the current one, and it includes in its synthesis the positive reception of human thought from the perspective of the doctrine about the divine reasons of St. Maximus the Confessor, the incorporation of Latin Fathers' thought, description of the importance of experience in theology, as this emerges from the writings of the *Philokalia* and from the personal experience of life, the pastoral openness to contemporary problems and the theological creativity springing from the language with infinite meanings of Tradition. Although absorbed by patristic thought, the theology of Father Stăniloae is presented as a novelty through the exposition and interpretation of the thought of the Holy Fathers. By discovering the Palamite theology, by the most authentic interpretation of St. Maximus, by mastering philocalism and the love of beauty, he masterfully updated the patristic tradition in modernity and in a prophetic way for postmodernity.

I identified a relationship of mutual completion in the thinking of the two fathers regarding the concept of Church Tradition, both visions contributing to a unitary meaning, nuanced according to the specifics and historical context of each person's personal life, but a roads-opening one by maintaining fidelity to the everlasting Tradition of the Church. The updating of Tradition in modernity by these theologians is done in a non-specific context of the patristic period: the seen rupture of Christian unity. Conjugated, these fathers' thinking about the Church Tradition can provide a coherent picture of an inclusive ecclesiology. The method of patristic ecumenism expounded by them in the continuous dialogue with theologies and Western thought, it is the appropriate form of receptive ecumenism today. They do not critically approach Western and Eastern thinking and theology, in order to abolish them, but to recover on a patristic basis the true Orthodox identity of Church theology or to reintegrate theology into the Orthodox Apostolic, Patristic and Byzantine Tradition. With Jesus Christ the God-Man at the center of their theological concerns, these theologians paved the way for us to know through Tradition the same Christ as the Holy Apostles and disciples knew and believed in Him.

These fathers show us that the Orthodox Tradition must be understood in its universality and catholicity. We cannot say that there is a Church separated from universality. What we define as Byzantine is loaded with Latin, Syrian, Coptic etc. elements. The universal church is holographic, it can be understood both as a whole and in every part of it. The tradition is lived in catolicity, which is not reduced to universality. After the fall of Constantinople and the Eastern Church along with the Western Church, together they are dominated by rationalist scholasticism and together they move away from the patristic, Byzantine and liturgical sources of undivided Christianity. The Catholic Mass was originally in Greek, the Latin Fathers were no better than the Greek Fathers. Along with the patristic and Byzantine rediscovery in Orthodox theology, the same rediscovery took place, of course, not in general, in Roman Catholic theology. Next we must note that the Byzantine and patristic Orthodox Tradition is discovered in the West at the Institutes of St. Serge and St. Vladimir, along with the contributions of some Eastern Orthodox theologians, such as Iustin Popovici and Dumitru Stăniloae.

The conclusion and final proposal of this work is that, given that the whole world is sick, some in the body, others in the spirit, and that the product of this universal pandemy is loneliness and discriminatory isolation in an even greater schism, the Church through its servants and through its believers, it must be more than a mother. The role of the Church as a spiritual hospital, or as a Vitezda Bath, must now be expressed more than ever. In this sense, the ecumenical openness of the Orthodox Tradition can be capitalized, not only for the affirmation of an identity, but for the highlighting of that universal and Catholic identity of the whole Church, which preserves a Tradition unaltered in the substratum, which reveals the same ready-to-self-sacrifice Son, and the same sanctifying Spirit, to all its members. The Orthodox Church is the Church of Tradition, not because it has its limit, but because it preserves and rediscovers again and again, in spite of all the stepsons of history, the same Tradition that the Holy Apostles kept and transmitted. By virtue of this universal truth, the other churches are called and invited, on the background of an ecumenism of love, to participate in the same historical and eschatological truth alike.

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