

**Ship of Fools:  
A Response to the Conclusion of the  
Ecclesiastical Court on September 17 and the  
Verdict Written by Fr. Enoch (Gavin Fetter)**

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I have been defrocked, but not excommunicated, by the Autonomous Metropolia. In essence, I was accused of not heeding their order to remove two essays from my website concerning Phyletism and “name worship.” I requested an explanation as to why they needed to be removed. I was ignored. I was asked to deny historical fact. Unfortunately, in refusing to provide evidence that I was incorrect, the synod gave me no good reason to recant anything. Since I cannot be commanded to lie, the Synod and its decisions are invalid. To this day no evidence has been brought against me and the 12 page document that comprises the verdict contains not a shred of evidence that I am incorrect on anything.

This is a move I've known about for a very long time and, in fact, remain surprised it has taken so long. I'm approached by other groups all the time saying I'm “wasted” being a part of the Autonomous Metropolia. I always turn them down based on my personal relationship with the Metropolitan. I contemplated leaving the Synod many times in the past given its total lack of charitable, publishing, apologetic or social endeavors of any kind whatsoever. I tolerate the Metropolitan's eccentricities because he is legitimately a brilliant and holy man. I've yet to get a firm answer as to why I'm one of the few in the world who realize that. Why does he refuse to publish, speak or lecture? The Synod has suffered greatly due to his invisibility to other Orthodox people.

The truth is, had it not been for Joseph Suaiden and myself, no one would have ever heard of John LoBue outside of a handful of vagante rejects that no one else could stomach. As much as I love the Metropolitan, the church comprises a handful of scattered house churches with no ecclesiastic, liturgical or ethnic unity of any sort. The church contains a gold mine of potential on so many levels, but instead, it is far more focused on putting their most active priest on trial for being politically incorrect.

Technically, I was not a part of the Synod by the 17<sup>th</sup>. In my letter to the Synod that was cited at the trial, I said “If my compromise is unacceptable, then I resign from the Synod as of this moment.” It clearly was not, so they tried someone who was no longer a part of their Synod.

I recall some time ago when I had erroneously stated that all non-Orthodox souls die upon their physical repose. “Death” has many definitions in the church and I made it seem like I meant “go out of existence.” When that was pointed out to me, I removed the offending passage immediately. It is a mark of both humility and honesty to admit mistakes, and believe it or not, no one died as a result. A scholar can say he was wrong and apologize without the world crashing to a halt. This is something I wish the Ecclesiastical Court had explained to them.

My “Orthodox Nationalist” radio show has been in existence since 2009. My writings on these subjects have been public since the 1990s. Dozens of members of the Synod are regular listeners. I have emails from them that prove it. Not only was I not condemned, I was congratulated. Nothing in my views have changed at all since then. Something else was added here that changed things, and that is Matt Heimbach. Someone is actually doing something

against injustice. That such acts inspire fear in the alienated should not be surprising. This is the reason for this farce and explains not only the vague charges, but the ludicrously fallacious reasoning behind the verdict.

Yet even here, I've not been involved in any directly political concern. My issues have always been concerning justice and historical fact. This is extremely well known. My loathing for liberal democracy is evidence I care nothing for politics except in the most theoretical or legal manner. Quite explicitly, I was defrocked because I refused to permit bishops to decide what is historical truth and what is historical fiction. I have to give up the priesthood so they can say what good cosmopolitans they are. Say to whom? Who are they trying to please?

I was amused when the 7<sup>th</sup> Canon of the Council of Chalcedon was used against me, to wit: no clergyman should “become a soldier or assume secular dignities.” I am neither a soldier nor have any secular “dignity” at all. This canon refers to clergy that have abandoned their posts due to a job in the state apparatus. It also would anathematize the entire Russian Orthodox Church from Peter the Great to the Revolution.

The term “political” is being arbitrarily defined to provide a cloak of canonical authority for the real issue. I have stressed the Etymological fallacy in much modern writing, it is a severe problem here, and quite a convenient one too. “Politics” has always referred to public affairs, namely, a position in the state apparatus or today, the trappings of an election campaign. I've done neither. My concern has only been writing about issues of history and politics for the sake of justice. This distinction is foreign to this illustrious body of historians. Their verdict condemns almost all modern saints of the Orthodox church. The Synod has stated that anything political, or anything with political implications or that might be perceived as political is forbidden. Does anyone think they really believe this?

Preaching about justice is precisely the clergyman's duty. Saints from Cosmos the Aetolian to John of Kronstadt have been intimately involved in political matters. “Political” here means issues of justice that have implications for social life and the state. This is not the conception of “political” used in the ancient or medieval worlds. Could they be this ignorant? I do not vote and my writings rarely deal with present issues unless they can be a part of a much broader theoretical critique of modernity. All in attendance on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September know this.

I am told that worrying about the “cares of life” is an excommunicable offense. I wish I could adhere to this. How I wish I could avoid paying bills or raising children. I do not have that luxury. Fr. Enoch, however, does. Those without the cares of family should refrain from judging those who do. These are not “secular cares” in the canonical sense. Again, they know this. None of those canons are even remotely connected to the issue. I have never held a state position nor ran for office. I don't even vote. I have no choice but to concern myself with “worldly cares.” The canon cited, apparently with a straight face, reads:

Those in holy orders are not allowed to get themselves involved in worldly matters, but are required to devote their time to the divine service of their profession, and to keep their mind free from all confusion and disturbance of life. Hence it is that the present Canon decrees that a bishop, or a presbyter, or a deacon must not undertake or take upon himself cares of life.

One need not be a historian to realize that this was written for clerics in parishes and monasteries where the “needs of life” were provided. The Synod, containing no more than 100 people with a huge amount of turnover, cannot provide this. The result is that I was forced to

worry about the “disturbance of life.” Yet, could they really mean this? They are not that illogical. Further,

Those in holy orders ought not to farm, i.e., rent real estate belonging to others, or become procurators, that is to say, more plainly speaking, caretakers and managers of worldly matters and mundane businesses of any kind (for the word *cura* is a Latin word signifying care and governing), as the present Canon decrees, nor ought they to take the proceeds from any undertaking that is shameful and dishonorable.

Why is this here? This is not remotely part of the accusation. The shameful acts here are the rape of logic the human mind is forced to endure when reading it. The entire decision is a monstrous non-sequitur. “Worldly affairs” does not mean issues of justice. “Politics” does not refer to a concern for social truth. That business undertakings are used as an example here might have given the good bishops a clue. Relying on *argumentum ab auctoritate* just makes their case all the weaker. Ultimately, it makes these guys look awful, demanding blind obedience out of fear rather than dialogue. It all could have been avoided.

They are also upset that I criticized Bishop Joseph (Royer). Nothing I have said about him was denied. My evidence is sound and needed to be dealt with rather than be condemned *tout court*. I am told that there was a “year” of examination into his past is humorous since my comments come from his own website. Regardless, if there was an error, it should have been brought to my attention. I would have altered anything incorrect. No, it was merely that he was criticized. Metropolitan John himself told Fr. Elias that Joseph was “leaving the Synod” if I was not “dealt with.” This is not denied either. That Bishop Joseph dared hold his church hostage in this way is cowardly and shameful even if his reasoning was correct. This behavior is, apparently, acceptable to the Autonomous Metropolia.

The Metropolitan told me that it came down to a CNN report over the Sacramento riot the media mislabeled and a handful of ignorant parishioners misinterpreted. Wide-eyed, these fools stared into their TV screens and, in panic, called the Metropolitan (rather than myself). They feared that this wildly indirect association might have something to do with the reputation of the Synod; a Synod that few have ever heard of even in the Orthodox world. Refusing to contact anyone who was there, they offered their interpretation to the bishop behind my back. Such cowardice generally does not bespeak a firm conviction. It derives from self importance and bad faith.

No one I knew was present at that riot, one where communists jumped a group of Americans protesting illegal immigration. Matthew Heimbach nor the Traditionalist Worker Party was present. Yet, even if they were, the good guys won. Maybe we disagree on who the “good guys” are. Life is easy when one cowers in an isolated monastery without responsibilities. Either way, if this was the issue, then the accusation against me was false, absurd and irrelevant. Explaining this dozens of times had no effect. Truth could not penetrate their emotional reactions and zombie-like veneration of the Jewish media.

Many in the Autonomous Metropolia have been following my work for over a decade and only now, decide it is “political” and “worldly.” This doesn't make sense. The awful reasoning and multi-layered use of logical fallacies is the result. What matters is fear: they fear attacks of “racist” or “anti-Semite” due to these vague and disconnected non-sequiturs. Maybe they fear that “political” work would destroy their tax exemptions. Fear of looking stupid is always a

popular motive. Fear their fictional views of history are coming apart might be a cause. It could be any of these or none. Without dialogue or communication, there is no possibility of knowing. A trial is not dialogue, nor is communication. It takes place only when other channels have been closed off. None, in my case, were ever tried.

I never once called Phyletism an “elaborate” hoax, its just that no one believed it. This too, is not denied. I requested documentation that the Exarchate was ethnically exclusive. It went unanswered, and with good reason. The historical issue as to simony in the Phanar nor the actual beliefs of the Bulgarian Exarchate were mentioned by the court. I cite from the documents of the Exarchate themselves. The 1872 Synod and the present one have much in common. They both were based on false information, proceeded under bad faith and refused to divulge their true motives.

The purpose of the 1872 Synod was to maintain the ability for Greek “bishops” to continue to collect from the overtaxed peasants of the Balkans. This is not mentioned. That's a good thing, since few, if any, secular historians disagree with that fact. I'm just not permitted to mention it. In fact, I was being forced to deny it entirely. Not only is that not part of the Synod's competence, it is immoral, as all lies are. Simply saying “I don't know” would have obviated the need for all of this, but just like Fonzie being unable to say he was wrong in “Happy Days,” the Synod members and the immature Gavin Fetter thinks it makes them look bad.

Fr. Enoch, a mere boy who first learned of the Orthodox church from me, refuses to cite from anything I've written to buttress his accusations. His conclusions are identical to the accusations, with no intervening evidence. Normally, an accusation requires evidence, not mere assertion. One cannot have a trial because one feels like it. It exists because clear canonical norms are being violated and no other appeal has worked. Thus, the trial itself is illegal and illogical.

If I supported heresy, what is the precise statement? Are they not aware that this is incumbent upon them to show? Not a single citation is brought to bear on this. Not a syllable of my writings were used in this trial or mentioned in its verdict. I've asked the Synod many times to provide a citation where those condemned by the 1913 Moscow Synod believed that the name of God, that is, the physical letters and sounds, are “God himself.” That was almost two years ago. I've received no answer or a retraction of their reviews. I've shown that the Bulgarian Exarchate was not ethnically exclusive and that the 1872 Synod was condemned by almost all of Orthodoxy. Rather than explaining how these conclusions are incorrect, they simply demanded that I utter falsehoods on the grounds of “obedience.” The right thing would have been to admit that they were wrong and retract their statements. Rather, their pride forced them to suppress mine instead. As my mother used to say, “my views don't need facts.”

Every accusation this enthusiastic but inexperienced boy brings against me I've refuted 100 times over. Paper after paper I've issued proving these accusations are either too vague to matter or matters of historical evidence. Either he cannot understand my verbiage, refuses to read it, or he doesn't care. My view is that he is too immature to understand the doctrines and theories here and too proud to write me for clarification.

I tried to avoid just coming out and saying that these people, Fr. Enoch among them, were simply too dull for the responsibilities placed upon them here. Yet again, I overestimated them. They write to me,

Not content with insulting one Bishop, he then attacked the competency of the entire Synod, claiming their consecrations were unacceptable, and that there is no proof of an education among any of them, and bizarrely discussed an influx of “Afro-Cubans”

entering our Synod. Despite the fact that we would gladly welcome any Orthodox Afro-Cuban, we literally have no idea what he is talking about, but in the end, Fr Raphael not holds all our Bishops in contempt, but futher [sic] seems fully unrepentant about public slander. As he told the Metropolitan, he said he will “accept the teaching authority” of the Bishops when they accept his.

Had I been shown to be guilty of slander, I would certainly have repented. I was not. I certainly claimed that Synod members could not competently decide on matters of historical fact. No Synod has that right. Even if they had that right, a synodal trial is hardly the place to hash these things out. It was a farce inside an absurdity wrapped in pomposity and self-importance with a side of male bravado. The comment, as poor Gavin well knows, comes from the Metropolitan's eccentric fear that those “of non-white racial backgrounds” will not join our church because of news reports linking me to Matt Heimbach, which in turn, links Heimbach to the riot in Sacramento in June that he had nothing to do with. This is the logic I am to equate with the “teaching authority” of the Orthodox church. While none know what the phrase *argumentum ad lapidem* means, they have charted new courses in its use.

The Autonomous Metropolia has a handful of people, less than 120 to be very generous. They are almost all white. The context of my comment was clear to even the dullards: there are very few converts coming to us, let alone non-whites that would recoil in fear that I baptized a man running an organization that opposes illegal immigration. Gavin is well aware of my sarcasm.

The verdict here and the proceedings upon which it is based imply the following propositions:

That the “political” concerns any matter of justice;

That justice is identical with “worldly cares”;

That the endless and blatant political activities of saints and bishops over the last 200 years is not significant;

That the Serbian priests leading armies against the Turkish occupiers in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are acceptable, but my radio show is not;

That conclusions can be reached without actual evidence or even data;

That the chrism of episcopal consecration grants specialized historical knowledge;

That the teaching authority of the church is more significant than actual truth;

That simony is no impediment to validity;

That one can be convicted of an offense with which he was never charged;

That slander can be determined without evidence or communication;

That one can be judged by a synod of which one is not a member;

That it is permissible to be a voting bishop without parishes or people;

That the inner workings of a mind can be known without contact with the person;

That a defendant need not know anything about his trial beforehand;

That a trial can proceed without any previous warning to the defendant beforehand;

That someone can be condemned of heresy without being excommunicated;

That criticism is identical to condemnation;

That a synod has power over historical fact.

Like a man refusing to ask for directions when he's lost, these men were out of their depth. This explains why they refused to deal with any issues of substance. I am being quite kind in the list of assumptions above.

I wrote in one of the offending papers:

From the Orthodox point of view, ethnicity is the situation of the canonical tradition. It cannot interfere with this tradition, but it can provide it with a very real, political and social hypostasis in the ethnic culture and the institutions that it has created (or suffered under). It is not a stretch to hold that “modernism,” at least in part in the church today, is based on the mythic creation of an “abstract Christian” going to an abstract church and hearing an abstract liturgy with no culture whatsoever. This is a void, something less than human. Autocephaly is meant to join the truly universal canonical and liturgical tradition and making it real for the embodied self. The “rational modern,” another mythical creation, will see in the ethnic tradition something threatening, something that accuses the “abstract man” of his own alienation. Those that have no culture should hold their tongue when judging others who do. It's time to dig into your own people and way of life, rather than pointing the abstract finger at those who maintain their traditions. These are not “myths,” but the existence of the “abstract, rational Christian” most certainly is.

I had no idea that those with “no culture” might well be Synod members. Admitting that they are ill-equipped to deal with these ideas is a sign of intelligence, not the opposite. In my case, I offer arguments, theses and evidence. In theirs, vague accusations, indirect associations, naivete and an inexplicable reliance on mainstream media sources. This is the “teaching authority” I am to respect.

The Kollyvades fathers were anathematized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1775 and excommunicated by it in 1776. This did not affect them in the least. They ignored the ignorant decree of the Synod and continued their work. Realizing that the entire Synod was comprised of men who bought their sees, they rolled their eyes and fought on. I shall follow in their footsteps as the Autonomous Metropolia has followed in the Patriarch's.

Gavin cites from the same canon as above:

What the present Canon says may be stated as follows. Since many men wishing to confound the discipline and good order of the Church inimically slander Orthodox bishops, without accomplishing any other result than that of blackening the reputations of those in holy orders and disturbing the laity, on this account it has pleased this holy Council to decree that neither all accusers of Bishops be admitted nor again that all be excluded or refused admission.

This implies that my purpose is to “confound good order.” My purpose was the contrary. It implies that I sought to “disturb the laity” and again, that it is all false, since the term “slander” is used. Since there is no evidence that such vicious behavior is the case here, the use of the canon is void. *Ad hominem* assumptions are no substitute for courage and ability.

Unfortunately for Enoch, his lack of worry about paying bills does not exempt him from logic, rules of evidence or actual expertise. Any reference to “slander,” to repeat, assumes that the falsity and intent of my words has been established. Since no one has even attempted to deny the veracity of my statements, it is a *circulus in demonstrando*, a common fallacy of emotional reasoning. My criticisms of Bishop Joseph (Royer) are not being denied because they cannot be. If they could be, it would have taken up much of this verdict rather than lengthy and irrelevant canonical citations.

It might have dawned on the reader that these are the same people who condemn Metropolitan Sergius because he refused to suffer an excruciating death rather than serve Soviet power. For these men, they fall into line at the slight possibility that a wildly indirect association

among very disconnected events might mildly inconvenience them.

They say that the “heresies” I preach are “acted upon” in the political arena. This is not explained or expanded upon in any way. I've not heard them before. They cite no reference that has me preaching heresy nor was I convicted of heresy. I was neither excommunicated nor anathematized. Therefore, I am no heretic. That wasn't even the issue.

Slander is the malicious attack on a man based on what one knows to be falsehood. This is what the over-zealous Enoch has done. If evidence against me existed, that's all this verdict would be. They would have justified their actions with copious quotes from my work. Yet, nothing in my writings is mentioned at all. This is no accident. Enoch is too emotional to grasp it or is acting in such bad faith that cognitive dissonance has destroyed what reasoning faculty his health problems have not already ravaged.

I wrote the Synod a few days before the trial:

So tell me where my offense lies? I've condemned both heresies. Worst of all, all anyone ever needed to do was just ask me about it. Why was my above answer ignored?

I've given thousands of citations on patristic and church support of ethnonationalism since 2000. Fr. Enoch, when he was Gavin Fetter, was a huge fan and my work helped bring him into the church. I've not changed. All of a sudden, when someone actually does something about it and Pharaoh gets upset, I'm ordered back to making bricks.

The problem the Synod fails to grasp is that these are matters of fact, not belief. Never have synods been concerned with matters of verifiable historical fact. The Council of Constance mandated belief in the Donation of Constantine. This is considered ecumenical by the Roman church.

I asked Metropolitan John about 20 times over the last 18 months to provide citations where “name worshipers” say that the name, the physical name, is worshiped as God. I have shown that they have not. They have condemned it. I have already condemned name worship over and over. So what's the problem? Am I being unreasonable? Where does it say I must believe, not merely in the existence of a heresy, but that certain people held it? Shouldn't you be overjoyed that these men were Orthodox people after all? I'm not even saying they were fully Orthodox, but why the demand that these men be guilty for a crime about which they were never tried?

Further, all of this has to be on an area that the church actually has competence to judge. Again: matters of fact are not in that category. I certainly will alter aspects of my written work that are problematic to you, since so much can be a matter of misunderstanding turns of phrase, especially in an area where few in your inner circle have any real knowledge. But to repudiate something based on a vague aspersion is not within your or the church's power. You are telling me to condemn men based on a doctrine they don't seem to hold and to reject a very long period of research.

Let me give an example as to what a Synod of bishops can pronounce upon:

Impermissible: Stalin killed 14,976,098 Christians in Russia from 1933-1953, no more or less.

Permissible: Stalin's killings are manifestations of demonic power in the world.

Let me give a more general one:

Impermissible: historical event x occurred

Permissible: historical events are the working out of divine providence.

Do you see the difference? The former cannot be a matter of synodal decision.

That's a matter for historians. The latter certainly is. Almost none of obediences here are of the latter sort. This is why the “obediences” make little sense.

So I ask the following questions to clarify the meaning of these:

Did Bulgarians state that only Bulgarians will be served in the Exarchate? If you can't show that, then your demand fails. If they never did, then my position is vindicated.

How many of the Greek bishops at the time were simoniac? Most of the literature says they all were. This is why no one cared when the Ecumenical Patriarchate excommunicated the Kollyvades fathers in 1776. The Phanar cult was not taken seriously at the time, its corruption was too deep.

Was it incorrect for Ukraine to declare independence? Or any Orthodox nation? If it was not ethnic, then on what grounds did or do nations declare independence?

On what grounds did Serbia fight the Turks if not ethnic separatism? The church celebrates, rightly so, the blood spilled in the defense of the faith. The Cossacks do the same.

Was the Republic of South Africa inherently evil for its racial policies? Is the resulting mixing of races there preferable from a religious point of view? The economy and social peace have entirely collapsed there. Is this tolerable from a religious point of view?

Am I also to deny that crime in the US is mostly racial?

Is white separatism legitimate if there is an organized attack on whites? There has been since Ferguson in America's cities.

Do you deny the Patriarch of Jerusalem condemned the 1872 Synod?

Honestly now, did any of you know that almost the entire Orthodox world condemned the 1872 Synod?

Why did Russia maintain communion with the Exarchate? Why did the Serbs? The Romanians?

When our prayer book refers to prayers against "foreign invasion" or "invasion by aliens," what do they mean? Is prayer against "alien invasion" now heretical?

Do you condemn St. Nikolai Velimirovich's support of "fascist" dictator Dimitri Ljotic? How many of the bishops purporting to judge me know who Ljotic even was?

All these questions remain unanswered and were kept from other Synod members. They were not permitted to see it. The verdict shows shallow, emotional thought and sloppy writing typical of Enoch. It also suggests that truth is the last thing that matters here. This hearing was a farce led by a child and based on fear. The reasoning of the verdict is so sloppy that they condemn practically the entire Orthodox world without realizing it. They've condemned themselves. Their servile conformity to the demands of the fallen world and its power structure will be their doom one day.

I did not attend the trial, though I did request a continuance. The continuance was rejected. There were many reasons I could not attend, some of which were private. However, those made public were that a) I was not given any procedural guidelines; b) no discovery request was accepted; c) the backgrounds of my judges were not provided; d) the charges were vague and sloppy and contained no actual evidence; e) no probable cause against me was given, f) rules of evidence were not sent to me and g) I covered every possible argument against my position in previous letters and papers. I have no idea what more ground I could cover. All remained unanswered and all requests for clarification were ignored. Further, these requests were also kept from other Synod members.

In other words, I was to be tried by people I know nothing about in a manner known only to them using evidence they refused to divulge. They needed seven bishops to face one man. I think if anything, that was unfair to them, not me. No one would or should accept such a

summons, hence my conclusion that it was meant to be rejected. My responses sent to the Metropolitan were kept from the other synod members. Having voiced the above concerns about six times over the last month, the stony silence I received proved that I was never meant to appear. It also showed that the verdict was long decided upon.

My conscience remains clear. I don't believe Enoch's is. I will always see him as a friend regardless of his bad faith. When he grows up and matures, he will realize what he's done. When that day comes, my door will be open.