"THE ARMENIAN CHURCH: REALITY OF THE PROBLEMS ..."

Posted on June 27, 2011 by keghart.com



Category: Opinions

> *The following is an edited Google online translation and might not be accurate, please read it accordingly.*

By Jacques Panossian, Nouvelles d'Arménie, June 27, 2011

The words of the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of France (France-Armenia No. 376, June 2011) and the release of the Diocesan Council (armenews.com of June 12, 2011) persist in refusing to admit serious problems the Armenian Church faces. With that in mind, we bring the dire situation to the attention
of the faithful and the general public.
I decline to pinpoint in detail their practice of disinformation (amalgam, falsification, omission, half-truth ...). My goal is not to argue, but since my credibility is being challenged, I would like to point my active and meaningful participation in the construction of the Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator in 1955-'57, the administration of our parish, and finally as the first elected Secretary of the Diocesan Council. In 2009 I was appointed, by the Primate and Diocesan Council, as a lay representative best qualified to attend the meeting at the Holy Echmiadzin See"Oughenish" (Guide Association).

Briefly, what are the problems?

1. The current status of the Diocese is still the one established in Holy Echmiadzin in September 2005, and approved reluctantly by the 18 founding associations and deposited at the police headquarters on July 19, 2006. They include flaws and obvious inconsistencies. The project's proponent and the future diocesan primate had promised their correction. Four years have passed since that promise yet no correction has been made and the unchanged status and the articles are still the models of the association of parish members whom the Nice congregation has accused of not respecting the following: the vast majority, if not all, of the founding associations never fully implemented; a renewed draft statutes for these associations, voted by the Diocesan Council in March 2010, was blocked by an illegitimate veto and has not been proposed or communicated to the Diocesan Delegates opposed to the surprising affirmation of the Primacy.

2. The Guide ("Oughenish") approved in November 2009, by a meeting with the orders up to two-thirds of the bishops, impose over the objections I raised a model and a text identical to the word. No article on the cult, but are defined in detail the organization and operation of uniform communities of lay faithful, parishes and dioceses (whether in Iraq, Australia, Russia, the Americas, Armenia or Europe) under the direction of a priest who is the President of the General Assembly and all Councils or Committees. The Honorary President is not (for those who doubt that the same term as in "President of the Republic of Armenia"). It is the leader as was hammered vigorously and publicly Véhapar in Paris and São Paulo. All major decisions of General Meetings and elections of parish

associations should be subject to the approval of their diocese. Any change in status must be approved by the Holy See-- the Parish of Geneva found at its expense consideration given to its General Assembly votes by Véhapar imbued with absolutism.

3. The Guide and the minutes of the meeting have not been communicated to the Holy Echmiadzin See to date or the Diocesan Assembly of Delegates, or to the public. Would they be secret, reserved for an exclusive club? That's why probably the Primate believes "absolutely amazing ... a person" (I am the sinner ...) dares to write ("himself"!) and distribute a draft statutes for Review: I confess I have urged the faithful and their Deputies to look up and think, rather than rubber-stamp what is going on. It is scandalous that such an incentive as to "undermine the foundations of the Church and destroy the authority of Echmiadzin." I understand the fear and
indignation of the Primate and Diocesan Council.

4. The Nice Crisis. It is clear that it started by the actions of the priest and his entourage in December 2009. It developed until the fateful day of 21 March 2010 due the obstinacy of the Holy See and the primacy rule of maintaining the priest despite warnings from authoritative sources. In the chain reaction that followed, the decision primatial, dated May 19, 2010, is illegal, provocative and the clerical direction pronounced deliberately excluded any amicable resolution of the crisis. (I refrain to mention the priest's conflict with the law). It appears that the Holy See wants a showdown, as in the operation of destabilization against the community of Geneva.

5. While the Diocesan Council rediscovered that the Diocese of France is a union whose members are the founding church groups, it went on to decide that each of these founding associations keep a relative sovereignty "is incorrect or at least ambiguous." It should be noted that the General Assembly is and remains the sovereign body of the association parish, it defines the objectives thereof, elect its governing bodies, gives full discharge of their activity. It alone can decide the statutory changes, to participate in a union-which, like any contract--entails obligations in or out: sovereignty remains intact. Finally we see the end of the debate.

6. Cleavage, to use the term by Jules Mardirossian, is not religious. He does not worship but the organization/operation of communities of lay faithful (re-Guide "Oughenish", but also subject to Title IV of the Act of Dec. 9, 1905). This split is between two conceptions of our diocese--and more broadly of our Church:

- The real church groups of full legal capacity are each a union to which they entrust certain tasks and grant certain rights, and their general meetings are and remain sovereign ("vox populi, vox Dei"), their priests are "Hokevor Hoviv" spiritual leaders to serve the faithful.

-The church organizations are local chapters of a central authority that can grant delegations, but has the power of ultimate decision in any case. The local assemblies are not sovereign; the faithful are to serve the church identified his clergy.

The reality we perceive is of course more complex. This simple pattern is blurred by many factors:

problems of personalities, ambitions of some, relationship problems of others, incantatory effects of old traditions, lures such as "ex officio", targeted, policy plans and projects ... But it is this divide that is evident in the dissent on the "Oughenish" Geneva's controversy and that of Nice. We will have to face it to begin the modernization of the Armenian Apostolic Church and to counter its decline.

> *The following is an edited Google online translation and might not be accurate, please read it accordingly.*

By Jacques Panossian, Nouvelles d'Arménie, June 27, 2011

The words of the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of France (France-Armenia No. 376, June 2011) and the release of the Diocesan Council (armenews.com of June 12, 2011) persist in refusing to admit serious problems the Armenian Church faces. With that in mind, we bring the dire situation to the attention
of the faithful and the general public.
I decline to pinpoint in detail their practice of disinformation (amalgam, falsification, omission, half-truth ...). My goal is not to argue, but since my credibility is being challenged, I would like to point my active and meaningful participation in the construction of the Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator in 1955-'57, the administration of our parish, and finally as the first elected Secretary of the Diocesan Council. In 2009 I was appointed, by the Primate and Diocesan Council, as a lay representative best qualified to attend the meeting at the Holy Echmiadzin See"Oughenish" (Guide Association).

Briefly, what are the problems?

1. The current status of the Diocese is still the one established in Holy Echmiadzin in September 2005, and approved reluctantly by the 18 founding associations and deposited at the police headquarters on July 19, 2006. They include flaws and obvious inconsistencies. The project's proponent and the future diocesan primate had promised their correction. Four years have passed since that promise yet no correction has been made and the unchanged status and the articles are still the models of the association of parish members whom the Nice congregation has accused of not respecting the following: the vast majority, if not all, of the founding associations never fully implemented; a renewed draft statutes for these associations, voted by the Diocesan Council in March 2010, was blocked by an illegitimate veto and has not been proposed or communicated to the Diocesan Delegates opposed to the surprising affirmation of the Primacy.

2. The Guide ("Oughenish") approved in November 2009, by a meeting with the orders up to two-thirds of the bishops, impose over the objections I raised a model and a text identical to the word. No article on the cult, but are defined in detail the organization and operation of uniform communities of lay faithful, parishes and dioceses (whether in Iraq, Australia, Russia, the Americas, Armenia or

Europe) under the direction of a priest who is the President of the General Assembly and all Councils or Committees. The Honorary President is not (for those who doubt that the same term as in "President of the Republic of Armenia"). It is the leader as was hammered vigorously and publicly Véhapar in Paris and São Paulo. All major decisions of General Meetings and elections of parish associations should be subject to the approval of their diocese. Any change in status must be approved by the Holy See-- the Parish of Geneva found at its expense consideration given to its General Assembly votes by Véhapar imbued with absolutism.

3. The Guide and the minutes of the meeting have not been communicated to the Holy Echmiadzin See to date or the Diocesan Assembly of Delegates, or to the public. Would they be secret, reserved for an exclusive club? That's why probably the Primate believes "absolutely amazing ... a person" (I am the sinner ...) dares to write ("himself"!) and distribute a draft statutes for Review: I confess I have urged the faithful and their Deputies to look up and think, rather than rubber-stamp what is going on. It is scandalous that such an incentive as to "undermine the foundations of the Church and destroy the authority of Echmiadzin." I understand the fear and
indignation of the Primate and Diocesan Council.

4. The Nice Crisis. It is clear that it started by the actions of the priest and his entourage in December 2009. It developed until the fateful day of 21 March 2010 due the obstinacy of the Holy See and the primacy rule of maintaining the priest despite warnings from authoritative sources. In the chain reaction that followed, the decision primatial, dated May 19, 2010, is illegal, provocative and the clerical direction pronounced deliberately excluded any amicable resolution of the crisis. (I refrain to mention the priest's conflict with the law). It appears that the Holy See wants a showdown, as in the operation of destabilization against the community of Geneva.

5. While the Diocesan Council rediscovered that the Diocese of France is a union whose members are the founding church groups, it went on to decide that each of these founding associations keep a relative sovereignty "is incorrect or at least ambiguous." It should be noted that the General Assembly is and remains the sovereign body of the association parish, it defines the objectives thereof, elect its governing bodies, gives full discharge of their activity. It alone can decide the statutory changes, to participate in a union-which, like any contract--entails obligations in or out: sovereignty remains intact. Finally we see the end of the debate.

6. Cleavage, to use the term by Jules Mardirossian, is not religious. He does not worship but the organization/operation of communities of lay faithful (re-Guide "Oughenish", but also subject to Title IV of the Act of Dec. 9, 1905). This split is between two conceptions of our diocese--and more broadly of our Church:

- The real church groups of full legal capacity are each a union to which they entrust certain tasks and grant certain rights, and their general meetings are and remain sovereign ("vox populi, vox Dei"), their priests are "Hokevor Hoviv" spiritual leaders to serve the faithful.

- The church organizations are local chapters of a central authority that can grant delegations, but has the power of ultimate decision in any case. The local assemblies are not sovereign; the faithful are to serve the church identified his clergy.

The reality we perceive is of course more complex. This simple pattern is blurred by many factors: problems of personalities, ambitions of some, relationship problems of others, incantatory effects of old traditions, lures such as "ex officio", targeted, policy plans and projects ... But it is this divide that is evident in the dissent on the "Oughenish" Geneva's controversy and that of Nice. We will have to face it to begin the modernization of the Armenian Apostolic Church and to counter its decline.