

## DIVERSITY AND DIVISIONS

Yves Congar

The following is a translation of "Diversité et divisions," a talk which Yves Congar delivered at the Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques (8 - 14 November 1961) and published in *Catholicisme un et divers* (Paris: Fayard, 1962) 27-43.

We have all had comforting experiences of Catholic unity. For myself I remember one August 15, 1946. I arrived at Vienna from Munich around ten o'clock A.M. From the station I went immediately to the nearest church to celebrate Mass. I entered a church full of people at the very moment when they were being told from the sanctuary that there was no priest to celebrate the Eucharist and that they could go home. I stepped forward and briefly said who I was and why I was there. Three minutes later I returned to the altar dressed in the vestments; I celebrated; I gave the Eucharist to hundreds of believers. And I remembered the inscription which Abercius of Hierapolis composed for his tomb, around the year 200:

I am a disciple of a shepherd who shepherds his flock of sheep on mountains and plains, who has great eyes and sees all. He it was who taught me the trustworthy letters. He it was who sent me to Rome to contemplate its majesty and to see the queen in golden vestments, wearing golden sandals. There I saw a people which wears a shining seal. I also saw the plains of Syria and all the cities, and Nisibis beyond the Euphrates. Everywhere I had confrères. I had Paul as a companion. And everywhere the faith led me on. Everywhere it served me a fish as food, a large, pure fish which a pure virgin had caught. It gave it to me constantly, to eat it among friends. It had a delicious wine which it gave me with the bread.... Let anyone who understands pray for Abercius.<sup>1</sup>

This is what the Church is.

But without leaving Paris you can just as easily take part in the eucharistic celebration in one of about ten rites in which it is celebrated every Sunday in as many eastern Catholic churches. In the great Church you can choose the chapel where your devotion will find a home suited to your needs and inclinations. In those chapels people honor hermits as well as missionaries of astounding activity: Anthony of Egypt and Francis Xavier; or a Thérèse of Lisieux who never left her little Carmel; and kings and popes, a St. Louis, a St. Pius V, who were involved in the public history of their times; or St. John Chrysostom or St. Augustine, great oratorical and theological geniuses, and Bernadette, Jean-Marie Vianney, simple people; or St. Thomas Aquinas, the holiness of intelligence, and St. Benedict Labre, the holiness of a pilgrim's poverty, etc. There are different spiritualities. There are different theological schools.

In one sense, all this is not dangerous: it is well known, unsurprising, in some way ritualized. But there also are diversities that are less inoffensive.

Those, first, which are borne by ethnic, national, or political groups, and which have the power and vitality of those entities. They reflect the distinctive genius of a people which is itself linked to a soil, to a sky, to a history; they are mixed in with their struggles, with their historical ambitions. Without being misled by their facile and deceptive schematizing, think only of the

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See all the dictionary articles and G. Bardy, *La Théologie de l'Eglise de saint Clément à saint Irénée (Unam Sanctam)*, 13; Paris: du Cerf, 1945), 72-73. See the full text and comment in H. Musurillo, *The Fathers of the Primitive Church* (New York: Mentor-Omega, 1966) 260-62.

oppositions between East and West, between Nordic and Mediterranean countries. Even if one does not share the forced exaggerations of partisanship caused by polemics, nationalism, or political rivalries, it remains that people in Syria and in Alexandria, in Byzantium and in Rome, have not approached the revealed texts or the Christian mysteries in the same way. Differences are not simply geographical; they also exist between human spaces, subject to different cultural and historical destinies.

Space also sometimes fixes differences produced over time. Like any civilization, the Church also has developed. In the course of its history, it has lived through certain crises, seen certain dramas; it has encountered heresies which it has had to face and reject. Take as an example the monophysite heresy in the middle of the fifth century, which led the Church to define its faith without ambiguity at the Council of Chalcedon (451). Circumstances had placed the Christendom of Armenia outside the Byzantine Empire and made them unfamiliar with the christological controversies and with the Council of Chalcedon, in which its bishops did not participate. *This* is why it declared Chalcedon to be monophysite and rejected it in its councils at the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth centuries. It is still monophysite, at least in name, and separated from both the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches, which did live the Council of Chalcedon and still others after it. The difference in history has hardened into distance and separation. Around the same time, anti-Byzantinism led the Christendom of Egypt also to reject Chalcedon, whose christological orthodoxy seemed to the East to be so linked to Byzantine political causes that its partisans were called "Melkites," partisans of the *melek*, of the king, of the Emperor. These churches are still monophysite today, undoubtedly in name only, less because of an incorrect faith than because of a rejection of better, further developed formulations. But by these examples you can see how the fact of being strangers to a development can, when linked to and as it were hardened by a certain geographical situation, become an estrangement, a secession.

Now at this moment in the Church we are living through a movement of renewal, on the basis, principally, of a return to biblical, liturgical, and patristic sources. Not everyone is involved in the movement with its significance and consequences for all the ways we live out our religion: in liturgy, apostolic activity, in the very concept of the Christian community, in its style of existence, in the way we relate the faith, a very evangelical and biblical faith, to certain devotions and practices which arose and spread in the nineteenth century. In the same country, such as our own, certain believers or, better, certain priests, have not followed the movement to the point that one can wonder sometimes if there are not, co-existing side by side, two different religions, the one which arose before the return to the Bible and the liturgy and the one which has arisen from and is inspired by that return. Here there is a communitarian and missionary, biblical and kerygmatic style; there there are particular devotions, groups preserving themselves by little mixing with the world... In a certain sense, they might be two little churches within the framework of the one big one. If different social or political orientations are mixed in, or thought to be mixed in, it can happen that they become almost strangers to one another: like the Jews and the Samaritans, "they do not associate with one another" (Jn 4:9). Within the accepted framework of the big official Church, there might be chapels which severally represent mentalities, religious nationalities as it were, defined by human, political, ideological, or artistic options, where people almost sense more communion with a non-Catholic or a non-Christian of the same tendencies than with his brethren in the faith. Like undoubtedly many of you, I have

had this experience in extremely painful ways--one time especially, especially because it occurred during a round of conferences during the Week of Prayer for Unity, each year a week of grace for me! In this little corner of Christendom, people distrust one another, hardly speak to one another!

Our bishops are upset and concerned about this situation<sup>2</sup> and the 1955 Journées universitaires were devoted to studying it.<sup>3</sup> It is also being dealt with outside the Church. Protestants have often believed it possible to say that Catholic unity is quite external and that Catholics are more divided in their intellectual tendencies and in the very concept of Christianity than the children of the Reformation are in their divisions between denominations or different schools. I believe, and I could show it with specific references, that the distinction between the level of theologies and that of dogma, between unity in faith and in sacramental celebration and the variety of personal practices, in brief between the Church as such and the Christians who live within it often escapes Protestants. But their comments are no less worthy of consideration. They require us to ask in all seriousness the question which I am honored to have been asked to treat.

All the more because there is a danger that what exists within the same national Christendom can also be found when you pass from one country to another. If "Frenchmen at heart," as they are known here, feel somewhat out of place in Alsace (I mean within the frameworks of the Church), what must it be like in Naples, in Spain, in South America, maybe even quite simply in Belgium, in Ireland? The religious geography or "geopolitics" (as J. Folliet calls it<sup>4</sup>) of Catholicism seems to present as many varieties as physical or cultural geography. Well then, is it the same Church? Isn't the Catholic Church cut up horizontally, according to countries, and vertically, as in our country, according to choices of chapels?

This evening I do not intend to discuss this particular problem pastorally. I will reflect theologically on the general problem which concerns us on this first evening of our Week: "Diversity and Divisions." No doubt, the particular pastoral problem will be somewhat illumined thereby. I propose to lead this reflection through three steps: 1) to seek what Pascal called "*la raison des effets*," that is, to identify the structural data of the question which we will see consists in two principles, one collective and the other personal; 2) to examine the maladies of each of these two principles, the causes of their imbalance; and 3) to consider the demands and laws of a healthy balance between them.

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Cardinal Feltin's pastoral letters on the meaning of the Church (1951) and on unity in the Church (1952) (*Doc. cath.*, 1951, cc. 268-69; 1952, cc. 404-46); Msgr. Renard, Bishop of Versailles, Letter of January, 1957 (*Doc. cath.*, 1957, cc. 297-300). Even earlier, Msgr. Groeber, Archbishop of Fribourg-in-Bresgau, in his alarmist memorandum of January, 1943 (*La Pensée catholique*, no. 7, 1948, p. 64).

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See *Cahiers Univers. cathol.*, April-June 1955, especially A.-J. Maydiou, "L'Unité vécue," 338-52; P. Dabosville, "Conditions du dialogue entre catholiques," 353-63; *Suppl.* au no. 3, Dec. 1955: "L'Unité des catholiques: Compte rendu des XXXIIes Journées Univ., Paris, 6-10 avril 1955." I discussed the question in *Vraie et fausse Réforme* (Paris: du Cerf, 1950) 572-76, and in *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* (Paris: du Cerf, 1953) ch. VII, esp. 481-87.

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In *Apologétique* (Paris, 1948) 701f.

## 1. The Two Structural Principles

The Church--I could also say "Christianity"--is a gift of God, linked to *one* precise economy of the movements of God towards us. In the Church, much could be one even while belonging to different peoples, different conditions and cultures, different ages, because it has a principle of unity which does not originate in them but comes from above. This reality from above could be human, provided that it is spiritual. Of themselves a philosophy, an art, can unite different people; they have their universalism, although they can also exclude the worlds, also virtually universal, of partisans of another philosophy, of another music, etc. Their universalism retains some elements of particularism.

a) The Church's principle of unity is none other than God himself. Yes, God: the Father, the origin without origin, source and originator of all, even within the Trinity. And as goals correspond to origins, I think that the goal, the final end, of the Church is that the many--all!--proclaim in truth and with one heart and mind: "Our Father!" The Son who sends, the Son who is sent, the Spirit who is the gift of them both and who internalizes in people the single gift of truth and grace given in Jesus Christ, so that in the end the Church's principle of unity is the unity of God himself: "May they be one as we are one" (Jn 17:22).

This principle of unity is personal. Not only does it seize us at the level at which we are persons, at what is most intimate, most incommunicable within us, but it is itself a Person,<sup>5</sup> not merely an idea, an ideal, not a law, not a "thing." What makes us one is that each of us has a personal relation with the one living God, thanks to the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. This was clearly known by that Chinese Catholic woman who is part of the recent martyrology of her country. During an interrogation, the police said to her, "You're all the same, you Catholics. Either you remain silent or you repeat the same thing. You surely have a secret organization. What is this organization?" And Shou Yi replied, "Since you ask me..., our secret organization is the Holy Spirit. In Manchuria, in Africa, in America, and here, Catholics believe and say the same thing because the same Spirit dwells within our hearts and speaks through our mouths."<sup>6</sup>

But this principle of unity is not communicated to people, here below, with that evident character necessary for it to serve as a criterion of social unity. It is given internally, spiritually, in a way that is generally not evident, not beyond challenge. All reformers have appealed to the Spirit, and the Spirit has not been enough to discriminate among their contradictions. *External* means, forms, and even criteria of unity are needed. While the Protestant Reformers rejected the ones that were traditional, then and now, the ones that had been received and communicated from generation to generation, they had to meet this demand in other ways: they said that Scripture must be joined to Scripture and Scripture to the Spirit. This statement is correct: with Cardinal Pole, one of the legates of the Council of Trent, I maintain--and I suspect you do also--that Catholic orthodoxy does not require, does not consist in this, that we avoid Scriptural statements and the Scriptural style of these statements simply because Protestants have made

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<sup>6</sup> In the sense relevant here, God, in his unity, is personal.

J. Monsterleet, *Les Martyrs de Chine parlent...* (Paris, 1953) 141.

them their own.<sup>7</sup> But the Catholic tradition, as much in the East as in the West, does not stop with Scripture alone.

Besides the internal and spiritual principles of unity--the Holy Spirit, faith and love, grace--and linked with them, it also affirms external principles capable of serving as criteria. In addition to Scripture, there is also an authority which derives from that of the Apostles, who received it from Christ, who received it from God, in the ecclesial community's threefold sphere of belief, worship, and social life: a teaching office, a priesthood, a spiritual government. It was said of the first Christians that "they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles, in communion, in the breaking of the bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). This authority possesses a coercive power which, since the time of the Apostles down to our own day, has been exercised in particular, in extreme cases, by the power to excommunicate, to exclude from communion, but which obviously entails a more ordinary and more peaceful positive exercise.

For our own topic itself, it is important to state firmly that this external and social authority in the Church is entirely oriented, and must be entirely subordinated, to the service of the personal religious relationship. "Personal" here does not mean "individual," as we shall see in a moment. The external authority of pastors, the authority of all external rules--rites, dogmatic formulations, organizations, canonical discipline, etc.--is not self-justifying. It can never promote itself in practice as an end or as a value independent of the finalities it is to serve, the finalities of the personal relationship of faith and of love within a Church entirely made up of persons. In the patristic and medieval ages it was often said that the Church is not walls, but believers! But even in the Church there is always a tendency to allow spiritual realities to degrade into "things." When Alfred Loisy wrote, "The Church would like to govern much, but it raises very little,"<sup>8</sup> the remark was somewhat resentful and unjust but also perhaps, in part, clear-sighted.

For all this there is probably no stronger formulation than the calm but firm statement of St. Thomas Aquinas in his treatise on the New Law.<sup>9</sup> The New Law, he said, consists principally in the grace of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The rest exists only in order to prepare people to receive this grace and to use it well. Everything else has the value of an external law: not only the sacraments, canon law, but even the moral law *as law*, the precepts from authorities, and even the letter of Scripture as letter. I am not commenting but simply translating St. Thomas' text.

2) The principle of diversification. Ideas and beliefs, Scripture, rules, social or cultural determinations, sacraments, faith, prayer, love of God: all these principles of unity that we have must be received and lived *by somebody*. Thus another principle is at work, besides the principle of unity: the principle of multiplication and even of diversity. For these "somebodies" are persons, each of whom is an original subject of attribution and of life and not simply a simple

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Letter of Cardinal Réginald Pole to Cardinal Morone, August 28, 1546 (*Concilium Tridentinum*, ed. Görresgesellschaft, X, 632).

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*Mémoires*, II, 368.

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*Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 106, aa. 1-2; q. 107, a. 1, ad 3m.

material occasion for an indefinite multiplication of the same thing, like the pattern which the post office reproduces indefinitely on gummed paper to make thousands of identical stamps.

Each person is a subject of attribution that is incommunicable and irreplaceable: my joys are *my* joys, my sorrows *my* sorrows. The same thing is not lived identically; when it is received it is personalized by each one in a unique way. Each person is a *conscious* subject of attribution, an original center of synthesis, of world view, and of life-projects. As such, each consciousness is the center of a universe which it sees, feels, chooses, and constructs in *its own* way, which is not reducible to that of anyone else. Gandhi's mother, an illiterate, told him, taught him, that an atom reflects the universe.<sup>10</sup> Thus the most demanding principles of unity, and God himself who is their source, must be *received* in a large number of different people and, in order to be their principle of unity itself, it must produce in each of them deep living roots, quite original and personal. The religious relationship is indeed a covenant relationship which is established first by God's gracious initiative but also by the response of the person.

But persons are not monads, some sorts of points of angelic existence scattered throughout an immaterial heaven. They are fully carnal, in Péguy's sense, associating and communicating with one another. They only achieve their humanity and then their quality as members of the People of God and the Body of Christ in association with other persons. Personally and in this close association they are engaged in a fully *historical* existence, the existence of natural human groups which represent so many "worlds," each of which has its own solidarities, its own density, its own inevitable impurities, its own historical weight. These groups, while having no existence except in and through the individual persons who constitute them, have each an original reality. They too represent subjects characterized by a certain activity or a certain way of being, of feeling, of acting. That is why nationality has been defined, or at least characterized, by a certain mentality, a common way of feeling and of living.<sup>11</sup> This is not to misunderstand the importance of juridical structures in which are embodied a profound solidarity of sentiments, of ways of being, and of interests. At these different levels and in a host of ways, people constitute groups in which persons share in a particular way of living their humanity, in one of the particular activities of human life: communion in a language and thus in a way of thinking and expression, communion in a historical opportunity and destiny, in a culture, communion in work, in a social condition and in its corresponding interests, struggles, hopes, communion in an art, in tastes, etc. It is the whole gamut of these communities in which persons realize their very life, finding their lives broadened and enriched in them: nation, class, profession, etc. As such communities share and do something in common, there exists a new

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L. Fischer, *La Vie du Mahatma Gandhi* (Paris, 1952) 450.

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M. Hauriou, *Précis élémentaire de droit constitutionnel*, 9: "A nationality is a mentality. There is an English, a Spanish, an Italian mentality, and national moral unity flows directly from this common mentality.... A stranger is assimilated, not when he has the same ideas as a citizen, for ideas differ even among citizens, but when he has acquired the same mentality, the same cast of mind, the same way of envisaging all ideas." Compare J.-T. Delos, "L'internationalisme, synthèse de la culture et de la civilisation," *RSPT* (Oct. 1928) 659-79; Garcia Morente, *Idea de la Hispanidad*, 2d ed. (Buenos Aires, 1938) 43-45); cf. R. Ricard, "Une nouvelle description du caractère espagnol," *Construire*, 2d series (1941) 183-94, 187-88.

*subject*, one that is not individual but collective, not one that is substantial, but that is real nonetheless.

Now this is not true solely on the temporal or natural level, but also on the religious level, since the subject in which the gifts of God are received and take living root is this concrete, historical, and "fleshly" person who realizes himself in communication with others in a particular activity. There also are collective ways of praying, of understanding, categorizing, and expressing the Christian mysteries. And as people are not happy except when they can express themselves, they also do not have their full spiritual expansion except when they can sing *their own* song, in the language of their own country. We have all had experiences of oppression, and we know what it means. Péguy said that you can't love morality, that is, rules, pure external rules; but you can love your song and, through it, what it sings; one can love one's choice, one's love, and, through it, what they love.

In this subjective structure, which they must take on in order to be received and lived, the objective principles of unity are doomed to a very human, very "carnal" history. This is true of all the principles of unity and communion which we have discovered: the teaching of the Apostles, the social life of Christians, worship, liturgy, and prayer. Their universality or, if you prefer, their catholicity will not be a simple quantitative expansion of an identical form of unity. To the degree that my exposition of catholicity in *Chrétiens désunis* (1937) unintentionally reflected such an idea, Vladimir Lossky was correct in criticizing it,<sup>12</sup> and I tried, unsuccessfully, to find an occasion to say so.<sup>13</sup> Catholicity is not the simple quantitative expansion of unity. It also presupposes and entails the personal principle, in its individual and its social forms, and all that reality of "reception" in subjects which I have just been explaining. In and through these subjects the principles of unity are fated to know a diversity. This is both an enrichment and a danger. An enrichment because it will mean the unfolding of a large number of virtualities, as when white light is refracted by a prism or a network of little drops unfolds the whole gamut of basic colors. It is a danger because it is an adventure: the adventure the Christian group still lives today as it has lived it ever since it emerged from the hands of Jesus as he blessed the bread and the cup and from the coming of the Holy Spirit dividing itself into tongues of flame on each of the disciples. We know what happened to that unity: the magnificent expansion I evoked at the start, but also lamentable divisions: both diversity and divisions.

Now we must move our discussion forward by turning to the possible maladies the two principles of unity and diversity can experience.

## 2. *The Maladies of the Two Principles*

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See "Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise," *Dieu vivant*, no. 10 (1948) 79-89; *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* (Paris, 1944) 171f.

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In a new edition of *Chrétiens désunis*, prepared in 1948 and still not published. But see the article, "Catholicité," in *Catholicisme*, II, 722-25. To the references given there, add Testis (=M. Blondel), *La Semaine sociale de Bordeaux et le monophorisme*, extract from *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne* (Paris, 1910).

These maladies represent different exaggerations of one of the two principles such that one of them smothers or wounds the other and their healthy union and balance is compromised. We will take them up in turn.

a) The principle of unity, in its quite spiritual and transcendent form cannot give rise to any exaggeration, any malady: it is God, his Holy Spirit, faith, love, grace; or, at worst, it is a malady which should not be healed, because it is the malady of holiness. But the principle of unity in its ecclesial form as a criterion of unity can exaggerate its control, especially in the form of ecclesiastical authority. It can do so in different ways.

If, for example, the principle of authority as such, of authority as authority, so dominates that it leads people to forget, or practically excludes, all consideration of the *content* of the action, with the interest which this content can arouse. If the Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français had held a Week in 1898, it would no doubt have invited M. Ferdinand Brunetière to speak and might have heard his somewhat simple reply: "What do I believe? Go ask Rome!" An extreme expression--though others could be cited, for example, the rather ambiguous comment, "It is the mark of authority not to have to give reasons"--of the crushing of personal motives that are drawn from the content, from the objects, and from a felt interest, by the single, completely formal motive of authority. This point, which seems quite abstract, could be given many extremely concrete applications, including in theology.

Without of course denying them on the level of principles, authority may also practically lose sight of its reference and its subordination to the personal spiritual finalities of the life of union with God. It may practically lose sight of this service and become content with its own exercise, maintaining structures of a reified sort: a structure of dogma in itself, detached from the living faith and thought of Christians, a structure of worship in itself which in the end, however many the "assistants," expresses no one's worship, and so forth.

Authority may also exercise its needed function by leveling everything, by practically confusing unity and uniformity, even if solemn, but Platonic, statements profess the contrary. From my dossiers I could easily extract a good dozen texts down to recent years which state principles of this kind: as there is a single faith, as there is a single See of Peter on which the whole life of the Church depends, there must be one and the same discipline, in conformity with the traditions and customs of the Roman church.<sup>14</sup> One could point out the tendency in Rome "to conceive the universal only in the multiplied form of its own image."<sup>15</sup> In his remarkable liturgical renewal in the mid-nineteenth century, Dom Guéranger often professed similar principles in liturgical matters.<sup>16</sup> But I could also extract from the same dossiers dozens of texts

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See "De la communion des Eglises à une ecclésiologie de l'Eglise universelle," in *L'Evêque dans l'Eglise universelle* (Paris: du Cerf, 1962), nn. 23 and 48.

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<sup>16</sup> Ch. Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Paris, 1955) 112.

See E. Sevrin, *Dom Guéranger et Lamennais* (Paris, 1933) 66 and 75; O. Rousseau, *Histoire du mouvement liturgique...* (Lex Orandi, 3; Paris, 1946) 22-24. The most debatable texts of Dom Guéranger are in volume III of Guéranger's *Institutions liturgiques* (1851), for example, p. 142: "The time will come when the language of Rome, like its faith, will be for the East as well as for the West, the only means for unity and regeneration" (see *La Maison-Dieu*, no. 7 (1946/3) 138-40).



of the Fathers of the Church, of popes, of councils, of great theologians, ancient and modern, which proclaim as the very principle of the Catholic tradition that, as long as the unity of faith and the demands of communion are preserved, Catholics are permitted to differ in sentiment and to preserve different customs in matters of discipline, worship, devotion, etc. "As long as the rights of communion are preserved, people may think differently": this formula summarizes a text of the great bishop-martyr, St. Cyprian.<sup>17</sup> Here is another, from St. Gregory the Great, the model of popes: "Within the one faith different customs do no harm to holy Church."<sup>18</sup> You know that our Holy Father, John XXIII, likes to repeat the formula inspired by St. Augustine, but, as expressed, of Anglican or Lutheran origin: "Unity in necessary matters, freedom in those that are in doubt, charity in them all."<sup>19</sup>

Islam may be monolithic and impose at once a faith, a canon law, a regime of social life, eventually a polity and a military action. At the time of the Apostles, when Christianity received its absolute normative determinations, we do not find one form either of discipline or of liturgy that is imperatively defined in detail. It is *one faith* that spreads among the peoples, by repeated initiatives of God's Spirit; it is not a sort of legalistic form. This is the status of Christianity. But we have to recognize that more than once in the course of the history of the West, an imperialistic and legalistic spirit has impeded or even destroyed legitimate local expressions of the collective personality of a Christian people.<sup>20</sup> People need to express something that comes from them and which, received by them and in them, they must receive in their own way. There is, then, a latent possibility of conflict between a logic of unity, tempted to assert itself in a unitary form, and this demand of the personal principle. All universalizing is in danger of flattening people, their originality and, with it, the richness and depth they contain. A certain conflict is latent in the nature of things between what personal spirits, individual and collective, call for and certain things that are required by or appropriate to unity. If, for example, the Mozarabic rite were still alive and popular in Spain, I would have had some difficulty, landing in

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At the Council of Carthage in September 265, Cyprian himself said: "Judging no one or removing him from the rights of communion, simply because he disagrees" (CSEL, III, 435). And see St. Augustine, *De baptismo*, III, 5 (PL 43, 141-42).

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*Reg.*, I, 41 (MGH, Epp., I, 57, l. 18), to Leander, the Metropolitan of Spain, April 591, with regard to the triple immersion in the baptismal rite; PL 77, 497 (=Reg, I, 43).

<sup>19</sup>

John XXIII, Encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram*, June 29, 1959 (*AAS*, 51 [1959] 501; *DC* [1959] 909). For the history of the saying, see G. Morin, "Origine de la formule pseudo-augustinienne: 'In nec...,'" *RHLR*, 7 (1902) 147-49 (=Richard Baxter, 1627-1635); G. Krüger, "Ueber den Friedensspruch: 'In necessariis...,'" *Theologischen Studien und Kritiken* (1927), 154-63 (in French in *Congrès d'Histoire du Christianisme: Jubilé Alfred Loisy* (Paris, 1928), III, 143-52); A. Eckof, "*In necess...*," *Eenheid in het noodige, vrijheid in het niet oodige, in beide de liefde: Oorsprung, beteeknis en verheiding der zinspreuk* (Leyden, 1931) (=the Lutheran Peter Meiderlin in *Parainesis votiva* was the first to propose the saying, in 1628); J. Jaccard, "Un mot d'ordre de Luther sur l'unité," *Cahiers protestants* (March 1937) 84-101, and *idem*, "In necessariis unitas," *Presbyterian Register* (March 1937) 54-57 (=Luther, sermon of March 10, 1522 [Weimar ed., X/3, 14]).

<sup>20</sup>

See F. Heiler, *Altkirchliche Autonomie ude päpstlicher Zentralismus* (Munich, 1941).

Madrid on an August 15th, celebrating there as I did in Vienna. Uniformity has its benefits, and I feel all the force of the arguments of its partisans.<sup>21</sup> But the fact that the Mozarabic rite has been retained, like a museum piece, in a chapel of the Seville Cathedral is not enough for one to be able to say that the Spanish personality really has its place in the concert of Catholicity on the level of liturgical expression. Here, as in every sphere, real existence requires means of existence, a vital space, real opportunities. No doubt, the Spanish personality does have this space and this opportunity at the level of paraliturgical and devotional expressions, which show how irrepressible the deep movement of people is. We see it in education, in the whole history of a vocation. You may very well want to impose this or that; but if it is contrary to the person's deep internal movement, this movement will in one way or another take its own necessary path. A person is a vocation, and a vocation is something so imperious that one would die if it were prevented, as Rilke says in his *Letters of a Young Poet*. Bernanos for his part wrote: "It is very fine to put social programs down on paper, but it is important to know what kinds of people you are putting down there."<sup>22</sup> True wealth, this time it is Ruskin's saying, is the person, not an organization.

The tension, then, is in the nature of things. For if the personal principle entails what I have just said, authority, which is part of the principle of unity in its social form, of itself tends to seek this unity along the lines of what Bergson calls action by pressure, that is--if the word can be freed from its connotations of repressive violence--to seek this unity by coercive measures. From then on that is all people will see; they will distrust any effort, even efforts at unity, which might come from within; they will mistrust it as an indication of a naturalistic or subjectivistic spirit! I could illustrate this with examples and citations.<sup>23</sup> The danger is even clearer in the case of larger groups, for as it gains in extension, a group risks abandoning the style of personal relations to take on a completely administrative and reified character.

The predominance given to the point of view of authority and the search for unity by way of external pressure is related to the juridical spirit and to juridicism. This consists in giving greater weight to the external result than to the motives which might lead persons to this result,

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"Uniformity is the external and material buttress of unity, and this help is often necessary to keep together forces that are only demanding divergence. Let me allude to the role of the liturgy as a guarantee of unity. Today we see many efforts to rejuvenate the liturgy, often by recalling forgotten traditions; and this can surely only be praised. What I presume to hope, however, is that the liturgical innovations, whether accepted or generalized, not lead to a kind of fracturing of a uniformity that has its merit. Those of us who travel know this, since wherever we go, we Catholics and we alone have that kind of profound intellectual and spiritual satisfaction, across all the differences of custom and styles of life, that we can find everywhere the same rites, the same prayers in the same language, the same Mass" (P.-H. Simon, "Vivre l'unité," in "Compte rendu des XXXIIes Journées..., 54). This text obviously only expresses one aspect of the problem.

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<sup>23</sup> *Nous autres, Français* (1939) 241.

I have cited some authors in "L'Éclésiologie au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle," (Unam Sanctam, 34; Paris: du Cerf, 1960) 105, and in "Mentalité de droite et intégrisme," in *Vraie et Fausse Réforme dans l'Eglise* (Paris: du Cerf, 1950), esp. 613f.

in being able even to dispense with these motives, in so placing *order* above *life* that the former may suffer, without the latter. Juridicism often accompanies a tendency to prefer external action by pressure to personally motivated internal action. It loves what is defined, fixed forms, while the personal principle often expresses what is deepest in a person, in inquiries, attempts, revivals, searches for new forms. The juridical spirit and the authority which it accompanies don't like all that; it prefers security, the unsurprising, and distrusts what is in search of itself, what has no defined and fixed form.

b) If the exaggerations or deviations of the principle of unity in its social form of authority misunderstand and bully the personal principle, the latter can also have its maladies, exaggerations, or deviations. Here I see three main dangers.

The first is that of an absolute individualism, or even a desire for pure interiority, entailing a misunderstanding or even a formal refusal of the role of the external principle of unity. This has been present throughout history in the different kinds of "enthusiasts" studied by Msgr. Ronald Knox,<sup>24</sup> as, for example, the ones whom Luther called *Schwärmer*, particularly Schwenckfeld. But the point is so clear we do not need to insist on it.

The second danger could come from the collective application of the personal principle. We know in fact that persons communicate in the same interests, the same ways of thinking, also on the religious level. They are thus parts of groups, whether natural--their people--or chosen. Thus they might be in communion with other persons, but they limit this communion to *people like them*, excluding "the others." The name for this attitude is "*esprit de corps*" in its exclusive and negative aspect. In religious terms, it is "*esprit de chapelle*." Here we see again the danger already evoked at the level of facts: the danger that in the Church sorts of vertical divisions will be set up, within which there will be communication, but no understanding, sympathy, or active cooperation will relate them to the neighboring chapel. This can happen among movements of Catholic Action, among teams engaged in such a work, and the contingent of parishioners who are not engaged in this way. This would be an impoverishment not only for the Church's activity but for the faithful themselves. Saint-Exupéry, the champion of human communion, wrote in 1940: "When the Nazi respects only what resembles him, he respects only himself. He refuses the creative contradictions, ruins any kind of upward movement, and establishes for a thousand years, in place of a person, the robot of a termite hill."<sup>25</sup> In fact the Nazi regime died in large part because it would not admit the possibility of any critique, any contradiction.

The third danger is a variety of the second, whose power to divide and oppose it terribly reinforces. It is a threat when the options which gather similar people and exclude others are the options of human life to which we often powerfully commit and dedicate ourselves. Thus we are particularized by nationality, culture, and language, by social condition, profession, the framework of our relations, by our political choices, the experiences, solidarities, and exclusions to which these choices have led us, by the struggles in which we have thought it our duty to engage. And no one should say that because a Christian is a citizen of heaven, he should not

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R.A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion with Special Reference to the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* (Oxford, 1950).

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*Lettre à un otage* (N.R.F., 1940) 60.

make such choices. He is not a monk! His march towards heaven entails his commitments as a citizen of the earthly city: inevitably he will espouse its diversities and divisions. Indeed sometimes he may espouse them by a voluntary choice made *out of Christian fidelity*. Does this not double the danger? For in such a choice, made out of a desire for integral Christian service, there is an immediate danger that we will include in our choice, even in its particular and perhaps debatable elements, the absolute element of our Christian service and commitment and also that we will believe, in practice, that there is an identity between our position and the reality of the Church itself. This is a history we all know well,<sup>26</sup> the history of many divisions either from the Church or within the Church.<sup>27</sup> If it were just a matter of celebrating the Eucharist, I could do that with everyone (and more!); but if it's a matter of meeting one another in those fully historical and fully fleshly activities with which, as they say, we "incarnate our faith," what problems arise!

If people want to practice a Christianity, not of the ghetto, but of presence to the world, to its activities, to its searches, obviously Christians will to some degree embrace their contours, their approaches, their progress. It is in countries where this option of Christian presence to the world is stronger than an option or tradition of a life partitioned off in Catholic frameworks that the problems of pluralism are posed with the greatest sharpness. It is only natural to try to make a synthesis between the realities of culture or of nationality, of social or even political commitment, supposed to be good or worthy of a Christian, and our faith, our service of God and of neighbor. It's natural, yes, but what a dangerous effort! Historically, many schisms arose from such syntheses. In two unfortunately posthumous articles, Dom Nicolas Oehmen showed that the "place" of schism, that is, the point of ambiguity and of danger, is precisely too close a link between Christianity and a culture, a national interest, a human undertaking, whether personal or social.<sup>28</sup> For if the link is too close, it leads people to practice--I use examples without intending to judge--an Egyptian, or a progressive, or a bourgeois Christianity, without any readiness to communicate with an Israeli, a conservative, or a workers' Christianity, even simply with a

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Let me cite P.-H. Simon again (p. 43): "What I especially learned in the uproar to which I alluded and which has been confirmed every time I have seen conflicts arise within the Catholic world, is that each of the antagonistic attitudes is linked in their consciences, rightly or wrongly, with a religious imperative. This is what makes the problem so serious. While denouncing the corrupting activity of a certain conservative spirit over Catholic milieux, I had the sense I was acting according to the demands of my faith and in the interests of the Church; but those who described me then as a scandalous writer, the important people who denounced me to Rome, the students who hissed at me in the halls of the University, were persuaded, I have no doubt, that they were defending a just and useful cause, that they were safeguarding an alliance generally favorable to the Church with certain powers of which it had temporary need...."

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For example, the division of French Catholics which goes back to the school of Lamennais, on the one hand, and to Louis Veuillot, on the other.

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"Le 'Lieu théologique' du schisme et le travail pour l'union," *Irénikon* (1945) 26-50; "Le Schisme dans l'Economie divine," *Irénikon* (1948) 6-31. See also S.L. Greenslade, *Schism in the Early Church* (London, 1953) and the pertinent remarks of A. Cruziat, *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, no. 35 (Nov. 1, 1956) 15-16.

universal Christianity. The chosen Church, which in reality is a chapel, is more important than the Church itself. The "Other" is as it were chased out of communion, which is reduced to what I bear in myself, personally and spontaneously.

### 3. *The Healthy Balance of the Two Principles*

As I begin this third moment in our reflection, which will now deal, more briefly, with the conditions and requirements for the health of the principles of unity and of diversity, allow me to cite two beautiful texts which state the need for and the links between these two principles. The first is from Pascal: "A multitude which is not reduced to unity is confusion; a unity which does not depend on the multitude is tyranny."<sup>29</sup> The second dates from the fourth century and is taken from the *Apostolic Canons*: "The bishops of each people should know who is the first among them and acknowledge him as their head, and they should do nothing important without discussing it with him; let them do only what concerns their own communities (*paroikia*) and the regions they have to govern. But neither should the first bishop do anything without discussing it with the others. Thus there will be a unity of thought (*homonoia*) and God will be glorified, by the Lord, in the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."<sup>30</sup> This expresses a sort of mutual interiority of unity and diversity, which must indwell one another. And we see indicated the principle of this interiority, which is also its model and term: the Holy Trinity, the perfect communion of three Persons in unity.

They are three: "*Alius est Pater, alius est Filius, alius Spiritus Sanctus.*" The Father is a Person, the Son is a Person, the Holy Spirit is a Person. But the Three perfectly share the same nature, the same joy, the same glory, the same power, and do *together* whatever they do. The single divine nature is entirely present in each of the Three Persons. Each of the Three is relative to the others, and all Three conspire in unity. The Three Persons are in one another. "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," Jesus said (Jn 14:10). *O beata Trinitas!*

At its own level, the Church imitates the Trinity. It is a multitude of persons communicating in the same life. But this unity of life is not uniformity; it is rich with an abundant diversity by reason of the individual and collective persons who receive and differently live its richness. It is the catholicity of the Church, one, holy, and apostolic. Unity and multiplicity are only opposed to one another at the level of the poor creatures at the lowest level of the scale of living things. They are united to one another in superior creatures whose principle of existence is rich.<sup>31</sup> The Church is fullness, it is at once unity and diversity. In it the fullness of

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<sup>30</sup> *Pensées*, Brunschvicg ed., fr. 871.

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Canon 34 (PG, 137, 103).

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"An organism is the more unified the more its differentiation grows and its functions multiply, provided that this differentiation and this growth of functions proceed from within, from the initial principle which seeks to reveal itself in ever richer ways. A man is more than a protozoan; when the latter is cut into sections, it continues to exist: try to dissect a man!" (A.-D. Sertillanges, *Catéchisme des incroyants*, II, 21; compare *L'Eglise*, II, ch. 1 [vol. I, 6th ed., 95], and St. Thomas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 183, a. 2, esp. ad 3m).

Christ in some way stretches itself into a humanity which seeks to receive and to live it, but whose members receive and live it each in its own way and in accord with what it is. On the other hand, each of them and all of them together thus contribute to fulfilling Christ, as St. Paul says (Eph 1:23), or to give him his fullness as the perfect Man (Eph 4:13). You know the classic images of this catholicity developed by the Fathers and taken up again in the documents of the popes: the Church is the queen *circumdata varietate* (Ps 44, Vulgate), she speaks all the languages, with the Apostles on Pentecost, she is the cloth seen by Peter at Jaffa, full of all the animals, pure and impure, etc.

But in the Church catholicity is not something external, the result of a successful undertaking, a simple quantitative whole. It is an intimate quality, possessed by each part, and even by each believer, as much as by the whole. It is the quality in virtue of which the whole is present in each of the parts, which themselves are related to the whole and related to one another. It is not only the great Church which is catholic because universal in extension; it is I myself, it is each of us. I am not the whole, but I have the whole within me and I am in conformity with it. I am in communion with the whole and with the totality of the parts which communicate in it along with me, although neither they nor I express it in its totality.

The existential law which flows for the Church from this quality of catholicity is a law of communion. It is a spiritual law, whose moral implications we will see in a moment. But it is also a form of existence which specifies the nature of this society which is the Church and of its unity. Although external authority has a place within it, the Church is a society not by coercion but by communion: communion of the members in the same objects of faith and love, communion of the members with one another.

The great requirement of this communion is openness, a readiness to welcome, to give, and to exchange. Individuals, groups, peoples, we distinguish ourselves by ways of thinking that are different, perhaps even in certain respects opposed. But there is one way which must be common to us, because it derives from Christianity itself. The spiritual principle which makes us Christians necessarily entails the consciousness that we are not alone, that others also are subjects. It necessarily entails an invitation not to lock myself in a system or a situation, but to accept that this system of ideas and situation be called into question. Is this not in the Gospel, not perhaps in this form, in a particular verse, but in a hundred equivalent forms and in a hundred places?

We have to keep in mind--aided, as needed, by that ancillary form of intelligence called humor--that we are ourselves only a point and a partial and transitory outcropping at the surface of actuality, of a people whose deep nature desires to be coextensive with the totality of space and time. Only the totality of this people, only the Church in its historical and geographical, anthropological and spiritual universality, is the adequate subject of the totality of faith and of grace which come to it from Christ. In practice to give what I have been able to perceive of it the absolute character of the totality is profoundly to misunderstand what that totality can truly be. It is not only a sin, it is a sign of a lack of culture, it is stupid. But stupidity can be a sin.

Thomistic theology defines the sin of schism as the refusal to act as a part, to be part of a whole.<sup>32</sup> Translated in terms of spiritual attitudes, this means, besides a conformity of faith and

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Cajetan, *Comm. in II-II*, q. 39, a. 1.

worship, besides submission to the same authority, having others present to one's mind, including them in some way, and including their reasons within my own position and in my determinations, bearing, finally, in oneself an intention of the Whole. It thus means a desire to understand one another, to do justice to each other's reasons. Finally, from the parish to Catholic Action, from the East to the West, despite diversities and even frank differences, it means a desire to be together and to do something together. Communion--*communio* comes from *communis*, which, whatever the original term, *munus* or *moenus*, means a common work, a team for action or for defence. The Thomists to whom I referred add that, the principle of this *agere ut pars*, of this non-schismatic but communion behavior, the spiritual and mystical, and not just intellectual or psychological, principle is none other than the Holy Spirit which inclines each one to act "according to the whole," catholically. The Holy Spirit frees our souls from their human limits or from the absolutizing of their particularism, to make them communicate with others in the sovereign principles of unity which are common to all.

After having evoked this lofty theology, dare I cite a text of Jean Guéhenno, less for its depth--there would be many better ones, for example, in Möhler--than for its immediate practical import? A dozen years ago he wrote: "Let our ideas be clear; let us present them in all their rigor. This is a condition of honesty. Let us serve them with all our might. This is the exercise of our courage. But just as we leave a margin on our writing paper, for revisions, for corrections, for everything not yet found, for the truth for which we can still only hope, let us leave around our ideas the margin of fraternity."<sup>33</sup>

In the ancient Church communion had its organs and means, humble means, very human ones. There were visits and hospitality; on this occasion there was the celebration together, or the invitation from one priest to another, from one bishop to another, to celebrate in his place at the altar. There were the letters recommending a Christian or a priest to another community. There was the solidarity of considering condemned what another Church, and especially the Roman Church had condemned. There was the sending of professions of faith to other Churches when one assumed an office. There was the sending of letters, especially occasioned by an event, a trial, difficulties. Finally, there was the mutual aid, the sending of help, living witnesses of spiritual and bodily compassion.

It would not be hard to find modern equivalents or forms of these different means or to revalidate the ever present analogous activities, as means and signs of communion. It is easier to travel than it used to be. Every year there are a number of congresses, in all sorts of areas. There is Catholic Assistance. We can be abreast of one another's activities either by organs for this purpose or by sending news, communicating documents. The different parts of Christendom can be informed about one another. Sentiments of solidarity and sympathy can be expressed at important moments. In short, there are the hundreds of ways and the reality of what has been called horizontal Catholicity: ways of assuring that there does not exist only a catholic Unity, but a unity *of* Catholics, not only a unity *of* the Church, but a unity *in* the Church, without an impoverishing and levelling uniformity. Of the unity *of* the Church, the Church itself is the subject; of the unity *in* the Church, we are all the responsible agents.

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"La Marge de la fraternité," in *Le Figaro*, January 6, 1951.

The urgency of such a program will appear all the greater, more imperative, if, to end, we evoke two features that particularly mark our present conjuncture: the missionary urgency and the ecumenical urgency, between which there exist profound connections. The very problem of reunion must be seen in a missionary perspective; it is not just a matter of reuniting all Christ's disciples into the same Catholic enclave, but of reuniting them in the same Christian service of the world, in a unanimity of witness, in view of the world's evangelization.<sup>34</sup> And what a world! In world that is more and more ardently seeking and achieving its unity, is Christianity to remain a dividing factor? And in a world that at the same time is aggressively affirming personal, cultural, national particularities, is Catholicism to present itself as a force for uniformity? Wherever, whether rightly or wrongly, missionaries have seemed to be linked to the West, they have been checked or challenged. Everywhere ideologies are being affirmed and opposed to one another as they have never been before, even in the sphere of Christian dogmatics, for ecumenism itself has aroused a renewal of confessional awareness.

Well, then, are you still interested in playing the silly game of a multitude without unity or of a unity without a multitude, of anarchical monologue or tyrannical monologue? Another way is open to us, the way of ecumenicity. Which ecumenicity? That of the World Council of Churches which in ten days will open its third world conference, or that of the ecumenical Council which the Holy Father will open at the end of 1962? The two ecumenicities have to encounter one another! The Holy Father has very formally given the Council the goal of seeking a vaster reunion which obviously will require long preparations and difficult steps. But the total problem is surely the one we have reflected on tonight. The home of people reunited in the service of Christ can only be that of a unity without divisions, but not without diversities. Do you wish to work to build it?

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<sup>34</sup>

See J. Vodopivec, "Unity in Diversity: The Problem of Reunion in Missionary Perspective," *Euntes Docete* 13 (1960) 459-512.