

„UNITY“, „DIVISION“, „REUNION“ IN THE LIGHT OF ORTHODOX ECCLESIOLOGY¹

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I

Τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας Σου φύλαξον

«The Theology of Schism»—such is the somewhat strange name of a new branch of theology which has grown out of the present-day search for Christian unity. The reasons for its emergence are to be found in that notion of the nature of the Church, which is generally described as «Catholic», a concept which may be described as «horizontal», in contradistinction to the «vertical» or «protestant» conception. This «Catholic» notion of the Church inevitably leads to the following paradox: any search for reunion presupposes a preliminary agreement as to what unity is. On the other hand, the «Catholic» concept of unity excludes the very possibility of real division, for, *if* on the one hand this Catholic conception leads us to affirm the organic unity of the Church or, more precisely, to affirm the Church as an organic unity, and if this same organic unity is expressed in the outward structure of the Church and in its historical continuity—division as such, is an obvious contradiction in terms; for in Catholic terminology such a division would signify the division of Christ Himself. The «theology of schism» is sometimes put forward as an attempt to find a way out of this specifically «catholic» *impasse*, and to reconcile the theological impossibility of the Church's division with historical reality.

It must be admitted at the offset that contemporary Orthodox theologians are far from having reached any agreement on this matter, and that those views which they have put forward in recent years on

1. Adress given at the Annual Conference of the Fellowship of S. Alban and St Sergius at Abingdon, England in August 1950.

the significance of our divisions often appear to be mutually exclusive. These views range from a complete denial of the existence of any *vestigia Ecclesiae* outside the boundaries of the Orthodox Church, rejecting even the validity of the Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, to a kind of justification of the divisions in Christendom based on the doctrine of Chalcedon. The diversity of these theories, I would suggest, is due to the fact that Orthodox ecclesiology is as yet almost totally undeveloped. The uncertainty of the Orthodox position on this point is a serious drawback, for those who would attempt a study of the problem before us to-day are thereby deprived of premises clearly defined by a consensus of Orthodox theological opinion. For this reason, I cannot attempt more than a very brief outline of a subject which, to be treated exhaustively, would require a large book. My paper, therefore, is but a modest attempt to suggest to you a few topics for reflection which I can only submit to you, in the words of Origen «γυμναστικῶς», *not* as an answer to the problem, but rather as so many *questions* addressed, if I may say so, to the considered opinion of theologians.

II.

The question of the unity of the Church has already been discussed from widely different angles at this Conference¹. I will, therefore, confine myself to one aspect of the problem which, it seems to me, is of fundamental importance. It is *the* difference between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic methods of interpreting the *organic* unity of the Church. I refer explicitly to Roman Catholicism because I believe that one of the first tasks of Orthodox ecclesiology is to find a way of freeing itself of certain Roman influences. These influences can be detected in our very notions of the *organic unity* of the Church and, to my mind, they are especially dangerous since their true nature is concealed from a number of Orthodox theologians by the age-long resistance of Orthodoxy to the See of Rome; this resistance has only too often been a substitute for any fundamental discussion of our «ecclesiological differences». At first sight it would seem that the only aspect of the Roman doctrine of the Church that is unacceptable to the Orthodox is the teaching on the Papacy as laid down

1. The paper read at the Conference by *Fr. Lionel Thornton*. C. R. «The Unity of the Church—A Biblical Approach» has been printed in «Sobornost» series 3, N 8, Winter 1950, pp. 324—334.

by the Vatican Council, a teaching regarded as a mere heretical superstructure on a doctrine in all other respects Orthodox. Yet, I believe, it is important to realize that the doctrine of Papal Primacy and, anterior to this dogma, the very existence of Papalism are but a logical consequence of a particular conception of the Church's «organic unity». In a simplified form this conception may be defined as follows: in the Roman theology this organic unity, the Church as an organism, is primarily the Universal Church, that is the totality of the visible Church on earth, which, in the unity of its organization and in its universal structure, is the manifestation and the extension of the Mystical Body of Christ. «Un Dieu, un Christ, un baptême, une Église institutionnelle et sociétaire», says Father Congar¹ and for him this implies a conception of the Church in terms of «parts» and of the «whole», and Roman theology seeks for a definition of the Church in which, according to the same Father Congar, «les différentes parties aient vraiment dans un ensemble qui soit proprement un tout, un statut de parties qui soient proprement des parties»². The universal organism of the Church, as a whole, is ontologically *anterior* to its different parts, and it is only *in* and *through* the «whole» that the «parts» are united to the Church. It seems to me that it is precisely this conception of the unity of the Church, as one visible, universal organism, that postulates a single head—one universal bishop in whom this unity is grounded and fulfilled. Thus, the Church, as a universal organism, as a «whole», is the Church of Rome—«*Ecclesia Sancta, Catholica et Romana*», as we read in the *Encyclical Mystici Corporis*, «through which we become members of the Body of Christ».

The essential difference between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism on this point is, as I will attempt to show, vital and relevant to the problem of reunion. The Orthodox view, as it seems to me, may be expressed as follows: the category of organic unity can properly be applied only to a *local Church*. I should like to make it quite clear that by «local Church» I mean not one of those ecclesiastical groupings coterminous with nations or states, which we call autocephalous Churches (such as the Greek Church or the Russian Church), but a single community united under the headship of one bishop and possessing,

1. M.—J. Congar, *Chrétiens Désunis. Principes d' un «œcuménisme» catholique*. Paris, 1937, p. 109.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

in unity with him, the fullness of sacramental life. Such a local Church can alone be called an «organism» in ecclesiastical language and such a Local Church, as an «organism», a sacramental body, is not a «part» or a «member» of a wider universal organism. *It is the very Church itself.* I am aware that in making this statement I am laying myself open to the criticism of many Orthodox theologians who tend to conceive of the Church in the very terms of a «universal organism» which are used by the theologians of Rome. Nevertheless I believe that the view I am submitting to you to-day directly and logically follows from the Orthodox conception of the Church's *catholicity*. »Catholicity» was the subject of a previous Conference of the Fellowship, and I shall not endeavour to repeat in detail what was said on that occasion¹. I will only remind you that, in the Orthodox view, «Catholicity» is not the Church's universality, but primarily its *wholeness*, the wholeness of its life always and everywhere. It follows from this definition that such categories as «the parts» and «the whole» are inapplicable to the Church, because the Church is catholic in so far as within it the «part» is not only in agreement with the whole, corresponds to and submits to the whole, but is identical with and embodies the whole: the part, in other words, *is* the whole. The Church is catholic in time and space. In time, because she is not only always linked to the Apostles «horizontally», but is in fact the *same* Church, the same Apostolic community, gathered, ἐπι τὸ αὐτὸ (Acts, 2, 45, 47). It is catholic in space because each local Church, in the unity of the bishop and people receives the fullness of gifts, is taught the entire Truth and possesses the whole Christ; «and where Christ is, there is the Church». «Totus Christus and therefore, «tota Ecclesia». The Apostolic succession which is the basis of the Church catholicity in time is likewise the basis of her catholicity in space: it signifies that each local Church possesses not a portion of the Apostolic gifts, but their fullness. What may be termed the «horizontal» structure of the Church is the prime condition of her catholicity; while her catholicity is the fullness of the Church, always and everywhere, the fullness given to her in Christ which, in the last instance, is but the fullness of Christ himself: «totus Christus, Caput et Corpus».

1. Cf. E. Every, «The Catholicity of the Church» in «Sobornost» Series 3, N. 6, Winter 1949, pp. 233-238 (an analysis of what had been said at the Conference by the Orthodox and the Anglicans theologians) and G. Florovsky, «The Catholicity of the Church» in «The Church of God» (an Anglo-Russian Symposium) London, 1934, pp. 51-74.

The unity of the Church cannot be divorced from her catholicity, cannot obey any other law except the law of catholicity, in terms of which the essence of the Church is «l' extension et la plénitude de la Sainte Incarnation, ou plutôt de la Vie Incarnée du Fils avec tout ce que pour notre salut il connut: la Croix et le Tombeau, la Résurrection le troisième jour, l'Ascension dans les Cieux, la Session à la droite du Père» ¹⁾). In other words, the nature of the Church's unity is primarily sacramental, for it is in the Sacraments that the fullness of Christ is ever actualized and we become participants in it, ever sealing, through this *communio in sacris*, our organic unity with one another in Christ's Body and constituting together one Christ. But the very sacramental nature of the Church's unity presupposes the use of «organic» categories with reference to the local Church. The Local Church is that sacramental organism which in its bishop possesses the fullness of Christ, the fullness of unity, of holiness, of catholicity and apostolicity, in fact those very *notae Ecclesiae* which are but the signs of the Church's organic unity with Christ: *Caput et Corpus*. A bishop cannot be a bishop of a part of the Church, for his very unity with his own Church is not only the image of the unity of Christ with the Church, the unity of the people of God, but is also the real gift of fullness, actualized eternally in sacraments.

The fatal defect of Roman catholic ecclesiology, from this point of view, is that this organic character of the Local Church as the basis of unity has been transferred to the Church Universal, which has become in fact *one enormous Local Church*, requiring, consequently and naturally, a single bishop as a focus and a source of the fullness of the Church. If the Church is a Universal Organism it must possess *its own* universal bishop, just as a Local Church possesses an organic unity in its own bishop. Dom Clément Lialine, in his commentary on the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, drops a very significant remark, driving the doctrine of the organic unity of the Universal Church to its extreme conclusions. Commenting on the passage of the Encyclical which deals with the place of the Eucharist in the unity of the Church, Father Lialine remarks: «on pourrait ajouter que l'image du Corps Mystique se réalise parfaitement quand c'est le grand Prêtre du Christ sur terre qui célèbre lui-même

(1) G. Florovsky: *L'Église: sa nature et sa tâche*. In «*L'Église universelle dans le Dessein de Dieu*» vol. I, 1949, p. 70.

le Saint-Sacrifice» (1). No clearer evidence could be found of the fact that the whole theology of the local Church and of its link with the bishop, as expressed for instance in the epistles of St. Ignatius of Antioch, has here been transposed to the function of the bishop of the Church Universal. But, in the Orthodox view, this transfer signifies that universalism has been substituted for the catholicity of the Church, for its eschatological fullness, which enables us always and everywhere «in this world» «to actualize» the whole Christ and to bring the whole Church, in all its fullness and saving power, to the people; and so this transfer would prevent «two or three gathered together» from being the witnesses of the full reality of the Incarnation of the Son of God. It is my firm conviction that, if it were to adopt these categories of a universal organism, Orthodox theology would inevitably lead to Rome. It is indeed impossible to go on maintaining, as the Orthodox frequently do, that, although the Church is a Universal organism, it has no visible Head, for its invisible Head is Christ Himself. This assertion is due to a failure to understand the very relationship between the «visible» and the «invisible» within the Church. If the Church is catholic, then its invisible essence is verily present and incarnate in its *visible* nature and its *visible* structure; these are not mere symbols, for the visible Church *is* verily the body of Christ.

But what then do we mean by the unity of the Churches and what is the nature of the visible unity of the whole Church in the whole world? It is clear that if the Roman concepts of the «parts» and the «whole» cannot be applied to this unity, the unity must be ontologically expressed in terms of an *identity*; It follows that the unity of the Churches is just as real as the organic unity of a local Church, which is indeed the Unity of the Church and not merely unity among the Churches. The point is not that all these local churches *together constitute* a single organism, but that each church, as a church, as a sacramental unity, is the *same* Church, manifested in a given place. This identity is based on the identity in the sacramental structure of every Church: on the Apostolic succession, on the episcopate, and on the sacraments. And so we return to the same organic unity of the Church, but in which the

(1) Dom Clément Lialine. Une Etape en Ecclésiologie. Irénikon 1950, tirage à part.

churches *are not complementary* to one another, are not «parts» or «members»: *each of them and all of them together* are nothing but the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

III

This, however, is only one aspect of the Church's unity, an aspect which may be termed ontological. Yet, the Church is not only something *given* to men by God in Christ, but it also implies their acceptance and assimilation of this gift, their answer to God's calling and their election. And if *that which is given* is the fullness, always identical with itself, the eschatological fullness of the Church, even Christ Himself, it is yet impossible to abstract this fullness from its incarnation and manifestation in history. In this sense catholic ecclesiology is also essentially the *theology of the history of the Church*. I should like to emphasize that I mean the *theology* of the history of the Church and not the *philosophy* of history. The philosophy of history seeks to discover the significance of the historical process, its teleology,— and in this sense, the only real pattern of a philosophy of history is the sacred history of the Old Testament, the history of Salvation, «Heilsgeschichte», wholly moving towards its own fulfillment, to the Incarnation of the Son of God. And this history was fulfilled. «But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son» (Gal. IV, 4). In Him the fullness of Divinity and the fullness of Salvation are granted to men. The history of Salvation was fulfilled and «the time of the Church» is eschatological: «the last time». From the point of view of Heilsgeschichte the Church *has no history*, it is already *in statu patriae*, and is always the actualization of its fullness of salvation accomplished by Christ *ἀνάξ*— once for all.

The statement that the Church has a history means that this fullness of salvation is not only *given* to men, but is *accepted* by them, that human nature, restored and renewed through the Incarnation, has become capable of accepting and assimilating Salvation; that historical reality, this world of ours, can actually receive Christ, and our human nature acquire conformity with Him. God became man, the Divine Word became the word of human scriptures, and just as it is impossible to disincarnate Christ, or to separate the Word of God from the word of man, so is it impossible to abstract

the eschatological fullness of the Church from its historical and human manifestation. The theology of the history of the Church presupposes that in history, in the changing and limited world, it is possible adequately to comprehend, express and assimilate Divine Truth which is granted in Christ. Thus, from a purely historical point of view, the history of the Church, like any other history, is contingent. For instance, the structure of the early Church was shaped by the world in which it was born, and the dogmatic formulae of the Oecumenical Councils, the very doctrine of the Church and the development of its organization were determined by purely historical factors. But the nature of the Church is such that all that is Divine, absolute and «eschatological» in it can be expressed in these «historical» forms, and what is purely historical can be transfigured and made to conform with Truth. More than that: this is a task set before the Church. Just as each of us, who has received in baptism the fullness of the gifts of salvation, has become «a participant in the death and Resurrection» of Our Lord, and has found a new life, is called to grow in it, so does the Church «till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ» (Eph. IV, 13).

This notion of the organic unity of eschatology and history within the Church provides the key to the true understanding of the *Church's Tradition*. On the one hand the Orthodox Church rejects the theory of «the development of dogma» regarded as a kind of quantitative enlargement of Truth: the fullness of Truth is given to the Church from the very beginning and, in its entirety, is transmitted to the Church always and everywhere. «Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est». It is not the truth that grows, it is we who grow in the truth. But, on the other hand, this growth is not simply a series of historical and relative apprehensions of one and the same Truth, but an actual and adequate reply to the summons of God, the fruit of the Incarnation and of the Holy Spirit; and so it becomes an integral part of the Church's life and is transmitted as such by Tradition. This is no mere «explicitation» of some basic «kernel» of Tradition, exterior to it and only of «historical» value: it is Tradition itself, the very Truth, manifested and expressed. In this sense Tradition for us includes the Scriptures which form its foundation and content, and the dogmatic formulae and the holiness of the saints and the veneration of the Mother

of God and the whole teaching and the whole life of the Church.

And so the true sign and condition of the unity of all the Churches, that is of the whole Catholic Church, is *the unity of Tradition*, which is that adequate interpretation of the Church's eschatological fullness which alone permits us to comprehend and manifest our unity, not merely to believe in it but to possess it. This is the unity in Truth, in real and objective Truth, not merely in a pale, relative and «historical» expression of it. These, it may be objected, are human words and human beliefs and human truths. But we must not forget that the word «human» has acquired two different meanings since the day when God became man and has remained man: it may mean the sum total of human weakness, sin and the falling away from God; it can also signify the deified and glorified humanity of Christ: «ye are the Body of Christ» (1 Cor. XII, 27), «we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. II, 16), «yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me...» (Gal. II, 20): these words, spoken by a man, could be said by the Church of itself.. And for this reason its Tradition, its faith and its Truth, received and witnessed by the Holy Spirit, are the true expression of its unity. Our unity in Christ cannot be otherwise manifested by us than in this «unity of faith and love» and it is thus that St Ignatius of Antioch defines the Church. The eschatological unity of the Church, its identity in time and space, is manifested in the actual *historical and visible* unity of faith; and the criterion of this faith is, again, the *historical tradition* of the Church. Arianism, Monophysitism, Nestorianism were fourth and fifth century Oriental heresies; yet the dogmas, that were formulated by the Church as a reply to these heresies are not merely fourth or fifth century Oriental dogmas. They are the very *Catholic Truth*, the words of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and this Truth cannot be a relative one. To enter into the Church, to live in the Church is not merely to achieve an individual and eschatological union with Christ: it implies the necessity of entering into and living in the historical Church which possesses its own language and its own historical form, of accepting this history as one's own history; and, far from dragging the Catholic Truth down to the level of one's own time and personal needs, this act implies a constant widening of one's personality, one's faith and one's language towards the goal of full Catholicity.

To sum up, the unity of the Church is expressed and realized in the unity of faith, manifested in the full *Catholic agreement* of all

the Churches; through this agreement each Church *knows* the others as it does itself, and in the others it knows the One Catholic Church. It is this Catholic agreement that finds its expression in communion in the sacraments, in intercommunion; through it the sacraments of another Church are recognized as the sacraments of one's own Church, and ultimately as the sacraments of the Church Universal. The Church is not a universal organism, yet its faith is always the universal faith, the faith of the Apostles, the Fathers and Doctors; it is a visible unity, the unity of the Catholic Church throughout the earth (1).

IV

It seems to me that I can now venture to draw several conclusions regarding the attitude of the Orthodox Church towards the fact of division and meaning it attaches to the idea of «reunion».

It should be noted at the offset that the attitude of the majority of contemporary theologians to the fact of division is very different from the attitude of the Eastern Church at the time of the Oecumenical Councils and in Byzantium. It may be said that contemporary theologians seek above all to discover the meaning of division and wish paradoxically to determine what might be called the *theological status of division*. How is division possible, what happens to the Sacraments in a Church or a community separated from what is supposed to be the true Church, what is the validity of their orders — these are the questions raised to day. It seems to me that all these questions, which «a theology of schism» attempts to answer, are fundamentally connected with the Roman conception of the Church as one universal organism and can arise only out of Roman presuppositions. A theology of schism is a product of the desire

(1) I do not, of course, wish to deny the visible organization of the Universal Church, the grouping of local Churches into provinces, metropolitan areas and patriarchates; the primacy of certain episcopal sees; in brief, that whole ecclesiastical order (τάξις) which is sanctioned by the canons of the Church. My point is simply that this organization is not an organism as understood by the Church of Rome, but is *historical* by its very nature—changing in accordance with the historical process. It changes in such a way as to always express the catholic agreement of the whole Church and her real identity with every local Church. Cf. my brief essay: «*The Ecumenical Patriarch and the Orthodox Church*» in the «*Messenger of the Russian Church in Western Europe*» No 1 (28) 1951, pp. 3-12 (in russian).

of theologians to find a place for the Church where, according to their own presuppositions, there should be no place for her. But the whole trouble is that, from the Orthodox point of view, these questions are unanswerable, because the whole problem is falsely posed, and formulated in the wrong terms. This may best be proved by the fact that neither the early Church nor the Church of the period of the Oecumenical Councils never raised these questions, and in contemporary Orthodox theology they are a product of Roman and, generally, Western influence.

For the Byzantine Church division meant the falling away of one or several local Churches from catholic agreement and, consequently, from the *true faith* expressed in and through this agreement, not, would I repeat, a separation from a universal organism, nor the breaking away from Eastern Church, regarded in some sense of the word as the *source of the Church*, but the violation of Tradition and Truth. But in so far as the Church manifests and recognizes her ontological identity in this unity of Tradition, in this manifested Truth, and the unity of faith is a condition of this identity, the violation of catholic agreement interrupts the communion in the Sacraments. For the Roman Church division is precisely a breaking off of communion with Rome, because Rome is the *source* of the Church and the source of her visible of unity. The term «*Romana*» is in fact a *nota ecclesiae*, which includes the *notae* of apostolicity, unity and catholicity. But for the Eastern Church such a *nota ecclesiae*, in the absence of which she can recognize neither apostolicity, for unity, nor catholicity is not the East but «*Orthodoxy*» —the fullness of tradition and genuine unity in faith. This signifies that, when one or several local Churches fall away from catholic agreement, the Orthodox Church cannot raise the problem as to their «*validity*» as Churches, because outside the fullness of tradition, outside the manifested truth which is *Orthodoxy*, we cannot «*know*» «*acknowledge*» (or recognize) this validity. Tradition, in this sense, is that which permits us to truly apprehend and receive what God did for us, truly receive the Mystery of our salvation; and hence outside this Tradition we simply *know* nothing of «*validity*» or «*invalidity*».

To cite an example: when the late Patriarch Sergius of Moscow and several other Orthodox theologians expressed the opinion that the question of the validity of Anglican orders cannot be solved by the Orthodox Church without general dogmatic agreement, they meant, I believe, precisely this: that for us the problem of «*validity*»

ty» is inseparable from that of right «interpretation», since this «interpretation» is the acceptance of the validity of Salvation, achieved once and for ever. And this adequate interpretation is the Tradition of the Church, expressed in Catholic agreement.

This explains the fact, which I have already mentioned, that the Byzantine Church, in her polemics with the Western Church, invariably raised the problem not in terms of a re attachment of the Western Church, to her, or of a natural recognition of sacrament or ecclesiastical organization, but purely on the plane of dogma on which the Western Church violated the Truth and fell away from Catholic agreement: the Filioque, etc.. This was so because it is only in dogmatic agreement, more precisely in agreement in faith, that the Sacraments of another local Church can be acknowledged by us and the Sacraments of our Church, in other words this Church can be acknowledged as the *some* Church. In the last resort, *dogmatic agreement* is a necessary criterion of acknowledgment of another Church, as being the same Church; without this criterion the external unity of the Church ceases to express her «ontological» unity. It follows from this that though the Orthodox Church cannot have any «theology of schism», because something negative cannot be interpreted positively, and consequently «justified», yet she *knows* the true conditions for reunion and the way that leads to it. I shall not disclose anything new in saying that this way can only be the way of dogmatic unity, of a true dogmatic agreement. This dogmatic agreement, in the light of what I have said implies not only an agreement, on specific points, a certain artificially defined dogmatic minimum, but an integration of the «historical fullness» of Tradition. Our divisions were primarily the result of a break in catholic agreement, of ecclesiastical parochialism and of a limitation in men's experience of the Church. And the call of the Orthodox Church back to the Fathers and to the Councils is a call not to the East or to *Herself*, but to that very fullness and genuine catholicity of the Church's experience which both Fathers and Councils were able to express. Our first task is to discover that *language of the Church*, without which formulae and definitions may be introduced into the Creed but cannot become the true *content* of our faith.

In practice this means that *dogmatic* unity is impossible without a measure of *doctrinal* unity. Dogmatic unity is the beginning of an endless growth into «the fullness of unity» and in this process of growth all those tensions between different schools and doc-

trines which have always existed in Christendom are legitimate and even necessary. But may I emphasize once more that dogmatic unity cannot be achieved without a measure of «integration» of the Church's history, of her historical experience. We must once more follow the course of the Church's history, experience anew this history as *our* history; her «past» must come to life and become our actual present; It must become the basis and expression of our unity in the Church and hence of the unity of the Church itself. The Church is one because the Church *is* unity. Someone has remarked during this Conference that the essential difference between «catholics» and «protestants» lies not in a different approach to the Bible, to the Church, etc., but in the fact that in the last resort, though we have one Bible, and the same historical fact of salvation, we believe in different Jesus Christs. In the last resort, the entire tradition of the Church is but an answer to the question: Who was, who *is* Jesus from Nazareth? And only in *Tradition*, in the full experience and life of the Church, we acquire—not a portion or an aspect of the Gospel, not a «biblical doctrine» on this or that particular point,—but the *whole Gospel*, the whole Mystery of Salvation which is announced in it and ever dwells in all its fullness in the Church. For this reason the unity of Tradition is not a condition or a consequence of the Church's unity, it is indeed the *visible unity of the Church*. This unity of tradition determines the unity of the Church's outward structure, but only in it does this unity of structure become actual and valid. Thus neither apostolic succession, nor the episcopate, nor the Sacraments can in themselves be recognized as the foundation of unity, but only that faith of the Church manifested in tradition, which bestows on this entire structure its true significance and «comprehends» its «validity».

In conclusion, I would suggest that an arduous and possibly a long road lies before us, — the road that leads to the «integration» of the Universal and Catholic Tradition of the Church. Every attempt to shirk this road, to find a kind of «eschatological» unity outside its «adequate» historical manifestation will lead not to true unity but to a purely human makeshift unity and to the disincarnation of the Church. And only if we advance along this road the words «*reunion with Orthodoxy*» — which, in essence, expresses what I have attempted to say, will no longer seem to our Western brethren a manifestation of human pride, and will be revealed to us as the only possible end of the road and the true completion of the journey.