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9. *Ratnagotravibhaga* I, 71, quoted in Conze, *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages*, i.a. New York, 1964, p. 130.
10. The affinity of the *Gita* with early Buddhism

is well-known but the striking similarity between the Bodhisattva ideal of Mahayana Buddhism and the *bhakta* in the *Gita* has not, to my knowledge, been emphasized.

POLARITY AND PLURIFORMITY IN THE CHURCH

Paul D.L. Avis

It is not often that ecclesiology comes to the forefront of theological debate—though there is no department of Christian theology that does not bear in some way on the concept of the church and no theological question that does not have ecclesiological implications. In the thought of the sixteenth-century Reformers, for example, the question, 'How can I find a gracious God?' entailed the question, 'Where can I find the true church?' Soteriology led directly to ecclesiology: the two were bound together in the Reformers' understanding of the Christian gospel[1].

In the opinion of some, the doctrine of the church is going to become dominant once again. For too long, ecclesiology has been the poor relation in Anglo-Saxon theology, regarded merely as a dispensable luxury, an inessential academic exercise. But now the Christian churches are faced with a fundamental challenge—a challenge not, for once, to their credal and confessional positions and to the credibility of the Christian faith, but to their actual existence as separate churches, to their ecclesiological integrity.

The various churches have always had to grapple with the question of what separated them from their sister churches and on what legitimate grounds they could take their stand *vis a vis* other ecclesial bodies. Superficially, they may appear to take up positions on such issues as adult baptism, adherence to the doctrinal standards laid down by Martin Luther, the Westminster Divines or John Wesley, or recognition of the primacy of the bishop of Rome. Beneath the surface, however, these ostensible criteria recede in importance and factors deriving from historical accident and the development of different styles of worship and diverse languages of Christian experience loom larger. To bring these underlying issues into the open and to subject them to critical analysis is the proper task of ecumenical theology. Each church must be helped to take a dispassionate and critical look at those things that constitute its ecclesial identity. Each church must ask itself whether those things that are embedded so deeply in its tradition are mere accidents of history and culture, or whether, on the other hand, they are actually grounded on the one and only foundation of the Church of Christ—the nature of God, the person of Christ and the character of the Christian gospel (cf. I Cor. 3:11).

This question of ecclesial identity in what we may call the external forum, that is to say, in relation to other churches, has been given added point and complexity by the further question concerning ecclesial identity in what we may call the internal forum, that is to say, with regard to a church's own inherent unity, its individual integrity. In the external forum, the problem of ecclesial identity is the problem of the plurality of churches; in the internal forum, the problem of ecclesial identity is the problem of pluralism within a church. The issue is that of unity in diversity. The diversity is obvious: but where is the unity to be located? The diversity of doctrinal views represented within the major denominations raises acutely the problem of ecclesiological integrity.

Now just as every church needs to take a critical look at its ecclesial identity in the external forum, so too every church must take heed to its integrity in the internal forum. Both ecumenical considerations, as to where a particular church stands on a particular matter, and reflection on theological method, with its alertness to the hidden methodological axioms, good and bad, that underlie all theology, demand that the notion of unity in diversity be subjected to critical analysis. No church is without this problem and each must undertake the enquiry

for itself. But perhaps it is felt most acutely in Anglicanism and it is the Anglican form of unity in diversity, usually called comprehensiveness, that I now propose to discuss.

Comprehensiveness was once 'the glory of the Church of England'. The authors of the report *Catholicity* (1947) claimed that Anglican comprehensiveness opened the way for the Church of England to become 'a school of synthesis over a wider field than any other church in Christendom'. Not even the most fervent Anglican ecumenist would claim that this potentiality has been realised and the whole notion of comprehensiveness has recently been pilloried from within the Anglican fold as conceptually incoherent and as providing a refuge for woolly thinking, if not intellectual dishonesty. If comprehensiveness is to be rehabilitated within Anglicanism and unity in diversity defended as a permanent characterstic of the church catholic, constructive and positive proposals must be developed in a way that the critic of comprehensiveness, Professor Stephen Sykes, did not attempt except in the most allusive and tentative way[2].

Anglican comprehensiveness has historical and contingent origins. During the sixteenth century a synthesis was attempted in the heat of controversy and under the pressure of political upheaval in which appeal to the fathers of the undivided church was combined with the stimulating humanism of the Renaissance and acceptance of the fundamental positions of the continental Reformers—all being held together by the relative continuity of parochial ministry. As a result, Anglican theology has an inbuilt pluriformity, an inherent openness to diverse sources of theological reflection. It draws together various threads of understanding and insight and trusts that out of the tensions that result some broadly based synthesis may emerge. Exponents of Anglicanism have upheld it as an attempt to combine elements which in other traditions have been cut adrift and left to fend for themselves.

In a world increasingly conscious of its own pluralism, we might suppose that a pluriform Anglicanism would at least exercise an initial attraction and invite a positive approach. Its significance might be indicated along the following lines.

(i) *Pluralism and transcendence*. A basic axiom of Christian theism provides the seed-bed for theological pluralism: the doctrine of the transcendence of God implies that no one set of theological statements can adequately describe him, he transcends every attempt to grasp his nature. There thus arises the possibility of a plurality of approaches to the doctrine of God. These may in practice be hard to reconcile or they may appear to be mutually contradictory, but they cannot be ruled out of court simply on grounds of disagreement. Pluralism in the church may be a legitimate response to the mystery of God[3].

(ii) *Pluralism and trinitarianism*. The bare notion of unity in diversity needs no further initial justification than to point to the presence of this principle in the trinitarian nature of God—whether conceived of in its highest objective form, three Persons sharing one Nature, or in its lowest subjective form, three modes in which one divine presence and action are experienced. Thus, it would appear, the principle of unity in diversity finds its incontestable mandate at the most axiomatic level of Christian discourse.

(iii) *Pluralism in the New Testament*. Here it is only necessary to mention without elaboration that biblical scholarship has exposed a plurality of theologies within the Bible itself, both in the Old Testament and the New. As C.F. Evans has remarked of the New Testament, its various contributary theologies may have to simply lie side by side, unreconciled, since they may be—and may have been intended to be—irreconcilable. And J.D.G. Dunn, drawing attention to the diverse *kerygmata* of apostolic preaching, and pointing out that one underlying *kerygma* can only be discovered in the New Testament by a process of abstraction, has concluded that 'If the New Testament is any guide, one can never say. This particular formulation is the gospel for all time and for every situation.'[4] The principle of unity in diversity is thus ineradicably imprinted on the foundation documents of Christianity.

(iv) *Pluralism and catholicity*. The richness provided by pluriformity helps the church to transcend cultural barriers and protects her from sinking into a culturally insular orthodoxy. Here the principle of unity in diversity reflects a central characteristic of the Christian gospel, namely its universality as a gospel that is to be preached to 'every creature' and to bring to God

a great multitude that no man could number 'of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues' (Mk 16:15, Rev. 7:9). At least one of the several facets of the church's pluriform message may appeal to individuals of diverse social, cultural and educational background. In this way, pluralism in the church can become an aspect of catholicity[5].

(v) *Pluralism and development of doctrine*. If Christian theology is not primarily an ideology to be defended and propagated, but rather a venture of faith, an exploration into truth, it must always be open to the emergence of new and unsuspected factors that may point the way to fresh lines of enquiry or provide the tools for self-criticism and reconstruction. A.N. Whitehead has drawn attention to the enormous potentiality of the ideas that sleep in forgotten systems of thought. Pluralism within the church encourages the cross-fertilisation of ideas that may lead to new departures. As John Moorman and Howard Root remark, 'The very dynamism and inner life of Christian faith depends upon development and that means the recognition of the need for diversity, at any time, in theological method and exploration.'[6]

(vi) *Pluralism and the essence of Christianity*. The pluralism of Anglicanism merely mirrors the pluralism of Christianity itself. It is a microcosm of the world church. Ecclesiological work in the internal forum of the Church of England can constitute a pilot study for the whole ecumenical enterprise in the external forum. In this sense, the claim of the report *Catholicity* that Anglican comprehensiveness opens the way for the Church of England to become 'a school of synthesis' for the benefit of the church catholic should be taken seriously. The quest for unity in diversity is a quest for the essence of Anglicanism and the problem of the essence of Anglicanism parallels the problem of the essence of Christianity. We find that definitions of the essence of Christianity have a pluralism of their own, ranging from Schleiermacher through Troeltsch to modern students of this problem such as Professor Sykes. Are we then to seek to discover an essence of essences, an irreducible element in this pluriform phenomenon 'the essence of Christianity'? Such a process of boiling down could go on indefinitely, but what would it leave us with? Better surely to accept that there is a pluriformity inherent in the Christian

religion and reflected in the protean richness of its tradition. This is not, however, to say that no coherence principles are given us in the Christian tradition to counterbalance the radical openness and diversity of Christian theology. Nor is this perhaps the place to expound my own conviction that these coherence principles are dominantly formal or structural and concern the received polarities of Christian theism—transcendence and immanence, grace and nature, revelation and reason. I have attempted a detailed exposition elsewhere[7].

(vii) *Pluralism and realism*. Its acceptance of pluriformity in the church denotes the eminent realism of Anglican theology. This is perhaps what Mandell Creighton was driving at in this rather triumphalist assertion:

> We tend, I think, to make too many apologies for the supposed defects of the Church of England: its want of discipline, its absence of positive definition on many points; its large latitude of opinion. To me it seems that the Church of England is the only religious organisation which faces the world as it is, which recognises the actual facts, and works for God in God's own way . . . Its proudest boast is that it faces the world as it is[8].

In other words, Anglicanism is not seduced by utopian and perfectionist ecclesiologies. It takes seriously the fallenness of the world, the brokenness of the church and the weakness of human nature.

Perhaps I have already said enough to make out a *prima facie* case for comprehensiveness and to show that unity in diversity need not be merely a let out for lazy minds attempting to prop up corrupt churches. But the need to provide a theologically and philosophically sound account of exactly what we mean by this much abused notion remains. We are left with the question whether there is an understanding of pluriformity in the church open to us that does not seem to imply 'a plurality of Lords, a plurality of spirits and a plurality of gods' (Barth). I will suggest four possible senses in which the concept of comprehensiveness might be used in ecclesiology, the last of which is the view I wish to defend.

1. *Mere juxtaposition*. This is the interpretation of comprehensiveness raised by many writers on Anglicanism, only to disown it with contempt— while confessing that this is how Anglican claims

of comprehensiveness strike the observer from without (and even from within!).

The Church of England at the present time, remarked Hensley Henson forty years ago, 'exhibits a doctrinal incoherence which has no parallel in any other church claiming to be traditionally orthodox.' Compare this with a contemporary observation, E.L. Mascall's conviction, 'reached with reluctance and distress and after long and anxious thought, that the theological activity of the Anglican churches is in a condition of extreme, though strangely complacent, confusion, and that this is having a disastrously demoralising effect upon the life and thought of the church as a whole and of the pastoral clergy in particular.' Bishop Gore asserted that comprehensiveness envisaged as the mere juxtaposition of views gave us not a church but 'a mere concensus of jarring atoms'. Alec Vidler similarly rejects the sort of comprehensiveness that has been taken to mean (by whom, he does not say) that 'it is the glory of the Church of England to hold together in juxtaposition as many varieties of Christian faith and practice as are willing to agree to differ, so that the church is regarded as a sort of league of religions.' Vidler dismisses this as 'unprincipled syncretism'. The report *Catholicity*, observing that 'the possibilities of synthesis within the Anglican ideal are still largely unrealised', concludes with unnecessarily pronounced understatement that 'it is by no means true' that the mere juxtaposition of diverse elements in Anglicanism will produce the synthesis that is needed[9].

The view we are considering here has probably never received attempted theological justification, but that does not prevent its being tacitly accepted by a wide section of theologically uninterested clergy and ecclesiologically bewildered laity. Those who are overtly party-minded render support to this view by adhering to the party that in their view enjoys a virtual monopoly of truth, while continuing as members of a church which tolerates opposed, and therefore erroneous, opinions.

2. *Compromise*. This is what the celebrated *via media* often amounts to—a halfway house, an Aristotelian golden mean, the pedestrian pursuit of a safe middle path through all extremes. This view of comprehensiveness goes back to the seventeenth century when George Herbert

compared the charms of the Church of England—'A fine aspect in fit array, Neither too mean nor yet too gay'—with the allurements of Rome, the painted harlot on the hill, and the uncomeliness of the protestant churches, the slovenly wench in the valley, declaring, 'But dearest Mother, (what those miss) the *mean* Thy praise and glory is.' Or in Simon Patrick's memorable phrase: 'that virtuous mediocrity which our church observes between the meretricious gaudiness of the Church of Rome and the squalid sluttery of fanatic conventicles.' The Preface (1662) to the Book of Common Prayer seems to echo these sentiments when it asserts: 'It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England, ever since the first compiling of her Publick Liturgy, to keep the mean between the two extremes, of too much stiffness in refusing, and of too much easiness in admitting any variation from it.' For George Savile, Marquess of Halifax, the Church of England was 'a Trimmer between the frenzy of fanatic visions and the lethargic ignorance of popish dreams.'[10]

'To this day', wrote Thomas Babington Macaulay in the 1840s, 'the constitution, the doctrines and the services of the church retain the visible marks of the compromise from which she sprang. She occupies a middle position between the churches of Rome and Geneva.' Her doctrinal standards 'set forth principles of theology in which Calvin or Knox would have found scarcely a word to disapprove', while her prayers, derived from the ancient breviaries, are 'such that Cardinal Fisher or Cardinal Pole might have heartily joined in them.' Similarly with the ministry: while Rome maintained the doctrine of apostolic succession and many protestants rejected episcopacy altogether, the Anglican Reformers took a middle course. They retained bishops without making episcopacy of the *esse* of the church or necessary to guarantee the efficacy of the sacraments. And, as Macaulay says, 'in every part of her system the same policy may be traced'.

> Utterly rejecting the doctrine of transubstantiation, and condemning as idolatrous all adoration paid to the sacramental bread and wine, she yet, to the disgust of the Puritan, required her children to receive the memorials of divine love, meekly kneeling upon their knees. Discarding many rich vestments which surrounded the altars of the ancient faith, she

yet retained, to the horror of weak minds, a robe of white linen, typical of the purity which belonged to her as the mystical spouse of Christ . . . She retained confirmation and ordination as edifying rites; but she degraded them from the rank of sacraments. Shrift was no part of her system. Yet she gently invited the dying penitent to confess his sins to a divine, and empowered her ministers to soothe the departing soul by an absolution, which breathes the very spirit of the old religion.[11]

William Temple, whose facility for devising reconciling formulae is well known, held this view of comprehensiveness. An exclusive loyalty to either the Reformation or the unreformed catholic tradition is not a viable option for Anglicans, he claimed. 'The Church of England has always bridged the gulf (or sat on the hedge, if you like) that divides "catholic" and

The understanding of comprehensiveness as compromise does attempt to do justice to one deep-seated and permanent element in Anglicanism—its moderation, its stress on sobriety, balance and the horror of 'enthusiasm', or as a critic might claim, its Laodicean luke-warmness, its propensity to muddle through, its dislike, as Hensley Henson put it, 'of pushing principles to their logical conclusions, its almost limitless acquiescence in anomalies which are practically convenient, its ready condonation of admitted abuses which serve material interests.'[13] This apparently ineradicable element acts as a useful check on hasty innovation and creates an ethos uncongenial to movements centred on charismatic individuals, but its drawbacks are precisely superficiality, complacency and lack of vision.

As the authors of *Catholicity* justly remark, to interpret comprehensiveness as compromise seems to presuppose that grey possesses the virtues of both black and white: the result is 'an insipid centrality which misses the truth of catholic and evangelical alike and is no more comprehensive than either of them.' The real trouble with this view of the *via media*, remarks Emmanuel Amand de Mendietta, is its 'chronic tendency towards complacency and mediocrity,' and he goes on to assert that 'in so far as central churchmen occupy this "moderate" position of compromise in matters of religion, they cannot show either the breadth or the depth of the

Anglican synthesis, of its meeting and merging of all the living values of catholicism and evangelicalism.' It often takes someone coming to Anglicanism from outside to tell us what it is all about. When de Mendietta speaks of the meeting and merging of the living values of catholicism and evangelicalism, he is anticipating the view that I shall shortly be advocating myself[14].

3. *Eclecticism.* According to a third approach, albeit crudely put, Anglican comprehensiveness gives the freedom to pick and choose from the available theological options. 'I condemn not all things in the Council of Trent nor approve all in the Synod of Dort', declares Sir Thomas Browne in the *Religio Medici.* Anglicanism, claimed Gore, represents a combination which could become one of 'the most beneficent forces of catholicity in the world.'

It is the glory of the Anglican church that at the Reformation she repudiated neither the ancient structure of catholicism nor the new and freer movement. Upon the ancient structure—the creeds, the canon, the hierarchy, the sacraments—she retained her hold while she opened her arms to the new learning, the new appeal to scripture, the freedom of historical criticism and the duty of private judgement.

Put like this, it almost seems as though Anglicanism can both have its cake and eat it. As R.W. Church had pointed out a generation before Gore, this ideal seems to many to be 'an illogical and incomprehensible attempt to unite incompatible principles and elements.' It leaves the contributory elements lying side by side: it does not explain how they are to be combined.[15]

In Gore's case, though this ideal provided the impetus for an impressive effort of synthesis and reconstruction, it also sowed the seeds of conflict and contradiction. He ultimately failed to unify his thought. The doctrines of apostolic succession and the priesthood of all believers, the magisterium of the church and the duty of private judgement, the supremacy of scripture and the indefectability of (credal) tradition remained unreconciled. It was only sheer intellectual brilliance, prophetic power and force of personality that enabled Gore to take his attempted synthesis as far as he did. His very gifts prevented him from ever undertaking any significant revision of his position in the light of criticism[16].

To this particular interpretation of comprehensiveness belongs the popular notion of complementarity of truths. Properly speaking, the principle of complementarity, formulated by Niels Bohr, is just one among several concepts of polarity, some highly esoteric, employed by modern physicists. The precise meaning and function of the principle of complementarity is often misunderstood by the layman, and it has been subjected to criticism by Einstein, Schrodinger and Popper, among others. While Bohr himself would have welcomed the extension of his principle to theological problems, we should not forget that, in itself, the principle of complementarity is a confession of failure, an expression of agnosticism about ultimate unified truth. Its use outside physics is only analogical, not inferential, and it provides no justification for the facile acceptance of dualisms or the abandonment of the search for synthesis. But, as Stephen Sykes has trenchantly shown, this is precisely what has often happened in Anglicanism. The availability of this notion has served as 'an open invitation to intellectual laziness and self-deception,' since 'lots of contradictory things may be said to be complementary by those with a vested interest in refusing to think straight.'[17]

4. *Polarity*. When Frederick Denison Maurice speaks of a union of positive principles and Michael Ramsey of a binding together of the gospel, the catholic church and sound learning, they are not envisaging a mere juxtaposition of elements, a compromise between competing claims or a fastidious selection of what appeals from among a broad range of theological possibilities. Nor are they advocating a view of comprehensiveness on the lines of complementarity—commonly understood in a way that approximates to the medieval idea of the 'double truth'. When they advocate 'an embracing of the positive truths of our tradition in their depth and vigour', they are speaking (in the case of Maurice, explicitly; in the case of Michael Ramsey, probably implicitly) from within a distinct and powerful epistemology which alone makes such a combination possible. It does this according to the mode of polarity[18].

The doctrine of polarity has remote and recondite origins, shading off into mythology and the occult. But it is not this esoteric sense of polarity that is meant when, for example,

H.R. McAdoo asserts that polarity or a 'quality of living tension' is an over-all characteristic of Anglican theological method. It is in the weaker sense of truths-in-tension that polarity distinguishes the Anglican theology of the seventeenth century. 'Beneath the surface', writes McAdoo, 'was the feeling for the *via media* which was not in its essence compromise or an intellectual expedient but a quality of thinking, an approach in which elements usually regarded as mutually exclusive were seen to be in fact complementary. These things were held in a living tension, not in order to walk the tight-rope of compromise, but because they were seen to be mutually illuminating and to fertilise each other.' In this synthesis, he continues:

> There was the centrality of scripture and the freedom of reason, the relation of revelation to reason and that of reason and faith, credal orthodoxy and liberty in non-essentials, the appeal to antiquity and the welcome to new knowledge, the historic continuity of the church and the freedom of national churches. Behind it all lies the healthy tension of freedom and authority, accepting neither authoritarianism nor uncontrolled liberty[19].

In the early nineteenth century, however, under the influence of German idealist metaphysics, the notion of polarity became more explicitly defined. In our present context, it owes its formulation to Coleridge and is integral to the Platonic stream of philosophical theology that regards him as its presiding spirit.

As J.S. Mill remarked with Bentham in mind, 'Nobody's synthesis can be more complete than his analysis.' It was precisely with reference to philosophical and theological construction, proceeding by analysis and synthesis, that Coleridge stressed the importance of polarity. Analysis may *divide* or it may *distinguish*: the difference is crucial to Coleridge, for to divide is often to destroy, while to distinguish is often to discern a polarity. 'It is a dull and obtuse mind', Coleridge remarks, 'that must divide in order to distinguish; but it is a still worse that distinguishes in order to divide.' To divide is the work of a *keen* mind; to distinguish without dividing (i.e. in polarity), the achievement of a *subtle* mind[20].

Turning from analysis to synthesis: the function of polarity here derives from Coleridge's belief that men are usually right in

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what they positively affirm but wrong in what they negate. In the aphorism 'Extremes meet', he claimed, 'I bring . . . all problematic results to their solution and reduce apparent contraries to correspondent opposites. How many hostile tenets has it enabled me to contemplate as fragments of truth, false only by negation and mutual exclusion.'[21]

F.D. Maurice's doctrine of the union of opposites owed its passionate intensity to the circumstances of his upbringing in a household torn by sectarian strife and its paradoxical twist to Coleridge's teaching on polarity. Maurice's obsessive search for unity in diversity is symbolised by his transition from unitarianism to trinitarian orthodoxy—here too he was following Coleridge.

Maurice rejected the idea that the Anglicanism that emerged from the Elizabethan settlement of religion was a cowardly or cunning compromise which lacked the courage to ally itself either with the radical Reformers like John Knox or 'the bold reactionaries of the Council of Trent'. He believed that the secret of Elizabeth's success rested on her unique ability to unite in herself the reformed and catholic elements in the nation. 'The alkali and the acid produced a healthy effervescence; no neutral salt had as yet resulted from their combination.'[22]

Maurice had an equal horror of both systems and eclecticism. The catholic church was constituted by the union of positive living principles which, isolated by sectarian systems, had there lost their life and power. While the systems continued to witness to these principles, they at the same time tended to distort them. Maurice did not hold, as Stephen Sykes appears to suggest, that the systems as such could be reconciled, only that the positive, living principles to which each bore witness could form parts of a higher truth. 'There is a divine harmony, of which the living principle in each of these systems forms one note, of which the systems themselves are a disturbance and a violation.'[23] The constructive approach to opposing systems is 'not by yielding a jot to either but by satisfying the real cravings of the earnest spirits who are entangled in both.' Maurice is echoing Coleridge when he claims: 'It is not the negative parts of each opinion which have most tendency to coalesce but . . . the positive parts of these

opinions are always struggling towards each other and are kept apart only by the negative and contradictory elements with which they are mingled.' For example, the Tractarians were right to want to 'catholicise' the Church of England but wrong when they vowed to 'unprotestantise' it. Maurice does not mean by this that the church is to be half protestant and half catholic, but rather that she is to be 'most catholic when she is most protestant.'[24]

As I attempted to show at the beginning of this paper, the principle of unity in diversity is firmly anchored in the very structure of Christian theism and a degree of comprehensiveness is now a permanent feature, not only of the Anglican Church, but of all Christian churches. But the ecclesiological integrity of the churches hangs upon the way in which they understand and respond to this problem. We cannot with integrity accept comprehensiveness as mere juxtaposition, or as compromise, or as eclecticism: a deeper synthesis than these is required and I am suggesting that the notion of polarity may indicate the mode in which that synthesis can be achieved. The concept needs more justification than I am able to provide here (though I have attempted it elsewhere), but perhaps the citations from Coleridge and Maurice already indicate the lines on which the argument could be developed: learning to distinguish without dividing between, for example, protestant and catholic, individual and corporate, spiritual and formal, transcendent and immanent elements in the wholeness of Christian experience; being guided by the positive affirmations that different traditions have to offer, rather than being diverted by their negative denials; and, finally, looking beneath the surface for the spiritual aspirations and insights that may be veiled by historical or cultural forms.

In conclusion, there is one further point that needs to be stressed. When Coleridge speaks of distinguishing without dividing and Maurice of the craving of the spirit for truth and the tendency of positive truths to coalesce, almost to 'home in' on each other, they are presupposing a particular philosophy of mind, they are assuming the reality of what Polanyi has called the tacit dimension—the creative, constructive and heuristic power of thinking below the threshold of explicit consciousness.

The doctrine of polarity only appears to be an attempt to flout the law of contradiction and an open invitation to the analytical *tour de force* when it is considered in detachment from its context in a particular epistemological tradition, stemming from the Platonists of antiquity, and passing, through German idealism and the thought of Coleridge, into modern thought, where it has received reinforcement and restatement from philosophers of mind such as Whitehead, Polanyi, Popper and Lonergan. Polarity cannot be grafted on to a merely analytical and discursive mode of rationality. It grows out of and depends entirely upon a grasp of the power of intuition, the reality of tacit knowledge and the transcendent operations of insight whereby we may indeed have a real though inarticulate sense of 'the full orbit of Christian truth'.[25]

NOTES

1. On this see my article, ' "The True Church" in Reformation Theology', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, xxx (1977), 319-345 and part one of my book *The Church in the Theology of the Reformers*, Marshall's Theological Library, London and John Knox Press, Atlanta,

2. *Catholicity: a study in the conflict of Christian traditions in the west*, London 1947, 49; S.W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, London and Oxford 1978.

3. Cf. J.R.H. Moorman and H.E. Root, 'Unity and Comprehensiveness', in Alan Clark and Colin Davey, ed., *Anglican/Roman Catholic Dialogue: the work of the Preparatory Commission*, London 1974, 79f; cf. Don Cupitt, *The Leap of Reason*, London 1976.

4. C.F. Evans, 'The Unity and Pluriformity of the New Testament', in *Christian Believing*, London 1976, J.D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*, London, 30ff.

5. Cf. Moorman and Root, op.cit.

6. Ibid. On pluralism and development of doctrine see also Nicholas Lash, *Change in Focus: a study of doctrinal change and continuity*, London 1973, and *Voices of Authority*, London 1976, esp. ch.3; cf. also *Christian Believing*, 3f.

7. See my article, 'Polarity and Reductionism', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, xxix (1976), 401-413 and my book *Mind, Method and God. towards a new integration in theology* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London; forthcoming).

8. Cited G.W. Fallows, *Mandell Creighton and the English Church*, London 1964, 56, from Creighton, *University and Other Sermons*, 1903.

9. H.H. Henson, *The Church of England*, Cambridge 1939, 108; E.L. Mascall, *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, London 1977, 1, Charles Gore, *The Basis of*

Anglican Fellowship in Faith and Organisation, London 1914; 4f; Alec Vidler, 'What is Anglicanism?', *Essays in Liberality*, London 1957, 165; *Catholicity*, 51;

10. P.E. More and F.L. Cross, ed., *Anglicanism*, London 1935, 11f; Halifax, *The Character of a Trimmer*, 1684, cited Henson, op.cit., 64.

11. T.B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*, Everyman edn, London 1906, I. 47f.

12. William Temple, *Religious Experience and Other Essays and Addresses*, London 1958, 88.

13. Henson, op.cit., 65.

14. *Catholicity*, 51, E.A. de Mendietta, *Anglican Vision*, London 1971, 49f.

15. Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, Oxford 1909, 8 ; Charles Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, London 1892, 36; R.W. Church, *Pascal and Other Sermons*, London 1896, 69.

16. Further on Gore see my article 'Gore and Theological Synthesis', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, xxviii (1975), 461-476, my PhD thesis, 'Charles Gore and the Christian Polarities: a study in theological construction and conflict', submitted in the Department of Christian Doctrine, University of London King's College, 1976; and the book *Gore. Construction and Conflict*, with a Foreword by Lord Ramsey of Canterbury, James Clarke, Cambridge 1981.

17. Sykes, op.cit., 19. On complementarity in its wider applications see W.H. Austin, 'Waves, Particles and Paradoxes', *Rice University Studies*, liii (1967); *The Relevance of Natural Science to Theology*, London 1976, I.G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, New York and London 1966; Jean Sharon, *Man in Search of Himself*, London 1967, ch.2; Christopher B. Kaiser's Edinburgh PhD thesis, 'The Logic of Complementarity in Science and Theology'.

18. *Catholicity*, 52; A.M. Ramsey, 'What is Anglican Theology?', *Theology*, xlviii (1945); *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, London 1936; *F.D. Maurice and the Conflicts of Modern Theology*, Cambridge 1951, ch.2.

19. H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, London 1965, 312f.

20. S.T. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, 5th edn, London 1843, I. introductory aphorism 26. For Mill's remark see F.R. Leavis, ed, *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge*, London 1950, 58.

21. Coleridge, *Anima Poetae*, London 1895, 301.

22. F.D. Maurice, *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, London 1872, II. 138f; cf. *The Prayer Book and the Lord's Prayer*, London 1893, xiii, 1ff.

23. Maurice, *The Kingdom of Christ*, ed. Vidler, London 1958, II. 322, cf. Sykes, op.cit., 19.

24. Maurice, *On Right and Wrong Methods of Supporting Protestantism: a letter to Lord Ashley*, London 1843, 20, 12. (The same conviction informs Maurice's approach to other religions: see *The Religions of the World*, 4th edn, London 1861, esp. 210f); *Subscription No Bondage*, Oxford 1835, 104; *Three Letters to the Rev. W. Palmer*, London 1842, 16. See also *Reasons for not joining a Party in the Church: a letter to the Ven. Samuel Wilberforce*, London 1841. On the philosophical

tradition that lies behind the teaching of Coleridge and Maurice here see J. Coulson, *Newman and the Common Tradition*, London 1970; S. Prickett, *Romanticism and Religion: the tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church*, Cambridge 1976; David Newsome, *Two Classes of Men: Platonism and English Romantic Thought*, London 1974; Owen Barfield, *What Coleridge Thought*, London 1972; Thomas McFarland, *Coleridge and the Pantheist Tradition*, London 1969; J.H. Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon*

Philosophy, London 1931; *Coleridge as Philosopher*, London 1930.
25. I have attempted to show the relevance of this tradition in epistemology to theology in *Mind, Method and God* and, in relation to ecumenical theology in my book *The Shaking of the Seven Hills: Romanticism, the Reformation and Philosophy of History*, on which I am currently working. May I also refer to my article 'Richard Hooker and John Calvin', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, (1980).

STRUCTURALISM. AN INTRODUCTION
B.L.Horne

First some remarks of a general and historical nature. The word 'structuralism' operates in much the same way as the word 'existentialism'. It is not to be thought of as an autonomous school of thought; and just as there are philosophers, historians, theologians all calling themselves 'existentialist', so there are 'structuralist' psychologists, philosophers, literary critics, Biblical scholars. Whether structuralism can be spoken of as a 'philosophy' or 'ideology' at all is an issue which is hotly debated in structuralist circles. Robert Scholes, for instance, in the closing pages of his book *Structuralism in Literature*[1], makes remarks which clearly show that his own understanding of structuralism is that of its being a philosophy, a 'Weltanschauung'. Raymond Boudun, on the other hand, in his book *The Uses of Structuralism*[2] is intent on demonstrating that structuralism can only properly be described as a method, and dismisses curtly, almost contemptuously, those who foolishly believe that structures exist in reality and that structuralism can offer a way of interpreting the world.

The fields in which structuralism has been developed, and is now a powerful force, are linguistics, anthropology, psychology, sociology and literary criticism. It is a relatively new discipline and can be traced back to the teachings of the Swiss philologist Ferdinand de Saussure at the beginning of this century. (I use the word 'teachings' because the substance of his thought is to be found in lecture notes collated by his students and published in 1916 under the title *Cours de linguistique generale*.) He viewed language as essentially a system of relations between elements (words, sounds etc.) each of which owed its validity to its relation to the rest and could have meaning only in that context. He described language as a social system, a system of signifiers, and insisted on the arbitrariness of the verbal sign. He also drew a distinction between certain concepts whose French names are difficult to translate into English, but which have become part of the vocabulary of structural linguistics: *la langue*, *la parole*, *le langage*. *Langue* refers to the institution of a language; *parole* to particular and individual acts of expression. Together these elements constitute *le langage*. In English we use the single word 'language' to translate both *langue* and *langage*, but we use it in two different senses. For example, the English language (*langue*) and the language (*langage*) of philosophy, poetry etc. which is the *parole*—individual utterances after a particular manner—in the given instituted language (*langue*), English. Saussure tried to discover the key principles upon which language is constructed and came up with a complicated system of contrasts, distinctions, oppositions, which need not detain us here.

Of all the linguistic philosophers who have followed in the steps of the Swiss master, the one best known in English speaking countries is the American Noam Chomsky. Much controversy has surrounded his work, especially his belief in, and search for, a 'universal grammar', for those 'deep structures' of language which underlie the surface differences between spoken languages. He has even claimed that the principles which constitute the structure of language