



Unity at the End of Times (I)

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What we see today is an enthusiastic division. Another aspect of Jesus' sayings with regard to division refers to the birth of Christianity and its separation from the Judaic tradition, yet today the discord is tremendous: between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, between Christians and Muslims, between Muslims and Hindus, between Muslims, etc., to which we can add the false prophets who reinterpret the Scriptures, the holy words are twisted and the twisted words are taken as true.

In this context, the Ecumenical movement promoted in the West would seem to be a good remedy against division and a positive action aiming at unity, but, in fact, it is a dangerous parody, and we should remember that, as René Guénon said, at the end of times everything will be a parody, an upside-down world; therefore, if at the beginning of this cycle, the Primordial and One-and-only Tradition represented the genuine Ecumenical unity, now, at the end of times, will reign a parody of unity, an upside-down unification of the various traditions, where truth and falsehood, orthodoxy and heresy are mixed together, and for this reason Charles-André Gilis' affirmation that at the end an universal exoteric Islam will dominate the world seems unlikely. On the other hand, Gilis underlines that Ecumenism is at the opposite pole of the transcendental unity¹ and it is the parody of the *Tawhîd*. The most authorized representatives (in the spiritual sense) of the Orthodox Church consider without any hesitation that Ecumenism is a heresy, and we should mention here the spiritual community of the Holy Mount Athos which, together with other similar forces, has opposed modernism for decades, the reign of quantity² and the antitraditional mentality of the European Union.³

René Guénon explained the Primordial Tradition in terms of the cosmic cycle: *Sanâtana Dharma* takes into consideration the whole duration of a *Manvantara* and represents the Primordial Tradition, which is the source of all the particular traditional forms that develop from it by an adaptation to the special conditions of a specific people or of a particular epoch, yet neither one can be identified or taken for being the Primordial Tradition (even if it is its image); each orthodox tradition is a reflection of the Primordial Tradition or its "substitute," as much as the contingent circumstances will permit. All these particular traditions are *principially* contained in *Sanâtana Dharma* and all have the

¹ *La papauté*, pp. 46, 48.

² A special issue was the use of optical and magnetic cards, and also of barcodes, because all of them were considered having encoded the number of the Beast: "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (**Revelation** 13:17). See also Guénon, *Le règne*, p. 265.

³ Greece was for many years the only Orthodox country belonging to the European Union.

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Primordial Tradition as center, and it would be a mistake to simply assimilate a traditional form with *Sanâtana Dharma*; the people whose horizon is limited to their own tradition often make such an error, even though the representatives of each tradition could insist in good faith that their tradition is *Sanâtana Dharma*.⁴

Sanâtana Dharma is directly connected to *Et-Tawhîd*.

“The doctrine of Unity (*Et-Tawhîd*), René Guénon wrote, that is, the affirmation that the Principle of all existence is essentially One, is a fundamental point common to all orthodox traditions,” while “only in descending toward multiplicity differences of form appear, the modes of expression themselves then being as numerous as that to which they refer, and susceptible to indefinite variation in adapting themselves to the circumstances of time and place.”⁵ The Islamic tradition, as the last orthodox tradition descended on earth before the end of times, affirms most openly and clearly that “the doctrine of Unity is unique,”⁶ that is, this doctrine is everywhere and all the time the same, unchangeable like the Principle, independent of any multiplicity and of all the changes that influence the contingent applications.⁷ With the decay of the cycle and the increasing distance that separates the world from the Principle (the distance from center to circumference), this truth is forgotten, mainly because human beings live in an extreme multiplicity, and therefore the most recent traditional forms have the duty to affirm as explicitly as possible the Unity.⁸

Due to the particularities of the Islamic tradition, including the fact that it is the “seal” of previous traditions and the last tradition revealed, the Islamic terminology allows us to express the universal and *principlial* truth beyond any distinction and specific form. For this reason, René Guénon, when he described the Unity, could affirm: “This luminous spherical form, indefinite and not closed, with its alternations of concentration and expansion (successive from the viewpoint of manifestation, but in reality simultaneous in the ‘eternal present’) is, in the Islamic esotericism, the form of the *Rûh muhammadiyah*; this is the total form of ‘Universal Man’ that God commanded the angels to adore.”⁹ For

⁴ Guénon, *Études sur l’hindouisme*, pp. 106, 112, 113. This text is also quoted by Vâlsan (*Le Triangle de l’Androgyne*, *Études Traditionnelles*, no. 387, 1965, p. 38).

⁵ René Guénon, *Aperçus sur l’ésotérisme islamique et le Taoïsme*, p. 37.

⁶ *Et-Tawhîdu wâhidun*. As Guénon said, in Islam, the statement of Unity is expressed in the most explicit way and so adamant that it seems to absorb all the other statements. “Moreover, this tendency increases as one advances in the development of a cycle of manifestation because this development is itself a descent into multiplicity, and because of the spiritual obscuration that inevitably accompanies it. That is why the most recent traditional forms are those which must express the affirmation of Unity in a manner most visible to the outside; and in fact this affirmation is nowhere expressed so explicitly and with such insistence as in Islam, where, one might say, it even seems to absorb into itself all other affirmations” (*Aperçus sur l’ésotérisme islamique*, p. 39).

⁷ Guénon, *Aperçus sur l’ésotérisme islamique*, p. 38.

⁸ Of course, at the beginning of the present *Manvantara*, there was no need to express the affirmation of Unity. On the other hand, today, the modern man, consumed by the reign of quantity, understands almost nothing of the doctrine of Unity; and even if he accepts the existence of three “monotheist” religions, he cannot understand that it is about the one and same Principle, beyond any duality, or that other traditions, like the Hindu or the Chinese one, are not “polytheist.”

⁹ René Guénon, *Le symbolisme de la croix*, p. 44. In accord with Guénon’s sayings, Michel Vâlsan wrote that in the Supreme Center of the Primordial and Universal Tradition reigns the primordial Muhammadian Being, who corresponds to primordial Manu and to Melki-Tsedeq (*L’Islam et la fonction de René Guénon*, Les Editions de l’Oeuvre, 1984, p. 178). Ibn Arabî calls the Supreme Center

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the same reason, the appellations “Islam” and “Muslim” have a universal essence, as any traditional man realizes their meaning, regardless of the traditional form he belongs to; “Related to this, we should recall that the proper meaning of the word *Islâm* is ‘submission to the divine Will’; hence it is said, in certain esoteric teachings, that every being is *muslim*, in the sense that there is clearly none who can elude that Will, and accordingly each necessarily occupies the place allotted to him in the Universe as a whole.”¹⁰ For the same reason, when the great seer Ibn ‘Arabî declared that “the Christians and, generally speaking, all ‘the men of the scriptures’ do not change their religion when they become Muslims,” he referred to the doctrine of Unity, and in this sense we have to understand Charles-André Gilis’ expression, “the universal spirit of Islam.”¹¹

As we said before, the cycle could be symbolized by a circle, but also by a sphere or an indefinite spiral. The circular form is actually an image of the Principle, which manifests Itself as a universal spherical vortex or as *Rûh muhammadiyah*, and, at the same time, corresponds to the World’s Egg. René Guénon said that the Ark, the inferior circumference, together with the rainbow of the alliance between God and earthly creatures, the superior circumference, compose the World’s Egg, and this circular figure, which was complete at the beginning of the cycle, before splitting into two halves, must be reconstituted at the end of the same cycle.¹² In other words, the reunification of the two halves represents the completion of the cycle through the junction of its two ends (the beginning and the end) and usually equals 10; yet, because the two halves are similar to the Arabic letter *nûn*, the value will be in fact $2 \times 50 = 100$, which shows that the junction takes place in the “intermediary world” or the “subtle world”; and indeed, René Guénon explained, it is impossible for this junction to take place in the inferior world (the corporeal world), where reigns only separation and division. Related to this, Guénon concluded, there is some sort of correlation with the historic order, where at the end of the cycle, two traditional forms meet at the junction: the Hindu tradition (with Sanskrit as the sacred language), representing the beginning as the direct heir of the Primordial Tradition, and the Islamic tradition (with Arabic as the sacred language), which is the “seal of the Prophecy,” being the last orthodox traditional form for the present cycle.¹³

The final conjunction, Vâlsan wrote, does not take place, of course, from an Islamic or from a Hindu point of view, as an external combination or a kind of syncretism.¹⁴ However, we should ask ourselves, Vâlsan said, which could be, in the traditional world as a whole, the role of this special conjunction between two traditional forms and what is

“the Sublime Assembly” and the Islamic community is its external form, similar to the Judaic tradition where Knesseth-Israel here on earth is the expression of the celestial Knesseth-Israel.

¹⁰ Guénon, **Le symbolisme de la croix**, p. 135.

¹¹ Charles-André Gilis, **L’Esprit universel de l’Islam**, Al-Bouraq, 1998, p. 205.

¹² René Guénon said the same thing in **Roi**, pp. 92-93. He also explained there how, when the reconstitution of the circular figure takes place, at the end of times, the horizontal circle, which separates the two spherical halves (and represents the Earthly Paradise), will be replaced by a square (representing the Heavenly Jerusalem), illustrating the transformation of the zodiacal cycle, at the same time with the ceasing of the world’s rotation and its fixation in the final state, which means the restoration of the primordial state (when the successive manifestation of its possibilities ends).

¹³ Guénon, **Symboles**, pp. 175-176. See also Michel Vâlsan, **Le Triangle de l’Androgyne et le monosyllabe “Om”**, Études Traditionnelles, no. 382, 1964, p. 91.

¹⁴ Guénon clearly stated that it takes place in the “intermediary world.”

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the situation of the other traditional forms.¹⁵ René Guénon gave the answer to this question, and Vâlsan quotes from Guénon's article **Sanâtana Dharma**: "There are reasons to consider the Hindu tradition as the closest one to *Sanâtana Dharma*, because it derives more directly than others from the Primordial Tradition. (...) It is interesting to remark that the Hindu and the Islamic traditions are the only ones that affirm explicitly the validity of all the other orthodox traditions; and they do so because, being the first and the last traditions of this *Manvantara*, they have to integrate equally, even though in different ways, all the diverse forms that were produced in this period of time, to make possible 'the return to origins' when the end of the cycle must join its beginning, and which, at the starting point of a new *Manvantara*, will manifest outside, again, the true *Sanâtana Dharma*."¹⁶ Vâlsan concluded that the objective of the final conjunction of Hinduism with Islam must be the integration of all the traditional forms, these two traditions playing an axial role with regard to the others.¹⁷ The ecumenical spirit manifested by the two forms qualifies them for this role, Vâlsan added.

The problem is that, at the end of times, the Unity of Alpha and Omega, the Unity of the beginning and the end, cannot be realized in a world almost exhausted, the same way as the "inversion of the poles" does not represent an external recovery, in the world; therefore, the Hindu and Islamic traditions will not reach a visible junction, a traditional synthesis, because at the end of times will reign a parody and an untruthful ecumenism, a parody of unity. "What allows this forgery to exist and to be even more perfect and more possible, as we advance in the decay of the cycle? The profound reason for this situation is the inverse analogical ratio that exists between the highest point and the lowest point."¹⁸; "the inversion of the poles" has as objective precisely to bring back the things to normal, and this takes place instantaneously, beyond this world.

For Michel Vâlsan, the Islam is destined to remain the only form practiced on earth before the end of the cosmic cycle of the present humanity, and this because it was formed with the general human characteristics and the spiritual universality needed at the end. The function of the Hindu tradition has to be purely contemplative and of an informal order; anyway, Vâlsan underlined, in the context of the final integration, Hinduism cannot play a role in the formal order of tradition.¹⁹ Yet, will Islam remain truly *islam* until the end of the world? There is no secret that, today, Christianity is incapable of rebuilding and sustaining a traditional society; on the contrary, it concedes more and more to the modern mentality, and the most authorized representatives of the Church, even those full of faith, have no spiritual power to stop the decay and even less to remedy the situation. Yet, will Islam be capable of remaining traditional and honoring its function as the seal of prophecies, compensating for the weakness of Christianity?

¹⁵ Michel Vâlsan, **Le Triangle de l'Androgyne et le monosyllabe "Om"**, Études Traditionnelles, no. 386, 1964, p. 268.

¹⁶ Guénon, **Études sur l'hindouisme**, p. 114. This "return to origins" is the "inversion of the poles."

¹⁷ Vâlsan, **Le Triangle de l'Androgyne**, no. 386, p. 270. Yet it should be said that this takes place "inside."

¹⁸ Guénon, **Le règne**, p. 195.

¹⁹ Vâlsan, **Le Triangle de l'Androgyne**, no. 386, pp. 271-2.