

**Michael Hare Duke** , here presents a paper that he previously gave to the Dundee and Tayside Interest group. It forms the first of a, hoped for, series of 'occasional papers' that will be distributed alongside the newsletter. We know that members , the country over, have been presenting papers to various audiences for many years. We would be very pleased to receive any of these papers or indeed any specifically prepared papers, for circulation to a wider audience.

# The Marriage of Theology and Analysis by Michael Hare Duke.

'Occasional  
Paper'

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I want to use something of the form of a case study to bring together relevant bits of my personal development so that the biography can be related to the belief system which I want to explore.

I was born in India in 1925. My father was the son of a clergyman in the Church of Ireland and became an engineer engaged in the construction of Indian railways. I was brought home to England aged 18 months and I and my older sister grew up as orphans of the Raj. My father returned for leave every 6 years, my mother went backwards and forwards between Calcutta and Eastbourne at much more frequent intervals. The stable figure in the lives of myself and my sister was our Nanny who presided over the Eastbourne house. I had a typically middle-class education, Prep School followed by minor Public School. At 18, in 1943, I left school to join the Navy via a University short course but had already begun to think that I might have a vocation to the priesthood. I had also won a scholarship to Trinity College Oxford. So I set out for the Far East as a Sub-lieutenant RNVR, had a fascinating 2 years and returned to Oxford via a couple of terms teaching at Bradfield, my old school.

The war had churned up the neat academic patterns and I was allowed to omit the first half of my Classics degree, Mods, and go straight to the part concerned with Philosophy and Ancient History. After that I still had a year in hand and so read the Honour School of Theology. These two disciplines brought together the determination of philosophy to pursue an enquiry into truth, reflecting on the methods of learning, and the dogmatic approach of theology. It was not enough to contrast method and content. Ancient history and church history had taught me to pay attention to the context in which anything occurred in order to understand to the underlying reasons for it. It was not enough to know what Augustine said about Sin and Sexuality. You had to recognise the pagan world in which he operated, its particular kind of morality and the personal battle that Augustine had to fight with his mother and within himself when he sent away his mistress and their little son.

There is another relevant bit to the biography. My first cousin was roughly a contemporary at Oxford. She was a medical student with a strong interest in training as a Freudian analyst and made sure that I learned to ask questions about myself. My tutor for both philosophy and theology was a renowned scholar, Austin Farrer who saw it as his duty not to cram his students for exams, but to educate them for life. Therefore when he told me to read Augustine's treatise on the Soul, he also suggested that I read Freud to understand how a Twentieth Century thinker might describe the human mind, conscious and unconscious.

When I had finished at Oxford I moved to Cambridge. Training for ordination required a further two years in a much more intense community than a University College. Westcott House gave its forty odd students a chance to reflect on their reactions to each other and their own inner life. We began to listen to the music behind the words. The two years allowed time to do enough academic theology, but because I had already done an Oxford degree I was excused that part of the curriculum and had the freedom to choose how I would spend my time. I asked to be allowed to join the medical school for their lectures in Clinical Psychology which included practical demonstrations of patients at Fulbourne Psychiatric Hospital. I also studied with Fr Casey, an American priest who was Dean of Sydney Sussex. He was a superb linguist who knew many of the obscure ancient languages in which largely unknown additions to the regular Books of the bible were written and was at the same time an accredited Psychoanalyst.

All these contacts confirmed me in my interest in asking "why?" things happened or attitudes were adopted rather than being satisfied with answers to the question "What?". It was a question that Harry Williams who was on the staff of Westcott House amplified in the aphorism "tell me what sort of a God you believe in and I will tell you what sort of a person you are"

The business of the Church is metaphysical belief, moral codes, patterns of prayer. All of these are products of social conditioning and unconscious assumptions as much as intellectual in-put. Should it be a necessary part of the training for any kind of pastoral work to have a working acquaintance with the concepts of projection, transference and counter transference?

When a priest begins his work he is motivated by some conception of both God and the Church. Is he serving a God who is fundamentally a law-giver who blue-print for the right working of his Creation, so that if it is followed harmony will ensue, if it is ignored the result will be malfunction, possibly understood as punishment? Or is he the representative of a God who is on our side, understanding and forgiving? There is no sure way of knowing which image is right. Some people would argue that the Bible produces the infallible answer but in the teeth of one text it is always possible to quote a different and opposite one. Moses teaches the Children of Israel of the God Yahweh who offers rewards in return for conformity to his laws "If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in

his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish." (Deut 30 vv 15-19)

This contrasts with the New Testament picture of a God who is ready to forgive and of Jesus who says "I came that men might have life and have it in all its fullness" There is a fundamental contrast between the God who is the embattled commander of the forces of good at war with the hostile forces of evil and the belief that all creation is the work of the Divine Word, 'all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made'

One side or the other will determine how the church operates. Is the priority for its members to keep evil forces at bay, building the fences high and expelling anything tainted or is their task to cherish and restore?

There are various translations of Stephen Langton's Latin hymn to the Holy Spirit. The version which appeals to me has a verse which goes;

What is soiled, make thou pure  
What is wounded work its cure,  
What is parched fructify;  
What is rigid, gently bend  
What is frozen, warmly tend  
Straighten what goes erringly.

What is the root of my preference for this translation? Why do I agree with the current disapproval of the sexual rigorism of St Augustine? I can justify my attitudes with theological argument but in the last resort I am the child of my own history and not uncontaminated intellect. This has to be recognised in every theological debate. At the present time the Anglican Communion is tearing itself apart over the issues of sexuality, most particularly homosexuality but behind that particular debate lies the much greater uncertainty over the Body in general. Monica Furlong summed up the issue in a satirical poem;

#### 'Better Not'

Christians, you may remember, don't.  
Solomon did, of course,  
And so did many more  
The Jews had a rich erotic imagination  
Which made them such a lively nation  
But Christians, you may remember, don't.  
At least, not often.  
There were the Adamites  
Of which Bosch may, or may not, have been a member  
And the illuminati, who thought well of the body  
While the Borgias did as was their wont  
But Christians, you may remember, don't.  
Hindu Tantra show the heavenly pair  
Shiva and Devi joined in blisses rare.  
Buddhists may, whether they will or won't  
But Christians, you may remember, don't.

"What is that all about?" we are tempted to ask and expect the answer to come in terms of fears and social taboos, rather than theology. Perhaps I have said enough to justify the need of Theology for an analytical appraisal so that it can come clear of its intellectual defences.

Personally I am happy to bear witness to the necessary correctives that analytical insights have brought to my own pastoral practice. First there is the ego image that almost every religious carer brings to his or her work. We want to see ourselves as the endless self-denying and compassionate workers, governed by the aphorism 'it is more blessed to give than to receive'. Denying oneself rather than loving oneself has seemed more godly. It was the realism of Winnicott who saw the need to redefine parenting in terms of 'good enough' not ideal that woke me up to the notion that 'good enough' was the proper aim for a parish priest or a bishop. The immaturity of a congregation or a diocese wanted to load the office holder with guilt in order to manipulate the fulfilment of their fantasy. It has got built into Church formularies like the old service for the ordination of priests where the Bishop offers this job description;

*"Have always printed in your remembrance how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ which he bought with his death and for whom he shed his blood. The Church and congregation whom you must serve is his Spouse and his Body. And if it shall happen the same church or any member thereof to take any hurt or hindrance by reason your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault and also the horrible punishment that will ensue. Wherefore see that you never*

*cease your labour, your care and your diligence until you have done all that lieth in you according to your bounden duty to bring all such as are shall be committed to you charge that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God and that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ that there be no place left among you either for error in religion or for viciousness in life."*

After this recipe for pastoral burn out there follows a prescription for family conflict "That by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry; and that ye may so endeavour yourselves, from time to time, to sanctify the lives of you and yours and to fashion them after the Rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow" The practical outcome of such teaching was a situation that I discovered in a parish near Guildford where I was teaching a course. I was talking of the need for clergy and laity to find mutual support from each other. "But that is not possible the way that things are. They replied "We are all terribly worried about the Vicar. We know that his daughter in London is getting divorced. He is so unhappy about this that it is making him ill but he cannot admit what is happening to any of us because he thinks that reflects such a failure on him"

The Church has labelled "Holy" various objects and institutions about which it is defensive: the Holy Bible, Holy Communion, Holy Baptism, Holy Matrimony, even Holy Mother Church. All these are then treated as sacrosanct, beyond question or revision. Yet if we look at this in terms of Object Relations Theory, the aim of religion is the relationship with God. The others are all intermediate objects, the Toys of Faith and when we start worshipping them the result will be as frustrating as for who grow up to marry their teddy bears. Yet Church history is full of accounts of devout believers sending to the stake those who have disagreed with them over the Bible or Sacraments. Holy church has been defended with the violence of war or inquisition either within the one Christian religion or between world faiths.

"What are we doing?" "What is going on?" "What is the hidden agenda?" are questions that we need to ask as the emotional temperature increases or the violence of the rhetoric mounts.

What can Christianity bring as its dowry to the wedding? Isobel Menzies Lyth has taught us to consider the role of institutions as a defence against anxiety. She put her theory to practical use in her study of hospitals but widened it to the functioning of all social systems. She observed the pathological modes of activity when the defence system inhibited free and creative responses. But first of all she identified the role of social systems as a defence. In the case of the hospital the primary task is to care for people who cannot be cared for in their own homes "the nursing service bears the full, immediate and concentrated impact of stresses arising from patient care". The response is to standardise relationships, structure lines of responsibility and ritualise some duties. I believe that her description gives us a pointer to some of the functions of religion in society. Just as the hospital staff need rituals of accountability and support, so any of us who are handling the powerful issues of life and death in our society need so way of dealing with our stress.

In the dialogue which serves as an introduction to Isobel Menzies' book, the participants look at the way that ordinary people are 'faced with disasters all the time - disasters like broken marriages, unemployment, dying children, little children who have psychotic mothers or whatever..what you need ..is to get into the on-going disasters and help the care-takers there to cope with them better, so that they not only cope with these disasters at the time, but they actually learn to face death or loss or whatever it is.' (p32) Part of the way in which society has in the past coped with the crises of human living is through the rituals and beliefs of formal religion. The rites of passage are duly marked and over the years they have been revised to conform to contemporary understandings of what is needed. For instance the Scottish Episcopal Church as part of the revision of its Funeral Rites invited Dr Colin Murray Parkes for a two day consultation in order to bring his experience and research to the task of writing the new Service book. This is an expression both of the gifts that the religious institution can receive from analytical insights but also of the reassurance that it can offer to the whole of society, and not least those who are in the helping professions, of a well prepared and resourced support in coping with crisis. If the Churches and their equivalents in other faiths are working well they can be the first stop in primary care for those who are facing the stress of new situations, with marriage, the birth of a child, initiation to adult life, the fear of old age and bereavement.

It is part of the present difficulties in our society that instead of work in a harmonious marriage, the two disciplines have become divorced and operate an apparent rivalry. Practitioners from both sides need to find a common language and a confidence that will allow collaboration.