DIAGRAMMATIC MODELLING: AN AID TO THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK

A Report of Some Work Done from 1975-1979 by the Community Development Group of the Methodist Church in co-operation with the "Core Group" of the William Temple Foundation.

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Diagrams: Mr R.K. Connell.

PREFACE

Ever since New Testament times Christian believers have had problems about relating the content and implications of their faith to the goings on and ways of thinking in their contemporary world. Some Christians conclude that this means that the Elect have to struggle to live a separated life of their own responding to God within and through the community of faith only and, as far as possible, keeping the world at a distance. Others have seen and see these problems of living faith and contemporary world as precisely the material for growth in faith and in the knowledge of and response to God. Probably the two responses represent a tension and a bipolarity which has to be maintained in the life of faith as a whole and among the whole community of Christians. The service of the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ requires denying the world as well as affirming the world. But the tension and the bi-polarity can be kept healthy and dynamic rather than pathological and paralysing only as and if they are always being examined and lived through.

The document that follows is one man's account of something of what emerged out of one fairly sustained account to think through, feel through and live through what was experienced as a painful and paralysing gap and/or mismatch between experiences arising out of encounters with the contemporary world through involvement in community work and the content and bearing of Faith as they seemed to be maintained within the general practice of the churches to which the practitioners belonged. Yet it was that Christian faith originally kindled in and in connection with churches which sent people into the programmes and experiences which eventually generated the unease and the awareness of the mismatch. What creative and, hopefully, "theological" sense could be got out of all this?

George Lovell's piece describes a way of discovering sense-making and theology-developing procedures, procedures related to the development of styles of working together with implications for styles of living together. The piece itself arises out of a sustained process of collaboration. This was in the first place collaboration between the William Temple Foundation Core Group on Community Development (see the report "Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution" available from the William Temple Foundation) and the Community Development Group of the Methodist Church. George Lovell was a member of both and very carefully conveyed reports and impressions from one group to the other. He was so careful and conscientious in this that there is no doubt that the thinking and explorations of the two groups greatly influenced and helped one another. But this was possible because George, in himself, embodied a further component of collaboration. He took infinite pains to observe, note and absorb what went on in the two groups so that he could feed back to them insights from their work and insights about their work. This greatly helped the two groups both to be collaborative in their respective workings and to collaborate with one another. I mention this "process" contribution in the Preface because, naturally, it does not appear in the document itself how necessary the "collaborative enabler" is to the type of procedures and processes outlined in it.

It is also because of George Lovell's particular role that it is wholly appropriate that this paper of his - which is really a paper of the Methodist Community Development Group - should appear as a William Temple Foundation occasional paper and should be published at the same time as the bigger Report of the William Temple Foundation Community Development Group. Both documents represent the fruit of a common working together under different auspices about a problem and an opportunity which is common across the Christian churches and for a great variety of Christian groupings. In the William Temple Foundation we very much hope that this sort of collaborative working things out will greatly multiply.

November 1980 David E Jenkins

INTRODUCTION

Perceiving new meaning is an exciting event. It is a critical event when it is about something crucial to one's belief, life and work. It is a liberating and creative event when it brings into unison previously alienated aspects of belief and experience. Such events are points of discontinuity: one is not the same after as before them; one sees and does things differently and is in a sense different. And this is what happened to me through an experimental project in theological reflection on Church and community development work. It was a project carried out under the aegis of the William Temple Foundation by an ecumenical working party known as the "Core Group". An active partner to the Core Group was the Community Development Group of the Methodist Church (CDG). This group, with the help of the Core Group, carried out exercises in theological reflection during the period 1975-1979. Throughout I was privileged to work with both groups as a member of the Core Group and as the convenor of the CDG and as the "go-between" for them. (See Appendix).

A report of the work done by the Core Group has been published[1].

This is a report of the work done by the members of the CDG. It starts with their keenly felt need for theological

1. "Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution" William Temple Foundation, and the British Council of Churches, 1980.

help; it shows how they found real help, new insights and renewed hope through the use of models and diagrams; and it discusses the significance and implications of their experiences. It is published to share experience and to learn from the responses it is hoped it will evoke. It is, therefore, a basis for discussion and not a treatise on the subject.

THE GROUP AND ITS FELT NEED FOR THEOLOGICAL HELP

The Community Development Group's felt need for theological help was a persistent one, best seen against the Group's background and within the context of its work.

1. The Origins of the Community Development Group

The Methodist Community Development Group was one of several groups inaugurated in 1970 to help ministers and lay people to acquire any insights and skills from the behavioural sciences and adult education which would help them to do their work in the Church and in the community more effectively. The decision to form such groups grew out of a ferment in the Methodist Church during the 60s about "lay training". Eventually a Board of Lay Training[1] was set up in 1966 and Miss Pauline Webb was appointed the first director. Attempts were made to define the nature of lay training and to establish the relationship between lay and ministerial training. They were abortive; it was

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1. The task of the Board was described somewhat comprehensively as being "to correlate existing efforts, disseminate ideas, encourage local enterprise and initiate new ventures", all with the aim of discovering "a new and exciting ministry of the whole of the laos" and "a drastic re-orientation of the life of the Church". From p2 of Audenshaw Papers No.32, August 1972, in which Pauline Webb gives an overview of the first six years of the Board's life in an article under the title "Six Good Years of Experiments".

just not possible to rationalise the differences between the members of the Board. Attempts to establish a generic base for different forms and methods of training were also abortive. The members of the Board simply had mutually incompatible approaches to theology, to education and training, to the behavioural sciences and to working with people. Ultimately in July 1970 it was decided to give up the search for an agreed basis, a common approach and a comprehensive training programme. Instead it was decided to set up several small task groups based on each of several disciplines felt by one member of the Board or another to have a contribution to make to the training of lay workers and ministers[2]. The Community Development Group was one of these groups[3].

This system worked well because there were good relationships between the Director and the Board members responsible for the task groups. The Community Development and the Sociological Group are the only ones extant.

2. The Community Development Group

During the period 1976 to 1979 the Community Development Group had eleven members: ten Methodist and one Roman Catholic; three lay people, one deaconess and seven ministers;

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2. It had been agreed that lay training programmes would be effective only in as much as they are supported by ministers (they are in key positions to promote or to prevent such programmes); that ministers are potential if not actual trainers; and therefore that orientating ministers to new ideas and ways of working and training them to train others was key to any programme of lay training.

3. The others were entitled: Adult Education; Vocational Group Training; Leadership Training; Group Sensitivity Training; later a Sociological Group, already in existence, was affiliated to the Board.

two women and nine men. Three were circuit ministers; one was a District Chairman; two were secretaries in the Division of Ministries; two were engaged in community development projects; three were engaged in training clergy and laity for Church, community and youth work. (The names are listed in the Appendix). They were all committed to working for development with people in the Church and in society at large, they all sought to promote change in people and in their environment and they all saw that the changes they wished to see involved working with as well as for people. But there were significant differences between them. They represented various approaches to Church and community work. Some were working exclusively for self-induced change freely and willingly made, and they emphasised the importance of the "processes" by which this kind of change is achieved; others, without denying the value of self-induced change, saw a need to make people in power, and against their will, make environmental and structural changes, and they emphasised the importance of political and direct action. They differed in their political outlook and commitment: a minority were active in the Labour Party and others were not involved in or committed to any political party. They differed in their commitment to working with and through the Church: some were working for development of Church and neighbourhood from within the Church; others were working entirely outside of the Church and, sadly, in some cases finding themselves much closer to the community than to the Church. Some were emphasising the need for local development within the given social structures, others for overall structural change. Between them they spanned a wide spectrum of experience and they took up different theological stances. The diversity was a deliberate expression of the policy of the group to be as representative as possible.

There were, however, common threads in their experiences. Each of them had struggled to find more appropriate ways of working with people than those commonly used in Church work, through study of the theory and practice of community development and of community work and of group work.

They had tried out what they had learnt over a long period and in widely different situations. They had each evolved much more effective ways of working with people in the Church and in the community. They found the underlying concepts of the disciplines they had studied attractive to them. Acquiring greater skill in working with people and in practising the non-directive approach[4] had, at different times and in various ways, brought new life and meaning to their ministry and given them much deeper satisfaction in their work.

Naturally, they desired to learn more about Church and community development work, to work out the practical, theoretical and theological implications of what it meant for them and for the Church and to share with others what they themselves had found to be of such value. It was these desires that brought and held them together as a group. They worked hard at practical and theoretical problems and issues; they collated information; they produced articles, papers and aids for workers, "tools"; they stimulated discussion in the Methodist Church about church and community development work; they helped to inaugurate and monitor an action-research project; they promoted in-service training courses and offered valuable help to two of their members engaged in setting up a training agency; and they worked at the theological implications of the concepts and practices that they had adopted. Progress was made on all fronts, but the members of the group were most dissatisfied with

4. Basically the non-directive approach involves getting people to think things out for themselves as thoroughly as they possibly can and then getting them to put into good and effective practice their conclusions and decisions. And for an approach with a negative-sounding title this demands a lot of initiative and energy of would-be non-directive workers. Thinking for oneself can be difficult, getting others to think for themselves can be doubly difficult especially when it is something about which they need to think but do not want to. For further notes about this approach see pp 14f, 30ff, 65f.

with what they achieved theologically: working at the theological implications proved to be more problematic for them than working at other aspects. Their inability to master the theological issues was having serious adverse effects upon them. They felt theologically vulnerable and were prone to become defensive, even though they were never more sure that what they were about was of God. They knew they needed to make theological progress for their own peace of mind and for the promotion of their work.

3. The need for theological help

From the inception of the group therefore the members were searching for an adequate theological basis for the work in which they were engaged and the approaches and methods they were using. They had made some progress and each had their own rough hewn working theology[5]. But no matter what they did they experienced the dissatisfaction that accompanies the feeling that one has not "got there" and cannot seem to "get there". Endless discussions were marred by such feelings and they gave the subject a rest.

Once again in October 1974 the members turned to the subject and eventually broke new ground. They decided that the way forward was to get someone generally accepted in the Church as having "theological authority" to look critically at community development ideas, ideally someone who could build bridges between those attracted to and those repelled by "Church and community development work". The problem was to find a theologian who really understood the ideas, practices and processes associated with community development or who could acquire the kind of understanding needed, (the latter comes through experience rather than from verbal and written descriptions). Previous attempts

5. I gave some expression to my working theology in The Church and Community Development: An Introduction. Grail Publications and Chester House Publications, 1972. See especially chapters 3, 6 and 7.

to find such a person had failed. The members of the group did not hold out much hope of succeeding. Eventually, therefore, they decided to attempt to get theologians to consider the problems they were facing in trying to get creative theological comments on their work; that is, to get theologians to apply themselves to the "how" of getting theological help rather than to the theological problems themselves.

They pursued this idea. The theologians contacted were positive but, apart from one, were not really helpful. The exception was Professor (then Canon) David Jenkins of the William Temple Foundation who not only understood what the members were talking about but had experience of helping people of two other disciplines (medicine and industry) to do what the group wished to do. Further, he was currently promoting a project on the theology of community development! The members of the CDG became excited.

The initial contacts were followed in March 1975 by a meeting of the CDG with Professor Jenkins and the Revd Gerry Wheale. The discussion centred around the theological problems the members were experiencing and the William Temple Foundation Project on the theology of community development.

A PROMISING PROJECT

During the exploratory meeting with the CDG, Professor Jenkins explained the plans they had for the Project[1]. He said it aimed to promote more efficient and effective involvement of Christians and the Churches as institutions in work for human development "in the disturbed and disturbing areas of society (with particular reference to what should be distinctive about Christian stances and contributions)". It planned to do this by clarifying and codifying experience so that it:

- could be used to help Christian workers to determine what they consider to be distinctive about their roles and aims and what resources (physical and personal) are required for the work;

- could be fed back to the Churches (with the intention of promoting changes in their attitudes and securing more active commitment to development work);

- could be used for purposes of "training and the multiplication of resources[2].

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1. Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution, is the report of this project.

2. These statements are a paraphrase of what Professor David Jenkins wrote in some brief Notes on Emergent Theology or Doing Theology From Within, written as a Project memo.

Theology for these purposes, he said, can only be done from within; therefore some of the contributors to the exercise must be actually involved within the situations about which the theology is being done. That is, he said,"this kind of theology cannot be done by theologians alone (i.e. by those whose expertise is in theological disciplines) but it cannot be done without them (because they are necessary to making proper professional use of the resources of the Christian tradition which is their expertise)". It is therefore "emergent theology" (not applied) and it is a "collaborative exercise". Doing theology in this way involves taking seriously specific experiences, the context, the Christian tradition (and this includes biblical patterns, doctrinal distillations of experiences, experiences of liturgy and the dynamics of fellowship)[3]. It also means that people's experiences "in their particular operations and their subjective responses, judgements and evaluations have to become the real objects of theological analysis". Consequently doing theology for the given purposes and on the given pre-suppositions is "episodic"[4].

The project was to be based on these concepts about the nature of the theological exercise. The idea was that there should be a "central reflective group" know as the CORE GROUP and groups of people operative in the field of community development known as OPERATIVE GROUPS. The Core Group, a William Temple Working Party, would have overall responsibility for the project. It would comprise theologians and people with varied experiences in community work and in Church and community development work.

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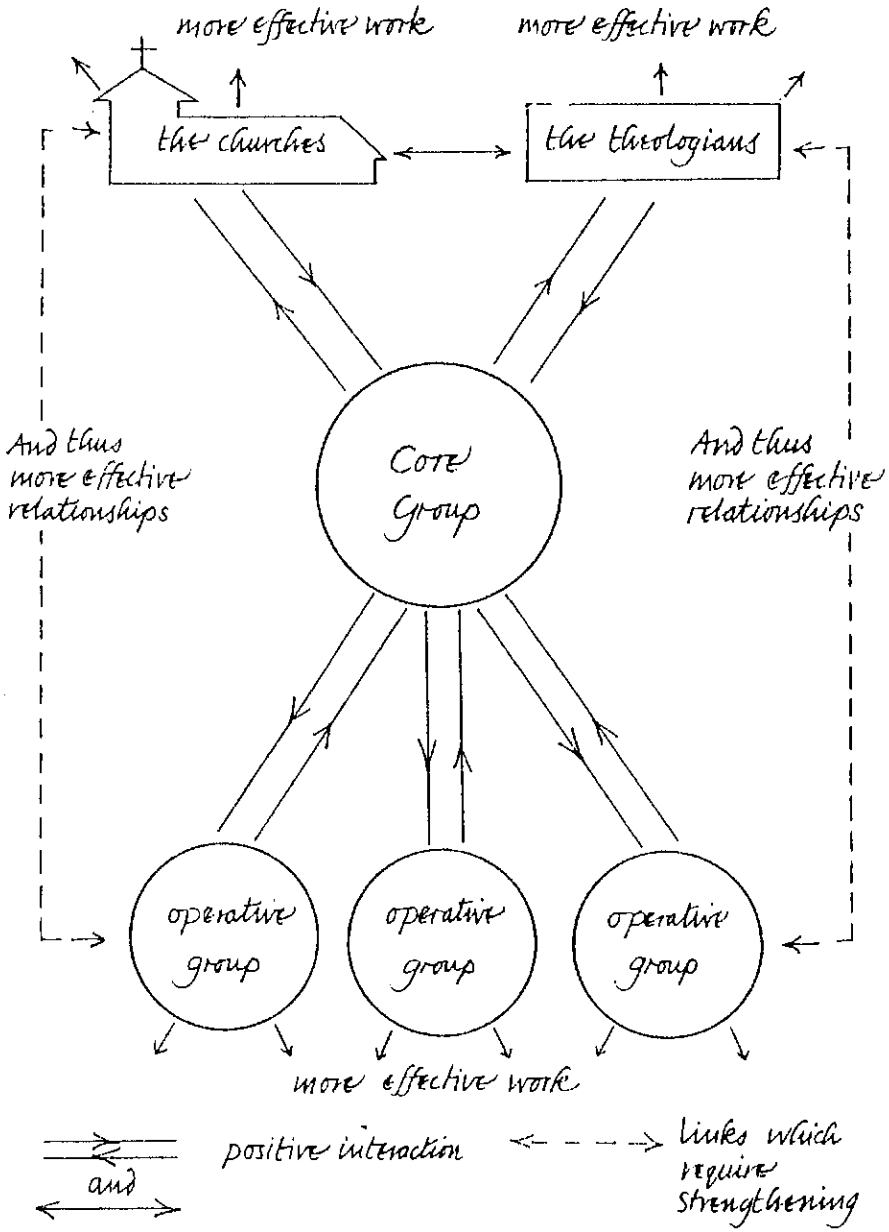
3. These ideas were described more fully by Professor Jenkins in a Project memo: Notes on some Presuppositions of a Theological Consultancy. See Appendix II, Involvement in Community.

4. But see Appendix III of Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution, about the need to systematise theological insights.

The operative groups would comprise people with knowledge of and experience in community work and in Church and community development work - in practising the ideas, in action-research into various aspects of it and in training others to practise it - and who, ideally, were currently "operators" in the field. The idea was that each operative group would, with the help of the Core Group, reflect theologically on its concerns and experiences. The Core Group too would reflect on its own concerns and experiences and, in the light of its theological expertise, on what came out of the operative groups. It would use its findings to stimulate further reflection in the operative groups. The Core Group would be primarily responsible for getting theologians and the Churches to think through the implications for them of whatever emerged from the Project. This was expressed in the following diagram. (Should you find diagrams difficult to read you will possibly be inclined to skip it and the ones that follow; before doing so see if the notes on p20ff help you. People who read the text in draft and knew just how helpful diagrams are in this work suggested I write them).

DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING ORIGINAL PROJECT PLAN.



THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP AND THE PROJECT

The members of the CDG felt that the William Temple Foundation Project offered more hope of help with their problems than anything they had previously encountered. They were convinced that it could help them and the Methodist Church to make much better contributions to human development. They committed themselves to being one of the operative groups[1] and to two of their members serving on the Core Group[2]. And this led to an exciting and profitable experiment in theological reflection for the members of the CDG. The principal features of what they did are described below.

1. Ways and means of reflecting

Effective ways of reflecting evolved early and were followed throughout.

The CDG had a session generally lasting two or three hours[3]. A written record of the session was produced and circulated to the members of the Core Group. I was responsible for producing this record.

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1. In the event, the CDG was the only "operative group" but Core Group members did have meetings with several other groups and discussed their findings and observations.

2. Revd Harry Salmon for part of the Project; the Revd Dr George Lovell throughout.

3. Generally as part of a day or a twenty-four hour consultation on several topics.

The Core Group commented on the record prior to the next session of the CDG. Notes were made of their comments. Generally speaking, the discussion in the Core Group on the record lasted about thirty minutes. The records (rarely was it necessary to supplement them with verbal comments) and the homework done on them by the Core Group members meant that much could be said in a short time. The exchanges were normally very intensive. Apart from points of clarification, I concentrated on getting a note of the points. This was supplemented during the course of other discussions by various references to the work of the CDG and more leisurely discussions about its usefulness.

After their first session, therefore, the CDG members received a record of the previous session and notes of the Core Group comments, and in addition, input from the Core Group by Harry Salmon and myself as we were members of both Groups. Such input was a description of the ideas discussed and of any new insights we had gained through sharing in these discussions. They opened up new and very helpful areas of thought.

2. Worker and go-between

From the outset I saw my job in the CDG discussions as that of a non-directive worker and as a go-between for the CDG and the Core Group. I was utterly convinced that the success of the exercise depended upon both these roles being performed (and subsequent events proved this to be the case).

My contributions were vigorous, they were direct and they were forthright. They had an emotional content that reflected my deep personal involvement in and commitment to the exercise. Moreover, I was responsible for a heavy input of new ideas, concepts and information from the Core Group. But everything I did was designed to help the members themselves to really think for themselves about their own ideas and experiences and about anything I or others might contribute. That is where I was non-directive; I was not dictating what they should think nor, indeed, what they should think about, but I was urging them to think. My

aim was to get the minds of the members of the Group working in alliance, actively engaged that is in creative group thinking processes. Pursuing this aim made heavy energy demands upon me; it called for firm interventions, positive contributions, the clearest thinking of which I was capable and controlled emotional involvement. As I saw them, my main functions as a worker were (a) to ensure there were structures to facilitate constructive thought and to enable people to say precisely what they were feeling and thinking; (b) to engender the objectivity necessary for creative thinking; (c) to do all I could to see that processes were carried through to a satisfactory conclusion. I tried to do these things by summarising discussions, conceptualising what had happened in diagrams as well as words, tracing out previous stages of the discussion and then getting the group to decide what were the next steps to be taken. It was this kind of non-directive stance I adopted throughout, even when I was contributing ideas and information[4].

Full notes were made of the discussion as it proceeded by someone who did not participate in the discussion, a "recorder" (it is difficult to participate and to remain sufficiently objective to make adequate notes). After each session, from the notes taken by the recorder, I prepared a structured account of the session, describing what had been said and how it had been said, i.e. a description of content and process. These we called "records"[5].

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4. cf pp6, 30ff, 59f.
   The approach I adopted is based upon the work of Dr T R Batten. See The Non-Directive Approach T R & M Batten (An Avec Publication 1988.)

5. This form of recording was developed in the field to service local Church and community development work. Records describe both the content of the discussion and, where relevant, the pattern of interaction of the members and salient features of the group processes. Avec, a Service Agency for Church and Community Work, has produced brief notes on recording and note taking. They are available from Avec, 155a Kings Road, Chelsea, London SW3 5TX.

Writing these records was an extension of the worker's functions I performed in the group. In fact I was doing on paper what I had been doing in the group; structuring, objectifying, clarifying, classifying, putting questions, indicating gaps in our thinking etc. I learnt as much through struggling with these records as with any other aspect of the exercise. From time to time such experiences resulted in my making very positive contributions through a "worker's note" in the record. (There are examples of this on pp 46ff, and 60).

3. The Session

The CDG had a life of its own; this project was one item on its agenda, howbeit an important one. It spent seven sessions on the experiment, and on average a session took some three hours. The first was in September 1975 and the last in December 1978[6]. The direction taken by the discussion and the content was strongly influenced by the interaction between the CDG, the Core Group and the worker. Here we describe what emerged and how it did so.

6. CDG September 1975 and March 1976; Core Group October 1976; CDG November 1976; Core Group April 1977; CDG September 1977; Core Group December 1977; CDG February 1978; Core Group May 1978; CDG June 1978; Core Group November 1978; CDG December 1978; Core Group May 1979.

MODELS AND MODELLING

The members of the CDG found it very difficult to make a start. Attempts to discuss "values and theology" and to get some kind of agreement on approaches and methods did not get them very far. Eventually they managed to make some progress by defining what they described as "community work models" and the underlying assumptions on which one or other of them worked. It took two meetings to do this (September 1975 and March 1976) and papers prepared between them. The result was a commonplace list of points and definitions.

It was the response of the members of the Core Group to the casual and accidental use of the word "model" that brought things to life. They said that what the CDG had referred to as "models" are approaches, perspectives, concepts but they are not models. Models, they said, "represent the way in which we see the shape of things and the way in which change comes about"[1].

Some members of the CDG accepted this but others insisted that their "models" were models and that the Core Group was splitting hairs. Those who did see the distinction tried to get others to do so but without success. It was basically two things which enabled them to work through this impasse: notes defining and describing models which I produced at their request and the creative experiences of models and modelling described in Section V. The basic content of the notes is given below.

1. Core Group Meeting October 1976. The William Temple Foundation members were working on models in industry and searching for a Christian theory or model of society.

1. Models

Models are, according to Cotgrove, "a halfway house in theory building. They are very tentative descriptions of what a system looks like and suggest possible relations between variables of empirical research". Cotgrove sees both concepts and models as essential aids in the process of analysis; they are, in his words, "heuristic devices", i.e. they help people to find things out for themselves[2].

Ramsey[3] makes an important distinction between two kinds of models: picturing models (or scale models) and disclosure models (or analogue models). Disclosure models are born in insight. They are not pictorial replicas; they reveal something of the inner structure and the essential shape of things; they disclose the connections between variables and processes of cause and effect; they show how things fit together in the scheme and drama of life. And disclosure models are what we are concentrating upon in this report.

Disclosure models (and of course picturing models) can be expressed verbally or diagramatically[4]. God, for example, is referred to as our "heavenly father"; father is a verbal "model" borrowed from the everyday world; heavenly is a "qualifier" which limits the application of the model; in this case it excludes any characteristics of human fathers

2. Stephen Cotsgrove, The Science of Society: An Introduction to Sociology, (4th Impression, George Allen & Unwin, 1967) pp31ff.

3. Ian T Ramsey, Models and Mystery, (The Whidden Lectures for 1963, published by the Oxford University Press 1964). This book is the source of the references to and the quotations from Ramsey. In fact this whole section draws heavily upon his work on models which I find particularly apposite to Church and community development work and theological reflection.

4. Ramsey says that metaphors have important similarities to models; see Chapter 3 of Models and Mystery.

inappropriate to God[5].

Models are used in the natural sciences, in the social sciences and in theology. They are aids to formulating hypothethes about the relations between variables and enable steps to be taken in the process of theory building. As such they are tentative devices, and must be seen as such. The fact that subsequently they may be shown to be faulty does not matter. What matters is that they enable people to understand things, to gain better and deeper understanding, to live and to work to better effect and to become theologically and scientifically articulate.

"Each discipline", says Ramsey, "provides its own maps (or models) and they may be compared to an infinite set of two dimensional projections of a three-dimensional object. Of all disciplines, it will be theology which will be most concerned to point to and to hint at a further dimension, and it will do this primarily by its qualifiers which like a 3-D viewer bring diverse pictures together till they witness to 'depth' which each alone misses and conceals".

Theological models can "enable us to make sense of discourse whose logical structure is so perplexing as to inhibit literacy"; they can "enable us to talk of what eludes us"; and they enable us to "map large-scale interpretations of phenomena". Theological models lead to reliable theological understanding when they "chime in with phenomena", i.e. which they are an "empirical fit". (Ramsey says that "the theological model works more like the fitting of a shoe than like the 'yes' or 'no' of a roll call"!) These conditions are met when they incorporate the most diverse phenomena without inconsistency. And, to quote Ramsey yet again, "models are always fulfilled in mystery and mystery is articulated in models"!

5. cf An article by Tony Thiselton entitled "The Multi-Model Character of Holy Spirit Language" in the British Weekly (CWN Series, April 11th 1974).

It was this kind of understanding of the nature and use of models that informed the theological reflections of the members of the Group. Some examples of diagrammatic modelling are given below and in V.

2. Diagrams

Diagrams attract my eye. Some communicate their message immediately, unmistakably and forcibly without much effort on the reader's part. But other diagrams speak only to those who study them carefully, and doing that calls for application. For me this is most difficult when the diagram is a complex of lines and arrows connecting several "boxes" or circles and when either there is too much or too little verbal explanation. One wonders where to start, just what the arrows mean and what is the distinction between full and dotted lines, etc etc. These difficulties arise when people have to read a diagram they have not seen constructed, and since most published diagrams are the final product, the stages in their construction are rarely given. Generally speaking the first stage in constructing a diagram is to identify the entities about which the diagram seeks to say something (in the diagram on p12 for example, they are "the Churches", "theologians", the "Core Group" and the "operative groups"). The next stage is to set them down schematically and to do so in ways which say something about them and their relationships or enable something more to be said through connecting lines and arrows. A further stage is to find ways of showing what more one wants to say about the entities, about, for instance, their inter-relationship, the pattern of interaction between them, the processes by which they change or are changed. This is frequently done by lines (dotted and full) and arrows. The processes of construction give clues to reading diagrams that are presented in their completed form, and the kind of questions with which to approach them:

what are the principal entities?

why are they arranged as they are?

what is the diagram saying about the relationship between the entities?

what is the diagram as a whole saying to me and

what do I think about this?

In fact, these and similar questions help one to recapitulate stages in the construction of a completed diagram.

(Note that in diagrams in this book a full line represents a relationship between the entities it connects; a dotted line - - - represents a weak relationship; a line with a break — //— a broken relationship; arrows indicate exchanges between the entities and the direction in which they occur).

Clearly there are serious limitations to what any one diagram can communicate: they are most useful in highlighting key characteristics about complexly related entities; they are least useful in presenting subtle nuances. Consequently there are real dangers of trying to put too much into a diagram or of trying to read too much into one. Thus is some respects they are like parables which lose their effectiveness if they are treated as analogies.

3. Examples of diagrammatic modelling

The examples given below were selected not to communicate the ideas and theories they represent but to illustrate what is said above about models and to provide opportunities for the reader to work at what has been said in relation to concrete examples, i.e. they are both illustrations and exercises. Each of the diagrams has helped me personally and others known to me to think more clearly and effectively about issues, concerns and problems that confused and concerned us. They are about social forces and cultural and religious changes.

a. Social forces and cultural changes. These examples are taken from a chapter in a book by A.K.C. Ottaway (Education and Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Education, RKP, 1953, Chapter III of the 1968 edition).

The chapter is especially interesting because of the way in which the author builds up the models as the chapter proceeds. He summarises the discussion in three "figures" or models. Our interest is in the modelling rather than in ideas and theories they represent: our concern is with how the theories are represented diagramatically rather than with an assessment of them.

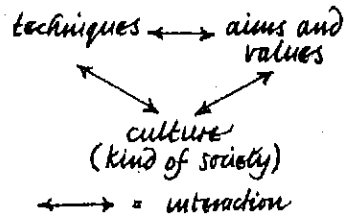


FIGURE 1

Figure I illustrates the way in which the culture of a society during a given period is influenced by the interaction of two classes of factors, the stage of technical intervention and scientific discovery and the dominant aims and values of the society. These classes of factors he refers to as "techniques" and "aims and values". The double arrows represent a dynamic interaction, or a two-way process. The model shows a triangle of dynamic interaction.

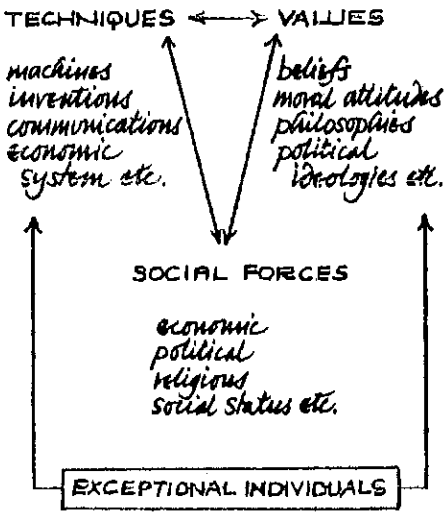


FIGURE II

Figure II amplifies Figure I. It also shows exceptional individuals having direct effect on techniques and values and the resulting changes in the culture following through the influence of social forces. Therefore it represents the dynamic interaction of factors and of individuals and groups within a society which determines cultural change. The arrows from the exceptional individuals represent the impact they have upon values and techniques.

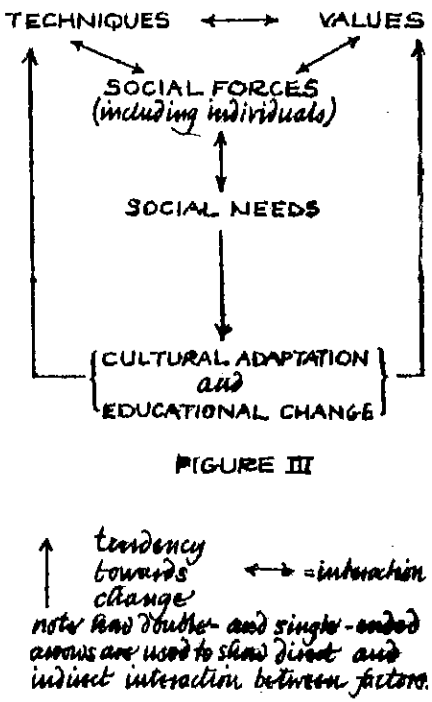


FIGURE III

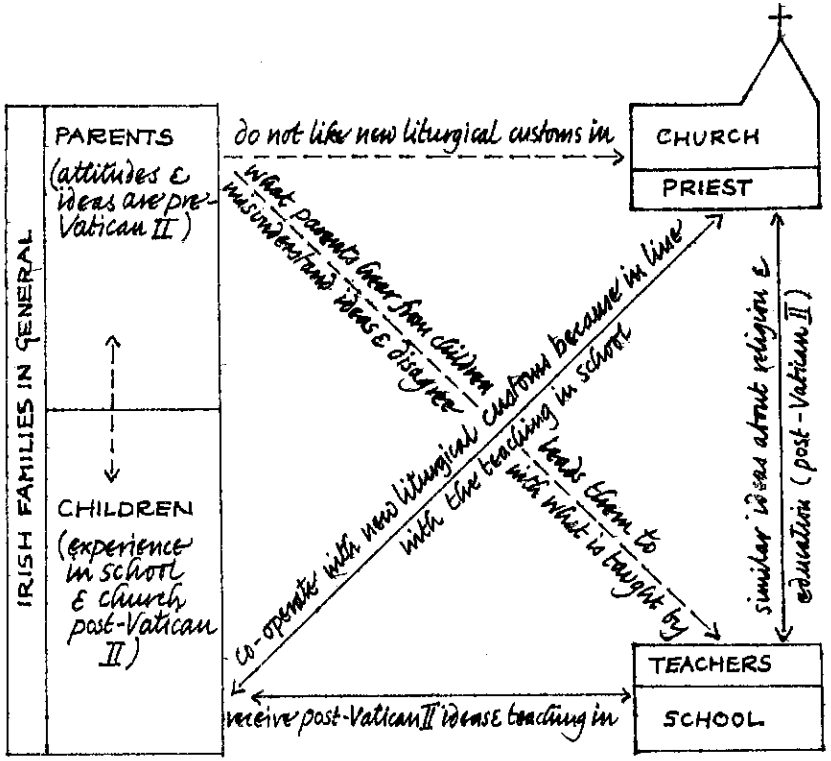
Figure III represents Ottoway's theory of social and cultural change. He argues that it is in the process of satisfying social needs that cultural adaptation takes place. As the culture changes new needs are met, new techniques arise, values may change. Thus a continuously interacting cycle is at work. He sees educational change to be one of the last functions of society to adapt to new social needs. All these ideas he represents in Figure III. It relates the essence of Figures I and II to social needs, cultural adaptation and educational change. It shows the interaction of factors and the direction of movement of cycles of change, a pattern which Ottoway says applies equally to large or small cycles of change.

Note how double and single ended arrows are used to show direct and indirect interaction between factors.

b. Liturgical and educational change and human relationships. This example[5] consists of a diagram constructed to help a Roman Catholic parish priest to work at problems he was encountering. They had been caused by the introduction of a new liturgy and new ways of teaching children the Christian faith. The parents preferred the

5. Taken from Churches and Communities: An approach to Development in the Local Church, George Lovell and Catherine Widdicombe, p78.

old liturgy and the ways in which they had learnt their faith in Ireland before the Vatican Council of 1962-65. But their children were all for the new liturgy and responded to the new approach to Christian education. Consequently the children were confused by being told one thing at home and another at school and in the church; their parents were distressed because they found themselves in a bewildering conflict with their children, their church and the school; and the priest was at the centre of many conflicts and tensions which greatly confused and worried him. The following diagram helped him to get a clearer picture of what was happening and to decide what to do about the problem.



Note the use of full lines (——) to indicate congruence and the dotted lines (- - -) to indicate incongruence.

This diagram was constructed by identifying the entities in the interaction and arranging them in such a way that the interaction between them could be expressed.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCES OF DISCLOSURE MODELS

The members of the Community Development Group had three key experiences of disclosure models and modelling, experiences which they value greatly and which have been extraordinarily creative. They were:

1. the dynamics of their theological unease;

2. perceiving and re-formulating their own theological models;

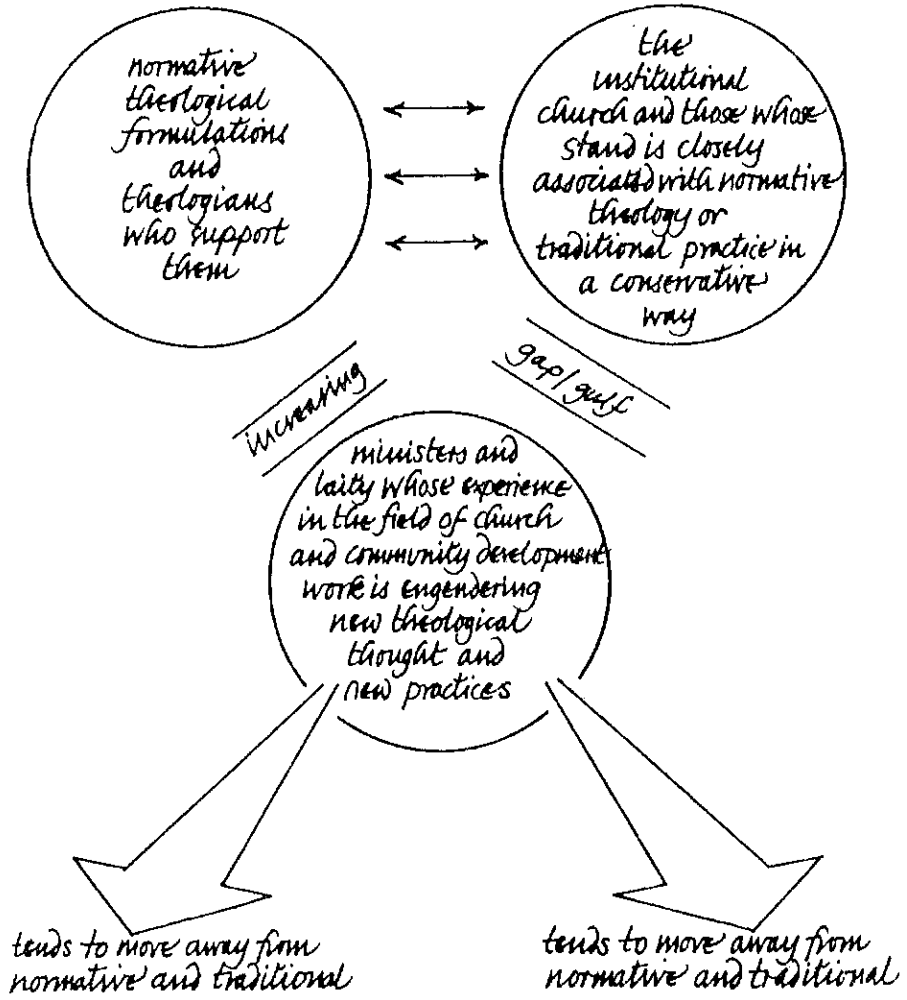
3. seeing errors in their community development practices.

1. The dynamics of their theological unease

The first of these experiences occurred in March 1975 when Professor Jenkins and Dr Wheale visited the CDG group (cf p8). They discussed the theological unease that the members felt and the problems they were facing.

What emerged was that through practising with satisfaction what they had come to value in community development and community work they were being distanced from normative theological formulations and from those who support them and from those who had very different work experiences and who adopted different approaches and used different methods. This was expressed diagramatically as follows:

DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING RELATIONSHIPS AND MOVEMENTS



This diagram was to the members of the CDG a "disclosure model" and it had telling therapeutic and creative effects. It immediately clarified things in a startling way. It made sense of their experience and cut through their confusion. It depicted for the members just what they felt was - and still is - happening. It showed them the kind of intellectually and emotionally confusing process in which they were enmeshed, a divisive process which set people against each other and engendered faction in the Church. (Previously close personal and working relationships members had enjoyed and valued with other people in the Church had been strained and marred, including those with some who had encouraged them to get involved in the community as an extension of their ministry and the mission of the Church. Some members knew that they were viewed by some as renegades because of the way in which they were working and that others simply dismissed them as "radicals" because they were using non-traditional methods). The process which, if left to take its course, would have disastrous effects: development in some areas would cause deterioration in others and thus prevent overall betterment. And the members of the group were deeply committed to working for overall betterment, that is, for the inter-related development of Church and community because of their commitment to the Christian faith and to the Church and to the world[1].

Their theological unease and distress, they now say, had several aspects and implications, inter-related but distinguishable.

First, there was a personal aspect. Some members of the CDG felt they were being ostracised at a time when they were trying without guides or consultants to find their way through a theological no-man's land. They were trying to be faithful to their past and present experience; they had a heavy investment in both. They wanted to be true to their new found insights and those of the Church at large. They

1. Church and Community Development: An Introduction. George Lovell, cf Chapter 7.

constituted a minority view. They felt some theological uncertainty and insecurity even though they were convinced that what they were doing was of God and His Kingdom. In view of all this and the enormity of the theological task in which they were engaged, it was not surprising that they were inclined to be defensive, to overstate their case, to be somewhat reactionary - and to cause others to be the same.

Second, the unresolved theological differences were inhibiting development and generating faction. Creative inter-action between theology and experience is an essential condition to overall development and to the Church as an institute making its proper contribution to it. Therefore, they were more and more convinced that their inability to master key theological issues and to gain theological credibility reduced their effectiveness in promoting the use of Church and community development approaches and methods in the Methodist Church.

Third, they realised that their own development as a group depended upon deeper mutual theological understanding and interaction.

Fourth, they realised that the Church finds it easier to deal with pragmatic concerns than with the theological issues they raise[2].

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2. An example of this is that from 1971 to 1973 a Working Party prepared a report on community development and the Church. Two members of the CDG were members of the working party. The report was presented to the Methodist Conference in 1973. It urged the Church to train its workers, lay and ordained, in the practices and theology of community development. The Conference adopted the Report apart from the section on theology which it referred for further consideration. In fact the training recommendations are being implemented, but the theology is still in abeyance! The need remains for a more adequate presentation of the theological implications of this way of working.

Tackling the problems implicit in all this, they were convinced, involved promoting "theological reflection", and it was to this that they turned their attention.

Some underlying problems

In retrospect, and given our purposes, it seems to me that the problems we were facing were:

- how to evolve a theological basis which would enable us to be much better at our work, at exploring our experiences and at discussing our experiences and theology with others;
- how to acquire greater skills in thinking theologically and "doing theology" in the given working context;
- how to bridge the theological and experiential gulfs between ourselves and others;
- how to create in the church and environment of mutual understanding and acceptance which encourages people with different experiences and theological stances and ways of working, to want to share each other's thinking;
- how to promote overall development when there is theological faction.

Much emerges from the work of the Project which helps to tackle these problems.

It was only after writing the main body of this paper that I realised that the group had not defined the problems. Normally it is one of the first things that any member of the group would have done, but none of us thought of it; we were so intent on "reflecting"! But would problem analysis have been as productive as reflection? I do not know. What is clear, however, is that insights help to define problems and are therefore necessary to their solution. Finding ways of seeing into the nature of problems is a necessary part of solving them. Reflective processes and diagrammatic modelling are ways of doing this. In my experience similar insights and disclosures have resulted from pursuing and

worrying at problems in relation to such questions as: Just what is the problem? Why is it a problem for me? When, why and how does it occur? Why has it arisen? What causes it and how? What factors create it?

By way of personal reflection

Writing and reflecting on all this has helped me to understand some of the theological problems and conflicts that I faced during the early seventies about the place of directive and non-directive approaches in the life, work and mission of the Church. Basically and briefly the directive approach involves getting other people to act on our conclusions about what is good for them; the non-directive approach involves getting people to think things out for themselves and to act upon their own conclusions. Both approaches are necessary if people - Christians and non-Christians - are to grow towards perfection and to build up better churches and communities. This is incontrovertible and it follows that Church workers, lay and ordained, need to be skilled in both and to know when and how to be directive and when and how to be non-directive.

For me the non-directive approach is not simply a way of helping people to take responsibility for aspects of their own lives previously controlled by others, although it is that; it is more importantly a way of helping others to make that contribution that they alone can make towards creative activity and their own salvation and growth. It is this approach which enables one person to get as near as he can to the inner places of individuals, groups and communities (religious and secular) where the human and divine are at work: places where there is a glorious confusion between processes of human growth and salvation and where the activities of God, self and others are fused. It enables me to do all this with the respect God accords to us all. It takes me to the very heart of ministry.

Adopting and advocating a non-directive approach in work associated with the Church caused conflict. It appears that this approach - or was it the systematic statement, used and advocacy of it over a wide range of human life, because most if not all Christians agree that people should think for themselves - challenged something commonly, widely and

deeply believed by Christians, that the way and the only way to do the essential work of the Church is through directive action. Preaching and evangelism, it seems, were equated with getting people to think, to believe and to do and to be what the Church, the minister or the preacher thinks they should. So deep-seated was this that I could easily be inwardly disturbed when I was not "telling others", "proclaiming" and "witnessing". And this was so, even when I was convinced of the rightness of the non-directive approach and when I knew I was taken most seriously by the community when I worked with rather than for people without intent to proselytise[3].

I was challenged to make a theological case for the non-directive approach. That was not too difficult to do to the satisfaction of those convinced of the value of this approach[4]; it was impossible to do to the satisfaction of those who suspected the approach or were convinced it was "wrong". But a case for the habitual use of a directive approach was not called for by the Church, that was taken as given, proven and normative. In short the weight of theological thinking seemed to be for the directive and against the non-directive concept in Church work, ministry and mission. Clearly the conflict had irrational and emotional aspects, and that made it all the more debilitating and painful.

This polarisation of "directive" and "non-directive" was distinctly unhelpful and problematic. In retrospect the nature of the change through which I was passing can now be more clearly defined. I was changing from habitually, indiscreetly and uncritically adopting directive methods towards using

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3. cf Churches and Communities: An Approach to Development in the Local Church, Lovell and Widdicombe.

4. See, for example, The Church and Community Development: An Introduction. George Lovell.

non-directive and directive methods judicially in relation to purpose, people and situation. I was not changing from being habitually directive to being habitually non-directive although it may have appeared in the early stages that this is what I was doing! This happens when one is in the process of assimilating a new idea that was seen to be of enormous value. During the early stages it was easy to lose a sense of perspective because the new-found treasure dominated my thinking and I was busy exploring its treasures and trying it out. From the outset, however, intellectually I understood the need for both approaches; but practically I had insufficient experience to put this concept properly into practice. Thus the polarisation misrepresented the nature of the change, tended to fix the discussion at an early stage in the process of assimilation and generally confuse the theological and pragmatic issues.

Some implications

Now we are back to the three circles on p26. What will help to bridge the gulfs and help workers, lay and ordained, to find the approaches, methods and theologies which hold together in a creative tension and which "fit" them?

First, an environment in the Church conducive to finding, testing and assessing new ways of working in the light of all the Church stands for. Characteristics of such an environment are: mutual trust, love, support, encouragement, openness, lack of defensiveness, honesty, rigorous intellectual and theological activity grounded in reality. Such an environment greatly helps processes of assimilation, not least by preventing premature polarisation and reactionary behaviour.

Second, the availability of corroborative theological help when needed and wanted[5].

5. cf Chapter 6 of Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution.

Third, creative interaction between those in each of the three circles in the diagram on p26: processes of theological reflection between all concerned by which theory and practice can critically be reassessed in the light of new experiences and Christian teaching[6].

The Board of Lay Training made a major contribution to meeting these conditions in the way in which it set up the task groups of which the CDG was one (see p3f). But the cycle of theological reflection is not complete (cf. the footnote on p28).

A crucial factor in promoting such conditions is the stance taken by people in the Church at all levels who are in key positions to give a lead of one kind or another. What then are the characteristics of the stance most likely to promote these conditions? Attitudes and approaches to people and events that derive directly from the realisation that the Church is living through a radical transition; that, as always, people respond differently to change and new ideas, from uncritical acceptance through critical and open consideration of all that is happening to unthinking rejection of all that is new; that some are full of new hope because they see that a new age has dawned, some are full of foreboding, some are confused and others are lost, and that all face new difficulties; that this is the "given", an understandable given, which constitutes the reality and authority of the working situation; that the Church of tomorrow will grow out of the proper interaction of people holding all these positions; and, that, whatever their own personal views may be, their job in part is to facilitate and participate in that interaction. Such a stance - true to one's own convictions, those of others and the

6. A book, Theology in an Industrial Society, (Margaret Kane, SPCK, 1975), which became available shortly after we had come to these conclusions presents a model for theology as a continuing search for meaning in life and faith and exemplifies it. This search for meaning involves the continuous reflection on experiences and belief in a cyclical way. See especially p29.

authority of the working situation - makes for strength and creativity as people in the "circles" interact and intersect rather than move apart. Clearly it is a necessary stance in an era of innovation and change, when unity comes from the mutual understanding and acceptance of differences, and not through uniformity.

2. Perceiving and re-formulating their own theological models

The second experience of disclosure models evolved from attempts made by the CDG "to reflect theologically". During one of the early meetings - immediately after they had got stuck on "models" - the members worked out that they needed to reflect theologically on the following[7]:

a. Questions and problems related to the balance between promoting the good of the individual and promoting the good of society, where the elevation of one may produce problems for the other.

b. The relative merits and demerits of working for good ends through conflict and through gradual change.

c. The nature of Christian responsibility for the socially most disadvantaged group.

d. The relationship between inner and outer changes in people.

7. In the event, but not by consciously following these points, the Core Group worked on these areas and it is interesting to see how the Core Group's final report reflects this framework. The Core Group's report Involvement in Community: A Christian Contribution, has greatly helped some members of the CDG in relation to all these points.

e. The comparison of Christian and other "theories" about people with the reality of experiences of working with people.

f. What in the Christian scheme of things is a better society?

They had a go at the last of these points. The initial stages of the discussion revolved around two questions. First, should the main thrust of Christian action be towards changing the existing social structure for the better or towards making the existing systems work better or towards promoting discussion about Christianity, society and change? Second, what is the relationship between the Kingdom as present now and the Kingdom as it is to come; between present processes of growth and development and between death and resurrection; between earthly potential and heavenly fulfilment; between reality and Utopia?

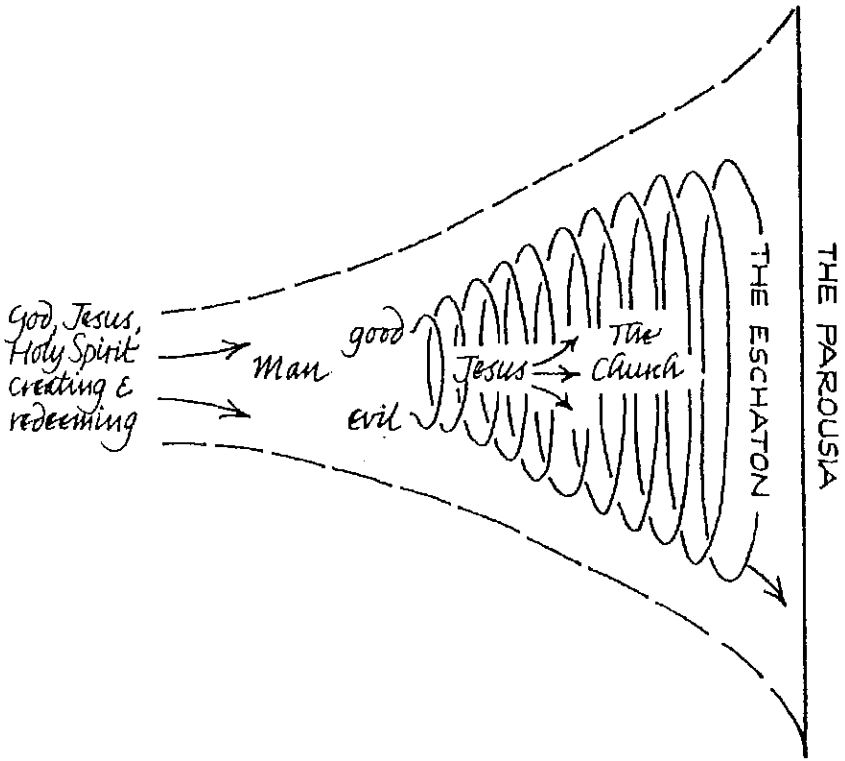
People contributed freely about the ways in which they personally approached and resolved these questions and some quoted Biblical texts to support their views. Whilst there were varying degrees of agreement on one or other point, no clear consensus emerged. The discussion was not rigorous. For instance, claims that much of the Bible was about the need to work justly and compassionately within given social systems and not about the need for radical social and structural change, were not really substantiated nor challenged. The discussion did not galvanise the group: it was circular and inconclusive. There was the feeling that we had heard it all before, that people were referring back to theological systems that had been formulated some time ago and that the discussion was not breaking through to the theological heart of the matter. The contributions had something to say, but I had the feeling that they were disappointing us because they were not insights of the kind which illuminate the reality we had seen through our experience of Church and community development work. Consequently they had a hollow ring. The result was that there were feelings of "flatness" and having reached an impasse in the group.

It was at this point that Harry Salmon and I both felt that what we had got from a discussion stimulated by Father Austin Smith in the Core Group about "creation" and "Salvation"[8] was highly relevant. We said so. The Group asked us to share it with them. I introduced the essence of what I had got from the discussion in the following way.

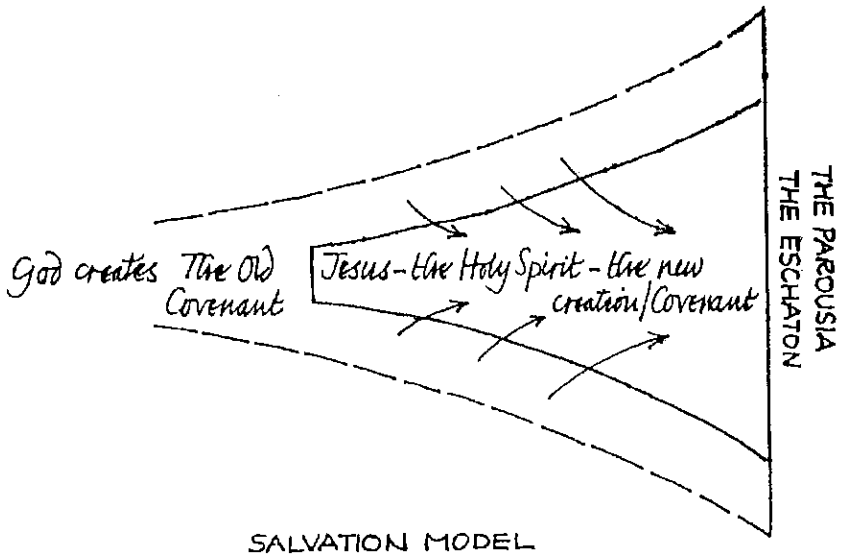
The creation model emphasised God as the creator. It depicts Him - and Jesus the second person of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit - as actively engaged from first to last in every aspect of the created order. It depicts Him as effecting a new creation through the redeeming activity of Jesus in the Church and in the World. It depicts a process of human creative activity both within the Church and within the World which is an inextricable admixture of good and bad. It shows that powerful thrusts towards goodness and betterment spring from the depths of human beings of every kind and of every age as well as thrusts towards evil and change for the worse; viz: within humanity there are constructive as well as destructive tendencies. It depicts creation as a process within which God and man can co-operate but which God started and which He will end and fulfill. This was illustrated diagramatically as follows.

8. Father Austin Smith said after reading this in draft that he now prefers to use the word "redemption".

CREATION MODEL



The salvation model emphasises God's redemptive activity through the historical Jesus who atoned for our sins. It depicts those who do not overtly confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour as being without hope because they are outside His saving grace. It contrasts the old and the new creations: they are mutually exclusive, the first is predominantly evil and the other good; only those who are "new creations" can achieve the good. It divides off the "saved" from the "unsaved". It emphasises what God contributes - and what He alone can contribute - to man's salvation, and denigrates man's own part in his salvation and growth: it is all of God, and that through grace. It contrasts the goodness of God with the sinfulness of man and the holiness of the saved with the evilness of the unsaved. It depicts God's primary activity as saving and redeeming evil man from an evil world to find salvation in Christ and new and eternal life in his new creation and in the Church. It is therefore a model about a sick world in need of saving, healing and redeeming, viz: a pathological model. This was illustrated diagramatically as follows. (The distinctions are Smith's, the diagrams are mine).



SALVATION MODEL

The Group came immediately to life. These models penetrated the barrier that previous contributions had not been able to, they touched the reality of members' experience, they illuminated the theological issues underlying their confusion.

The Group was at pains to really grasp the very different theological perspectives of these models: at one moment members thought they had it, the next they felt it was slipping away from them. The differences are profound but subtle: the change of emphasis from one model to the other turns negatives into positives. The salvation model was more natural to their thinking than the creation model, but the creation model was more relevant to their experience of Church and community development work. They wanted and needed, they said, time to reflect on the two models and possibly to make the transition in their way of thinking theologically from the one to the other or to some new position[9].

This was seen to be a major break-through in the processes of reflection and it occurred as a direct consequence of what was done in the Core Group. It was unplanned and only in retrospect did we see the significance of this to the previous discussion. It was a vivid example of "theological modelling". It helped us to break free from the desultory discussion which led to it.

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9. The Revd Dr John Atherton, after reading the manuscript of this paper, pointed out that I had "painted one model deliberately black in order to reveal the righteousness of the other". I did not feel at the time that I did that although my own leanings at that time were towards the creation model which helped me to new insights, but I take the point. I have deliberately left the descriptions of the models as I wrote them up immediately after the meeting.

Father Austin Smith was most interested in our version of "his" creation and salvation models, concepts he was in the initial stages of thinking about. What he would like to see, he said, were combined creation-salvation models which:

- have a basis in the notion of "becoming; (he felt he would rather set community development work in such a context, or in an "evolution" rather than a "creation" framework. In this connection mention was made of the work of Teilhard de Chardin).

- show how Jesus is part of the creation process;

- illustrate the distortion in human thought and action which result from "original sin" and the correction that comes through salvation;

- indicate the influence on the theology of redemption and its outworkings of political necessity. (For instance, how far, since Constantine, has the theology of salvation been directed by the desire for law and order? Is monasticism a particularly vivid illustration of this? These questions need to be considered in relation to "liberation theology" he said).

Some ten months later members of the Group said they were finding both the salvation and the creation models very useful in promoting theological reflection. They found the creation model speaking more to them and their experience than the salvation model. One person, however, said that his "experience of life attracted him to an evolution model" but before he can adopt it he will have to "wrestle with the biblical models of creation and salvation". They also said:

- it is a question of bias (their word) towards the one rather than the other because they are not mutually exclusive;

- does the "dynamic come from within or without"?

- "where does sin come in?" (This question was not pursued but it expressed real concern of the members especially in situations in which people find it difficult to decide whether or not it is right to use force and violence. They asked "Did God put sin there intentionally?" Is it simply a falling short of our full potential?)

- the diagrams (or the models) do not show how the future impinges on the present and do not include an adequate "theology of hope";

- the models (diagrams) do not give the "sense of movement" inherent in the processes of creation and salvation; they are static.

But why were these models helpful?

After I first wrote this section Dr Atherton said, "What was it in these models which excited and stimulated the Group to move forward out of an impasse? If you can isolate these factors it would be very useful for helping others to organise theological reflection more effectively". This is especially interesting, not least because subsequently the models have had similar effects on a wide range of groups; they have never failed to bring people to life. Definitive answers to the questions elude me in a tantalising way. How did these models excite and stimulate if they contain nothing new? Why did they not do what the other contributions had done, cause people to revert to old-established patterns of thought? Regrettably all I can do is to hazard some suggestions partially informed by what people have said after such discussions.

First, they had excited and were exciting those who contributed them, and this excitement must have had an element of contagion.

Second, we were agreed that they penetrated the barriers that previous contributions had not been able to, and touched the reality of our experience and illuminated the theological issues underlying our confusion. They

actually brought together theological concepts and experiences and spoke to both at the same time. They revealed things which I immediately saw to be of great significance to me personally in re-formulating my theology to embrace more of my experience. Thus, they were to me "discolosure models". They put in a nutshell a complex of issues, experiental and theological, which had bedevilled my thinking but which I had not previously put into a manageable form. I immediately saw that they would facilitate discussion and reflection. Others, I know, have felt what I felt.

Third, the diagrams were a novel way of conducting a theological discussion: normally we relied entirely on words and theological exchanges that rely entirely on words so quickly and easily become involved and abstract. Diagrams tend to make things concrete and objective. They make one think again. Of themselves they display old truths in a different light. They help people to articulate what they cannot adequately describe (cf p20). Thus they enable one to think again.

Fourth, they polarised things in ways which made one think.

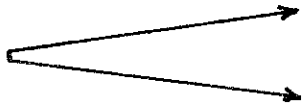
Fifth, they were provocative because they were not put forward as definitive and adequate theological formulae but as ways and means of thinking further about crucial issues. They promoted processes of thought which involved identifying the theological models which had previously been assumed or pre-supposed and searching for models that would fit experience and beliefs, and comparing and contrasting the models that emerged with those that had been assumed. Such processes raise questions and these questions are fundamental theological questions: previous contributions had been "answers" that covered the questions.

Sixth, from the time the models were first identified it was clear that they could help all concerned to find a more adequate theological framework for their thought, experience and work. And this engendered hope and enthusiasm.

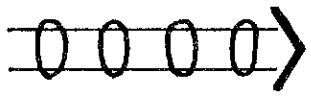
3. Seeing errors in their community development practices

The third creative experience of discolosure models that the members of the CDG had, evolved from a discussion of the Core Group.

At the Core Group meeting in November Father Austin Smith suggested we need to ask people in the inner city not about development, but, "How on earth do you survive?" This and all that the CDG members had done together started them thinking again about development and survival. They were greatly helped to do so by ideas put forward by John Berger in an article "Towards Understanding Peasant Experience"[10]. In this article he differentiates between cultures which envisage future progress and those which envisage a future of survival (what he calls "peasant culture"). The following diagrams taken from the article illustrate the concepts. The worker described these to the group and the subsequent discussion was based upon them.



A culture of progress which envisages future expansion: the future offers ever larger hopes.



A culture of survival which envisages the future as a sequence of repeated acts for survival. Each act pushes a thread through the eye of a needle and the thread is tradition. No overall increase in envisaged.

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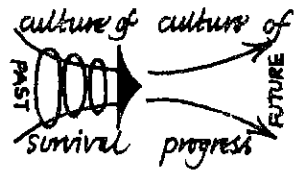
10. Race and Class: A Journal for Black and Third World Liberation. Vol.XIX, Spring 1980 and in New Society issues 29th December 1977 and 5th January 1978.



Comparing the two types of culture by considering their views of the past as well as the future we see they are mirror opposites of one another.

Survival and Progress Models

These models animated the Group. They spoke to each member. They engendered new insights. As I recall it the discussion had two phases. During the first of these, and in a short period, the members shared what they had seen. Principal points made were:

a) They are telling diagrams and help us to understand our experiences and the different groups of people with whom we work.

b) They are somewhat over-simplified pictures because, for example, there are periods when people of all cultures adopt a survival model.

c) They do not illuminate the transition between one model and the other, and this is a critical aspect.

d) Cliches, folk sayings and protective sayings are significantly part of each model (see p57ff). The second phase involved working at a major implication of the diagrams for us as workers and facing up to challenging and rebuking conclusions.

During this phase of the discussion we suddenly saw that often we have worked on one model with people who were working on another without being conscious of what we were doing and its implications. Thus, we have been trying to promote gradual and progressive development with people who are trying to survive (and we became more and more aware that remarkable human development occurs

whilst people are living and working for survival). And this is dysfunctional, and seriously so. Such an approach presumes one of the biggest changes that anyone can make, a change from one world-view to another, and it presumes such a change to be necessary and right; it thinks of development only in terms of one model; it provides no help in assessing whether the transition should be made and, if so, how it can be made; it generates or exacerbates unconscious "model conflict" in people and between them; it can promote changes which cause people to suffer from "model schizophrenia". We, the workers, had not been starting from where they, the people, were. And, because we had been blind to this, we, would-be non-directive workers, have been subtly and unconsciously directive; we have been imposing or super-imposing upon others our "model" for living, changing and developing. Clearly working for change for the better - and promoting theological reflection - involves starting where people are.

All this has profound theoretical, theological and practical implications for would-be Church and community development workers. Implications related equally to the basic concepts underlying development programmes and to the modus operandi of Church and community development workers. Implications for those engaged in promoting change: should they be stimulating and helping people to develop within their given concepts or models or to change them? Implications about the need to get people themselves to consider their models (survival, progress, survival/progress etc) and whether or not they wish to change from one to another; and, if so, just how they are going to do so - tasks demanding reflection and non-directive action. The significance of all this had just never occurred to the members of the CDG before, but once it had they saw ways of improving their working practices.

The Core Group saw the above to be a key insight and to have profound implications. They said:

> "This work - and the other - is taking community development seriously. It sees it not as 'a new section of ministry' but a new perspective on ministry today. People have got a voice, for God's sake and for man's sake we need to wake up to the possibilities here. What we can offer to each other is enormous. The Church does not face up to this".

An incident which occurred earlier in the CDG illustrates just how easy it is for a worker to impose or superimpose his/her concepts or models upon the thinking of others and how difficult not to do so.

The story goes back to the Core Group's reaction to the first attempt the members of the CDG made to classify their approaches and methods (see p17). The Core Group criticised the way in which things had been classified. The CDG accepted this, suggested several ways in which the material could be re-classified and I undertook to do so. I had several goes at it but eventually felt very strongly that it was wrong for me to do it even though I had undertaken to do so. Eventually I wrote the following notes in the record of the discussion.

> "During the discussion at the CDG in November 1976 I undertook to re-classify what in the September 1975 and March 1976 discussions had been described as 'community work models', taking into account what had been said by the Core Group about the need to differentiate between 'approaches', 'methods', 'techniques' and 'areas of work'. The more I thought about this task the more unhappy I became about trying to do it at this stage for two principal reasons.
>
> First, it seems to me a premature exercise. We are not yet agreed as a group about the distinction between models, approaches and methods.

Hopefully a discussion about the notes I have prepared on 'models' will help us to reach an agreement about terminology. We need also to agree on what we mean by 'approach', 'methods', and 'techniques'. Further, as I look again at some of the definitions given they seem to me to imply, assume or include a confusion of 'picturing' or 'disclosure models' - theological and sociological. I think the CDG was feeling this when it was agreed that 'more theological reflection on beliefs and assumptions underlying approaches should precede further sorting out of the community work models so that some pattern could be established for the paper.'

Second, I feel that at this stage I can only attempt to classify these approaches by using the conceptual framework on which I personally have been working for the past few years. This would mean imposing a personal structure upon group thinking which would not take into account the thinking of the whole group and the flux of my own thinking resulting from this theological exercise. Such an act could inhibit us from really exploring the material which is emerging and from discerning any structure or pattern inherent in the experiences and ideas upon which we are reflecting. What seems to me to be highly important is to share openly what we are feeling and to clarify things until we really understand our own ideas and experiences and those of others. Imposing pre-conceived structure is likely to prevent theological reflection or seriously reduce its value. And it is very closely akin to what we think ecclesiastics and theologians do when they insist that new experiences must fit into theological and credal systems formulated in the light of previous experience and established by tradition and history. How easy it is to fall into the same trap!

I feel this is teaching me something about theological reflection - it is a process by which

people explore experience until they are as clear as they can be about its essential and inner meaning in the light of their understanding of Christianity and the accumulated insights of the Church.

The re-classification therefore must, I feel, await subsequent discussion by the CDG of:

- The points made in the preceding section;
- the notes about 'models';
- the underlying assumptions"[11].

When the CDG saw the significance of this, and it took them some time to do so, they exclained:

"We must all formulate our own models. How can we be helped to do this?"

"The important thing is the statement of the situation; models must come out of it, not be applied to it".

"Often we look at the way the Bible has been interpreted rather than at what it is really saying. That is, at the 'models' others have found in the Bible rather than the 'models' it is suggesting to us".

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11. The Core Group's responses to all this were positive. They found the method of recording very helpful. They were very pleased by and most interested in the interaction between the CDG and the Core Group through Harry Salmon and myself and in the way in which this was engendering processes of theological reflection. It was their considered opinion that had I carried out the work I undertook in relation to re-classifying the "community work models" there would have been a breakdown in the process of theological reflection.

"Process is important...it is wrong to try to short-circuit the process of re-adjusting how you see things internally".

4. Some interim conclusions and implications by the CDG

Reflecting on these three experiences of disclosure models the members of the CDG made the following observations.

a. "We must find ways of promoting processes of theological reflection in the situations in which we work. (We must not let the process stop here, we must carry it into our work situations. How could we do this in our groups, in the church and in the community? We must try).

b. We need help in determining how to promote processes of theological reflection.

c. Case histories or 'case studies' could greatly help us and others to understand the processes of theological reflection.

d. The discussions have led us to a point of disclosure which revealed new concepts about the nature of and the need for 'theological reflection': a process based upon getting people - Christians and non-Christians - to re-think the ways in which they see the shape of things".

From this it can be seen that the members of the group put high priority on getting the people with whom they work to reflect theologically. Doing this, they said, could release people in the churches and the community to work more effectively with each other. It would also help the members to understand better the processes of inner and outer change; to internalise the ideas emerging from this reflective exercise; and thus to become better workers and agents of change.

The need for case studies[12]

"But", they asked themselves, "What kind of case studies are required?"

A case study, it was eventually agreed, should describe the way in which an individual or members of a group came to have a different inner view of things likely to influence for the better the way in which he/they act, and it should illustrate how some people reflected to good effect on one or other of their theories or models. It could be a description of a series of meetings or a telling exchange in a formal or informal setting. It could show how some people came to "see" things in a different way, or had come to a change of belief, attitude, approach etc. The change described may appear "small", they said, or it may be difficult to explain because it in intangible: "it may be that the change is experienced in terms of a raised level of consciousness, a feeling of being caught up in a process which generates possibilities and hope not previously experienced". They felt that the smallness of the change did not invalidate a case.

It was decided that at the next session members should share verbally any case studies they had come across. But in the event no one did. The need remains.

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12. Subsequently I have been helped by two papers containing case histories. They are: Theological Development: An Experiment in the Development of Intermediate Theologians in the North East by Margaret Kane, p38. (The William Temple Foundation Occasional Paper No.2); and A Workbook in Experiential Theology by Bruce I Rahtjen (with Bryce Kramer and Ken Mitchell). (p65 duplicated 1977. Printed in the USA, a Publication of Associates in Experiential Theology, Inc 1019 West 70th Street, Kansas City, No.64113).

By the Core Group

Members of the Core Group continued to be most impressed by the work the members of the CDG were doing and urged them to continue. They said that there is no comparable documentation of the processes of theological reflection on church and community development work available. They said they would like the group to consider:

- how to choose models, ie our criteria for selection;
- how to check, verify, modify them;
- how do our models relate to and match what we wish for and what we experience;
- how to keep on "modelling the theory and modifying the action";
- for what do we want and need models.

The CDG looked to the Core Group to promote further work on case studies and to model the various concepts that had emerged. The Core Group agreed that there was need for such a model. They also felt that the work done gave pointers to the kind of "federal model" required. That is a model which:

- will break out of the imprisonment of exclusive models;
- depicts aspects of theory, ideology and faith which indicates their coherence and openness (it is essential to avoid suggestions of self-enclosed systems);
- shows the weighting ascribed to various aspects;
- indicates that gradualism, and not revolution, is the major movement in those processes which lead to change for the better[13]; ("Gradualism" here means gradually but persistently and in a determined way moving towards one's purposes; it is not "doing a bit here and there to keep everyone happy").

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13. cf the section in Chapter 4 in Involvement in Community entitled "Social theory needs to promote a purposeful gradualism".

- brings together in a creative synthesis different approaches towards common ends in the Church and in the World[14].

14. Chapter 1 of Involvement in Community is a powerful commentary on this point. The structure of Involvement in Community exemplifies the approach adopted, it addresses the "Church" and the "World" together, it does not speak of the world over the shoulders of the Church.

MODELLING, REFLECTING AND WORKING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The members of the CDG and the Core Group reflected at various stages on the significance of models and modelling and on the experiences in the CDG of "disclosure models" (see Section V). As we did so we made various observations. What we said is presented below by way of a summary of what we learnt from the exercises in theological reflection.

1. The significance of models and modelling in working for development

Theological models are essentially ways of enabling us to see more clearly the basic shape of things, their connections and their place in the scheme of things. For instance, they help us to grasp and communicate the connections we see or assume between God, the world, the Church and Christ. And they help us to relate all this to our daily lives. From infancy these models are being formed within us in a not dissimilar way to those we have of the physical and moral universe (cf the work of Piaget and Kohlberg)[1]. Some models are directly accessible to consciousness, others are not. These models play a hidden but important part in determining what we think and do and how we react to and respond to life. They are to us spiritually what other models are to us morally and physically.

1. cf The Growth of Understanding in the Child: A Brief Introduction to Piaget's Work, Nalton Isaacs (Ward Lock Educ. Co Ltd., 6th Imp. 1966). One section discusses "the child as inward building". There is a discussion of Piaget's and Kohlberg's work on moral development described and discussed by Wilson, Williams and Sugarman in Introduction to Moral Education (A Penguin Original, Penguin Books, 1967) pp15ff. This book is a report of the Farington Trust.

Members of the CDG said that models were helpful because they aided their own thinking and they helped them to help others to think. "Models", they said, "push people to define where they stand and situations as they see them; they raise issues, clarify links between things and disclose patterns." "Looking at the models", they said, "is very exciting as they disclose new ideas, concepts...they open up new approaches and techniques to getting people thinking". "Models such as the creation/salvation models are useful because they generate discussion, they promote thought and exchanges". But they said that "different kinds of diagrams suit different people". And they were concerned to establish that "the diagram is not the model: it is an inadequate and imperfect representation of what a person sees to be the reality but for many it is easier to handle than verbal models".

Theological modelling is the activity or art of giving meaningful shape to our theological models and re-shaping them the better to fit our experience and what has been learnt from it. This can be done through any form of communication or art form[2]. Here we are thinking of doing so verbally and diagramatically. It can be a personal or group activity. It variously involves people in:

- clarifying, defining and articulating their concepts and models, those that are immediately available to consciousness and those that are not;

- assessing whether or not their models are in line with their world view and with their experiences and what they have learnt from them;

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2. Other ways of theological modelling than those described in this paper are being developed by the Revd Bill Denning. See for instance, his article on "Creative Art and Communication in GAAGE Collage Vol 1, No.3, Spring 1980. Cf also Rahtjen, op cit.

- determining whether or not their models are serving them well;

- deciding what changes, if any, they are going to make and how they are going to make them.

Theological reflection is an important bridge between action and models and between models and action. It facilitates better interaction between models and action and helps to bring and keep them in creative tension with each other. Modelling is one way of reflecting.

All this has important implications for those working for development for several reasons. First, it is important because there are close connections between theological models, attitudes, stance, behaviour and action - they influence each other and therefore the models on which worker and people are working are critical factors in development programmes. Second, it is important because it is necessary for workers to start from where people are. To do this they need to understand how people see things, i.e. the kind of theological models they have. The theological models of worker and people are therefore part of the authority of the working situation. Third, models, modelling and reflection can promote clearer thinking, stimulate more creative discussion, generate new insights, help to establish sound bases for action and development programmes, deepen relationships between people and enable people to work with each other at a greater depth.

Modelling and reflecting, therefore, are as important activities for workers as they are for people.

2. Some difficulties, dangers and their implications

The discussions reveal various difficulties and dangers. They and their implications were considered at different depths. This section contains a summary of the points that emerged.

a. The danger of imposing or superimposing "our" models of life upon others and using them as the point of reference in development programmes, whether this is done unconsciously or not

This point is illustrated and discussed in section V:3 pp42ff What emerges is that those who wish to facilitate theological reflection and to help others to construct their models need, inter-alia, to get people to describe and clarify how they themselves see things, and this involves getting people to realise that they alone have the required information. And, because this is not always easy to do, there is a danger that a worker constructs a model from only part of the information required from others, bridging the gaps (probably unconsciously) from his own models. The result is a hybrid model, part people's and part worker's, which does not adequately represent either people or worker and could seriously misrepresent both. If it is not recognised as such it can inhibit rather than promote creative thought both in individuals and in groups.

Further it is all too easy to miss what people really think by submitting to them models which are different from their own but which, because they are attractive, distract them from considering their own. Getting them to really work at their own models and then at those of others requires non-directive skills which enable people first to think reflectively and critically about their own thinking, then about that of others and then about the implications of what they have "seen", and there could be implications for changing their model.

b. The danger of confusing models and the evidence for them

Models are not reality itself. They are based on what is considered to be reliable evidence. Experience, personal and collective, constitutes an important part of the evidence. Differentiating between the evidence for models and the models themselves help us to maintain the clarity and flexibility by which we can change our models when either new evidence or new insights indicate it is necessary to do so.

c. The danger that models are not used as tentatively as they need to be

Each model, the Core Group felt, should be self-destroying at a particular point: "a model is only an aid for truth until it becomes an enemy of it". Models can be too "tight" and implicitly or explicitly hint that they have clarified what is not clear. No model or concept or theory can ever completely capture reality; reality is always elusive in its subtlety.

d. Protective sayings and cliches have their uses but they can prevent and inhibit theological reflection.

Considering the need for case studies led to discussions at two sessions about some difficulties members experience in getting people to reflect theologically. These difficulties are associated with what they described as "protective sayings" and "cliches", e.g. "Oh well these things are sent to try us, aren't they?"

The group felt that sayings, texts, cliches and religious formulae have a wide range of uses. They are used, howbeit unconsciously, to manage a wide range of experiences: especially those which are painful or problematic to people or which appear to conflict with beliefs they do not wish to have questioned or undermined. They are "protective walls" or "bulwarks" against difficult philosophical or theological implications of people's experiences and the realities of life. They offer protection which people need if they are to survive the full force of the implications of their experiences. "They ward off God, the Devil and the implications of life". They are useful in making, maintaining and building up good human relations: "In greetings and general conversation", the group said, "they carry a lot of traffic beyond their face value".

Not surprisingly, therefore, people are suspicious of attempts to analyse them or to probe the experiences in relation to which they are used: such processes may render the sayings ineffective without providing alternative

ways of dealing with the experiences. They prevent enquiry by statements such as "It doesn't do to think too deeply about things, you never know where you will get to". In fact this is a protective saying against reflection.

The Group felt that often the Church actually screens people from the reality of their experience (and therefore from God). Thus it prevents people from all the growth that occurs through proper and appropriate exposure to experience: such exposure is creative when it is at the rate at which people can cope with it. They suggested that the Church over a wide area does erect "protective walls" through its attitudes and practices related to theological reflection. It does this in several ways. First, by acting on the assumption that it is the responsibility and prerogative of a select few to reflect theologically and to do so on behalf of the Church as a whole. Indicators of just how this has become normative are to be found, members of the group said, in the way in which their members expect the minister himself to do all the theological reflection. Second, by treating ordinary people who are theologically competent as though they were not. Third, by inhibiting, discouraging and penalising people from coming to their own theological conclusions when these are at variance with contemporary orthodoxy. Fourth, by failing to provide an ethos within which people can reflect and the aids that people require when they want to reflect theologically. In short they have failed to take seriously the need (whether or not it is a want) for all people to reflect theologically. In terms of human growth and the development of theological competence this is dysfunctional.

On the other hand, members of the group saw that protective sayings, cliches, etc., can provide most effective openings for exchanges which can promote theological reflection. This can be illustrated by the example given earlier, "Oh well, these things are sent to try us, aren't they?" A rhetorical question which anticipates a murmur of approval. A response which has frequently generated a theological discussion is: "I do not know whether they are sent to try us but they certainly do try us when they come". Various examples of this kind were discussed.

Members began to see various ways of promoting such discussions as they went about their work and ministry.

Again, Dr Atherton had some pertinent comments to make when this report was in draft form on the discussion about case studies (p50 and on the above which evolved from it).

> "Regarding this section on the use of personal case studies...I wonder how this would actually work out? ...Will people talk about their view of life just like that - or do they need to be encouraged to talk about, for example, how they see unemployment - and through this, be enabled to see their preferences, value-systems, pre-suppositions? Of course, as soon as you do help them to clarify these things, you rouse them to a level or order or reality which they didn't possess before (you introduce a coherence alien to most people). We do know that this coherence can be a most important factor in achieving change.
>
> I note that no-one produced even verbal case studies by the next meeting. If they can't do it, how do they expect others to? This suggests to me that there was something quite radically wrong with their conclusions.
>
> In the light of the above, I think the section on protective sayings is a diversion from the root of the matter. It reveals that, useful as their thinking was, it had not really got hold of the problem (otherwise, for example, they would have done their case studies, and would have been able to get others to do them).
>
> It could almost be that in our rightful concern to reflect theologically we have generated a discussion which in the end is not that dissimilar from the protective sayings and cliches of ordinary folk. (I get little glimpses of the experiences and realities of life)".

A parenthetical note on method

The paragraphs in this section (ie in (d)), follow closely a record of the CDG session on the subject which I wrote, but only with difficulty. I included the following note in the record:

> "It is only after subsequent and careful reflection on the full notes of the discussion that I have come to the conclusion that this is what was being discussed. It was, I feel sure, implicit but unclear in the discussion. But, and again only after reflection and after struggling to write these notes on the discussion, the examples used are not as telling to me now as they seemed to be during the discussion. For instance, there was some speculation about the adverse effect of the euphemisms used for death, such as "she has gone to live with Jesus". One of the points made was that this "lets people off the hook related to making doctrines of eternity". Again there was some speculation about whether the "prayers of the Church" are, in the sense we are using the terms, protective walls or bulwarks. If they are they can generate a false sense of security which emanates from the feeling that members are "ringed by the Church". It seems to me that we did not penetrate far enough into these matters".

Subsequently, the members of the CDG said that the record represented accurately what they were saying.

The Core Group[3] made several observations on these discussions and the record of them. They noted an "important methodological point which goes beyond method" in the worker's note above. The point made by the worker is that it was only after careful reflection on the discussion, and whilst struggling to write it up, that he became clear what the discussion was essentially about. The members

1. Meeting, May 1979.

of the Core Group said that some things will just "not be thought out unless someone is charged with the responsibility for doing so and telling others what he has concluded". The worker "captured what emerged and encapsulated it" - this they felt was an "excellent example of the collaborative, creative function of a non-directive worker". "Workers", they concluded, "can increase the dependency of people upon themselves or, and this is what is needed, establish and develop collaborative, creative working relationships. Doing this demands, inter alia, sensitivity and prudence".

e. Theory is needed, but the need for it, its nature and its uses are not generally appreciated and understood

This became clear through some discussions in the CDG on theory and subsequent discussions about them with Dr Atherton.

The discussion in the CDG on theory was stimulated by comments in the Core Group about the need for theory as well as models ("models are half-way houses in theory building"). Reference was made to the need for theory and the dangers attaching to rallying around a particular theory[4].

The discussion stimulated me and when I repeated it to the CDG it animated them. We began to see that the points made throw light upon experiences we have

4. The following quotation was referred to: "Those experienced in work must take up the study of theory and must read seriously; only then will they be able to systematise and synthesise their experience and raise it to the level of theory, only then will they not mistake their partial experience for universal truth and not commit empiricist errors!" (Foreign Language Press, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung Peking 1967 2nd edition, p308).

frequently had when discussing with Church leaders and members schemes and projects which involve them doing things with people whose ideology is significantly different from theirs. In such discussions we said, "The Church people feel uncomfortable and inhibited from giving themselves completely. We now see that in part it is because 'theory' is very important to them, similarity of 'theory' is ground on which they meet other people with confidence. We felt that it might be part of our insecurity as human beings which drives us into 'theory camps'". (Later, the Core Group said that "things in the Church are often less exciting than elsewhere because members are trying to keep things under theory control and therefore they are less open to experience".)

This discussion showed that some members of the group were equating a "theory" either with the phenomena the theory sought to explain or with the experience of the phenomena. This led the group to see that theories are interpretations of an experience, they are neither the experience (although they may communicate the essence of it) nor are they the things human and divine which constitute it (although they may become so inextricably connected with things that they seem to be a part of it). Theories, therefore, we said, are useful but limited: it is dangerous to treat them as absolutes or to confuse them with that which they seek to explain. We now saw with sadness how Christians had argued, fallen out, died and killed because they held different theories of the same event or experience and confused theory with the experience.

The inescapable conclusion is that those who wish to work effectively with people and especially with Christians need:

- to understand the nature of "theories";
- to use them without confusing them with that which they seek to interpret or explain;
- to be able to get people with widely different religious, cultural and educational backgrounds to do the same.

Later in January 1980 one member of the Core Group, Dr Atherton, commenting on this paper in draft, had some most telling comments to make which have important implications for future work and for training Church and community development workers. They are:

> "I am not sure about some of these assertions - that theories are not the experience, etc, that they should not be treated as absolutes. I think that how a person or group sees things, and explains things becomes a contribution to, and therefore part of, reality. That is why (among other reasons) people have died and killed for them. It is not therefore enough to be sad that Christians have died or killed for theories - this shows a too personalist and unpolitical, and indeed unrealistic, approach to life. (I almost expect Christian community workers to say something like this!) I therefore question:
>
> - whether you understand "the nature of theories";
> - your understanding of the relation between theories and what they seek to explain;
> - whether you can therefore embark upon an inter-theory dialogue from such a defective base".

This is an important comment which along with the work done on theory in preparing Involvement in Community (cf. Chapter 4) led to the conclusion that I need to get a better understanding of the place of theory in Church and community development work.

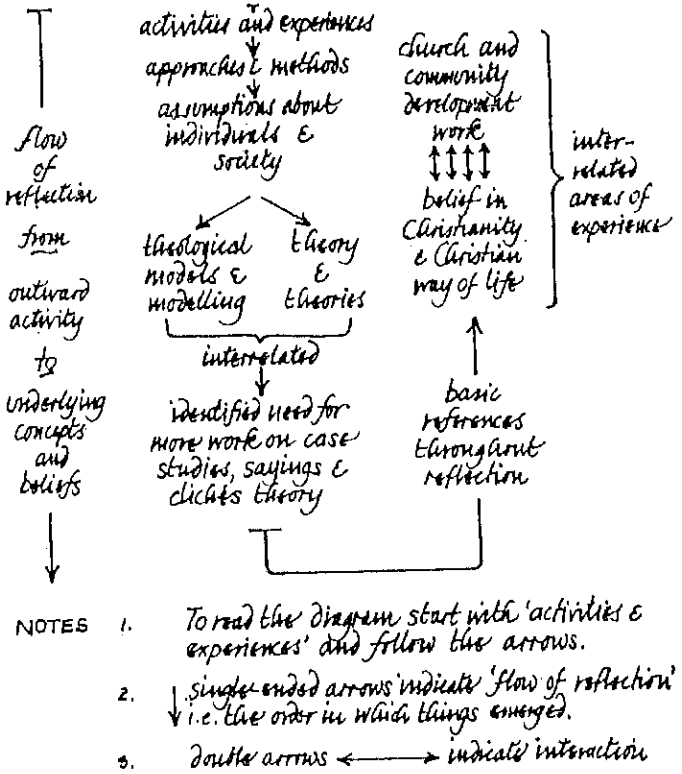
3. A modelling process

A modelling process which could help to avoid or overcome the dangers referred to in (2) above is:

a. clarification of models, first those of the people, then as required, those of others including the workers;
b. reflection on each and all of the models;
c. determine conclusions and implications;
d. revision of models if necessary.

4. Reflective processes discerned

As the work proceeded it was difficult to see just where the group was going, but in retrospect a process can be discerned. The members of the CDG started with an examination of activities, approaches and methods. They did not find this enlightening or satisfying and started to examine underlying assumptions. Again they did not find this enlightening or satisfying. This led to exciting discoveries about models and theological modelling, and discussions about theory and theories. From models and theories they moved to "protective sayings" and "cliches". These they saw can influence various processes of reflection, they can impede them or they can facilitate them. All this is best expressed diagramatically as follows.



A DIAGRAM SHOWING THE REFLECTIVE PROCESSES DISCERNED IN THE CDG'S THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

5. Skills and resources required

What then can we learn from this exercise about the skills and resources required to promote theological reflection in Church and community development work?

First, there are the technical skills and knowledge of theologians. Without the Core Group's contribution the CDG would not have been able to carry out the work they did. The skills and resources of that group constituted a key contribution to the exercise. The need is particularly well expressed by Margaret Kane:

> "A particular type of theologian is needed for this kind of theology. Theologians for this process must be well-equipped in academic theology, for without that the process could become simply an exercise in group dynamics. More than this is however needed. They must be able to identify the theological questions within secular life. They must be able to help people to see the relation of faith to their day-to-day concerns, and they must have the skills and the belief in people that enables them to draw from others their latent gifts, insight, faith and ability to express themselves. These theologians are not primarily lecturers, though they must be able to present unfamiliar material in comprehensible ways. First and foremost the theologians that are needed are those who can enable others to think theologically. Their skills are distinctive and we therefore give them distinctive names. We will call these people "enabling" or "intermediate" theologians[5]."

Second, there are the skills, gifts and graces required to initiate, promote and maintain collaborative action between community development workers, people and

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5. Theological Development, William Temple Foundation Occasional Papers, No.2, 1980, p35f.

theologians in order that theologians can help community development workers and community development workers can help theologians.

Third, there are the community development or human relations skills, and especially the ability to act non-directively when trying to get people to think for themselves - either about their own ideas or about your own or about those of others[6]. And there is the ability to act as a go-between. The Core Group underlined what had been said about this need. Then they said that "this indicates the time-scale required for this kind of reflection and the need of trust between people in groups. It has far-reaching theoretical and practical implications".

Fourth, there are the abilities and skills required to "model" human experience and thought and to help others to do the same. This can be done verbally or diagramatically. In either case an understanding of "models" is a pre-requisite. Clearly promoting ideological and theological reflection is part of the Christian's distinctive contribution in work with people - in the church and in the community. It is of vital importance because inner models have such a powerful causal effect, for good and evil, upon individuals, groups and communities. Promoting processes that lead to more and more people creatively re-modelling their thought and experience is a key to development and progress in Church and society, and especially if those processes allow people with very different views and approaches to do so together in constructive ways.

Fifth, the ability to record discussions is necessary for our purpose.

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6. Theological Development, p4, 12f, 28ff.

SOME IMPLICATIONS

One of the things that this report demonstrates is that working for development in the Church and the community leads naturally, compulsively and inevitably to thinking about underlying beliefs. Therefore development work, properly understood and practised, has ideological and theological as well as pragmatic aspects. Christians, ordained and lay, working in the fields of Church and community work are struggling theologically with very difficult questions about Church and society. They desperately need help and support from the Church and its theologians if they are going to make their distinctive contributions - help and support which by and large they are just not receiving.

The members of the CDG themselves had unmet theological needs as a consequence of working for the inter-related development of Church and community. And those needs were the starting point for the work discussed in this report. This report describes what, with the help of the Core Group, they were able to do to meet these needs through theological models and modelling, and what they were not able to do. It also points to what more needs to be done. Some of it the members can do on their own; some of it they cannot do on their own because by its very nature it requires collaboration between Church and community development workers (lay and ordained), theologians and those from different theological schools with overall responsibility for managing the affairs of the Church. That is, it is a collaborative theological exercise between operatives, theologians and ecclesiastics. And basically this involves different kinds of skills: technical theological skills; community development and human relations skills; and educational skills, as is described above.

It is my hope that the work done by the William Temple Foundation and by the CDG of the Methodist Church will make four basic contributions. First, that it will help

more and more people involved in Church and community development work to acquire and to practise the skills required to help people to engage in theological modelling and reflecting. Second, that it will stimulate more collaborative action in tackling the theological issues concerned with Church and community development work. Third, that it will promote more sharing of experiences of theological reflection. Fourth, that it will increasingly lead to more information being made available in a manageable form to Church and community development workers/operatives (lay and ordained) about how individuals and communities acquire their models of life, Church and society and the effects their models have upon them and upon the ways in which they live and work in the Church and in the society. Such developments could lead to considerable improvements in the practice and theory of Church and community work and greater effectiveness in ministry and mission.

Therefore, this report on the work done and its implications is a basis for discussion and for further work; it is not a treatise on the subject.

APPENDIX

MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP AND THE CORE GROUP

Members of the Community Development Group

Revd Deryck Collingwood	Methodist Minister. Chairman of the London North East District.
Revd Graham H Fawcett	Methodist Minister. London Highgate Circuit. (Member of the group from 1976-78).
Revd F Barrie Heafford	Methodist Minister. Superintendent of the Aylesbury Circuit.
Mr Alan A Jacka	During the period covered by this report, Secretary to the Board of Lay Training. Previously worked for the National Children's Home.
Revd John Lane	During the period covered by this report, a Methodist Minister, Warden of the Peckham Settlement and later on the National Staff of the YWCA.
Revd Dr George Lovell	Methodist Minister. Convenor of the CDG (see below).
Revd John Peaden	Methodist Minister. Community Worker, South Sheffield Inner City Community Project.
Revd Joseph Rimmer	Methodist Minister. Superintendent of the Shildon Circuit.
Sister Jean Robinson	Development and Training Officer of the Methodist Church Division of Ministries - to 1980.

Revd Harry Salmon	Methodist Minister (see below)
Miss Catherine Widdicombe	Roman Catholic. Member of the Grail. Staff member of Avec, a Service Agency for Church and Community Work.
Mrs Mollie Corlett	Methodist. Member of the London (Harrow) Circuit. (Recorder).

Members of the Core Group

Revd Tony Addy	Assitant Director, William Temple Foundation. Previously Secretary, Community Work Resource Unit of the British Council of Churches.
Revd Dr John Atherton	Joint Director, William Temple Foundation. Member Church of England Board for Social Responsibility. A main concern is with young unskilled workers in the inner city.
Revd Alan Gawith	Director of Social Work, Manchester Diocesan Board for Social Responsibity. Developing new patterns of community-based work within the diocese.
Revd Dr George Lovell	Director, Avec, A Service Agency for Church and Community Work. Author of several works including Churches and Communities: An Approach to Development in the Local Church.

Revd Prof David Jenkins	Joint Director, William Temple Foundation. Professor of Theology, University of Leeds.
Revd Harry Salmon	Lecturer in Community Work, Westhill College of Education. Chairman, the Association of Community Workers. Previously at Coventry Community Work Centre.
Fr Austin Smith	Co-founder Passionist Inner-City Project in Liverpool. Vice-Provincial, Passionist Order. He resides in Liverpool 8, and is part-time chaplain to Liverpool prison.
Mr Richard Tetlow	Lecturer in Social and Community Work, Lancaster University. Previously for nine years living and working in Southwark and involved in teaching, youth work, social case work and community work.
Revd Dr Gerry Wheale	Rector St James' Moss Side since 1962. Director, Moss Care Housing Association. Chairman/founder member of Longsight/Moss Side Community Project. Research Fellow, William Temple Foundation.
Revd Clifford Wright	Vicar of St Luke, Camberwell from 1967.