

## FOLLOWING PROF. ANDREW CHANDLER

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Andrew. We have some time for questions. Whilst you think of your own, may I ask one that occurred to me on re-reading this report? It relates to the social context of the time. I felt that the *Catholicity* report could possibly have been written in 1910, not 1947, but I could not imagine it being written in 1990 or 2000. You are a historian. Why?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: One of the dangers of being historian is that one is in danger sometimes of facing unhistorical questions! I think that a crucial element within the intellectual fabric of *Catholicity* is a response to particular contexts. I agree that in many ways the superstructure of the thing could belong to 1910, though I suspect it would have been more vigorously written, and there would have been greater opportunity for slightly more high-flown prose, but I think that the significance of *Catholicity* is not confined within its immediate context, though still owe as great deal to it – and that context shows specific signs that were very much those of the late 1940s.

I think Gregory Dix himself, who may have been dogmatic in all kinds of ways but whose correspondence reads very attractively, was someone who found the discussion over the Church of South India wounding. I think it is also important to recognise that Fisher found that the debate over South India actually drew out of Anglo-Catholic opinion something that needed to be faced, and needed – at that particular point – to be converted into something creative.

So, whilst the contours of the argument may belong to quite a broad chronology, the specific phrases and specific priorities that emerge – and some of the perspectives too – are undoubtedly contextual. The dense chronological pattern between 1945 and 1950 is, I think, very present. You can sense it in almost all the documents produced at that time.

DR COLIN PODMORE: You spoke a little about the composition of the group. Was it Fisher who chose them? Who did choose them, and on what basis? Also, can you put a bit of colour into what you said about the diversity of the group? Which traditions do we see represented here, and who represents them?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: Thank you very much. It is an important question, but a really firm answer is very difficult. It does not emerge with any clarity in Ramsey's papers, or in Fisher's. Dix is more problematic in archival terms altogether. There is no question that the essential agent is Dix – not Fisher at all. It is difficult to bury a sense that Fisher felt that, if he gave these people something like this to get on with, they would perhaps keep out of trouble in other ways. He was perfectly content for them to recruit each other. But beyond that, the intricacies of selection are, to my mind at least, unknown, at least at the moment. So I'm afraid my answer to your question – which is important one – is unsatisfactory.

THE REVD DR ANDREW DAVISON: I shall be speaking later on, when I will say something about the sense of a Protestant/Renaissance split that the Report suggests; but I wonder what sorts of documentary evidence we could turn to, to discover where various ideas like that came from. Are there working papers? Can we tell from correspondence? Can we work out what the sources were?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: Yes, there are working papers – for example, those preserved in the Ramsey archive. If one takes the example of a correlation between the Renaissance and Liberalism, we can attribute that really very firmly, not least because of Dix’s correspondence to V. A. Demant, which is the point of origin as far as we can judge. The listing of names is always rather a problem because, whilst responsibility is a shared thing, you never really get a very strong sense of who directly produced which particular idea – even in working papers – so I think it is one of those cases that answers to the following generalisation. If you appoint a committee or a body of any kind, the people who go onto it will automatically define what is written. There is no question of that at all.

The Free Church leaders, in their response, benefit from exactly the same thing. I have often asked the same questions about their report. There, the rules of the game are a little clearer, because there is a great deal of discussion about Luther, and you can see which members of the group are producing it. Incidentally, I have a sense that the consultancy role claimed by Franz Hildebrandt, for example, in that particular case managed to suggest not only a greater precision in Luther’s scholarship, but also a sense that the Liberalism of the nineteenth century owed far more to the enlightenment than anything that went further back. The enlightenment altogether is very obscure in all three reports. It is very odd.

But I am beginning to stray from your main point. I think the chances of deconstruction, if I can use that horrible word, do exist, but on a modest and partial scale.

MR JAMES PERCIVAL: So, in a broad brush way, would it be fair to say that Anglican-Catholicism was reasonably united at the time of this report, in a way that it was not by 1990?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: There are people here better qualified than I am to answer that, but there is no doubt that it was not coherent and united. Fisher was vulnerable to criticism for thinking, too easily really, that there was something coherent that could be called ‘Anglo-Catholic’ without any further definition at all.

What I would say is that Anglo-Catholicism, and those sympathetic to it within the Church of England, were to be found in greater numbers in 1947; and with greater numbers comes diversity. It was therefore part of a state of near prosperity that a wider range of opinions could be summoned to the feast. But it would be quite wrong to suggest that the *Catholicity* report was expressive of a mind that was unified from the first, and which represented a coherent understanding of a movement at large within the Church. It is much more a meeting of individual minds within a broad spectrum, and with shared concerns and loyalties than anything we might now identify as a narrow, purposeful party document.

It is important also to recognise that it is an intellectual essay. It is not a report. Such a distinction, I think, should be observed with seriousness in the context of a meeting like ours.

MRS MARGERY ROBERTS: I hope this is a historical question, Andrew, but one cannot help but notice that the make-up of the group of 1947 was entirely male, and that only one member was lay. Does this reflect the make-up of the appropriate thinkers in Anglo-Catholicism at that time? One thinks of people like Dorothy L Sayers, who might have been invited. Could you say a word about that?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: I think there is no doubt that all three reports are entirely male preserves. It would be an utter mistake to suggest that there were not women who were capable of participating or interested in participating. To some extent, if one really wanted to get under the skin of that, one would need a kind of archive which has yet to occur in my thinking and working, which relates to our earlier point about selection of people. In that sense, because we do not have that material, it is all too easy to relax into obvious generalisations that are clearly available to us. What we have, I think, is an expression of a particular world which is largely consistent, not only with the schools of thought that might be put together by other parts of other churches, or the Church of England itself, but really pretty much everything in British political, civic and administrative life in the same period. We cannot deny that these people – all of them – are resting on certain assumptions which produce realities of that kind. Beyond that, I think I can be no more specific and, I'm afraid, no more satisfactory.