

Recollection Lectures, Trinity Term, 2018, Pusey House, Oxford

Lectures take place at 4 pm in the Ursell Room with tea and coffee from 3:30 in the Hood Room.

2 May 2nd Week- **V.A. Demant and Christian Sociology**

Andrew Louth, *Professor Emeritus of Patristic and Byzantine Studies in the Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University and Rector of the Orthodox Parish of St Cuthbert and St Bede, Durham.*

Vigo Auguste Demant ended his career as the Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and Canon of Christ Church, retiring in 1971 after 22 years at Christ Church. His career had been unusual: the son of a Comtean positivist father, a pillar of the Church of Humanity in Newcastle, and a Danish mother, he first read Engineering at Armstrong College (later the University of Newcastle), and trained for the Unitarian ministry at Manchester College, Oxford. He then studied anthropology at Exeter College, embraced Anglicanism, and was received into the Church of England by Bishop Gore, who also ordained him. He was drawn into the intellectual Anglican circles—largely lay and of Catholic inclination—that included such people as T.S. Eliot (who became a close friend) and Dorothy L. Sayers. Out of these circles grew what came to be known as the ‘Christendom Movement’ and Demant’s ‘Christian sociology’, which aimed at being orthodox in theology but radical in its analysis of society. Demant sought to present a Christian vision of society. During the Second World War, and William Temple’s all-too-short reign as Archbishop of Canterbury (1942–4), there were high hopes that these Christian ideals would inform the reconstruction of British society once the war ended.

We shall look at Demant’s understanding of society, at once theologically driven and prophetic, to be found especially in his book, *The Religious Prospect* (1939), and his 1949 Scott Holland lectures, published as *Religion and the Decline of Capitalism* (1952). Although largely forgotten nowadays, Demant still has plenty to teach us.

16 May 4th week - **Christian and Scientific Knowing: Recollecting a Forgotten Dimension**

Andrew Moore, , *Regent’s Park College, Oxford.*

It is often thought that science offers the most secure route to reliable knowledge of reality and that therefore Christian and scientific ways of knowing are in a competitive relationship. I shall argue that, from both scientific and theological perspectives, that view is mistaken, and that it would be good for theology and for science if the Church were to retrieve and to put more confidence in its own epistemic heritage.

30 May 6th week - **Devotion, Real and Stimulated: The Religious Poetry of George Herbert and John Donne**

Paul Oliver, *Paul Oliver writes and lectures on the intersection between early modern literature and religion. His latest book, Donne’s God, will be published by Routledge in May.*

The first editions of the poems of George Herbert and John Donne were published posthumously in 1633. Both collections were instantly successful. But the differences between their contents are far more striking than the similarities. In a wide-ranging lecture Paul Oliver will argue that, while Herbert may justly lay claim to the title of Britain’s greatest devotional poet, Donne wrote a new kind of religious verse which reflected the theological ferment of his period.

13 June 8th week - **A radical liberal: Dean Stanley of Westminster**

John Witheridge, *Chaplain to the Queen & Honorary Chaplain Christ Church, Oxford.*

Arthur Penrhyn Stanley was a leading Victorian Broad Churchman. Born in the year of Waterloo, he was sent to Rugby School where Dr Arnold was Headmaster. Stanley idolised Arnold (and wrote his biography) and Arnold exercised a powerful influence on the rest of Stanley’s life.

After twenty-two years in Oxford, and seven as a canon of Canterbury, Stanley married Queen Victoria’s favourite lady-in-waiting and was appointed Dean of Westminster. He made the Abbey the national shrine it is today, and turned the deanery into a salon whose members included Disraeli, Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, Dickens and Kingsley.

Stanley was a virtuous and extraordinary man whose liberal views embroiled him in the many controversies of the Victorian Church. He fought hard to defend the comprehensiveness of the Church of England, and its members’ freedom to follow a variety of beliefs and practices.