THE ROLE OF CONFLICT

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ONE OF MY FAVOURITE OCCUPATIONS is to listen to different people tell the story of 'groups I have known'. Practically, it is an asset for me in other situations where I work as facilitator, and speculatively I find it fascinating to see how an individual's personality and life experience means that each will perceive the same event differently. From one, I will hear that it was necessary to establish the different perceptions each participant held before a common stance could be reached; from another I will hear that 'Nobody understood my point of view and I was overruled'; while from another: 'We've had so many conflicts in our group, you wouldn't believe'.

A fair proportion of my work as facilitator is spent trying to create an environment in groups where understanding can be maximized, conflicts unravelled, and decisions made, and yet in my personal life I find conflict stressful and have to work hard to address such situations creatively rather than reactively. It seems to me that I am not alone in this experience; conflict *is* demanding. For some, though, it is ultimately rewarding, and whilst no one is a stranger to conflict, everyone would probably rather be without it. Conflict is overt or covert, and may at the same time be acknowledged or unacknowledged. Unacknowledged conflict may be quite obvious to the observer, while those involved may have a feeling that all is not as it should be, but lack the awareness, or even the confidence, to name the experience as conflict. Sometimes unacknowledged conflict is so subtle that even the observer may not recognize it, and then it is highly dangerous, for power games are being played out which, for one reason or another, participants cannot name.[1] But without exception conflict, when handled sensitively, is fruitful. So what are the causes of conflict in Christian groups? Why is it so difficult? Is it more difficult in the religious group than in its secular counterpart? If so, for what reasons? Do aspects of conflict, or conflict-handling strategies within secular groups have anything to teach participants in Christian groups? In what ways are the roles of prophet and deviant similar? How can the voice of the prophet be heard? How can the clamour and wily ways of manipulative conflict in such groups be identified, challenged and stilled? Does one have to be Superman to do it? What conflict-handling skills

might one reasonably develop? Are there ways of ritualizing conflict which may help groups to address it more creatively? Many questions, I know. But by asking them we may in fact be drawing a 'map' of the subject area which will stimulate reflection on aspects of conflict, assist in deepening understanding, and thus arrive at some practical ways of handling conflict in the Christian group setting.

In what follows I wish to fill in some of the detail of the map as I have discovered, and am discovering, the terrain. First it seems appropriate to examine some of the causes of conflict and how each may affect the way groups function, particularly in discerning and decision-making. Much of this may be equally applicable to both religious and secular groups, although the examples to be used spring mainly from the former.[2] The article will then consider any salient comparisons between conflict as experienced in secular groups and in their Christian counterparts. The final section will review the map, and explore ways of handling conflict in groups and examine some practical skills which individuals and groups may develop to assist this.

Sources of conflict

I consider that most forms of group conflict are related in some way to one of four overlapping types of conflict, which will be addressed here. They are:

- the existence of unvoiced, or unwritten, assumptions about the nature of the group and resulting ambiguity and stress;
- the nature of affiliation in groups and the type of commitment to the group which that engenders;
- the difficulty of making an accurate diagnosis of the real causes of conflict and the resulting propensity for 'sticking-plaster' solutions which only address external manifestations of conflict;
- conflict relating to minority voices and uses, or abuses, of power within the group.

Unvoiced, or unwritten, assumptions. One of the most significant sources of conflict in groups is related to unvoiced, or unwritten, assumptions about the nature of the group. For example, at face value, the work choices of individuals may have, at root, an economic motivation. But Maslow's *hierarchy of needs*[3] illustrates a range of other needs and motivations which influence the individual's choice. Applied to any group situation, then, a group is likely to comprise individuals whose purposes for joining, whether conscious or not, are

in conflict with those of other members. Combined with the group's advertised purposes, this will amount to a huge range of differences. Of itself this is not a problem, but experience reveals that if the differences are not revealed, then conflict results. I may feel wary of revealing my true motivation to other group members – it may look more self-seeking than altruistic – and instead hope that nobody notices. Fudging like this is stressful,[4] and retards group growth, but is perhaps more common than we think. In discussion with students I was teaching about the nature of motivation and its effects in church groups,[5] we concluded that, for many, belief in the gospel did not appear to be a prime motivation for church membership, and that perhaps other elements of Maslow's hierarchy of needs carried more weight. The question then arose: knowing this, how did one minister to individuals, let alone entire congregations?

There is another side to the question of group conflict caused by unwritten assumptions about the nature of the group. A group may be set up with acknowledged and clear purposes, unquestioned by the membership because there is no perceived need to question them. An example might be that of a pre-Vatican II religious community. The group's mission was abundantly clear to members and non-members alike; identity was afforded by a common ministry and uniform dress. Take that away, as happened in the largely external changes following the promulgation of the Council documents, and members begin to realize just how unclear things are. Non-members likewise no longer perceive what the group is about. Perhaps in this example the real truth may be that identity was never clear, but it was believed to be so because of external identifying factors. For members, the ambiguity which arises is too painful to verbalize, and there may be a fear that the individual who does so will be laughed out of court. So people continue with daily life, pretending that each is fully conscious of, and in agreement with, the mission of the group. Here the conflict is unacknowledged and subtly wears away any sense of common purpose. Now abuses of the system can take root, and conflict may remain under cover, or emerge, as individuals try to 'play the system' and have their own needs fulfilled, or the direction of the group swung to their own advantage. One school I knew always included in its advertisements for staff the clause: 'Applicants must be in sympathy with the ethos of the school'. This helped to reduce the risk of such abuses occurring; groups I know who have experienced them have paid the price.

The nature of affiliation. A second significant manifestation of conflict in groups relates to the nature of affiliation within the group.

Within a group there are likely to be different degrees of affiliation, and some groups, particularly religious groups, may be tightly affiliated, others loosely. A result of loose affiliation is that conflict is less emotionally demanding and more likely to be raised and addressed; in tightly affiliated groups the converse is true. This latter will require a whole learning process in order to enable the group to articulate its conflicts, accept where individuals may be threatened by them, and make adjustments and decisions in a sensitive and creative way. Additionally, loosely affiliated groups have more of a shifting, short-term membership, whilst tight affiliation produces a stable population for whom affiliation binds more tightly than disaffection looses. A dual consequence here is that addressing conflict is more difficult, and some members remain part of the group when common sense indicates they would be happier elsewhere.

Accurate diagnosis. Diagnosing the source of the conflict is problematic in some instances: just as in medicine the 'presenting problem' is not always the root of the matter, so it is with groups. I have known groups struggle for many months, even years, with a problem which is effectively absorbing the energy needed to tackle the underlying cause. Often if a group can engage in a kind of collective lateral thinking, a creative solution can be found[6] which propels them forward into a new awareness and way of relating. In some instances, the problem is something the group is not facing; in others it is simply not facing the existence of conflict amongst the members, from whatever source. Whichever it is, energy is dissipated in pretending everything is OK, or in addressing the tip of the iceberg and later wondering why the problem is still there. One group, with whom I had worked for some years, had been struggling with avoidance of any public acknowledgement that the future of a large property for which they were responsible needed examining. Privately, I had heard on a number of occasions that this was the one thing which, were a radical solution to be aired and risked, would free life within the group, but no one would say it in public: it was thought akin to apostasy. Consequently, over the years, various remedies had been tried, but they were little more than 'sticking plaster' solutions and the central problem remained unchanged. Finally, after careful before-meeting preparation and reflection by all, the group was invited to dream and verbalize a range of energizing visions for the future. Each of these, to the surprise of all, addressed the root problem in some way. Looking around at the group, I had the impression that there was a subconscious amazement that, firstly, the problem had come out into the open and that, secondly,

nothing had crumbled, no explosion had taken place and they were all still there, vastly relieved. Even though the next steps in agreeing on action and implementing it were still delicate, the nature of the conflict was changed by the acknowledgement of the real problem, and the energy which this released.

Minority voices and power in the group. Testing the authenticity of minority voices in groups always presents a problem for group members, although the reasons vary. Individuals actually spend a significant part of their thinking-time trying in some way to make sense of events which have just occurred. Try out the formula: 'How can I know what I think until I see what I say?'[7] and see how it matches experience. In other words, the likely sequence is: an individual speaks, sees, then thinks, or realizes, what their interpretive stance is towards a given series of events. Some form of appreciation – an evaluative summation in relation to that particular event – is a probable conclusion of this sort of reflection process. This stance forms the basis on which future events will, retrospectively, be evaluated, or the map thus enacted be revised.[8] This form of *retrospective sensemaking* is powerful because it represents how the subject, a biased evaluator, has appreciated events at a personal level and in the lives of others, in a way that is now protected from contradiction.[9]

Translate this into a group situation and the permutations are enormous, with wide-ranging implications for the context of group conflict and the presence of minority voices. In the public arena the first steps of the sensemaking recipe ('How can I know what I think until I see what I say?') may be enacted but it is less likely that the whole will be rounded off by an act of appreciation.[10] It would be more accurate to describe the public, collective sensemaking process as 'argument'. Perhaps we have come to limit the use of this term in daily speech. Thus, it may be useful here to exchange the notion of argument as conflict which is, in essence, *win–lose*, with the meaning which takes argument to be reasoned discourse, as in an academic paper. Therefore, to develop a *social argument* need not indicate existence of a *win–lose* situation. Rather, it articulates a position in which there is inherent contradiction[11] without necessarily implying the articulation of anger in an aggressive way. We know to our cost that aggression usually inhibits the articulation of social argument (and thus reasoned conflict resolution), partly because it tends to close communication, but also because it diminishes the quality of argument through the narrowed attention which is the result of anger arousal.[12]

The significance of all this in the context of Christian group conflict and discernment lies in the role of conflict as group sensemaking – or

as something which happens when groups engage in the activity of sensemaking, which for me is one of the principal functions of any sort of meeting. Frequently, the act of social argument involves minority and majority voices, and experience indicates that, no matter from where the minority voices originate, groups find it easier to absorb the majority voices in their midst. People more commonly change their mind towards the majority articulated position than the reverse, and studies of situations where the reverse is true merit examination.

When minorities argue their case, different thought processes are induced from when the majority argument is posited. Research[13] shows that when a majority group argues its position it does so by utilizing compliance,[14] while a minority group exerts influence by 'conversion'.[15] What goes on in a group when each of these is happening? Weick sums it up thus:

> Attempts at influence by a majority focus attention on the source, and its message is received passively with little information processing. If a judgement is expressed by a credible minority, however, then listeners are more likely to process information actively and to raise arguments and counterarguments (p 214). People exposed to a minority 'focus on reality' (Moscovici, 1980, p 214), meaning that people try to figure out how that insistent minority could advocate such a position. To answer this question, listeners (people in the majority) examine their own judgements and responses in order to confirm and validate them. Because little is clear-cut in these judgements and because 'attitudes are essentially unfinished business' (Billig, 1989, p 252) the examination process continues even when one is alone again. And the impact of the minority position increases when individuals are no longer preoccupied with listening to the majority. This can produce conversion, a greater change in private than in public responses.[16]

This, for me, is a fascinating discussion of the way prophets can be heard and 'conversion' take place in individuals in the group, leading ultimately to group acceptance. I suspect that in many Christian groups there are often more complicated scenarios at work, as agenda and motivations may be unconsciously blurred, giving a powerful mixture of rational interest and commitment to group endeavours, with non-rational elements springing from deeply held religious beliefs which are often not articulated. This combination can result in greater difficulties in hearing and assimilating the voices of group prophets, giving rise to the following questions: What happens to the minority voices which are not found to be 'credible' by the group? What happens in

situations when group members, for one reason or another, are trapped in the 'compliance' mode of group interaction? What happens when power is misused in the group and an enforced, but uneasy, compliance results? It all has much to do with the state of personal development of both individuals and the group as a whole, linked to, and reinforced by, the kind of affiliation characteristic of the group.

Individuals who are at home in their persons, and reasonably well adjusted, are more likely to be open to a range of opinions not consonant with their own, because they are not threatened by opposing viewpoints. Neither are they as likely to engage in unconscious, or subconscious, power games within the group. At the whole-group level, the situation is far more complex, and not simply a composite version of the various individual stances in the group. I am becoming increasingly conscious of the kind of group persona, which contains those of all the group members, but which has a life of its own, as in 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts'. Groups with which I work exhibit characteristics which seem to have the power to override what I would assess to be the better judgement of individual members, creating situations where a choice between a greater and lesser good is exceedingly difficult. Analysing individual behavioural psycho-dynamics reveals views of self, world and others, and it is possible to extend this to address group and organizational settings. Just as healthy individuals manifest residual neurotic traits, so with groups. In each group, in varying degrees, can be found traces of any of five neurotic character styles: paranoid, dramatic, obsessive, depressive and avoid-ant,[17] influencing both the relationship of the organization with its environment, and relationships within.

Group dynamics, then, derives from the interplay of individual psychodynamics in the group with other variables relating to task, including levels of ambiguity and uncertainty. Collectively, this means group behaviour can be interpreted to reveal themes, identified as *dependency* (where the leader is invested with omnipotence and omnis-cience while the membership becomes helpless and impotent), *fight/ flight* (where a covert task becomes the need for the group to protect itself from an external or internal enemy, or scapegoat), and *pairing* (where the group acts as if it will achieve 'salvation' through the near-messianic union of two of its members).[18] So groups develop behav-iour patterns which express these basic assumptions which will facili-tate or hinder task performance. Whilst different assumptions may come into play from time to time, one will predominate, and Schneider and Shrivastava[19] point out how 'group members' assumptions regard-ing the organizational stakeholders need to be surfaced to achieve more

rational strategic decision making'. Achieving this within any group requires a great deal of, firstly, personal and, secondly, group maturity, and it is not a once-for-all awareness. Absence of regular, serious scrutiny of group processes is likely to mean that prophets will be characterized as deviants and therefore discredited.[20]

A situation which I encounter in many groups is the misuse of power, which then becomes a more or less subtle form of manipulation. This may be on a relatively small scale, such as the person who sabotages all attempts at honest discussion during meetings by stating: 'I'm feeling very fragile today. Don't expect us to have an in-depth conversation in the meeting.' In this case, short of the rest acting brutally, which is sometimes the only way, progress is stymied.

On a more damaging scale is the situation in which someone in a leadership role within a group is trying to exert influence for a particular outcome, not desired by any other group members. Behaviour more coercive than discerning may result, especially if the leader is acting at an unconscious level. In some of these situations the membership exhibits an inchoate awareness of such tactics but either cannot carry that awareness through into full public consciousness, or lacks the assertiveness needed to challenge the agenda of the leader – perhaps because they have been socialized into being 'nice' all the time, or taught that 'nice girls don't do that'.[21]

When all this is happening in a religious setting it is even more poisonous, because the message at all levels is one of compliance, and quite difficult to resist. A phrase which describes this kind of self- and group-manipulation is 'screwdriver spirituality'[22] – both evocative and accurate, I feel – for trying to control group process and decisions like this is only harmful, and affects the group at levels which the self-appointed engineer does not see. Perhaps, in addition, such a person would do well to remember that they are more likely trying to change in others only what they would change in themselves, reflected in the rest of the group – shadow projection.[23] I well remember the first time someone told me that 'the only person you can change is yourself'. It induced a kind of panic in me, because all my hopes seemed to rest on the success of getting those around me to change. But, years later, I feel it to have been one of the most important messages of my life. Whatever position I hold in a group, I cannot *make* another person change. One of the most painful group conflict situations in my experience is when a block is being caused by one person, who is totally unaware of their effect on the others, experiencing instead what they perceive as the enormous problems of the rest of the group. No

accurate diagnosis in the world will help that poor individual, who must engage in the journey of self-awareness according to their lights.

So, as components of groups, individuals must accept their own responsibility for how they behave in the context of the whole, if conflict is to be fruitfully addressed. Group dynamics do not rest solely on what happens at group level; rather, behavioural dynamics at all levels are inextricably interlinked.

Contrast between religious and secular groups

As stated earlier, religious groups are usually more tightly affiliated than their secular counterparts, with the consequence that the experience of conflict is more far-reaching, and the way it is handled more precarious. In recent discussion with a friend, it was hard to avoid the conclusion that being part of a religious group somehow embraces an individual's whole life and personality in a way that, for the most part, the employment situation in the western world does not.[24] In addition, we wondered if it were true to say that religious groups sometimes have more than their fair share of dysfunctional leaders, individuals who would not survive in secular leadership. We considered that, in the employment situation, there are means of ritualizing at least some of the conflicts which occur, by means of disciplinary, grievance and industrial relations procedures. Whilst acknowledging that Canon Law does provide for the settling of disputes, I feel that, perhaps, the opportunity to ritualize one's work-related conflicts can help dissipate the negative effects of conflict in a way which is lacking to most religious groups. By this I do not mean that conflict-ritualizing structures adopted by Christian groups should mirror those of the secular world; rather, I would advocate reflecting on the *principles* underlying disputing and mediation to see how they may best be applied in the context of the Christian group.

Reviewing the map: practical conflict-handling skills

I once participated in the running of a course which promised the opportunity to deepen one's understanding of self in the work situation, and develop issue-based group-work skills. At the end of the course, my job was to help the participants and staff to evaluate the experience, and I decided to do this by using paper and crayons. I invited everyone to draw something which symbolized their feeling reaction to what had passed during the course. In response one of them, Peter, drew firstly a stick figure holding an empty supermarket basket, and secondly, the figure jettisoning the basket and growing in stature and bulk. Sharing

Peter's drawing, we discovered that he had arrived with a shopping list of the ready-made 'tricks' he wanted to take home with him from the shelves. But he had recognized that understanding was more than half the solution to his questions, and that ready-made solutions were not necessarily helpful.

It seems to me that, faced with conflict situations in groups, most of us want to rush out to the supermarket and fill the basket with à la carte solutions: serve these up with an appetizing starter, and – hey presto! – the conflict disappears. Deep down we know it is not like that, and that understanding is the key to a developed conflict-handling. So, what practical skills is it reasonable to cultivate, at individual and group level? Learning to distingush between aggression and assertion is invaluable.[25] Finding someone with whom to practise assertiveness is also helpful, but it will only go part way to being able to put it into practice – the rest comes slowly. I am still amazed by my progress when I look back over some incidents and wonder 'Was that really you?' I discover myself in the act of being assertive, and it is a pleasant surprise! At other times it is back to the old aggression. I think group journeys bear the same characteristics: at one time surging forward, at others regressing, depending on the forces at play.

Five styles of conflict management can be identified.[26] They are: avoiding, compromise, competition, accommodation and collaboration. Examining each, it is easy to assess if and when individuals or groups employ them. What is important to realize is that each one is appropriate at some time, and taking time to diagnose accurately may also tell which style is best. Individuals and whole groups may find it helpful to reflect on the variety of styles they employ, and whether they employ them in the most appropriate settings (with the exception of competing which, in the Christian group setting, is perhaps more appropriate to someone in a leadership position only when the situation requires immediate action and is of the 'buck stops here' variety). This can be both a fun exercise and useful for future conflict management situations.

Finally, and most importantly – take time. When groups meet to address conflict and make decisions there is a tendency to rush through the diagnosis stage, decide a solution, or plan of action, and apply it as soon as possible. Experience indicates that here, the maxim 'more haste, less speed' applies. Nobody wants to prolong painful conflict, but if adequate time is not taken to ensure a fair diagnosis, a group may just be lining up more difficulty for itself. This is not to advocate prevarication or inactivity, but to stress the relative importance of the diagnosis stage in group life.

Engaging in the diagnosis stage with a facilitator may sometimes more simply enable the group to identify sources of conflict and potential courses of action, so long as the group remembers that the facilitator is just that, and not there to do the work *for* them, or be the scapegoat for what they do not do for themselves. Each individual can only change themselves, so agreed group actions have to be followed by personal conversion, not compliance. People are on a personal journey to God, as well as a group journey; one does not supplant the other, and neither do the two journeys run through life on parallel tracks.

NOTES

[1] Members of some groups have habitually been treated so badly, particularly by those in authority or leadership, that they have ceased to recognize that things do not have to be like this. A change of leadership may thus be the means of enabling a member with a long experience of this kind of abuse to take on a position where they can now abuse others.

[2] Examples are drawn from real experiences but, where appropriate, identities and some characteristics have been changed in order to protect individuals.

[3] Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and personality*, second edition (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), postulated a hierarchy of human needs which was cumulative: one progressed through the hierarchy (physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem and self-actualization needs) and could not address higher needs if the most basic, and lower-order needs, were unmet.

[4] Clarissa Pinkola Estes, in *Women who run with the wolves: contacting the power of the wild woman* (London: Rider, 1992), speaks of the power which can result from a stance of real honesty about why an individual makes certain choices, and of the damage which can result if only those motivations which are perceived to be 'acceptable' are made public.

[5] Roehampton Institute, London: Postgraduate Diploma in Management for Ministry.

[6] Such a solution often creates an 'aha!' moment: from the facilitation perspective, a group seeming blocked from progress may be liberated by a chance awareness or even a remark. Witnessing the release of creative energy which this brings within the group, one is aware that the right trigger has been released.

[7] Karl E. Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations* (London: Sage, 1995), p 136.

[8] See the literature on rationality and sensemaking in organizations, for example: Gerard R. Salancik, 'Commitment and the control of organizational behaviour and belief', and Karl Weick, 'Enactment processes in organizations', both in B. M. Staw, G. R. Salancik (eds), *New directions in organizational behavior* (Chicago: St Clair Press, 1977); Barry M. Staw, 'Rationality and justification in organizational life' in Cummings and B. M. Staw (eds), *Research in organizational behavior* (San Francisco: JAI Press Inc., 1980); Karl Weick, 'Sources of order in underorganized systems: themes in recent organizational theory' in Yvonna Lincoln (ed), *Organizational theory and inquiry* (London: Sage, 1985); Karl Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations* (1995), *op. cit.*

[9] Contradictions, even when the individual has been conscious of them, are rationalized in the sensemaking process, thus tending to minimize awareness and acknowledgement of any externally presented contradictions.

[10] Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations*, p 137.

[11] For any articulated position it is always possible to articulate the opposite (Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations*, p 137).

[12] *Ibid.*, p 138.

[13] S. Moscovici, 1980, quoted by Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations*, p 140.

[14] Compliance is here seen as public acceptance but private rejection of an influence attempt, sometimes described as 'resigned behavioural compliance'; see Peter D. Anthony, 'The paradox of the management of culture or "He who leads is lost" ', *Personnel Review* 19, 4 (1990), pp 3–8. Perhaps in some religious groups this state is more common than some would care to admit, and where it exists it may be more insidious than in the group's secular counterpart, because of the nature of affiliation within the group.

[15] Here seen as private acceptance unaccompanied by public acceptance (Moscovici, *op. cit.*).

[16] Weick, *Sensemaking in organizations*, p 140.

[17] Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries and Danny Miller, *The neurotic organization* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984).

[18] This may also include the union of two *groups* of members, and is typically manifested by the setting up of task groups, work teams, etc.

[19] Susan C. Schneider and Paul Shrivastava, 'Basic assumption themes in organizations', *Human Relations* 41, 7 (1988), pp 493–515, develop these basic assumption themes and expand the range to include: persecution, exorcism, grandeur, philosophic, guilt, passivity and doom.

[20] There is evidence to suggest that the culture of a group will admit the existence of deviants: if the group has a *unitary* culture, i.e. one in which commonality is stressed over everything else, prophets will be classified as deviants, and their voices blocked out. If the group culture admits of the presence of *subcultures*, it is likely to acknowledge deviancy if it is consistent with one of the subcultures. If no overriding coherent perspective is present, then deviants, or prophets, will be welcomed. See the work of Joanne Martin and Debra Meyerson, 'Organizational culture and the denial, channeling, and acknowledgement of ambiguity' in L. R. Pondy, R. J. Boland Jr and H. Thomas (eds), *Managing ambiguity and change* (New York: John Wiley, 1988).

[21] See, for example: Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). Hochschild develops the notion of *emotional labour* in relation to flight attendants and the airline industry, and the theme is further developed on a wider scale in Stephen Fineman's *Emotion in organizations* (London: Sage, 1993). I see it as having considerable relevance in the context of Christian groups.

[22] Donagh O'Shea, *Go down to the potter's house: a journey into meditation* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1988), p 104.

[23] See, for example, Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, 'Prisoners of leadership' in *Human Relations* 41 (1988), p 261–277.

[24] In Japan, loyalty and allegiance to the company has been of similar status, though this situation is now beginning to break down.

[25] See, for example, Anne Dickson's *A woman in your own right: assertiveness and you* (London: Quartet, 1982).

[26] See Gareth Morgan, *Images of organization* (London: Sage, 1986), p 192.