

Tekst 10

1 SINCE the days of Freud, psychoanalysts and churchmen have been pitted against one another, fighting to prove that they have the cure for the ills of the soul. But now a man who should know – a former Catholic priest turned analyst – says it is time for them to patch up their differences and form an alliance. It is the only way for them both to survive into the 21st century, he says.

2 Neville Symington, a member of the British Psychoanalytical Society and one of its leading thinkers, maintains that both religion and psychoanalysis are failing, but for opposite reasons.

3 “Psychoanalysis is largely failing to heal those with sick minds because it is devoid of those core values which have been central to all the great religious traditions,” he said. “Traditional religions fail in the world today because they apply their values in a realm which is irrelevant to the modern world.”

4 He continued: “I think we’ve come to the end of the era where revealed religion can provide the necessary guidance for people living in the contemporary world. It’s a question of formulating an emergence of a new religious value system that could marry up with psychoanalysis.” In order to do so, both had to relinquish “excess baggage”: the creeds, dogma, rituals and theories which only obscure the deeper values they are trying to express.

5 Dr Symington, 61, who emigrated to Australia 12 years ago, was in London last week as a guest speaker at the BPS. He is on a mission to stimulate a dialogue between thinkers from traditional religions and the psychotherapeutic movement. The conversation would, he admits, be “uncomfortable”. He only has to mention the word “moral” to a psychoanalyst and he is interpreted as meaning “moralistic”; “virtue” is instantly translated as “hypocrisy”.

Emotion and Spirit

By Clare Garner

6 In his book *Emotion and Spirit: Questioning the Claims of Psychoanalysis and Religion*, to be reprinted by Karnac Books in March, Dr Symington argues that religious faith and therapy must learn from each other. Few psychoanalysts have turned their attention to religion – Freud was an atheist – but in the past



Neville Symington: “religion and psychotherapy have a joint goal”.

18 months he has noticed a growing interest in spirituality among psychoanalytic circles. “There’s some realisation that there is something missing,” he said.

7 Freud founded a movement which replaced a puritanical perspective with “one of understanding, of empathy, the neutral stance, one of acceptance”. But in so doing, “the baby has been thrown out with the bath water”, Dr Symington said. Psychoanalysts, who regarded the individual’s own feeling as “the only index of action”, were liable to

“smother” rather than “illuminate” conscience.

8 Dr Symington’s biography mirrors a move in some sections of society away from the Church and into the arms of therapists.

9 He grew up “in the bosom of Catholicism” and was sent to Ampleforth, the Catholic boarding school in Yorkshire, where he was taught French literature by Cardinal Basil Hume. At 21, he enrolled in a seminary and then became a curate in east London.

10 But in 1968, at the age of 31, his life changed. “I realised the irrelevance of Catholic practice to people’s real lives,” he said, recalling his departure from the Church. The 2nd Vatican Council’s ruling on contraception was a deciding factor, he added.

11 He decided to train as a psychoanalyst and has practised ever since. He sees psychoanalysis as “a spirituality-in-the-world” and the field for mystical union with “the Ultimate” as being within the closest emotional bonds. Religion and psychoanalysis have a joint goal: “The conversion or transformation of actions which are destructive into actions which are constructive.”

12 Instead of prayer, psychoanalysis has interpretation, but while confession concerns “things that the penitent knows about”, psychoanalysis deals with “those things of which the patient is unaware”.

13 Much of what Dr Symington says echoes New Labour’s emphasis on personal responsibility. Tony Blair has been attempting to reinstate the values of religion into public life. It appears that Dr Symington is trying to do the same for therapy.

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■ Tekst 10 Emotion and Spirit

- 1p 32 □ Waarnaar verwijst ‘their differences’ (alinea 1)?
Geef bij je antwoord aan tussen wie de verschillen bestaan en wat hun strijdpunt is.
- 1p 33 □ Welke combinatie van de onderstaande beweringen vat de inhoud van alinea 3 samen? Schrijf de nummers op van de twee beweringen die het juiste paar vormen.
1 De godsdiensten missen de aansluiting bij de moderne tijdgeest.
2 De godsdiensten zijn van oudsher meer geïnteresseerd in geestelijke dan in wereldlijke noden.
3 De moderne mens verkiest de psychoanalyse boven traditionele religieuze inzichten.
4 De psychoanalyse kent geen systeem van waarden dat mensen houvast kan bieden.
- 1p 34 ■ Which of the following characterises the content of paragraph 4?
Neville Symington
A calls upon both religion and psychoanalysis to forget the past.
B defines the common ground between religion and psychoanalysis.
C indicates the way in which religion and psychoanalysis should join forces.
D shows that present-day religion can lead the way for psychoanalysis.
- 1p 35 ■ What would make the conversation ‘uncomfortable’ (paragraph 5)?
A Psychoanalysts’ distrust of religious concepts.
B Psychoanalysts’ habit of listening rather than talking.
C The denial of the importance of morals and values in psychoanalysis.
D The essential intolerance of religions towards non-religious values.
- ‘There’s some realisation that there is something missing’ (paragraph 6).
- 1p 36 ■ What does ‘something missing’ refer to?
1 ‘those core values which have been central to all the great religious traditions’ (paragraph 3).
2 ‘a dialogue between thinkers from traditional religions and the psychotherapeutic movement’ (paragraph 5).
A Only 1.
B Only 2.
C Both 1 and 2.
D Neither 1 nor 2.
- 1p 37 ■ Which of the following is true of paragraph 7?
A It further explains Dr Symington’s point about where psychoanalysis falls short.
B It points out the value of Freud’s contribution to the development of psychoanalysis.
C It shows that psychoanalysis has moved away from Freud’s original principles.
D It underlines Dr Symington’s view that emotion should always be guided by reason.
- 1p 38 ■ What phenomenon does Dr Symington’s life story illustrate?
People
A exchanging spirituality for the temptations of the material world.
B opting for the challenge of psychotherapy rather than the safety of religion.
C refusing to live a life circumscribed by traditional values.
D rejecting religion because it fails to connect to the contemporary world.
- 1p 39 ■ What becomes clear from paragraphs 11–12?
In Dr Symington’s view
A psychoanalysis and religion fulfil different spiritual needs.
B psychoanalysis lacks the certainty of morality, which is the only basis for self-improvement.
C religion and psychoanalysis have much in common and complement each other where they differ.
D religion offers rigid dogma where psychoanalysis offers true insight.