

The Challenges of Mapping – Andrew Goddard

It is always slightly nerve-wracking posting something on-line and waiting for reactions - one hopes for critique that will help clarify but fears gut reactions and negative comment. I expected, given its content and given the context, my attempt at mapping might get reactions but have been rather surprised by the quantity and encouraged by the seriousness with which many have so quickly engaged with it. I began this response on Saturday on finding on [T19](#) there were quick responses from Don Armstrong and Stephen Noll whom I've discussed things with in the past. Since then the comments list has grown (most of what follows comes from T19's comments) and there have been some lengthy and substantial responses most notably from [Leander Harding](#) and [Sarah Hey](#).

While I cannot respond to all of them I'm finding four levels of critique and - in the hope there can be an ongoing conversation - want to engage with these:

1. Is mapping – particularly of this level of complexity - a helpful exercise - particularly at the present moment?
2. Is the map accurate and helpful?
3. Where am I/are we on the map?
4. What do we do with it?

(1) The need for maps

This critique came first and most fully in Don's comment which is primarily a critique of the whole enterprise -

We have seen these arguments before from Andrew, and as I think about them they seem so analytical just in their charts and neat categories as to completely leave out the Holy Spirit, which is the only source and hope of true unity anyhow...I think your logic has you trapped, your theology is minus a solid doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and your world view has become so small that you are missing the point--a common enemy, the devil himself and all his destructive forces, should unit us all to do God's business, and hopefully not to make any more mess of it than we already have.

Here, as in some other responses, I fear there may be a misunderstanding of what I was trying to do. It was quite simply to lay out the ground as I see it so we know what the issues are when asking "what is to be done? what is the Spirit saying?". My pneumatology has a place for the Spirit of wisdom and the gift of discernment so while hopefully recognising the limits in being "analytical" and of "logic", I don't see mapping exercises as a sign of the Spirit's absence. Indeed, if people think in those ways (which having worked with him for several years on ACI and earlier briefly in the Anglican Institute I don't think Don does) I get a little worried.

Jill Woodliff's concern offered a similar critique

Andrew, I applaud the sincere love you have for the Communion. However, I see the situation in simpler terms. A wedge (multiple corporate sins) was driven into the

Communion. Until that wedge is pulled out (corporate repentance), the fracture lines will only multiply. We don't need analysis. We need a call to prayer, fasting, and repentance.

I think my only disagreement here is it the final "either...or" when I'd want to say it is – as so often – a case of "both...and".

The other critique – which is I suspect the underlying issue here for many - is whether the time has come to put aside such work and act decisively in a battle against "a common enemy". I take it this is Don's concern when he writes

Perhaps this mirrors academic logic even at Oxford, where people come up with their arguments, and the reality of broken relationships, the power of the Spirit to call us a fresh, and the pruning of God to move folks on to new ventures, is simply beyond the logical steps and arguments that we ourselves and Andrew in particular have made into ditches in which we/he have convinced ourselves to die.

There are clearly times when map-making is a luxury one cannot afford. I am reminded of The Bishop of Durham's illustration in the General Synod debate on Windsor as far back as February 2005 when he said

Let me stress that Windsor is not merely a discussion document, the musings of a think-tank designed to generate more leisurely debate. It is not like a group of friends studying the map a week before an expedition in the hills and discussing potential routes. It is more like the urgent discussions, high in the crags with evening coming on, snow threatening, and two of the friends suffering frostbite, as to the best and quickest route back to the valley. Wrong choices could be disastrous; but to delay would be the worst choice of all.

I recognise that for many – particularly in the US and Canada – my exercise could appear to fail to recognise the seriousness of the situation, to be a luxury we cannot afford. However, the reality is that when in either the "war" situation described by Don or the "mountain-top" of Tom Wright if one has no map or does not realise the flaws in one's existing map then the situation can be made even worse. The point of mapping is to get a sense of the terrain and then to work out how one best crosses it. A bad map is of course a major problem – which is why the second area of critique is so important - but so is rejecting the whole exercise of drawing up and consulting a map in the belief that one has an inner compass which shows one where to go.

If I was being really naughty I'd say to Don that the appeal to illumination by the Spirit calling us afresh, moving us on to new ventures and going beyond logical steps and arguments is language I've usually heard from what I call "reinterpreters" and was indeed the main response they gave to "[True Union in the Body?](#)" which Don helped to produce and distribute. There was for example the refusal to engage with the detail because of a dislike of what was said and how it was said in [Elizabeth Kaeton's response](#) to that booklet.

I am well aware that my map is not perfect. I am also aware that it is a global Communion map and that local maps are necessary as well. That means that my own contribution is not the map some people need. I am, however, worried if people – particularly those most aware of the spiritual battles we are all engaged in – feel there is no need for a map or that attempting to map the wider terrain of the Communion is now futile.

(2) Is the map helpful?

This for me is the most interesting and exciting part of the discussion and the place of the more serious challenges which believe that what I have offered is flawed, a lower-grade map than earlier attempts I've made or that others are providing. As Sarah Hey writes, after kind comments on the earlier quadrant analysis – “Sadly this latest taxonomy is generally unhelpful”. Stephen Noll comments, “Sorry, Andrew, but I think this taxonomy is a step backward in terms of analysis”. The Gordian was blunter – “Andrew, I fear the blizzard of words you release doesn't contribute to clarity, but only obfuscates” – and Craig Goodrich was also disappointed

In my philosophy of science courses many years ago, one of the basic points (repeatedly emphasized) was that a taxonomy in se is of no value unless it offers substantial insights into the nature of the phenomena being categorized. With all due respect, Dr. Goddard's piece not only offers no insights—useful or otherwise—into the etiology, the participants, or the possible resolution of this conflict, but rather seriously confuses and mischaracterizes all of these, sometimes in an offensively polemical fashion. A grave disappointment.

2.1 What am I mapping?

I think one of the conflicts is that I am mapping the terrain of the Communion and for some of the respondents that is not their terrain. I've touched on this above and will return to it below. The key issue here is that I am not mapping the American (or Canadian) terrain. Many of the critiques seem to presume that I am doing so [Baby Blue](#) – a response I only saw after completing this paper – complains (*italics added*)

Andrew Goddard has created a map, a way of illustrating where we are and who we are. The problem is, the map is out of date, *at least here in the United States*. Looking at his essay and how he maps out his illustrations, I'd estimate his map is about ten years out of date, *at least on this side of The Pond*.

This insistence of relating the map to America itself raises questions about how the American context shapes our perception of the wider Communion situation. Nevertheless, as the American church is part of the Communion if that terrain is missing then the map is seriously flawed. However, it is also seriously flawed if that terrain is given a disproportionate place in a global map or allowed to set the agenda for the Communion. I greatly appreciate Leander Harding's important and powerful analysis (and Chris Setz's response to it) and would not wish my mapping to deny that reality.

The real question here is whether I have allowed my own location – for example within the Church of England and within more academic circles – to misrepresent the Communion landscape. Although that has been suggested and is likely as no map-maker is neutral and detached I've yet to see anyone offer a substantial criticism along those lines.

2.2 Am I wrong to focus on sexuality and ecclesiology?

Stephen Noll wrote

Andrew Goddard says: The two areas of tension remain homosexuality and ecclesiology...

I do not accept this premise. The main area of tension is an entire construal of the Christian faith, which covers such "core" matters as the Trinity (the Fatherhood of God), Christology (the divine Sonship of Christ), the depth of sin and the lostness of mankind, the Virgin Birth, the vicarious Atonement, the Bodily Resurrection of Christ and believers, and the Second Coming of Christ and final Judgement (Happy Advent, everyone). One of these construals is catholic and evangelical, the other is liberal in its origin and heretical in its full flower (such as can be seen in the works of Bishop Spong).

It so happens that the issue of sexuality is the one which God has chosen in our time to play out these alternative construals in terms of church order and discipline. I am sure there are faithful Christians in at least three of Goddard's four categories, but the division between them is not just over the question of homosexuality.

Here again I feel it hard to comment other than to say that I believe this is much more a question for US (and perhaps Canadian) mapping than for Communion mapping. This is one of the powerful points by Leander Harding

The overwhelming reality which must be taken into consideration in order to understand the American scene is that the dispute is not primarily about the proper theological response to same-sex attraction. It is about the nature of the catholic faith. It is very hard to explain this to those who are not living in this country. TEC has not changed its formularies. The Creeds are still recited in the liturgies Sunday after Sunday. The form is there but in a very massive way the Spirit is not. I think there is a real difference here between the English and American scene.

That must have a bearing on the life of the Communion and the place of TEC within it but within the broader Communion the focus of debate and disagreement has undoubtedly been these two issues of sexuality (focussed on I.10) and ecclesiology (focussed on Windsor/covenant process) rather than any of the issues Stephen raises. This is also where the fracture points are to be found which was my motivation for trying to map the terrain. As Dale Rye notes

There are, it seems to me, a significant number of people who are doctrinally orthodox on every point that anyone could wish, except that they are not yet convinced that it is necessary to break communion with those who would tolerate others who could accept exclusive intentionally permanent homosexual partnerships. Some of those who are close to the line on that issue are being driven into the anti-Windsor camp by rhetoric that does not seem directed at the churches' attitude to nonmarital sexual activity but against gay and lesbian persons (and their supporters) as such. Although they are reasserters in any reasonable sense of the term, they may believe that they have more in common with moderate reappraisers than with extreme reasserters. A binary division between reappraisers and reasserters does not have room for that phenomenon.

Those in the middle are increasingly fearful of extremism on both sides. For every reasserter who is afraid that tolerating stable homosexual relationships (while not too bad in itself) would be the start of a slippery slope inevitably leading to even more objectionable forms of sexual immorality, there is a reappraiser who fears that agreeing never to consider electing a gay bishop (while not too bad in itself) is the top of a slope leading to the excommunication not only of gay laity but perhaps also of remarried divorced people, women in nontraditional roles, and others labeled morally unfit. Again, dividing the world into only black and white ignores those distinctions.

2.3 The relationship between sexuality spectrum and ecclesiology schema

This is where I think there is a misunderstanding but also perhaps a valid concern/critique of my piece. Sarah Hey sums it up at the start of her SF article and it is one of her main criticisms:

he seems to desire -- rather transparently -- to characterize the positions on homosexuality as a continuing divide between the Federal Conservatives and the Communion Conservatives.

I am glad that not all have read it like this. Ephraim Radner for example while not following all my distinctions comments "Goddard – at least as I read his piece – took pains to underline the fact that not all "connectional confessionalists" share – by logic or by commitment – "rejectionist" views (on his definition)".

I think part of the problem is that both my original quadrant analysis and my homosexuality spectrum have four groupings. In reminding people of the quadrants and then offering a four-fold division on sexuality I inevitably made a link in some people's minds between them. In addition, there are clear connections and varying levels of correlation between most if not all of these in the two mappings. It is clear that for Sarah Hey I was saying "Fed Con=Rejectionist" and "Comm Con=Reassertion" and as someone who found the Fed Con/Comm Con distinction so helpful but the Rejectionist/Reassertion one so unhelpful (on which more later) that was a major flaw.

As I explain, the four-fold sexuality spectrum is one I've proposed before (when interestingly and sadly it did not arouse much response) and one which I think has integrity in its own right. Because of the connections with ecclesiology I here included a whole section on "the practical interaction" between the two. It is important that this is the *practical* interaction because, as I state, "In one sense there is no necessary correlation between one's place on the spectrum of views on homosexuality and one's ecclesiology". However, it is also the case that the way I have developed the earlier quadrants I have effectively distinguished the two anti-Windsor positions into one which is "fed con" (connectional confessionism) and one which is "fed liberal" (autonomous inclusivism) and then discussed these in relation to rejectionist and reinterpretist stances.

I have to say that I think Ephraim Radner is right here that I was not equating the two groupings but on re-reading I can see perhaps where Sarah Hey has a point. I write

In the current situation it would appear that there is often a strong link between a more rejectionist stance on sexuality and the 'connectional confessionist' ecclesiology. This is, in terms of the old model, the 'federal conservative' quadrant.

The 'this' here is – as explained above – a reference to the 'connectional confessionist' ecclesiology and not to the rejectionist position.

As I go on to say I allow for the rejectionist stance to fit within 'communion catholicism' – so communion can be rejectionists - and I would add that reasserters can be fed con. I note however that the rejectionist position is often connected to 'connectional confessionism' and say that this is perhaps in part because the way Windsor applied its vision to sexuality.

That last point highlights what I go on to discuss and what may be part of the tensions we now face – Windsor presents not only an ecclesiology but also a proposal as to what that means for our sexuality debates (my section 4.3). In discussing that I was careful to distinguish my two levels of analysis. The final sentence, for example, discussing intervention in other provinces reads "This is where the vision of Windsor is most in tension with that of 'connectional confessionism' and also a restraint on the temptations faced by 'rejectionists'". Here I clearly distinguish those two distinct groups. That is also seen in the earlier discussion of the listening process where I note Windsor's analysis "presented a challenge to certain people, especially those in the 'rejection' part of the spectrum", implicitly recognising "reassertors" could also disagree with Windsor here. That "reassertors" can be critical with Windsor alongside "rejectionists" is blatantly clear in 6.2.2.

This highlights what I now realise was a significant shift from the earlier analysis but not fully explained as I did not fully realise it when writing

2.4 The move away from using I.10 and Windsor as defining the map

I explained this decision to move away from reactions to I.10 and Windsor into broader categories of "sexuality" and "ecclesiology" briefly in the opening section but only now am I beginning to realise its significance. This is especially the case in relation to the ecclesiology mapping but I also think this shift explains why the "fed con = rejectionist" interpretation both is appealing but also flawed.

The earlier quadrants made people define as pro or anti Windsor but on the 'conservative' side of sexuality it is clear that only some were anti-Windsor because they disliked its ecclesiology (the 'connectional confessionals'). Others, however, were anti-Windsor more because they disliked its application of its ecclesiology to the current crisis (what I describe in 6.2.2.2) or its failure to follow it through should that application not be accepted (what I describe in 6.2.2.3). I think one reason I've come to this conclusion is that I believe the latter position is where we now are and is why the "comm con" group is particularly under pressure: will it support realignment and seemingly become (on the old categories) 'fed con' or will it simply follow the Windsor process and be what I understand Sarah Hey to mean by "collaborationist"? Part of what my distinguishing ecclesiology and sexuality (rather than Windsor and I.10) should allow is to see that holding these latter two concerns leading to opposition to (or doubts about) the Windsor process does not make you into a 'fed con'. Furthermore, while these two groups would I think include most, perhaps all, rejectionists it would also include many reassertors which is why it is not true that fed con = rejectionist. Those are conclusions that I think Sarah Hey would welcome.

Stephen Noll's criticism focuses on the other axis in the original mapping

Goddard's earlier taxonomy at least mentions Lambeth Resolution 1.10, but in his new taxonomy nary a word is heard of this Resolution. Indeed he seems to think that it, like Scripture, it is subject to differing interpretations and therefore has little practical value in matters of church order and discipline. I would ask whether the Windsor Report is itself not liable to the same accusation. Is there any solid ground on which the "Reasserters" would stand firm and conclude that a jurisdiction has broken the bonds of affection and walked apart?

I have argued elsewhere that despite a couple phrases that have been picked on by the Left, Lambeth Resolution 1.10 does speak plainly enough, and in particular it puts the sexuality issue in the context of faithfulness to Scripture and hence Anglican essentials.

Why then is there 'nary a word' of I.10? Well, firstly I think that is not true. In particular I note the problem (6.2.2.2.a – I can see why people think I over-analyse!) that Windsor risks backtracking on I.10. It also is prominent in relation to listening. And here is where I fear Stephen Noll does not do full justice to I.10 and why, as I explain in my opening critique of the earlier model, I moved away from I.10 in this re-mapping. His [discussion of the amendment](#) concerning "listening" does not acknowledge that this now integral part of I.10 was proposed by someone who clearly understood it in at least a "reassessor" manner and perhaps in the hope it could result in acceptance of a "reinterpreter" position. While I agree that "this clause cannot be considered the theological linchpin of the Resolution" nor can its potential significance for the church's learning be ignored. There is also, I think, little doubt that the final motion gained significantly more support than that "incompatible with Scripture" amendment did when it was proposed (thought that got over 2/3 vote) because of the addition of the "listening" amendment (which has also been regularly reaffirmed by the Instruments since 1998).

None of that is to deny the force of I.10's summary of biblical and historic Christian teaching with which I fully agree nor is it to say that "listening" must mean accepting that summary is wrong or that I.10 "has little practical value in matters of church order and discipline" (although of course I.10 says nothing about what we do when its teaching and discipline are rejected –hence our current problems). Like Scripture and all statements, I.10 is "subject to differing interpretations" some of which are more persuasive than others, some of which are valid and some of which are misinterpretations. I simply think that Stephen's interpretation is incomplete because it fails to do justice to the whole of the text and it is because of the complexity and tensions (some would say contradictions though I would disagree) within I.10 that I abandoned using it as a tool in this recent mapping.

2.5 The rejection/reassertion distinction

This is clearly the 'hot potato' and given the length of this response and the need for a lengthy discussion to do justice to this concern I'm going to write a [separate elaboration of this point](#). In summary, I think because I'd made the distinction before I didn't expect such a strong reaction. I also failed to realise that in spelling it out more and in this context (partly for reasons given above) I was apparently giving the impression that rejection = homophobic = fed con = anyone in favour of realignment (or that reassertion = pastoral and Anglican *via media* = comm con = collaborationist). Although I will return to this in another piece I simply here want to say (1) that I do not wish to make such equations (though clearly some will make those connections and there are correlations of varying degrees and 'conservative' self-questioning as a result may be good and healthy), (2) that my desire to find 4 labels beginning with "re-" may have been unwise given my acknowledgment that "labels are problematic and likely to annoy as much as elucidate", (3) The conclusion is vitally important – "Clearly these are four groupings across a complex spectrum and they are not water-tight. Individuals will also move between them over time. Even within one category there is a range of different attitudes and approaches". That latter point leads nicely into the next question

(3) Where am I/are we on the map?

This is clearly an important question and was one which particularly shaped Stephen Noll and Sarah Hey in their response. Stephen begins

"Is it I, Lord?" Reading Andrew Goddard's revised taxonomy, I found myself asking this question. Am I a rejectionist? Have I rejected the good order of the Communion? Have I perhaps, therefore, rejected my Lord?

[Of course a rejectionist is not rejecting either of those in my categorisation but that is a matter for my later response]

Sarah Hey carefully looks at herself on my listing of features and emphases in relation to "rejection" and "reassertion" and finds she doesn't fit them and so concludes they are flawed.

My response here is in part to say that this is perhaps not the first question in assessing mapping of this sort. Again, of course, just as if there is no place for TEC on the map there is a problem so there

is a problem if individuals cannot find themselves at all or feel their position is caricatured and distorted. However, given each of us is unique and this is “big picture” and “broad brush” mapping which imposes names on categories along spectra, none of us are going to feel properly represented and all of us are going to feel rather pigeon-holed and caricatured. We will always say “yes, but...” even when we find our place.

The primary questions I hope people would ask – as they are the questions I was asking myself and trying to answer - are “Do I recognise here a reasonable guide to the terrain of the Communion, its varied and conflicting theologies and the theological and political forces now at play in the current crisis? Does this categorisation help me understand what is going on, identify areas of tension and fracture points, and recognise different groupings and movements?”. My hope is that section 6 showed the practical value of my mapping and it is interesting that this section has received little comment or criticism (did people give up before they got there?).

I recognise that of course I map from a particular location (geographical in CofE and theological) and that that location may give me a different perspective of the terrain from others in different locations and that I will feel more ‘at home’ in it than others. That is why responses and dialogue about it is so illuminating. The personal history of this map is probably clear and certainly sad. It started with a growing realisation that a simple conservative/liberal categorisation though still having value (particularly in certain contexts) was one which, if used to understand and respond to the current situation in the Communion as a whole, too crude. This led to the four quadrant analysis which seemed to prove helpful for some like Sarah Hey. However, I increasingly felt – perhaps as a communion conservative with a sense of growing tensions with communion liberals and federal conservatives – that it did not do justice either (as noted above) to the complexities of both Windsor (as the process has developed especially post-Dar) and I.10 or to the growing tensions particularly among conservatives as realignment progress. I am well aware that some will say that my own views are broadly centre-right on sexuality and majority communion Catholicism within my mapping. It is certainly the case that mapping these locations in this way has produced a distortion and may be viewed as an attempt to draw people to these positions. That is clearly a danger but it is also clear that in parts of the Communion those who place themselves where I do will experience themselves as a minority viewed as extreme rather than central. That is also a reminder that in any mapping as in reality, simply being in the centre or the majority does not mean one is right and has the truth (in fact, quite often the opposite can be the case!).

(4) What do we do with it?

Here again I am concerned that people have misunderstood the exercise in various ways. It is not, to reiterate my earlier response, an alternative to either action or prayer. It is meant to assist thoughtful action and prayer wherever one is on the map. It has arisen out of my own action and prayer and shapes both - just as all such mappings (whether simple or complex, implicit or explicit) arise from and shape our acting and praying.

If there is an agenda it is that stated at the end

Miraculously, for the last five years... the Instruments have been able to bring together all the provinces... and facilitate ongoing conversation across these various divides and wide spectra of beliefs and visions for the Communion...The challenge now is whether and how that achievement can be maintained, especially in relation to Lambeth 2008, and, if it cannot, what sort of viable 'second best' arrangements can be developed or 'amicable separations' negotiated.

We can, I think, only respond adequately to that challenge with a good sense of the big picture. One of the current challenges at present is that people who accept the same categorisation as each other (from 'Anglican' to 'conservative' or 'communion conservative' or 'pro-Windsor' or 'pro-I.10' or 'communion catholicism' or 'reasserter' - to put myself roughly on the various maps I've had) are developing different readings of the signs of the times and what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The big question is how in those circumstances to heed Paul's exhortation in Eph 4

I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

We also all have different gifts - "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers" - and the exercising of them sometimes creates tensions. We need, therefore, to get a sense of as much of the body as a whole so that we can prayerfully discern and then act so that in our own contexts and faithful to our own callings we work "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ".

My hope and prayer is that being able to share and critique our different maps representing different understandings of the current terrain in the Communion may assist all of us – wherever we are on our own map or others' maps – to know how best we heed these exhortations of the apostle Paul.