**Dr Michael Robert Hodson (1946-2018)**

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Michael Hodson (Mike) was well known to attendees at ACE meetings for his keen questioning of conference speakers and also as an economist in government service who integrated his Christian faith with his professional concern for good policy making. We were saddened by his sudden death, aged only 71, in March 2018.

Mike’s early years were spent in Canada, France and the USA but he moved to the UK in 1971 to study economics at St John’s College, Cambridge. Whilst at Cambridge he attended the Round Church. Following his marriage to Sheila Knowles he moved to Nova Scotia in 1975 and spent two years as a lecturer at Dalhousie University, Halifax. He completed his PhD thesis, entitled ‘The optimal allocation of non-shiftable machinery’ in 1979, an important issue at the time in the economics of development. From there he went on to work as an economic consultant with Economic Models Ltd which was headed by Sir Michael Spicer. Later, he joined the Commodities Research Unit (now CRUGroup) as a specialist in the aluminium industry, followed by a period with Ernst and Young, and finally ending up in the Government Economic Service. There his career took him through the Export Credit Guarantee Department (now UK Export Finance), the Air Division of the DTI and ultimately to the UK Radio Communications Agency where he became Head of Economics and Statistics. This was an important time for Mike as he worked with Ken Binmore and Paul Klemperor in 2000 to set up the highly successful third generation mobile spectrum licence auction which helped to raise £22.5 billion for the UK government and was a model for subsequent auctions of this type(1). In more recent years, Mike focussed more on theology, obtaining a B Theol degree, and becoming a Reader (Lay Minister) in the Church of England. He played an active role in Faith in Business in the UK, and wrote and lectured on Social Enterprises at Regent College, Vancouver.

Mike played a dual role in fostering the links between faith and economics – at a personal level and in his writings. He had a genuine interest in helping colleagues, and was always willing to give time to discussion and participation in academic projects. He collaborated with me in several efficiency and productivity studies, generously providing data and contacts within government departments(2). Many have remarked on his cheerful, open and encouraging personality and his willingness to share his knowledge with others.

So far as economics was concerned his main contribution was in the area of social enterprise. In contrast to the standard economic model of the profit maximising firm facing known production constraints and consumer demand, he proposed a Christian model of innovation based on design thinking (3). Design thinking occurs at the inception of a new product or process and ‘ is directed toward devising what doesn’t already exist, designing something new’. It is at this innovation stage he believed that Christian motives could be inserted into (or, influence) the formation of new products or processes. His ideas were based in scriptural teaching to think differently, act differently and relate differently (Romans 12.2 and Colossians 3.8). He saw the method working well for the creation of collaborative Missional Enterprises.

A Missional Enterprise replaces the profit motive with a vision of bringing God’s order and purpose to the world, maintaining the welfare of others - humans, animals and, ultimately, the earth itself. This would involve designing a place fit for God where the glory of God is to be seen in the work of the enterprise whose members he saw as priests in Gods temple, the earth.

An important aspect of working out God’s purpose for the enterprise is that of giving people a role in exercising rule over creation, so that each worker would have ‘perceptible control over each stage in the production of each product the enterprise makes’ .

In developing this approach, Mike utilised Christian virtue ethics, social enterprise ideas, and the influence of the Mondragon cooperative movement to create a transformative model of the enterprise. Through his involvement in economic consultancy and in teaching and research at Regent College his work has already had a significant impact on present and future entrepreneurs.

He will be missed at our ACE meetings and also at our weekly NT Greek discussion group in Guildford .

David Hawdon, July 2019

1. Tilman Borgers and Christian Dustmann. (2005) Strange Bids: Bidding Behaviour in the United Kingdon’s Third Generation Spectrum Auction. The Economic Journal, 115 (July), pp551–578
2. Hawdon, D. and Hodson, M.R. (1996) The Use of Data Envelopment Analysis in Benchmarking . The Business Economist, Vol 27, No 3, pp23-39
3. Hodson, M. Missional Enterprise by Design. (2017) Anvil: Journal of Theology and Mission, Vol 33 No 1