

William Temple Foundation - Spring 2009 Newsletter



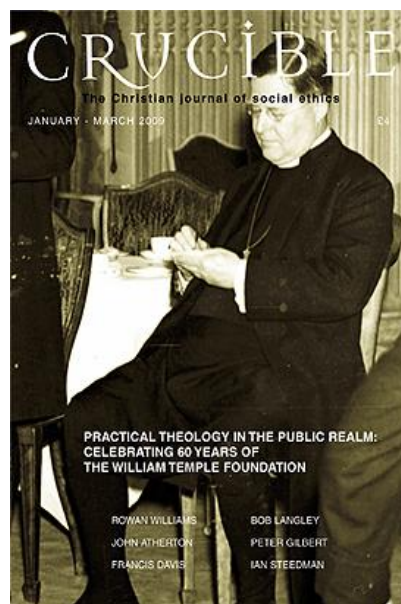
Welcome to our Spring newsletter 2009. Please find information about ongoing news regarding our personnel, research and publications.

WTFs 60th Anniversary lecture series – Rowan Williams finale

November 5th 2008 saw the culmination of our 60th Anniversary lecture series with a thought provoking lecture by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury at St James Church, Piccadilly in London. The Archbishop reinforced the importance of small scale, intermediate communities as vital for democratic wellbeing and human happiness. Referring to the contribution of faith groups to a reformulated welfare provision in the 21st century he remarked, 'Communities in which creative interaction is learned and in which agency and unique agents are taken seriously become essential building blocks in the creation of a properly interactive democracy, and a society in which it is assumed that people will constantly be arguing with, and co-operating with their neighbours for the good that they share'.



The full text of Rowan Williams' lecture is now available in a special commemorative edition of *Crucible* which is available for mail order via the WTF website (www.wtf.org.uk).



The edition also contains the full text of lectures by Bob Langley ('Learning to Flourish – Community, Church and Partnership in the post-industrial North-

East'), Francis Davis ('The demise of Prophecy or Reinventing Governance? – Faith and the Welfare State'), John Atherton ('Wellbeing in a post-scarcity age – the contribution of faith, health and economics'). John also contributes a fascinating editorial which outlining some of the origins and achievements of the Foundation over the course of the past 60 years.

WTF's Leverhulme Research: Year 2 almost completed

Chris Baker and Rana Jawad have been working hard over the past few months conducting a series of fascinating focus groups drawn from a wide variety of faith and spirituality groups in the Northwest. So far we have conducted around 25 groups with Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Circle Dancing groups to ascertain how members of these communities define the benefits of membership, and how these benefits are shared within the wider community. We are also asking their opinion on the suitability of religious and spiritual capital as an idea that expresses not only what they do but why they do it to a non-religious audience.

We will be analysing the data from these 25 focus groups throughout the course of March and April, and this evaluation will be the basis of a quantitative survey which we hope to run by roughly a 1000-1500 people as part of our third year.

Rana Jawad – update

We are delighted to report that our Leverhulme Research Fellow, Dr Rana Jawad, is shortly going on maternity leave with the imminent arrival of her second child. Rana will be away from the office from June to mid October 2009. We will therefore be recruiting a short-term replacement for Rana to cover that period. We are also delighted to report that Rana has been appointed as Lecturer in Faith and Social Policy at the University of Kent with fulltime effect from January 2010. However we are pleased to say that Rana will continue to work for the Foundation for two days a week to ensure the completion of the Leverhulme research project by the deadline of April 2010.

AHRC/ESRC Religion and Society programme – promoting greater human wellbeing: interacting the happiness hypothesis and religion

This exciting two year network featuring at its core the research work of the Foundation (in particular the work of John Atherton) is drawing to a close. All the contributions from the 20 participants of the network are going to be published in a ground breaking book by Routledge entitled, *Political Economy, Religion and Wellbeing – The practices of happiness* and edited by Elaine Graham, Ian Steedman and John Atherton. (For latest link and more information, go to <http://www.routledgepolitics.com/books/Political-Economy-Religion-and-Wellbeing-isbn9780415550970>) This volume is due for publication in June

2010. We are excited about the drawing together of key threads of our WTF research that this project represents – i.e. the relationship between religion, political economy, and human wellbeing – together with the shift from material to immaterial goods as the basis for life satisfaction. We also hope that this network and this publication will be a launch for future funded research in these key areas.

Postsecular cities: theory and practice – Groningen conference 2008

Chris Baker attended a fascinating inter-disciplinary conference on the theme of the postsecular city towards the end of last year. The conference was organised by the University of Groningen and their Faculty of Spatial Sciences – and reflected in particular, the pioneering work of Dr Justin Beaumont in this area. Out of this conference, a number of initiatives have arisen which we hope will provide further opportunities for the Foundation's research. Specifically, a book proposal on the above theme has been approved by Continuum Press which will explore the idea of the postsecular city in dialogue with human geography, and urban and public theology. Entitled *Postsecular Cities – space, theory and practice* it will be published towards the end of 2010 and will be edited by Chris and Justin

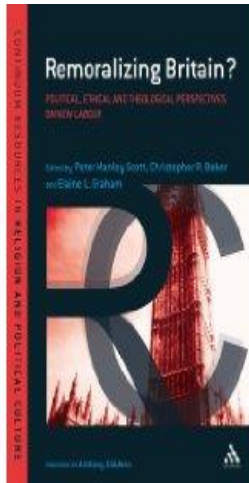
Defining the contours of a new capitalism project: principles, values and mechanisms

In response to the deepening recession and the current deep anxieties about the future of current economic systems, a series of papers written by John Atherton and John Reader (and others) are now published on our website, outlining some emerging thinking in relation to the contours of a new capitalism. These papers seek to address not only values and ethics, but also practical suggestions and ideas regarding the deepening partnership and contribution of religion to political economy. A colloquium has been set up for the 19th May to take some of this thinking further and there is the possibility of a major conference on this theme in 2010 that would coincide with the dissemination of the Leverhulme research project findings which are scheduled to finish at Easter 2010. Again please watch this space for further details and material as it emerges.

Remoralising Britain: political, ethical and theological perspectives on New Labour – Continuum Press, 2009

This volume of collected essays, co-edited by Peter Scott, Elaine Graham and Chris Baker has now been published by Continuum. Professor Will Storrar, Director of the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton University has written the following remarks about this book: '*Remoralising Britain* provides a unique interdisciplinary account of the religious sources and political impact on New Labour's critical turn from common ownership to communal values

as the basis of its electoral appeal and government policies. These essays evaluate how that ethical term worked out in practice and years. I commend this major case study to all who are concerned about the relationship between morality and government as citizens, members of faith communities and scholars.'

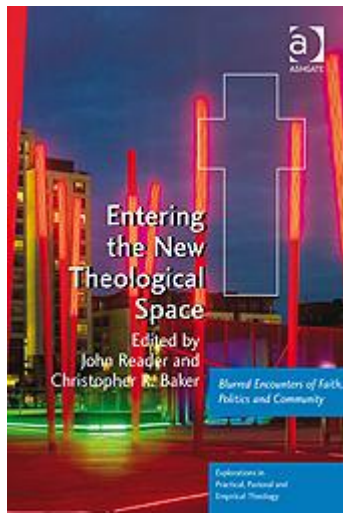


Anthony Giddens provides a preface to the volume, and contributors include Will Hutton, Gerry Stoker, Jess Steele, John Atherton, Mark Chapman, Paul Vallely and Inderjeet Parmar.

Entering the New Theological Space – Blurred Encounters of Faith Politics and Communities

This jointly edited volume of essays by John Reader and Chris Baker has also just been published by Ashgate Press. This volume has brought together contributions from faith based practitioners and theorists and given them the opportunity to describe their experience and understanding of the Blurred Encounter. This volume attempts to develop ideas from both John's book on Blurred Encounters and Chris's book on The Third Space.

The description that appears on the book itself reads as follows: 'This book presents theological reflections on the changing nature of church mission and Christian identity within a theology of 'blurred encounter' – a physical, social, political and spiritual space where once solid hierarchal and patterns are giving way to more fluid and in many ways unsettling exchanges... Speaking to practitioners in the field of practical theology as well as those engaged in theological and ministerial training, key voices encompass dimensions of power and conflict, and identify some of the present and future opportunities and challenges to church/faith-based engagement and leadership arising from blurred encounters'.



Contributors to the volume include John Atherton, Helen Cameron, Martyn Percy, Malcolm Brown, Clare McBeath and Margaret Goodall.

Faith, Secularism and Public Policy – ESRC seminar series 2009 – Manchester Centre for Public Theology

This seminar series, jointly sponsored by the Church of England (Bishop for Urban Life and Faith), The University of Manchester, and the William Temple Foundation, started in January 2009 and will run till June 2009. The aim of this series is to provide a platform for the discussion of key themes relating to this newly contested and ever changing field mainly: human rights, political economy, media representation, faith schools and welfare.

This series has attracted both UK based and international key note speakers including Professor William Storrar, Director for the Centre of Theological Enquiry, Princeton and Professor Paul Smythe, Professor of Social Policy at the University of Melbourne in Australia. Other contributors include Steven Timms MP, Financial Secretary at the Treasury and Vice Chair for Faith Groups for the Labour Party, Jonathan Romain, Chairperson of Accord, Mohammed Shafiq, Chief Executive of the Ramadan Foundation, Ms Wahida Shaffi, freelance consultant and researcher and Professor Kim Knott, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds and Michael Wakelin, Head of Religion and Ethics at the BBC. This series is attended by a regular group of 35 participants representing both faith based and non faith based sectors in the Greater Manchester area. Once again, we are hopeful that a publication will emerge from the various papers and conversations that this very timely seminar series has produced.

WTF involvement in new Dublin based initiative in spiritual capital

Both Chris Baker and Rana Jawad have been closely involved in the launch of a new research centre based at All Hallows College, (Dublin City University),

and the Waterford Institute of Technology into spiritual capital. Rana gave a key note address in Waterford in December and Chris gave another key note address in Dublin in February. The theme of the lectures was *Exploring spiritual capital: resource for an uncertain future?* It is hoped that this new connection will help develop further research and interests in the idea of spiritual capital on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Social Policy, Social capital and religion in the UK: taking stop, engaging policy

The William Temple Foundation, in association with the University of Warwick (Centre for Research and Ethnic Relations) is organising a conference on Wednesday 6th May 2009. The purpose of the day is primarily to provide a space for networking and information sharing from up to 65 participants exploring further the contribution of faiths to social policy and welfare provision, and will feature key note addresses from Martin Johnson, Maqsood Ahmed, Chris Baker, Rana Jawad, and Ghazala Mir on a variety of headings. Please see our website for further details.

And finally

Debbie Concagh our administrator will be stepping out on to the boards for the first time in a production of 'HOUSEKEEPER WANTED' by the Droylsden Amateur Dramatics Theatre in May 2009. We wish her all the best in her new part-time career!

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