

William Temple Foundation – Summer 2009 Newsletter

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter 2009. Please find information about ongoing news regarding our personal research and publications.



***Religious Futures Network* launched on the William Temple Foundation website**

We are pleased to announce the launch of a new web-based resource mapping a theological, ethical and structural response to the current global economic recession, and contributing discussions to future ideas of the common good. This website emerged out of the consultation held earlier this year under the title *Defining the Contours of a New Capitalism*. The aim of the network is to provide an open space for debate and contributions from a wide range of views and perspectives including news and events, publication links, conferences and papers contributed by members of the network and others. The name *Religious Futures* has three dimensions:



- Our global future will be shaped by the values, insights and practices of religious traditions alongside secularisation processes.
- Economics as a discipline will be partly shaped by the insights and research of religiously informed economists, theologians, businesses, not for profits and community level practitioners.
- Religiously informed economists and analysts will increasingly contribute to specific questions concerning the restructuring of the 'futures' aspect of the Market, including the role of risk, regulations, derivatives and hedge funds.

The webpage is edited by Dr John Reader and Dr John Atherton, and a number of papers have already been contributed by members of the network. To view what is currently on the web page, please visit <http://www.wtf.org.uk/ReligionandCapitalismNetwork.php>

Introducing our new Senior Research Fellows

We are pleased to announce the formal creation of four Senior Research Fellow posts at the Foundation whose role will be to further publication,

research and profiling of our current research agendas. These new research agendas, which were endorsed at the Foundation's Council in May this year, include:

- Faith based engagement in civil society (religious and spiritual capital).
- Contribution of religion to wellbeing and happiness.
- Postsecular cities – theory and practice.
- Religion and political economy (including the Religious Futures network).

To that end, we will be relying on the considerable capability and experience of our research fellows, many of whom will be familiar to those who are regular readers of this newsletter, or who have encountered the work of the Foundation in recent years.

They are: Canon Dr John Atherton, Revd Dr John Reader, Professor Ian Steedman and Rt. Revd Stephen Lowe. We look forward to their contribution in the years to come, and their appointment enables us to establish the Foundation as a research hub capable of working in partnership and collaboration with other research institutions.

Introducing Greg Smith – Leverhulme Research Fellow – June 2009

It is our great pleasure to welcome Greg Smith as our temporary Research Fellow to replace Rana Jawad who is currently on maternity leave following the successful birth of her son Zac. Greg will be with us for 3 to 6 months, bringing his considerable skills and expertise to bear on developing and analysing the quantitative survey that we are rolling out as part of the Year 3 of our Leverhulme Research project (please see item below). Greg has 30 years experience as a 'reflective practitioner' in Christian urban ministry, faith links, community development and urban regeneration in Newham, East London and Preston. He is currently coordinator with the Salvation Army Open Door Project in Preston. He is also involved in capacity building and churches with voluntary groups, interfaith networking and church-based children's work. You can catch up on the full range of Greg's work by visiting his website at www.gregsmith.synthasite.com

Update on Rana Jawad

As well as passing on our congratulations to Rana and her family on the birth of her son Zac earlier this summer, we are also pleased to announce the publication of Rana's first book published by Policy Press, and based on her PhD research. The book is entitled *Social Welfare and Religion in the Middle East – a Lebanese Perspective*.



Professor James Beckford from the University of Warwick endorses this book as, '... a ground-breaking analysis of the contribution that religion makes to social welfare programmes in the Middle East and their wider involvement in social and economic development'. We hope this book does open to the door to future research Rana intends carrying out in respect of faith-based contributions to social policy in the UK.

Leverhulme Year 3 – survey into religious and spiritual capital

The last phase of our Leverhulme research is in full swing, following the piloting of a quantitative survey based on themes which emerged from our Year 2 research work with focus groups. The task of transferring qualitative data into a quantitative survey was challenging but has gone reasonably smoothly, and we are pleased with the level of returns that we are receiving. To date (August 2009) we have received 301 completed printed surveys and a further 244 that have been completed online. The gathering of survey responses will go on until mid-October, after which they will be analysed. We are particularly keen for people to avail themselves on this opportunity, so would be grateful if you could encourage anybody who you think might be interested to complete our survey on-line by visiting the homepage of our website – www.wtf.org.uk

Social policy and social capital in the UK today – taking stock – engaging policy

In our last newsletter, we informed you of the above event which took place at the University of Warwick in May this year, and was co-sponsored by the William Temple Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It attracted a high number of participants from a variety of faith traditions and secular disciplines addressing the issue of the contribution of faith to social policy and welfare provision. The event was a great success, and we are pleased to draw your attention to a report of the proceedings of that day which you can access via the WTF website (follow the link on the home page)

And finally...

Following hot on the heels of her successful acting debut in the production of 'Housekeeper Wanted', we are pleased to report that our Administrator Debbie Concagh has added further to her public performance repertoire. Debbie has just completed an arduous week in a song and dance extravaganza entitled 'Night at the Musicals' which involved no less than eight costume changes and the ability to dance in a variety of different styles. Congratulations Debbie, and we look forward to news of your next production!

William Temple Foundation

Email: temple@wtf.org.uk

Website: www.wtf.org.uk

Phone: 0161 249 2502