

Bulletin

Number 110 May 2007

ABOUT THE BASR

The British Association for the Study of Religions, formerly the British Association for the History of Religions (founded in 1954), is affiliated to the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) and to the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) Its object is the promotion of the academic study of religions through international interdisciplinary collaboration. The BASR pursues these aims within the United Kingdom through the arrangement of conferences and symposia, the publication of a Bulletin and an Annual General Meeting. Membership of the BASR is open to scholars whose work has a bearing on the academic study of religions. Membership of the BASR confers membership of the IAHR and the EASR.

The BASR Committee

President and Chair Dr Marion Bowman

m.i.bowman@open.ac.uk 01908 659381

Secretary Dr Graham Harvey

g.harvey@open.ac.uk 01908 654033

Treasurer Fr Dermot Tredget

Dermot.tredget@st-benets.oxon.org

Bulletin Co-editors Dr Dominic Corrywright &

Dr Helen Waterhouse

dcorrywright@brookes.ac.uk 01865 488358

h.j.waterhouse@open.ac.uk 01908 659028

Co-ordinating Editor of Diskus Dr Mathew Guest

m.j.guest@durham.ac.uk 01913 343944

Membership enquiries and general correspondence should be sent to:

Dr Graham Harvey Religious Studies Department The Open University Walton Hall Milton Keynes MK7 6AA

BASR website address: http://basr.org.uk

All rights reserved. Edition, selection, arrangement and original material © BASR 2006. The rights of individual authors are reserved by those individuals and are not affected by the above copyright.

Printed at the Open University.

CONTENTS

Editorial	3
Correction	4
Members ' News	5
Changes and Movements	7
Treasurer's Update	10
Obituary	11
Book Reviews	14
Report from the PRS Subject Centre	20
Occasional Papers	25
Members' Publications	26
Guidelines for Contributors	27

EDITORIAL

Welcome,

We are newly re-branded. The map model and logo are sympathetic with the logos of our partners among other European Associations for the Study of Religions. The new logo is also present in our everimproving BASR website, where past copies of the Bulletin will, from now, be freely electronically available. The website is maintained and updated by the secretary to BASR who is also responsible for the list and contact details of members. Please remember to keep us informed when you change address and we can make sure we send you Bulletins and communications relevant to your BASR membership. Do also inform us of your regular e-mail address as we hope in future to make

occasional important e-mailings, as postage is a notable expense.

The executive committee of the BASR are concerned to maintain and improve provision of resources for the Association. In this edition of the Bulletin you will read a brief report from the Treasurer whose prudent handling of our financial resources would be applauded by heads of more exalted exchequers. Equally the coordinating editor for *Diskus* is ensuring that this journal will continue to be an academic resource of real worth in the study of religions.

It is conference season and a number of important events are advertised within the Bulletin. We have included notification of

organised by colleagues across events Europe, some organised by HEA-prs, including a summary of relevant activities from Simon Smith, and, of course the BASR annual Conference to be held in New College, University of Edinburgh, 3-6 September. Registration forms are inside this Bulletin and available online from the BASR website. We continue to welcome appropriate notices of events linked to the religions from of conference organisers and reports on events that will be of interest to the membership.

Movement and change continue to have a significant impact on the academic study of religions in Britain. In this edition of the Bulletin we include a combined personal narrative and account of academic programme change at Oxford Brookes University by Angie Pears. The move to mixing the focus of undergraduate Religious Studies programmes with culture and ethics resonates with the programmes offered in a number of institutions across the UK. Also included in this edition is a positive note on a growing area in the study of religions in Bettina Schmidt's account of her move from Oxford to Bangor. On a sadder note we include an obituary on the death of a remarkable and highly influential scholar of religion, Professor William Montgomery Watt.

Regular sections of the Bulletin remain, with a number of book reviews, including one by Amy Whitehouse a postgraduate student at The Open University, and a list of members' recent publications. If you would like us to include your own new publications in the next edition please email them to the editors and don't forget to ask your publisher to send a copy of your new books for review.

The editors welcome contributions from colleagues to be included in the Bulletin. Recent appointments deserve recognition, and colleagues can explain changing professional trajectories and patterns of research. Equally the influence of the RAE for the study of religions may be worth a local impact assessment or more broad reflection by established researchers. We are also especially interested in the research in progress of postgraduate students and commend to postgraduate tutors not only that they advise their students to become members of our esteemed association but take an active role, perhaps beginning by sending a short summary of their research to the Bulletin. Guidelines for Bulletin contributors are within this edition.

CORRECTION

The editors apologise for an unintended omission in Elliott Shaw's report on the 2007 BASR conference. His account of George Chryssides paper on 'Extraterrestrial Ethics—a study of the Raëlian Movement' ought to have read as follows:

The movement's support for abortion, GM crops and cloning illustrate its challenging of similarly founded ethical philosophies to test whether objections to such practices are in fact rooted in prejudice.

Members' News

Welcome to all our new members including Dr Claudia May who is Research Fellow in Implicit Religion and Contemporary Spiritualities at Queen's Foundation and Honorary Lecturer, University of Birmingham. Claudia currently serves on the editorial board of the International Journal of Religion and Sport. Her research interests include examining the spiritual dimensions of the blues, and her work also analyzes the trajectories of religious expression in cinematic portrayals of football culture.

An Award for Professor Frank Whaling

One of our Honorary Life Members, Frank Whaling, has received the James A. Whyte Award for services to religion in Scotland. It comes through the auspices of the Institute of Contemporary Scotland, an independent, non-political and inclusive think-tank for Scotland, via the nomination of its Fellows. Last year the Institute began making named awards, 'in recognition of exceptional achievement', to twelve persons from separate disciplines. The disciplines are: Arts, Business and Economics, Education, Environment, Humanitarian Service, Justice, Literature, Media, Medicine, Public Senvice, Religion, and Science and Technology. The awards carry with them election to a Fellowship in the Scottish Academy of Merit, and the twelve people concerned receive the designation 'Scots of the Year'. As a robust Yorkshireman Frank is especially touched and delighted by that title!

Congratulations and a Conference Reminder

Belated congratulations to Abby Day who completed her PhD 'Believing in Belonging in Contemporary Britain; a Case Study from Yorkshire', in May 2006. In 2004 Abby presented a work in progress report at the BASR 50th Anniversary Conference in Oxford. She has paid tribute to the useful suggestions and encouragement offered to her at the conference for which she was awarded a BASR bursary. Don't forget to encourage your students to apply for bursaries for the conference in Edinburgh in September 2007. The closing date is 1 June and details are on the web site.

The British Association for The Study of Religions

affiliated to: The European Association for The Study of Religions and The International Association for The History of Religions

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2007

SEPTEMBER 3 – 6, 2007 New College, University of Edinburgh

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

This conference aims to consider religious experience in an age of globalisation. Panels already have been proposed on Religious Experience in China (sponsored by the Alister Hardy Society's Research Committee) and Religious Experience and the Law. Other panels or papers may be focused on individual religions, new religious movements, indigenous traditions, geographical areas, key themes, important persons or methods relevant to the theme.

The BASR annual lecture will be given by Dr Maria Jaschok, Director of the International Gender Studies Centre, University of Oxford

Offers of panels, individual papers and reports of work in progress by June 1st 2007 to: Professor James Cox, University of Edinburgh, New College, Edinburgh EH1 2LX J.Cox@ed.ac.uk

Conference registration form and BASR membership at http://basr.org.uk

A limited number of full student bursaries are available for postgraduates presenting papers or work in progress reports.

Applications to Professor James Cox as above.

CHANGES AND MOVEMENTS

From Oxford to Bangor Dr Bettina E. Schmidt Lecturer in the Study of Religions, University of Wales, Bangor

The University of Wales, Bangor, is in the middle of a radical and rapid transformation process in order to increase its research profile. This development also affects its School of Theology and Religious Studies. It is an expanding department with an excellent reputation for teaching, research and student care. Founded originally with an expertise in Biblical Studies, the department decided last year to expand into the study of religions. Its first step was the appointment of a new lecturer in the study of religions in order to develop a new degree in Religious Studies.

My own academic background is in cultural anthropology with a focus on anthropology of religion. I have conducted several research projects in Latin America, the Caribbean and its Diaspora (i.e. New York City) and studied diverse topics such as identity and religion, social change and religion, migration and religion and gender and religion. In 2004 I moved from Marburg to Oxford where I was appointed as lecturer in the study of religions. Together with Peggy Morgan and other colleagues we were successful in expanding the study of religions in Oxford within the Faculty of Theology. We developed, for instance, a new course for the first year students, modernised the reading lists for the second and third year course, and included even a bit of post-colonial thinking into the oneyear taught Masters degree, which is still the only degree in Study of Religions at Oxford University (the undergraduate degree with a track in study of religions is still a theology or theology and philosophy award). But lack of funding for a permanent post has interrupted this positive development.

The department in Bangor is - similar to Oxford - predominately a theological department. However, its members are aware that many of their students as well as graduates are more and more interested in religious studies; hence, the department has offered courses in Judaism as well as courses introducing Islam and Eastern religions for some years. When the department decided to restructure the degrees and to increase religious studies, the members were aware that they would need a lecturer in the study of religions, and not in comparative theology, someone with a different academic background.

I am now a member of the School of Theology and Religious Studies, as a cultural anthropologist working on Caribbean religions and other 'exotic' traditions. It is a friendly environment, which easily embraces new members. I am able to develop my courses without long discussions or hostile questions about the relationship of what I do to theology. The students are very keen to learn more about the study of religions. At the moment I am teaching undergraduates theoretical approaches to religion, and how we think about religion. I am accepted as someone representing a different, independent field, the study of religions. I am still not completely sure how my research will fit in, whether I will switch

my current research project (about spirit possession and gender) and bring in some 'Welsh aspects'. But I am looking forward to new experiences and challenges (such as learning Welsh).

Innovation, Consolidation or Fragmentation?

Developments in Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religious Studies at Oxford Brookes University

Dr Angie Pears

Oxford Brookes University (and the former Westminster College, Oxford) has a long and well established reputation for delivering high quality programmes in Religious Studies and Theology at undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research level. I joined Westminster College in 1998 as a Lecturer in Practical and Contextual Theology. Prior to this I had completed a BA in Theology at Nottingham University and a PhD (British Academy Funded) at Nottingham University in Feminist Method in Christian Theology. For two years before my appointment at Westminster I had been Visiting Lecturer in Gender and Religion at Wolverhampton University. My pathway into both learning and teaching in Higher Education in the subject area of Theology and Religions was marked with ambiguities on many fronts. As a person of no faith background or commitment my place in the academic arena of Theology was interestingly unstable and sometimes contentious (for others). I had taken a degree in Theology and completed a PhD in theological method and yet my first academic (parttime) post was in a Department of Education teaching Religious Studies and Gender. My identity within the academic fields of Theology and Religious Studies remains a source of interest and sometimes contention (although usually for others and not for me). In rejecting the description "theologian" I place myself outside of the tradition of theological education yet at the same time I do not see myself exclusively as a scholar in the Study of Religion with a particular focus on the Christian religion. In isolation of each other the methodologies of the two disciplines variously defined seem to me to bring limitations and demarcations that my own approach to teaching, learning and research do not sit comfortably with.

The rigorous critical interrogation which has always played a part in the Theology programmes that I have been involved with seem to me to be crucial to today's religious/cultural climate. We need to be able to ask difficult and probing questions which go beyond description and comparison. As an educator in the 21st Century I see a pressing need, if not obligation, to raise these questions with whatever critical tools are appropriate. It is here that I see some of the methodologies of Theology as having a significant role to play. However, as indicated by my rejection of the term "theologian" in description of myself Theology as an academic discipline is clearly not without its problems. Its historical baggage as an insular and superior discipline needs radical deconstruction for in order that it might claim its place in the contemporary academic climate alongside many other critically informed disciplines.

These issues about academic identity and subject demarcation all came to the fore in 2005 when an extensive academic review was carried out by the staff team in TRS at Oxford Brookes University to assess the provision across the spectrum of Teaching and Learning in Religious Studies and Theology in respect of currency, innovation, subject integrity and market appeal. Following an extensive consultation period involving students, ex-students, potential students, academics, Further Education educators and employers a programme development team designed a single offering which was titled "Religion, Culture ad Ethics". The rationale behind this development which incorporated at the heart a move from a two programme offering to a single offering was complex but was deemed to be fully in line with the ethos and direction of the developing nature of the subject areas at Oxford Brookes, as compatible with developments in the subject area nationally, and as reflecting the curriculum and focus of the study of religions at A and AS levels.

At the point of development of this new programme both Religious Studies and Theology were vibrant programmes within Brookes' Undergraduate Modular Programme. So, in this sense, the programme development was not a response to the failure of the identifiable subject areas of Theology and Religious Studies as undergraduate programmes at Oxford Brookes to attract and retain students. Extensive and lively debate about the subject

areas, about integrity and distinctions, informed and shaped the programme development. Inevitably, perhaps, some colleagues expressed reservations about the relinquishing of the distinct and identifiable subject areas of Theology and Religious Studies to an unknown interloper called Religion, Culture and Ethics.

Despite these concerns the programme validation went ahead and the programme was launched very successfully with its first intake in September 2006. The programme of Religion, Culture and Ethics that is now in place is one that consciously brings together the strengths of the disciplines of Religious Studies and Theology in an unapologetic way in order to engage with religions and faith commitment in the 21st Century. The programme is diverse in its content, methodologies, and importantly in the student body. A survey of the first cohort of students onto the course revealed that students identified themselves in terms of faith commitment as follows:

33% Christian

21% Agnostic

11% Atheist

7% Muslim

7 % Declined to identify

3 % Buddhist

3% Believed in God

3% "Didn't know"

3% Atheist

3% Bahai

3 % Sikh

3% Took a "pick and choose" approach to religion

At the heart of the programme is the question of the place of religion in the contemporary world. This question is approached without prejudice either to an affirmation of

religion as an inherently positive and lifeenhancing part of human existence or as a negative and problematic aspect of human existence. The programme grounds students in the methodologies of both theology and religious studies (in Year One) and then presents students with options to employ these methodologies and tools in relation to some very challenging but persistently diverse issues. Modules on offer include: Change in Religion and Culture (compulsory), Philosophies of Religion, Religion and "Terror", Culture, Gender and Sexuality, Culture and Religion in Germany 1914-1990, Human Identity and Spirituality, Sex and Death, Identity and Culture, Culture and Ethics in a Global society, Religions in Conflict Situations and Religion, Culture and Ethics: Applied Contexts. In many respects the success of the programme will be the test of the next few years. Initial analysis by the course team and based on student responses, however, suggests that we have developed a rigorous, contemporary programme, grounded in the disciplines of both religious studies and theology in which both students and staff can engage in often challenging explorations about the place and meaning of religion in the world today.

BASR TREASURER'S UPDATE April 2007

As most of you will know I took over as BASR Treasurer from Dr Helen Waterhouse late last year. I am still getting to grips with the detail, and thanks to Helen's organisational skills, gradually finding my way around! I have already been in contact with most of you about this year's subscription which you will remember increased on 1st October 2006 from £15 to £20 for full membership and from £8 to £10 for full-time students, retired and unwaged. Out of a nominal membership of just under 250 I have contacted 107 of you about unpaid subs and another 107 about not increasing your standing order from £15 to £20 (£8 to £10 for the reduced rate). So, if you have not done so already, please send in your subscription for this current year, either the full amount or the balance if you have paid at the old rate, plus an updated standing order mandate. Finally, can I remind you that if you Gift Aid, BASR can get back from Chancellor Gordon Brown, another 28p for every pound you subscribe. This makes quite a difference to our income. If you do not have a Gift Aid form you can download one from the BASR website. I hope to see many of you at our Edinburgh Conference from 3-6 September.

Kind regards. Dermot Tredget.

In memory of Professor William Montgomery Watt (1909-2006)

William Montgomery Watt was recognised as one of the great Scots of his generation and as a legendary figure among scholars of Islam

The facts of his academic life can be summarised briefly. He was educated at the Universities of Edinburgh and Jena, and at Balliol College, Oxford. He held the post of Assistant Lecturer in Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh from 1934 to 1938, Lecturer in Ancient Philosophy from 1946 to 1947, and successively Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Reader in Arabic from 1947 to 1964. His Edinburgh Chair in Arabic and Islamic Studies came in 1964 and he became an Emeritus Professor upon his retirement in 1979. The names of the posts he held betoken his wide interests and his enquiring and mature mind, and his interest in Islam went far beyond the concerns of an academic career into a genuine desire to understand and engage with Muslims as persons and with Islam as a majestic system of life and thought.

I met him when I took up my first academic post at Edinburgh in 1973 as the first Lecturer in the newly formed degree of Religious Studies. Having been born on March 14 1909 William was much older and by this time a kind of academic patriarch. He had a deep interest in what was then the new discipline of the Study of Religion and his initiative was important. His innate kindness and humility shone in his agreement that Religious Studies should be situated in the strong Edinburgh Faculty of Divinity rather than his own Arts Faculty, but that it should include all departments at Edin-

burgh involved in the study of particular religious traditions and all departments involved in the study of different methods of studying religion. A wide programme thus evolved. William was very kind to me and I owe much to his friendship and advice. He was a gentleman in two senses. He was a gentle person, a gentle giant. He was also a gentleman in the British or even Chinese sense of a person who is cultured and urbane and yet open to all.

Professor Montgomery Watt continued the process of building up a strong programme of Islamic Studies at Edinburgh and at the present time it receives the rank of 5* in the A stream of books and papers flowed from his pen. They included Muhammad at Mecca (1953), Muhammad at Medina (1956), Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman (1961),Islamic Political Thought (1968), Muhammad's Mecca (1988), and various shorter works on many aspects of Muslim life and thought. In his day he was recognised as one of the major scholars of Islam in the world, and the Islamic press have called him the Last Orientalist in a respectful rather than a derogatory sense. I realised his greatness when I went to China in 1981 with the British Academy to look at the state of religion in China. As a guest of the government shortly after the Cultural Revolution I was suspect, and a meeting with the Vice-President of the Chinese Islamic Association began very formally. However when the name of William Montgomery Watt was mentioned and I said that he was a colleague and friend the whole atmosphere changed. He was a respected world figure

even in firmly Marxist China.

William had a strong emotional foundation to his life through his marriage to Jean in 1943, and through their five children, in the home that they set up in Dalkeith outside Edinburgh in 1947. He remained a humbly proud Scot.

William's father, who died when he was 14 months old, had been a Presbyterian Minister in Fife where William was born. William himself was later ordained as an Episcopal Priest and his last book, published when he was 93, was A Christian Faith For Today. He was also engaged in what would now be called scholarly Christian- Muslim dialogue, in practice and in books such as Muslim-Christian Encounters: Perceptions and Misperceptions (1991). Indeed in his daily meditations he would include passages from the Qur'an and from Muslim mystical writings. He felt a deep urgency, along with Norman Daniel, to put into context the negative stance that Islam had held in the West and to reorientate the West's view of Islam. He had a strong regard for what might be called critical tolerance. He could walk a couple of miles in the moccasins of Muslims and others, and see the world in some sense as they saw it. His views remain not unimportant now in our world where the 'clash of civilisations' gets more prominence than it deserves. Indeed William was what would now be termed an engaged scholar, admired for his erudite scholarship on the one hand and for engaging with contemporary concerns on the other hand. His approach approximated to what would now be called a reflexive phenomenology. He disliked intolerance and prejudice wherever they may be found, and yet he could understand but not condone them.

Above all William Montgomery Watt remained a towering scholar of Islam who inspired many people around the world to study Islam thoughtfully, empathetically, and not uncritically. In the nature of things we will not see his like again.

Frank Whaling
University of Edinburgh

From teatime on Friday July 6th to lunchtime Sunday July 8th there will be an international conference on Teaching Buddhism in Higher Education at St Anne's College, Oxford. It is a joint endeavour by the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies with the United Kingdom Association of Buddhist Studies (UKABS) and is supported by the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies.

Further information from: richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk.



The 2007 conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) will be held at the University of Bremen, Germany,

September 23-27.

It will be a joint conference of the EASR and the DVRW (Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionswissenschaft).

The conference title is "Plurality and Representation.
Religion in Education, Culture and Society".

For the conference concept and call for papers please take a look at the conference website:

www.religion.uni-bremen.de/dvrweasr2007

Please note that there is a limited number of grants for scholars from Eastern Europe.



IAHR Regional Conference 2007: "Health, Healing, & The Study of the Religions of Africa" to be hosted by the African Association for the Study of Religions (ASSR), Gaborone, Botswana 8-13 July 2007. For further information see the conference webpage: http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=155

IAHR Special Conference 2007: "Secularism and religious resurgence" to be hosted by the Turkish Association for the History of Religions (TAHR), Ankara-Turkey, October 22-23, 2007. For further information please consult the conference announcement.

BOOK REVIEWS

Rennie, Bryan (ed.) 2006. Mircea Eliade: A Critical Reader.

(Series: Critical Categories in the Study of

Religion)

London: Equinox. ix + 448 pp. Prices:

ISBN1: 1-904768-94-6 (pbk) ISBN13: 978-1-904768-94-4 (pbk)

Few, if any, readers of BASR's Bulletin will need an introduction to Mircea Eliade. In a recent email to Dolmen (the EASR's English-language discussion list) to announce another conference considering Eliade's work, Giovanni Casadio cited opposing assessments of Eliade as either "Il genio" or as an "imposteur". Even those who see his works as constructions of a

particular vision of religion - indeed as a programmatic quest for a return to "the sacred moment" - cannot entirely cease discussing them. Rennie's Critical Reader is not another evaluation of Eliade or his works. It offers only a brief biographical essay (pp.5-16). Its purpose is to contribute to the "understanding of religion and the processes involved in its study" by making it possible to consider questions raised powerfully by a reading of Eliade (p.16). Rennie begins his "General Introduction" to the volume by saying, "This is not an attempt to answer the questions raised for the academic study of religion by the work of Eliade and the style of his History of Religions; rather it seeks to serve as a useful introduction for scholars at whatever stage of their studies who wish to consider these questions" (p.2). It does this admirably by providing access to a selection of publications by or about Eliade that encourage us to read beyond a few classic texts. In common with other Readers in this Equinox series, expert introductions indicate areas of debate and do not end discussion by proffering resolutions or d e f i n i t i v e s t a t e m e n t s.

In addition to the Introductory material (including Eliade's own introduction to his The Sacred and the Profane), there are four Parts divided into a total of forty-three readings. Part II is concerned with "Eliade's Understanding of Religion" and is subdivided into "early understanding", "The Sacred", "Hierophany", "Homo Religiosus", "Symbols", "The Coincidentia Oppositiorum" and "Myths". Well chosen readings get straight to the heart of Eliade's project and to the core of debates about his work. Eliade's methodology is

the subject of the eight chapters in Part III, comprised of three readings from Eliade and five critiques. A more sustained consideration of the "Problems Themes in Eliade's Though" is enabled by the eleven readings in Part IV. Two readings from Eliade on "History and Historicism" are matched bν two of such "history". This assessments subsection is followed by others on "Eliade and postmodernism", and on Eliade's literature, religion and politics. This last subsection points to a vast area of differing views of Eliade. Usefully, it presents the "problem and theme" in two of Eliade's own works rather than in anyone else's assessment. As the cover blurb insists. "Eliade's career traces а complex trajectory involving many problems central to the academic study of religion". For this reason and others, Eliade's work and Rennie's Reader critical reward q m n

Graham Harvey
Open University

Hay, David (2006)
Something There: The Biology of the Human Spirit
Darton Longman and Todd
xiv + 316pp. Price £15.95 (pbk.)
ISBN 0 232 52537 0

This book begins in a lively way with the challenge that Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* sets as a reflection of where we are, or might be. David Hay has been investigating spiritual and religious experiences over many decades and explains (p.xii) that he is attempting to place the evidence 'in the context of our western cultural history'. He was the third Director of the Religious Experience Research Unit

(now Centre-hereafter RERC) and in many ways he sees himself as the heir to the work of Sir Alister Hardy to whom (with Alan Bullock) this volume is dedicated. In the early chapters Hay summarises some of the Hardy's ideas (chapters 1 and 2 Mountains of The Mind and Unfuzzying The Fuzzy) and also much of his own previous research (for example with Gordon Heald and Kate Hunt in chapter 3 The Individuality of the Spirit and that with Rebecca Nye in chapter 6 Primordial Spirituality). My first points of criticism can be placed at this juncture. Many parts of the text are engaging because of the quotations both from classical authors and from accounts drawn from the archives of RERC and Hay's own research. However, all the accounts in 'Hardy's archive' (now lodged with the University of Wales, Lampeter, which fact is acknowledged only in a brief footnote on page 258), have a reference number and entries are electronically searchable to access individual themes. Hay gives no reference numbers so that examples cannot be contextualised and there is no acknowledgment of the extensive use of the archive in the research of people such as Mark Fox, nor of work of a more interdisciplinary and cross-cultural nature that has been done under the auspices of the Centre since his own involvement. This has included reprinting Hardy's Spiritual Nature of Man (Hay has only the original publisher's details for this and other early work, all of which RERC has kept in print and for sale), as well as adding through its nearly fifty occasional papers a wide range of original research material on approaches to spirituality and religious experience in a variety of faiths and on many themes which are entirely relevant to our European context. Despite highlighting awareness of evil as a key area (p.11), Hay does not mention Merete Jakobsen's pioneering work on the RERC archive's accounts of experiences of evil. When dealing with happiness and the benefits of spiritual experience (p. 46), he does not mention the work of Michael Argyle. Caroline Franks Davis' The Evidential Force of Religious Experience is not even listed in the bibliography. These omissions are notable for anyone concerned for research in this field.

Early on, the extensive nature of spirituality and the juxtaposition of spirituality and institutional religion, an emphasis which has become almost normative for those working in this area, is made. 'Spiritual awareness is commonly the context out of which religion grows. But spirituality is not religion. Like Hardy I believe it is prior to religion and is a built-in, biologically structured dimension of the lives of all members of the human species. Therefore there are secular as well as religious expressions of spirituality, and many of them' (pp. 48-49). The 'talking to ordinary people' examples which are discussed in the next chapter are based on the research with Kate Hunt in Nottingham in 2000 where the focus was on the spirituality of people who do not go to church and indicates that religion tends to equal Christianity and its relationship to spirituality and secularity.

Hay's agenda and emphasis is spelt out particularly in chapter 11 Treating The Sickness of the Spirit which identifies individualism and self-interest as blocking the development of spirituality. When he asks whether anything can be done to retrieve our lost humanity, he asserts that 'the religious institutions are potentially in a very strong position with regard to social experiments in community building. More than any other body the Church has vast experienceŠ..(p.239) and later 'The more we believe that God the Holy Spirit speaks to everyone', echoing the John 3:8 quotation which heads chapter 3. This makes clear the European as Christian (despite one or two apt Jewish quotations and examples) orientation of the work, but the assumed 'we' is clearly a problem, as is the confessional stance in relation to scientific provability and religious orientation. As a survey of work done and an example of a position held in relation to certain views of what counts as 'scientific' and 'spiritual' and 'religious' this is a useful, though the case is not clearly proven. It also needs to

be contextualised academically in a broader arena of methods of research such as the ethnography of the 'Warwick team', the critique of Carrette and King and the further interdisciplinary and intercultural work of RERC in recent years. It has been timely that in 1997 in Oxford and again in the forthcoming Edinburgh conference that BASR has facilitated breadth of discussion in the academic community of this interesting and often controversial area.

Peggy Morgan

Paul Marshall (2005)

Mystical Encounters with The Natural
World

Oxford University Press
324pp. Price £58 (hbk.)
ISBN 0 19 927943 8

Those studying spiritual and religious experiences have often attempted typologies and mystical experiences can be seen as one of these types. However within the category of mystical experiences further types have been identified, for example introvertive and extrovertive experiences. The volume under review is a study of the variety of explanations put forward over the last hundred years for the extrovertive types, which are also called nature mysticism, those involving a transformed apprehension of the natural world. The author contends that these have been relatively neglected. His work is built on a doctoral thesis done at the University of Lancaster and provides a clear, up to date and excellently resourced investigation which is very balanced, providing 'a corrective to the usual tendency of specialists to fix on one explanatory approach to the exclusion of others' (p.5). The introduction maps out very clearly the plan of the book. Part 1 (chapters 1-3) gives the reader a sense of the key features of extrovertive experiences and is characterised by ample quotations, carefully referenced. It deals with definition, nomenclature, typology, incidence, phenomenology, circumstances

and consequences in relation to the accounts.

Part 11 looks at some of the very different modern ways in which extrovertive mystical experiences have been explained. Some scholars have been or are more interested in the origins and some in the function of the experiences, some emphasise and even reduce them to their contexts and others contest that experiences stand outside conditioning. The author has no personal agenda here of seeing mystical experiences as the essence or goal of religion but there is an affirmation stated much earlier that 'it would also be a mistake to neglect moments of intense experience that transform lives and raise profound questions' (p.4). The text never offers over-simplifications, whether it is in attempts to define what is meant by extrovertive mystical experiences and overlapping terms or in assessing the challenge of reductionist and contextualist interpreters and of the varied ways in which current and future developments in research need to be tested and might illuminate this area of exploration. One of the most lively and closely argued sections that I enjoyed was chapter 6 Scholars Lock Horns: Contruction or Deconstruction? which analyses the positions of a variety of contemporary scholars in carefully organised subsections. Lesser known names are added to the commonly discussed Katz and Stace and material brought in from studies of eastern as well as western traditions. As elsewhere in the book charts and diagrams help the reader to navigate closely analysed material.

Marshall advocates the holding of informed opinions, opinions based on evidence, and argues well but without preconceived ideas when criticising positions. He also has a strong sense of the interim nature of scholarship and welcomes the possibility of future insights from advances in neuroscience and fundamental physics, ending with a chapter entitled Fashions, Failures, Pros-

Thinking Through Things: Theorising Artefacts Ethnographically

Amiria Henare, Martin Holbraad and Sari Wastell (eds.)

London and New York Routledge

2007 237 pages

ISBN10: 1-84472-071-3 (pbk)

ISBN13: 978-1-84472-071-2 (pbk)

In recent years the study of 'things' in material culture has given rise to new polemics and discourses within academic disciplines such as anthropology and the study of religions, among others. The problematic nature of materiality has caused scholars to have to rethink the positions and models upon which studies have been based and fieldwork carried out for years. Both in the studies of religion and anthropology, approaches have generally involved the distinct separations that define binary opposites such as subject and object, nature and culture, non-humans from humans, or idea from material. In response to the dualism found in the experience/ analysis divide of anthropological dispects.

This is a book that I am sure that I shall return to again and again as both a stimulating read and as a research tool. It has an impressive bibliography of authors well used in the text and an index including both names and terms. It is to be hoped that OUP will soon bring out a cheaper paperback copy of this excellent study which has moves discussion forward a great deal.

Peggy Morgan Mansfield College, University of Oxford

course, Thinking Through Things offers a fresh, welcome and radicalized methodological approach to an artifact-based study of 'things'. Instead of explaining away ethnographic accounts of the engagement with 'things' in terms of representation, significance and meaning, the Thinking Through Things project renders them capable of producing a multiplicity of creative theories, novel ideas and concepts where "the 'things' themselves dictate a plurality of ontologies" (7) that challenge an anthropological approach largely symptomatic of modernist thought.

The introduction comprehensively surveys not only the more recent history underpinning this current 'quiet [anthropological] revolution' (7), but also wider issues relating to 'things' in material culture, anthropology, and the problematic nature of the traditional models used in anthropological methodologies by drawing on and adding to the works of Bruno Latour, Alfred Gell, Marilyn Strathern, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Roy Wagner. Following the introduction there are nine chapters in essay form written by contributors that introduce

different and creative ethnographic accounts of their informants' "concern with things" (21). Not all of the contributors agree with every aspect of the editors' proposed methodological approach of how to 'think through things' but all discuss the issues. In the essays, the 'things' of concern include cigarettes in a Papua New Guinea prison, Mongolian ceremonial objects such as altars and shamanic costumes where one can come to be through things, the legal documents and the law in Swaziland, the role of Maori taonga in New Zealand in light of recent debates on property rights, what happens when the aim of co-creating and producing new forms of art through the joint collaborations of artists and scientists falter due to issues of ownership and how powder is power for Cuban diviners.

Among these, let me draw attention to "Talismans of Thought" Shamanistic ontologies and extended cognition in Northern Mongolia" by Morten Axel Pedersen, and "The Power of Powder: Multiplicity and motion in the divinatory cosmology of Cubn Ifa (or mana, again)" by Martin Holbraad. Both authors address and survey issues arising from cognitive psychological theory. However, they are quite willing to advance the cognitive approach through considering 'things' "as conduits for concept production" (7). Pedersen's contention rests on his theory that Darhad Mongolian shamanic knowledge is rooted and exists in religious artifacts and costumes. He elaborates on how the design of the shamanic costume, for example, "triggers peoples" momentary conceptualization of social relationships which otherwise remain unseen, and, for the same reason, to a large extent unknown" (141), saying that people are given access to other planes of existence through the wearing of shamanic costume. Holbraad thinks through the thing 'ache': a powder type of substance used by diviners in Cuba during séances. He uses this powdery 'thing' to exemplify how a 'thing' in normative modernist cultural discourse is not the same as a 'thing' in the discourse of Cuban divers. To the diviners, the powder does not represent or signify power; the powder *is* power. It is suggested by the editors of this book that the missing theoretical piece to this perplexing problem is to afford the powder the ability to put forward its own theory.

Although Thinking Through Things is an anthropological work, it offers an important contribution to the study of religions because it offers ways in which to reform and improve the debate concerning religious materiality. A significant factor of this work rests on the suggestion that the term 'worlds' is adopted in lieu of 'worldview'. The term 'worldview,' and its often employed cousins 'perspective' and 'belief', further engages with binary opposites found in Cartesian thought. The use of the word 'worlds' implies a respectful distance that allows for the possibility of not understanding everything about other cultures and curves the temptation to search out 'meaning' 'significance' or 'representation' in the actions of other people. It points to the heart of the problem: in researching and discussing materiality we are engaging not with epistemology (what people believe about the world) but with ontology or, more adequately, ontologies. Thinking through "things" requires us to engage with people who live in different worlds.

Amy Whitehead Open University

SUBJECT CENTRE FOR RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES



Events

We are holding a couple of events over the next few months which are advertised elsewhere in this bulletin:

A colloquium on the Contribution of Theology and Religious Studies to Education for Sustainable Development

A workshop on the Developing the Curriculum in Philosophical and Religious Studies

In addition we are holding a focus group for students who have been on placements as part of their courses. The aim is to provide them with a forum to stare experiences and reflect on what they have learned as a result of their placements. The (anonymised) results will feature as a report that will be published on our website (prs.heacademy.ac.uk), and in our journal. We hope that it will provide useful information for those already offering placements and provide guidance for those who wish to establish such a scheme. The focus group will be held in Birmingham on Thursday 3 May. We will pay individuals £25 in Amazon vouchers, plus travel. Although we already have enough names to make this viable we would like representatives from as many institutions as is manageable. If you have any students who you

think might be interested please let me know (contact details below).

Research

We currently have three research assistants working for us looking at:

The role of religious studies and theology in public and social policy.

We have found that the importance of our discipline areas is often underestimated by policy makers and advisors. To help counter this we are putting together a series of reports that will highlight areas where our disciplines can make a contribution, and also advise colleagues on how they can become more involved in policy issues should they wish to do so.

The transition from 'A' levels to university.

This seems to be an increasing problem. We are looking at many of the aspects of transition concentrating on curriculum and skills issues, but also looking into cultural and social contexts. As part of this process we recently facilitated a very useful meeting between academic colleagues and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), and hope to meet again in July 2007 (please contact me if you wish to attend). The main outcome of the meeting was that we intend to hold a major conference around these issues in July 2008; if you wish to register an interest for this please let me know.

Developing subject specific pedagogical research.

We are concerned that much peda-

gogical research, especially in relation to higher education, is generic and not seen as applicable to learning and teaching in universities and colleges. We are therefore examining the extent that religious studies methodologies can engage with some to the prevailing methodologies in pedagogical research with a view to developing approaches that are both pedagogical and located within a religious studie discourse.

Elearning

We are now in the third year of our Elearning funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). A number of you have already benefited from the small grant funding that we have offered. In order to bring all this activity together we will shortly be appointing an Elearning project officer who will enable us to support this work more fully. We were really surprised by the amount of (often unacknowledged) good work that is going on in departments up and down the country and hope to be able to network interested parties more effectively.

We are also sponsoring a PhD student, Christian Kaestner, who will be researching into the role of interreligious dialogue in learning and teaching in higher education. More on this later once Christian has begun his research in earnest.

Publications

Our journal, *Discourse*, continues to go from strength to strength; up coming items which may be of interest include articles on:

Developing reusable learning objects for

theology and religious studies
Teaching medical ethics
An interview with Dr Deirdre Burke
Engaging students in personal development planning

Don't forget that the journal is available free of charge to those who work in the UK, to receive it please register on our website at: http://prs.heacademy.ac.uk/registration/

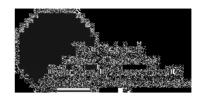
A number of you may be aware of the faith guides that we published during the summer last year (http://www.prs.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/index.html#1). These have proved to be hugely successful to the extent that we are about to do a second print run. They have proved to be an excellent opportunity to promote in importance of understanding religion(s) in curriculum and student support.

We are currently in the process of developing an employability guide for religious studies and theology students. The guide is intended to help students to appreciate the skills that they are gaining as part of their degree courses, and provide tips and case studies for potential careers. We hope that these will be sent out to every second year student in the country. To make sure students in your department receive this, please contact me for a sample copy.

If you would like any further information on these or any other of our activities please get in touch at: s.g.smith@leeds.ac.uk

Dr Simon Smith April 2007

Developing the Curriculum in Philosophical and Religious Studies



Women's Library, London Metropolitan University, London, May 21st 2007, 11am - 4pm

Would you like the opportunity to discuss issues surrounding curriculum and module design in theology, religious studies and philosophy, and listen to other perspectives?

The Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies is holding a workshop to discuss issues around curriculum design and module development. We anticipate that this event may be particularly useful to newer members of staff, and those with direct responsibility for curriculum design, but all are welcome to attend.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Dr Deirdre Burke, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Wolverhampton and National Teaching Fellow
- Dr Joe Cain, Senior Lecturer in History and Philosophy of Science at University College London
 Dr Chris Megone, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Leeds and National Teaching Fellow

The event, including lunch and light refreshments, is provided at no charge to those working in UK higher education.

To register for this event please go to: http://prs.heacademy.ac.uk/registration/curriculum.html

For further information, please contact Dr Simon Smith at simon@prs.heacademy.ac.uk

The Contribution of Theology and Religious Studies to Education for Sustainable Development



Woodbrooke Study Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham Thursday June 28th 2007

Are you interested in including sustainability issues in your teaching or curriculum planning for theology or religious studies modules?

The Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies, in conjunction with the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, is holding a colloquium to provide space for reflection on the role that teaching about religion in higher education could play in ESD. Its specific aim is to consider the contribution of TRS to educating students about sustainable development.

Provisional programme items include:

- Keynote introduction from Waheed Saleem, Sustainable Development Commissioner for Education and Young People
- Case studies for ESD in TRS discussing their current use and future development
- Identifying the wider social and cultural aspects of ESD in TRS Setting up a TRS and ESD 'Special Interest Group'

The event, including lunch and refreshments, is provided at no charge to those working in UK Higher Education.

To register or for further information, please contact Dr Emma Tomalin, University of Leeds, on:

0113 3433658 or at e.tomalin@leeds.ac.uk

24th Annual STIMW Seminar

Fri 25 May 2007 10.45 a.m. – 4.45 p.m.

Registration Form

	Institution (if applicable)	:					
Name.		Mailing address			email	Fax	
- 1						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1							
- 1						- 1	
						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1							
- 1						- 1	
- 1			- 1	- 1		- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1			- 1			- 1	
			- 1	- 1		- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1			- 1			8	
- 1						.00	
- 1							
- 1		:	- 1			- 1	
- 1				- 1		- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1				- 1		- 1	
- 1						- 1	
- 1						- 1	
						- 1	
- 1	-					- 1	
- 1	-					- 1	
	20					- 1	
	60					- 1	
	- 23						
	75.					- 1	
- 1	6	10				- 1	
- 1	€.	42		- 1		- 1	
- 1	44	92				- 1	
	9	-8		- 1		- 1	
- 1	-	ď		- 1		- 1	
- 1	- 5	65	- 1	- 1		- 1	
- 1	- 15	ρĐ		- 1		- 1	
ni.	=	=		- 1	i	نه	
ă	-		- 1		-	ā	
Ħ	100	. 45	- 1	- 1	2	Phone	
100	-	4			#	~	
-	1	\sim		- 1	a)	Silve	

Please delete as appropriate:

- I wish to attend the 2007 symposium and enclose a cheque for ± 15 (waged)/ £6 (unwaged)
- I am unable to attend the symposium, but would like to receive the papers and enclose a cheque for t6
- I do not wish to remain on the STIMW mailing list any more/
- I wish to remain on the STIMW mailing list and to receive information by among the root

Please make cheques payable to the University of Manchester and send with print out of completed form to:

Janet Meredith, STIMW, Conference Administrator Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama School of Arts, Histories and Cultures University of Manchester Manchester M13 9PL

अनु प्रत्नास आयवः पदं नवीयो अक्रमुः

The ancient bards have walked in a newer step - Rg Veda 9, 23, 2

24th Annual STIMW Seminar

Fri 25 May 2007 10.45 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Kilburn Building, G95, University of Manchester

Programme (Order to be confirmed)

- 10.45-11.10 Coffee and registration
- 11.15-12.00 McComas Taylor (Australian National University)
 The current renaissance of Sanskrit in India'
- 12.05-12.25 Payal Doctor (University of Liverpool, UK) Research report: 'The Tradition of Sanskrit Commentaries and their Future?
- 12.30-1.35 Lunch
- 1.45-2.25 Dermot Killingley (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK)
 'Ezour Vedam: Europe's illusory first glimpse of the Veda'
- 2.30-3.10 Jacqueline Suthren Hirst (University of Manchester, UK)
 'The six schools of Indian philosophy: some Indian and European constructions'
- 3.15-3.45 Tea
- 3.45.4.25 Annapurna Waughray (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK) 'Caste discrimination and human rights law'

4.304.45 STIMW 2008

and the European Conference for Modern South Asian Studies

For further details, please see

http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/religionstheology/newsevents/st or contact_jacqueline.httst/@manchester.ac.uk

To book, please print out, complete and post accompanying registration form.

For administrative queries, please contact janet meredith@manchester.a

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

£3.00 each inc. p&p. Write, enclosing payment, to Helen Waterhouse, Arts Faculty, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA or order from the BASR Web site.

- 1 Miranda Green, Women and Goddesses in the Celtic World, 1991
- 2 Christine Trevett, *The Quaker Margaret Fell: Religion and Gender in a C17th Dissenting Group*, 1991
- 3 Ann Bancroft, Hildegarde of Bingen to Meinrad Craighead, 1991
- 4 Julia Leslie, Religion, Gender and Dharma: The Case of the Widow Ascetic, 1991
- 5 Peter Antes, How to study religious experience in the traditions, 1992
- 6 Marion Bowman, Phenomenology, fieldwork and folk religion, 1992
- 7 George Chryssides, *Unificationism: A study in religious syncretism*, 1993
- 8 Michael Pye, Syncretism versus synthesis, 1993
- 9 Ria Kloppenberg, A Buddhist-Christian encounter in Sri Lanka: Pandura Vada, 1994
- 10 Peter Donovan, Maori rituals add magic to contemporary civic life, 1995
- 11 Ninian Smart, Sacred nationalism, 1995
- 12 W. S. F. Pickering, Locating the sacred: Durkheim and Otto, 1995
- 13 Terence Thomas, 'The sacred' as a viable concept in the contemporary study of religions, 1995 (bound together with 12)
- 14 Margaret Chatterjee, Do we need authority in religious life?, 1996
- 15 Chris Arthur, Media, meaning, and method in the study of religion, 1996
- 16 Gerrie ter Haar, Chosen people: The concept of diaspora in the modern world, 1996
- 17 Richard Gombrich, Religious experience in early Buddhism, 1997
- 18 James Cox, Alterity as identity: Innovation in the Academic Study of Religions, 1998
- 19 Elizabeth Amoah, African spirituality and religious innovation, 1998
- 20 Ian Reader, Religion, conflict and the sacred mission: On understanding the violence of Aum Shinrikyo, 1999
- 21 Brian Bocking, Religious Studies: The New Queen of the Sciences, 2000
- 22 Kim Knott, The Sense and Nonsense of 'Community': A Consideration of Contemporary Debates about Community and Culture by a Scholar of Religion, 2002
- 23 Armin Geertz, Religion and Community in Indigenous Contexts, 2002
- 24 Guilia Sfameni Gasparro, Religion and Community in the Ancient World, 2002
- 25 Tariq Modood, Multiculturalism, Muslims and the British State, 2002
- 26 Rosalind Hackett, *The Response of Scholars of Religion to Global Religious Violence*, 2003
- 27 Ursula King, Cherished Memories, Fractured Identities and New Subjectivities: Celebrating Fifty Years of British Scholarship in Religious Studies, 2006.

MEMBERS' RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- **Abby Day**, 'Doing Theodicy: an Empirical Study of a Women's Prayer Group', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 20.3 pp343-356 2005
- **Mathew Guest**, Evangelical Identity and Contemporary Culture: A Congregational Study in Innovation, Paternoster; forthcoming 2007.

Bishops, Wives and Children: Spiritual Capital Across the Generations, (with Douglas Davies), Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming 2007.

"In Search of Spiritual Capital: The Spiritual as a Cultural Resource". In Flanagan, K. and Jupp, P. (eds) *The Sociology of Spirituality*, Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming, 2007.

"Reconceiving the Congregation as a Source of Authenticity". In Garnet, J. et al (eds) Redefining Christian Britain: Post-1945 Perspectives, London: SCM, forthcoming, 2007.

"The Post-Evangelical Emerging Church: Global Innovations in New Zealand and the UK" (with Steve Taylor), *The International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, Vol. 6, no. 1, 2006, pp. pp. 49-64.

- **Graham Harvey** with Robert Wallis, *Historical Dictionary of Shamanism*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006.
- John R. Hinnells and Jamal Malik (eds), Sufism in the West, London: Routledge, 2006
- **John R. Hinnells**, (ed), *A Handbook of Ancient Religions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007
- **John R. Hinnells** and R. King (eds), *Religion and Violence in South Asia, Theory and Practice*, London: Routledge, 2007
- **Grahame Miles,** Science and Religious Experience: Are they similar forms of knowledge? Brighton: Sussex Academic Press HB ISBN 978-1-84519-116-0; PB ISBN 978-1-84519-117-7 2007.
- lan Netton and Zahia Salhi (eds.), *The Arab Diaspora: Voices of an Anguished Scream,* London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Melanie Wright, Religion and Film: An Introduction, London: I. B. Taurus 2006

GUIDELINES FOR BULLETIN CONTRIBUTORS

The Editors welcome contributions on events and issues relating to the Study of Religion. The following guidelines on length should be observed.

Conference reports (short, one-day)	500-800 words
Reports on major conferences	1,000-1,500 words
Notices of forthcoming conferences	Not more than one page
Book reviews	500-800 words
Religious Studies in location	800 words
Research in progress	800-1,000 words
Turning Point	800-1,000 words
Tributes	normally 500 words

We welcome, in particular, accounts of research in progress by post-graduate students, and articles describing RS at a particular location.

The BASR Bulletin will carry notices of relevant conferences and calls for papers (up to one page) free of charge. Preference is given to conferences where members may offer papers; other non-participatory conferences, which are more akin to courses, may be included if space permits. The deadline for the next edition is 15th April 2007.

Flyers may be sent out with the Bulletin, for a pre-paid charge of £50 each.

Icons of a New/Secular Monasticism

A conference of MONOS and the Lampeter Monastic Studies Programme

Douai Abbey, Reading, 20-22 July 2007

The last few decades have seen an explosion of interest in monastic spirituality in the wider Christian community. This interest arises from the needs of a changing church and society and has resulted both in increased development of lay 'monastic' communities and a renewed interest in the religious life.

Speakers include: Esther De Waal, The Right Revd. Dominic Walker OGS, Paula Pearce SFO, Michael Woodward, Lay community of Benedict.

For further information contact:

Ant Grimley, Monos, Vine House, 13 Charnwood Road, Barwell, Leicester, LE9 8FJ Tel: 01455 845390; email: ant@monos.org.uk

Dr Jonathan M. Wooding, Dept of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Wales Lampeter SA48 7ED, Tel. 01570 424 883 j.wooding@lamp.ac.uk

www.monos.org.uk