

From the Director—  
Peter M. Scott

Welcome to the Spring 2010 issue of the Institute's newsletter. Much has happened at the Institute since the last newsletter was published in summer 2009. As I write, advanced preparations are underway to host the second, international, colloquium of the Belonging & Heimat project at the University of Manchester in May and a rough cut of the LTI climate change film, 'Beyond the Tipping Point?' is being produced. There is more information on both these developments, and the recent Divinity after Empire meeting in Bangalore, elsewhere in this newsletter. A number of publications by members of the Institute have also appeared; please see inside for more details. I hope the activities presented here catch your interest.

I wish to use the remainder of my report to say a little about how the Institute plans to communicate from now on with its friends and supporters. In line with other research institutes, and as presented in the last two newsletters, we are moving to electronic communication only. If you are currently being alerted to the publication of the newsletter by e-mail, you need take no further action. We shall continue to notify you by e-mail of the Institute's activities.

If you are receiving a paper copy of the Newsletter this is because we do not hold a current e-mail address for you. To register your e-mail address, please send an e mail to [liti@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:liti@manchester.ac.uk), with NEWSLETTER in the subject line and put your name and address in the body of the e mail. We shall then contact you by e-mail in the future. LTI undertakes not to send more than four e-mails each year.

Finally, the Institute has a different website. It has the potential to be more interactive, blog-gy and will eventually offer a facility to receive regular notifications about LTI's activities. I shall say more about these developments in later newsletters. For now, I invite you to check out the website at [www.lincolnthologicalinstitute.com](http://www.lincolnthologicalinstitute.com)

With my best wishes,

Peter M. Scott

**Future Ethics:**

Project's final phase includes  
film, book



*No Hopenhagen: LTI does COP 15*

By Stefan Skrimshire

On the ferry that left Harwich for Denmark, 9th December, the majority of passengers were headed for the UN Climate talks in Copenhagen. A buoyant mood betrayed almost universal scepticism. What

hope could possibly be hung on a gathering that, according to one activist we interviewed on deck, would at most be capable of achieving "a decision to make a decision at some point in the future" on a new international climate deal?

The results did not prove her wrong. Inside the Bella Centre our 3 person film crew – admitted under the badge of LTI as research 'observers' to the process - witnessed the impact of the failure to reach any legally binding

**What's Inside This Issue:**



**Belonging & Heimat**  
Page 2



**Bangalore Report**  
Page 3

targets: walk-outs from African nation delegations; hunger strikers in their 40th day demanding climate justice; and climate scientists barely able to mask the apocalyptic implications of the passing of climate tipping points.

Did such failures lead activists to despair, or to raise their voice even louder against the politicians' failure to halt 'business as usual'? This, or words to that effect, was our question to protestors and delegates, in pursuit of material for the forthcoming LTI documentary film, *Beyond the Tipping Point? Conversations on climate, political action, and the future*. Following 10 days of fascinating and diverse responses to that question, our embarrassed reply to friends now asking about the trip is: bad news for the planet; great news for our film.

Back in Manchester, and wading through forty hours of footage, the task is now to compile, edit and produce a creative intervention in the ongoing climate debate. The finished product will draw on a diversity of voices: a Buddhist direct action group; a British MP; a 12-year old girl from the Amazon rainforest; Bangladeshi activists; a scientist from the Met Office—these are some of the highlights. It will also reflect the yawning gap between the two 'sides' in this common struggle: our intrepid crew had to move daily between riot police beating, tear-gassing and pepper-spraying peaceful protestors, and the crowds of frustrated, suited delegates that emerged from closed meetings inside the conference.



*The 4 horsemen of the apocalypse, commissioned by Greenpeace, parade through the streets of Copenhagen*

Not exactly a project that will guarantee 'happy' viewing then but, perhaps more importantly, one that will help activists, academics and community groups grappling with the deeper questions of what 'happens next' for political culture. What resources, ideas and beliefs will now be required to give meaning to political action for current and future generations? Hence the double meaning implied by the working title, *Beyond the Tipping Point?* For the task ahead is not only how to cope with the possibility that the earth has passed a point of no return in global warming feedback. It is also how to broaden the questions beyond the discourse of tipping points. How will we respond with justice to this new situation? What ethical values will underpin action in the future? What political, religious or spiritual beliefs will guide our conclusions?

Expect a fascinating exploration of these and other questions with the film's launch, projected for June this year.

Finally, the volume of essays that has emerged out of the project is in press and will be published by Continuum in autumn 2010. Edited by Skrimshire, this will be the final outcome of the project and brings this three year research effort to a conclusion.

*Stefan Skrimshire is LTI Postdoctoral Research Associate in Religion and Politics at The University of Manchester. As well as directing the Religion and Climate Change project, he teaches and researches apocalyptic belief and crisis rhetoric in political cultures.*

#### Editor's note

*On behalf of LTI, the Director would like to put on record his profoundest thanks for the effort and dedication that has characterised Dr. Skrimshire's leadership of the Future Ethics project at LTI over the last three years.*

## Belonging & Heimat

Research visit to Germany undertaken, October–November 2009; international colloquium set for May 2010

By John Rodwell

The aim of the research visit, supported by the LTI and St George's Trust, was to hear something of the richness of understandings of *Heimat* in Germany, among academics and practitioners in landscape ecology and planning and to begin to explore some of the theological implications of emerging themes.

Discussions with Professor Ulrich Deil of the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg, Professor Wolfgang Haber and Professor Udo Weilacher of the Technical University of Munich, Professor Chris Hann and Professor Helge Bruehlheide of the Martin Luthers University, Halle, provided both an ecological perspective on landscape and restoration, and also opened up some of the particular historical complexities in Germany of pondering notions of people and homeland, 'blood and soil'. Seminars I gave about the project at Freiburg and Halle enabled me explore ideas further with students and staff.

For the Deutscher Rat für Landschaftspflege, Director Fr Angelika Würzel at their headquarters in Bonn and Dr Werner Konold in Freiburg, told me something of the history of land stewardship in Germany that is this organisation's charge and, with Dr Udo Bohn in Bonn, I discussed how this related to the programmes of nature conservation administered by the Bundesamt für Naturschutz in Bonn. Fräulein Inge Paulini of the Ethnic Landscapes Project and Dr Franz Höchtl, Coordinator of the International Vineyards Project provided particular perspectives, on the relationships

between nature and culture in distinctive landscapes in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

With Herr Michael Schwarze-Rodrian, Director of the Standort Ruhr, I had a guided tour of the post-industrial landscape of the Emscher Landschaftspark, including Innenhafen Duisburg, Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord with its steel works, Gasometer Oberhausen and the Coke Works and Collieries at Zollverein, now a World Heritage Site. Here, in contrast to the usual approach to post-industrial restoration seen in Britain, there is an inspiring attempt to integrate the memories and ruins of industrial life with ecological processes, bringing *industrienatur* right into the centre of regenerating conurbations (see photo below).



An excursion with Dr Annett Basch of Halle University to the Goitzschese area between Bitterfeld and Leipzig, showed up some sharp contrasts between such *industrienatur* and more technologically-led restoration in the landscape left by lignite-mining. An encounter with NGO representatives and local people gave some vivid human perspective to this complex story in what was once East Germany.

Difficult memories of contested German histories were inescapable on visits to the Dachau Nazi labour camp, the Leipzig churches involved in the 1989 popular uprisings before the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the restored Romanesque churches of Cologne devastated by WW2 allied bombing. I ended the visit with lauds and meditation with the brothers and sisters of the Monastische Geimeinschaften von Jerusalem *Industrienatur* at Zollverein Colliery In the Groß Sankt Martin church in Cologne, austere restored after extensive bomb damage.

*The Revd Professor John Rodwell is an Honorary Research Fellow of the Lincoln Theological Institute.*

## Divinity after Empire

International conference held at United Theological College, Bangalore; 100+ delegates participate; plans to publish proceedings of the conference announced

By Joe Duggan

The second Divinity after Empire meeting, "Envisioning Postcolonial Theologies to Decolonize the Body of Christ", was held at United Theological College (UTC) in Bangalore, India from Jan 20-23, 2010. It was at the conclusion of the first Divinity After Empire meeting, held in May 2008 at the University of Manchester under the title, "Church, Identity/ies and Postcolonialism" that Rev. Dr. David Joy enthusiastically suggested taking the conversation around the world. Joy, a Professor of New Testament at UTC and 2008 author of *Mark and its Subalterns: A Hermeneutical Paradigm for a Postcolonial Context* hosted the January 2010 meeting. UTC, Lincoln Theological Institute (LTI) and the Society for Biblical Studies in India jointly organized the meeting.

As conference delegates entered the UTC campus they immediately saw a large banner welcoming them to this meeting. One hundred and thirty two delegates registered for the meeting with over thirty-five papers presented from scholars around the world. Among those present were the future Divinity After Empire hosts: Mark Brett, a Lincoln Theological alum and Professor of Hebrew Bible at Whitley College will host a Jan 2012 meeting in Melbourne, Australia; and Esther Mombo, Academic Dean of St. Paul's University, will host a May 2014 meeting in Limuru, Kenya. Joe Duggan, a doctoral researcher in his final write-up year represented the Lincoln Theological Institute and the Postcolonial Theology Network.

A message from Dr. Peter Scott, the Director of LTI was read by Rev. Stefani Schatz. In the message, Scott stated his hopes "that this precious opportunity for scholars of the postcolonial to meet and to discuss will advance the scholarly debate in postcolonial studies and postcolonial theology, and contribute to the formation of many postcolonial friendships". Nurturing friendships was a central part of the meeting enabled by the fact that all the meeting participants shared their meals together and resided on campus in the same dormitory.

The opening ceremonies symbolized a new era due to the presence of both Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda, from the local Diocese of Bangalore and Rt. Rev. Dr. Laurie Green from the Church of England. On a scholarly level, friendships were forged where in many other academic meetings there has been suspicion. This Divinity After Empire meeting was designed to initialize contact between postcolonial theorists and theologians to encourage longer-term engagement and dialogue. It has been common for theologians to be suspicious of secular theorists and for the theorists to question the category of religion. The theorists

attending the meeting demonstrated the way it is possible for theory to amplify postcolonial theologians' attention to the other. Brett captured in his remarks the significance of the meeting by cautioning scholars to avoid an orthodoxy that prioritizes the postcolonial as one thing versus another.

A variety of publications, including papers from the meeting, will flow from the conference. Joy and Duggan are now working with scholars to select papers for publication in conference proceedings. Palgrave MacMillian has expressed interest in publishing the papers from the Divinity After Empire meetings. Hopefully, papers will be published in time for the next meeting to be held in Melbourne in 2012 through Whitley College and Melbourne College of Divinity, with the theme of "Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial Theologies".

#### Editor's note

Rev Joseph Duggan is undertaking doctoral research at LTI and submits his thesis in 2010. He was the principal organizer of the conference, "Church, Identity/ies and Postcolonialism" (The University of Manchester, May 2008). LTI is deeply grateful for all his hard work in the development of *Divinity after Empire*.

## New Research Fellow—

Meet Anne Marie Sowerbutts



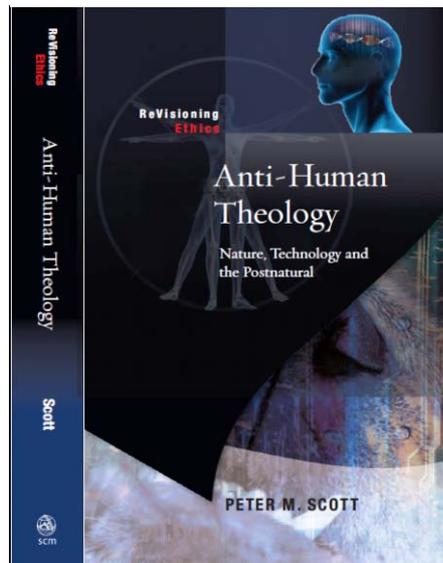
I join LTI having gained my PhD in 2008 from Liverpool University. In my thesis I researched ideas of freedom; I used the stem cell debate to critique contemporary ideas of freedom and the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar to propose an alternative. Von Balthasar tends to stress the interpersonal relationship in discussing freedom and therefore I linked his ideas with

the common good in order to investigate what his concept of freedom could offer to wider society.

It is this exploration of the common good that I want to take forward during my time with LTI, engaging with the concept in relation to biotechnologies. Emerging biotechnologies will have a profound effect on society and, whilst presenting remarkable opportunities, they also raise significant dilemmas; however, the current narrative surrounding these technologies is one of individualism, scientific progress and market forces. In my view, this results in technology being understood in reductionist terms and ethical reflection focusing on individual decision making. Given the implications of these technologies for society, it is questionable whether such an approach is adequate. My research, drawing on the concept of the common good, will take a broader perspective and will develop a model for approaching biotechnologies for the good of society as whole. I hope that this model will provide a practical resource to inform public discussion and

public policy making in relation to biotechnologies. I look forward to developing these ideas whilst at LTI.

## Lincoln Publications:



P.M.Scott, *Anti-human theology: nature, technology and the postnatural* (SCM Press, April 2010)



Cover image for S. Skrimshire (ed.), *Future Ethics* (Continuum Publishers, July 2010)

## Contact us

Lincoln Theological Institute for the  
Study of Religion and Society  
School of Arts, Histories and Cultures  
Samuel Alexander Building  
University of Manchester  
Oxford Road  
Manchester M13 9PL  
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)161 2753064 (Dr. Peter M. Scott)

Email: [lti@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lti@manchester.ac.uk) or  
[peter.scott@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:peter.scott@manchester.ac.uk)

Website: [www.lincolnthologicalinstitute.com](http://www.lincolnthologicalinstitute.com)