

**Australia/Australie**

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**UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme**

**Progress report**

**UNESCO Chair In Interreligious and Intercultural Relations – Asia Pacific**

**Report established by:** Professor Gary D. Bouma, School of Political and Social Inquiry  
Monash University

**I. Activities**

**1. Education/Training/Research**

The Chair's activities have centred on conducting and reporting research in the area of religious diversity, religious resurgence, and religion and terror in the Asia-Pacific region; establishing academic networks, building bridges between religious communities in Australia, Indonesia and Malaysia. Professor Gary D. Bouma is completing a volume entitled, *The States of Religion: Managing Religious Diversity in the Asia-Pacific*, which will provide an overview of religious diversity and issues in managing this diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. He was co-chair of the successful bid to hold the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne, which will provide an excellent platform for promoting and pursuing chair activities.

**2. Conferences/Congresses/Meetings**

In the past 18 months Professor Gary D. Bouma has given over 50 lectures in Australia, in parts of the Asia Pacific, the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe. These have been to academic, religious leaders, and the public. They have focussed on the impact of the increase in religious diversity and religious revitalisation on social cohesion and sustainability.

Professor Gary D. Bouma has also attended and keynoted a large number of conferences – the World Conference on Religions for Peace in Kyoto, a Symposium on Religious Diversity in Industrial Societies in Singapore, the Prince al Saud Babbain conference on intercultural relations, a consultation on Religion in Intercultural Education at UNESCO in Paris, the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in Portland Oregon, and others. He is frequently on television, radio, and in the press addressing issues of religious diversity and social cohesion.

**3. Publications**

Books:

- 2007 *Democracy in Islam*. London: Routledge. Forthcoming . With Sayed Khatab.
- 2007 *The States of Religion: Managing Religious Diversity in the Asia-Pacific*. Melbourne: Monash University e-Press. 120pp with Mark Manalopoulos in press.
- 2006 *Australian Soul: Religion and Spirituality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

#### Book Chapters:

- 2007 'The Settlement of Zen in Australia' (in press) in R Pereira and H Matsuoka (Eds) *Japanese Religions in and Beyond the Japanese Diaspora*. Berkeley CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley.
- 2007 'A Socio-demographic Profile of Muslims in Australia' Pp in S Mahmood (ed) *Muslim Minority Communities: Demographic and Socio-economic profiles*. Institute of Minority Muslim Affairs. (forthcoming with Joan Daw).
- 2007 'Religious Resurgence and Diversity and Social Cohesion in Australia'. In Jupp ed *Constructively Attaining Social Cohesion in Australia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (in press). (With Rod Ling).
- 2007 'The Challenge of Religious Revitalisation and Religious Diversity to Social Cohesion in Secular Societies' in B Turner (ed) *Religious Plurality and Civil Society*. Singapore: Singapore University Press. In press
- 2007 'Religious Resurgence, Conflict and the Transformation of Boundaries' in Beyer and Beaman (eds) *Religion, Globalization and Culture*. Amsterdam: Brill. In press
- 2006 'Australia's Changing Religious Landscape: 1947-2001' pp34-42 in Helen Richmond and Myong Duk Yang (Eds) *Crossing Borders: Shaping Faith, Ministry and Identity in Multicultural Australia*. UCA Assembly & NSW Board of Mission.
- 2006 'The religious contribution of Dutch migrants to multicultural Australia'. Pp 328-337 in Nonja Peters (ed) *The Dutch Downunder – 1606-2006*. Perth: University of Western Australia Press.

#### Monographs, Expert Testimonies and Research Reports:

- 2006 'The beliefs and practices of The Brethren compared with those of other groups' expert opinion in the case of The Exclusive Brethren vs the Brisbane City Council before the High Court of Australia (No. B4 of 2006, Registry Brisbane).

## II. Outcomes

Academic networks are being developed with colleagues of Professor Gary D. Bouma in New Zealand – through the Monash Asia Institute – and throughout the Asia Pacific – through universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, and beyond. Links are also being forged with other UNESCO Chairs in Australia in order to strengthen their impact and, where relevant, coordinate activities and draw on each others' strengths.

## III. Forthcoming activities

Professor Gary D. Bouma's research in the next few years will continue to focus on religious diversity and social cohesion in industrial and post-industrial societies. He has several grants to support this research, as well as seven PhD. candidates and four Post-Doctoral Fellows working with him in the area as part of the Chair's activities. He has been instrumental in establishing two Monash University centres in the area – The Global Terrorism Research Centre and the Centre for Muslim Minority and Islamic Policy Research.

The professor also continues to promote interreligious relations in the Asia Pacific through his work in the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the Parliament of the World's Religions 2009, the Australian Intercultural Society and its international associates, the Islamic Council of Victoria and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, the Yogyakarta

International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Relations, and the Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations.