



President's Newsletter, November 2008

Dear Colleagues,

The recently held elections in the USA have sparked imagination and hope across the world. Regardless of one's political views, the outcome can be appreciated in that it at least has bridged racial gaps to a degree many would not have anticipated. More than that, however, it seems that the president elect's determination and realistic optimism have stirred the nation's – if not the world's – hope for change. Meanwhile, we still live in a world of conflict and economic crisis. And even the US elections can be interpreted as being ambivalent when we consider that several states have seen electoral decisions limiting the rights of gay and lesbian people to marry. All this harbors a host of implicit practical-theological notions that need to be addressed: transformation, hope and reality, justice and economy, the meaning of marriage, just war, and religious extremism, and so on.

Chicago 2009, info and call for papers

In the shadow of this event, several members of the executive committee of IAPT met during the AAR-conference in Chicago to discuss our Academy and our 2009 conference. Ed Foley and his local team are working hard to put together a great meeting. Both the program and the facilities are very promising, and I hope that many of you will participate in our conference under the theme "Religion, Diversity, and Conflict." Let me first share the information that Ed Foley offers on the conference at this point. Below you will find the call for papers and further issues.

Dates: July 30 (Thursday) to August 3 (Monday) 2009
Place of Conference: Catholic Theological Union, Hyde Park Neighborhood in Chicago IL
Theme: Religion, Diversity, and Conflict. In 1893 the city of Chicago was host to World's Parliament of Religions, celebrated as a key moment in modern inter-religious dialogue. In 1993 the Parliament held its centennial observation in Chicago, where significant attention was given to discussions of global ethics. Like many urban centers of the world, 21st century Chicago is a city of enormous cultural, political, social and religious diversity. Such diversity can be a source of dynamism and grace, as well as conflict and strife. The 2009 Congress of the International Academy of Practical Theology will consider various aspects of both inter- and intra-religious diversity in the context of this polyphonic cityscape and other situations around the world. In particular, participants are invited to explore how the resources and varied approaches of practical theology can address the inter- and intra-religious conflicts which arise in the midst of such diversity, as well as propose paths for dialogue, mutual respect and ethical practices in the face of such conflict. The conference will explore ways in which the disciplines of practical theology can contribute both to the emerging world dialogue between conflicting religious traditions, as well as addressing parallel issues at the national and local levels.

Keynote presenters:

Thursday July 30th Dr. Eboo Patel and Dr. Patrice Brodeur

- Dr. Eboo Patel is a Muslim from India, D.Phil from Oxford (Rhodes Scholar) who founded the Interfaith Youth Core. A young and vibrant visionary, he is an on-line panelist for the blog "On Faith" hosted by the Washington Post

and Newsweek, and serves on the Religious Advisory Committee of the Council on Foreign relations, the National Committee of the Aga Kahn Foundation, and the advisory board of Duke University's Islamic Studies Center.

- Dr. Patrice Brodeur is Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair on Islam, Pluralism, and Globalization at the Faculty of Theology and the Science of Religions at the University of Montreal, Canada. In 2004-2005, he was Rockefeller Foundation Visiting Fellow at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, focusing on inter-religious dialogue and conflict resolution. From 1998 to 2004, he was Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Connecticut College. Dr. Brodeur completed an M.A. and a Ph.D. in the Study of Religion from Harvard University. He graduated with a B.A. in Religious Studies and an M.A. from the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, which included two years at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and one year at the Shari`ah College of the University of Jordan as a Rotary International Scholar.

Friday July 31st Joyce S. Dubensky, Esq., with a response by Prof. Robert Schreiter

- Joyce Dubensky is Executive Vice President of the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Dialogue in New York. Before joining the Tanenbaum Center, Ms. Dubensky was with the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), as the national Director of Communications and, later, Deputy Executive Director of a regional office. Ms. Dubensky also served as a National Consultant for the Council of Jewish Federations (now United Jewish Communities) and created the Legal Department at the United Jewish Appeal – Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, where she served as General Counsel for over ten years. Ms. Dubensky holds her J.D. from New York University School of Law, where she graduated with honors, and has a Master's degree in American History from Adelphi University.
- Prof. Robert Schreiter is the Vatican II Professor of Theology at Catholic Theological Union, where he has also served as Academic Dean (1977-86) and Professor of Doctrinal Theology, 1985-2001. He has served as Visiting Lecturer at the University of Chicago (1990); Visiting Professor, Lehrstuhl Theologie Interkulturell, at J.W. Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt (1995); and Professor of Theology and Culture at the University of Nijmegen (2000-2006). A prolific author, his books (e.g., *Constructing Local Theologies*), over 90 chapters in books, and innumerable scholarly articles have appeared in over 20 languages. Among his other activities are work on the Intercultural Hermeneutics Task Force, World Council of Churches (1994-96); the Task Force on Reconciliation and Mission, World Council of Churches (2002-2005); the Task for on Reconciliation for Caritas Internationalis (1996-); and Wissenschaftliches Beirat, Zentrum für Theologie Interkulturell und das Studium der Religionen, University of Salzburg (2005--).

Saturday August 1st Prof. David Tracy, on the topic "God, Diversity, and Practical Theology"

- Roman Catholic teacher, scholar, priest and theologian Prof. David Tracy received his licentiate (1964) and doctorate (1969) at Gregorian University in Rome. From 1967 to 1969 Tracy taught at Catholic University of America, his first teaching assignment. He then moved to the University of Chicago Divinity School, where he was named Distinguished Service Professor in 1985 and Distinguished Service Professor of Roman Catholic Studies in 1987. He has served on the university's Committee on the Analysis of Ideas and Methods and on the Committee on Social Thought. He was a fellow, with John Cobb, at John Carroll University in 1976-1977, delivering the Tuohy Lectures on "The Problem of God." The recipient of several honorary doctorate degrees, Tracy was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1982. He has lectured in around forty universities around the world. His publications include: *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan*

(1970); Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology (1975); The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism (1981); Talking about God: Doing Theology in the Context of Modern Pluralism, with John Cobb (1983); A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible, with Robert Grant (2d. ed., 1984); A Catholic Vision, with Stephen Happel (1984); Plurality and Ambiguity (1987); Dialogue with the Other: The Inter-Religious Dialogue (1990); and On Naming the Present: God, Hermeneutics, and Church (1994).

Sunday July 2nd The Presidential Address by Prof. R.Ruard Ganzevoort

- Prof. Ruard Ganzevoort teaches practical theology at VU University Amsterdam and at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences in Zwolle, the Netherlands. He served for ten years in reformed congregations before taking up academic positions in 1996. Coming from the field of pastoral theology and psychology of religion, he now focuses on the broader field of practical theology that he addresses as the hermeneutics of lived religion. His publications include (Dutch) books on sexual abuse, narrative practical theology, religious coping, and a handbook of pastoral care. For English language publications, see www.ruardganzevoort.nl.

Monday July 3rd Rev. Dirk Ficca

- The Rev. Dirk Ficca is Executive Director of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions. The Council is an organization which fosters inter-religious encounter, dialogue, and cooperative action in Chicago and around the world. Through the Council, Dirk was a leader in the planning of the Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago in 1993, and more recently in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1999. He also directs the Metropolitan Chicago Interreligious Initiative of the Council. Dirk is an ordained Presbyterian minister and served for eleven years as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Benton Harbor, Michigan. He teaches at DePaul University, the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary

Seminar Work

Four Seminars will entertain papers from members and visitors during approximately eight (8) 75 minute time slots, allowing for ample presentation and discussion of our work. The projected seminars include the three that were employed in Brisbane and Berlin (practical theology and empirical research, practical theology and liberating practice, practical theology and ministry formation) and sessions on more general issues.

Excursions

There are no large group excursions during the conference, but there will be opportunity on Sunday morning, the 2nd of August, for members to visit a variety of worship sites around the city. By compressing the meeting into four complete days (Thursday evening's opening lecture to Monday evening's closing banquet), members and guests have time to visit the many attractions of Chicago and the vicinity on their own.

Housing

Housing is available at Catholic Theological Union's residence, for \$65.00 (single occupancy) or \$85.00 (double occupancy). Housing is also available at the International House of the University of Chicago at \$65.00 (approximately 8 blocks from our conference site), and at the Ramada Inn at \$119.00 for double occupancy (also about 8 blocks from the conference site). A meal plan will also be available at the conference site (around \$30.00 per day).

Costs

The registration fee will be \$ 225. Further Housing and Registration information will be available before the end of the year. We will have – rather limited – possibilities to subsidize participants. Applications (sent to president@ia-pt.org) will be considered by the president and treasurer. Please be aware that registration for the conference requires up to date payment of dues. You can pay through our website (Paypal secure payment) or contact our treasurer Pamela Couture (treasurer@ia-pt.org).

Call for papers

The local host, Ed Foley, and the Executive Committee invites you to contribute a paper to this conference. For that purpose we would like to see your 100-200 words abstract sent to Ed Foley (conference@ia-pt.org). Deadline for proposals is February 1, 2009. If you need a formal response before that moment (e.g., to apply for funding), we presume that proposals by IAPT members will generally be accepted. Proposals by guests will be accepted on the basis of academic quality and space in the conference program. Early submissions will be given priority. Junior guests (like Ph.D. students) are invited to contribute research posters instead of full papers.

We particularly welcome your proposals related to the conference theme. In particular, participants are invited to explore how the resources and varied approaches of practical theology can address the inter- and intra-religious conflicts which arise in the midst of such diversity, as well as propose paths for dialogue, mutual respect, and ethical practices in the face of such conflict. The conference will explore ways in which the disciplines of practical theology can contribute both to the emerging world dialogue between conflicting religious traditions, as well as addressing parallel issues at the national and local levels. Please indicate which kind of seminar your paper would fit (practical theology and ministry formation, practical theology and liberating practice, practical theology and empirical research, or open/general seminar).

Films

Finally, we anticipate to show a choice of movies related to the theme. These films will be screened as an optional program on two different nights during the conference. We welcome your suggestions (conference@ia-pt.org).

New members

Based on your nominations, we have accepted an interesting group of new members to the Academy. Their names will be announced in the near future after they have been notified directly. At this point, I want to thank you for making the effort of nominating colleagues, especially when this involves colleagues from underrepresented constituencies. I am happy to note that half of the nominees are from countries that have not been represented at our conferences for the last decade. We are trying hard to diversify the Academy while keeping in mind its academic stature, and I am confident that this year's list of nominees does just that.

Nominations for office

One of the next steps for us as an Executive Committee is to bring you a slate of nominations for office (due by February 1st). Before moving on that, I invite you to suggest to me names of members you feel should be on the board. According to our by-laws, after we have presented our slate of officers, you can propose alternatives up to May 1st 2009. All communication in this matter please direct to me (president@ia-pt.org).

I will again post this newsletter at the forum on our website www.ia-pt.org. Please take a moment to post your comments. If you want to post anything else, like a recent publication, just let me know and I will be happy to post it on our website. Remember: a website like this only works when you make your contributions. Let me conclude by thanking you for being a member of IAPT and for doing you share in furthering our discipline and achieving the aims inherent to it.

Sincerely

Ruard Ganzevoort
president