

IAPT Newsletter

International Academy of Practical Theology: Advancing Scholarship in Practical Theology
March 2012



TORONTO 2013

APRIL 11-15

Complex Identities in a Changing World:

One God, Many Stories?

Exciting Plans Underway...

Registration Begins this Summer

See IAPT Website for Conference Description

NOMINATIONS

DEADLINE

APRIL 11, 2012

**Urgent Call for
Nominations from
Underrepresented
Regions and
Groups**

Send two letters of
nomination and
nominee's CV to:
president@ia-pt.org

For more info about
membership eligi-
bility, see By-Laws:
[http://ia-pt.org/
about/organization/](http://ia-pt.org/about/organization/)

Report from the Working Group On Practical Theology in Underrepresented Regions March 2012

The aim of this working group is to assist the Academy in achieving key aspects of its work as expressed in its purpose statement, namely to give attention to various historical and cultural contexts in which practical theology is done, and to promote international, interracial, and ecumenical dialogue and understanding. One way to achieve this is to aim for more inclusive membership of the IAPT in terms of geography, race, gender, language and theological traditions.

If we take the first aspect, namely geography, we see that the current situation is far from ideal. Of course, it is quite complex to accurately characterize multiple identities. The geographical distribution of members can roughly be sketched as follows:

Region	Country of Residence	Number	Total
Europe			53
	Belgium	2	
	Finland	1	
	France	0	
	Germany	19(1*)	
	Ireland	1	
	Italy	3	
	Netherlands	8	
	Spain	1	
	Sweden	2	
	Switzerland	6	
	UK	9	
North America			48
	USA	38(5*)	
	Canada	5	
Africa			10
	Ghana	1	
	South Africa	8(1*)	
Oceania			5
	Australia	4	
	New Zealand	1	
South America			3
	Brazil	3	
Asia			3
	India	1	
	South Korea	1(1*)	
TOTAL			122



*People accepted for membership, but whose membership status does not become active until they attend an IAPT meeting and pay dues.



Continued: Report of Working Group on Practical Theology in Underrepresented Regions

There may be many good reasons for this skewed geographical distribution, but we have to work together to make the International Academy of Practical Theology really international and global. More than 80% of the current IAPT members are from (Western)-Europe and the USA. Only 20 countries are represented in the IAPT, with almost no representatives from South America, Asia and Africa. Brazil is the only country represented in South America, and apart from South Africa, only one other African country is represented.

The picture above takes geographical representation into account. We also strive to be inclusive in terms of race, gender, language and theological traditions. A quick glance at the membership list is enough to know that the IAPT lacks representation in terms of race, language and theological traditions.

The closing date for the next round of membership nominations is approaching fast (11 April 2012). We would like to appeal to all members to make a special effort to identify and to nominate possible new members that meet our criteria for membership in order to redress the above situation. You can also send the names of possible IAPT candidates in other countries or regions to us. We shall then contact these potential nominees and provide them with information about the IAPT (including the criteria for membership) and ask them for their CV's if they are interested in our work. Even if they do not qualify yet, we can consider inviting potential nominees to our next meeting. Please also contact us if you have any other suggestions in this regard.

Jaco Dreyer (South Africa) dreyej@unisa.ac.za

Valburga Schmiedt Streck (Brazil) valburga@est.edu.br



RECOLLECTIONS of the ORIGINS OF IAPT



International Academy of Practical Theology: Princeton Meeting, 1991. From left to right: Hans van der Ven; Don Browning, Camil Ménard; Dietrieck Roessler; Rick Osmer, Riet Bons-Storm; Friedrich Schweitzer, Karl Ernst Nipkow.

“The birth of the IAPT, a personal impression”, by Riet Bons-Storm

It was in 1991, in Princeton, after a meeting of seven men and one woman – I am very honoured I was woman – that the IAPT was born. But like all births, this birth was not an unexpected event. There was a gestation-period: a period of bi-lateral international meetings between practical theologians. For instance, in July 1990 about twenty practical theologians from the Netherlands and the USA met in the Mennonite Center in Elspeet, in the Netherlands. The theme was: “Transformation of the Local Church”. Although these bi-lateral conferences were interesting and fruitful, the need was felt for a broader organization, where practical theologians from all over the world could communicate. Other disciplines had such organizations. It was time for practical theology to become an adult discipline on the forum of theologies.

So in 1991, August, 1-4, the seven founding fathers and the one founding mother came together in Princeton, where Rick Osmer was our host. The first evening we met each other for dinner in Rick’s home: it was clear that we had one purpose and were eager to work together. But still there were differences of opinion that would have a long life in the IAPT, once founded.....

Read Full Text on IAPT website: <http://ia-pt.org/about/history/>

The Beginnings of the International Academy of Practical Theology,

by Friedrich Schweitzer

Every true beginning has its own myth. More than 20 years after the inception of the idea that there should be such an academy, the processes that have led to these beginnings are beginning to sink into the realm of myth and mystery.

From what I remember, the idea for an international academy first came up during a conference on practical theology in 1990 at Blaubeuren/Germany, the site of Tuebingen university's conference center. This conference brought together a number of new interests in * as an academic discipline, from Germany, from the United States, and from other countries, most of all the Netherlands. Key speakers were, among others, Don Browning, James Fowler, Dietrich Rössler, Karl Ernst Nipkow. I myself had been active as one of the organizers of the conference. Since I had been a postgraduate student at Harvard in the late 1970s and also had started internationalizing my own work by organizing international conferences since the early 1980s, the idea of an international academy seemed very attractive to me. Moreover, it became clear that there was a convergence of similar developments in different countries that we could make use of.

Two key ideas were behind the efforts for founding the new academy. First, it was not considered sufficient that the various subdisciplines of * should have their international organizations (such organizations exist in a number of areas, like religious education, homiletics, pastoral counseling, etc.) . If * should be taken seriously as a discipline, it should also have its own organization at an international level. Second, the aim of the academy should be to bring together researchers who are working within the field of * in different countries. In other words, the aim was not to organize conferences but to facilitate international research projects as well as to create ongoing exchange on research...

READ FULL TEXT ON IAPT WEBSITE: <http://ia-pt.org/about/history/>

**SEND YOUR OWN RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HISTORY OF IAPT OR YOUR VISIONS
FOR THE FUTURE OF IAPT**

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE ACADEMY?

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY?

SEND YOUR IDEAS BY JUNE 1 TO PRESIDENT@IAPT.ORG

FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER AND POSTING ON THE WEB

(ANONYMOUSLY OR WITH NAMES ATTACHED)

See IAPT Website

For Updates on Working Groups:

PT in Underrepresented Regions

Interfaith Approaches in PT

Catholic Approaches in PT

Poetics

Methodology

THANKS especially to...

**Lynn Bridgers and Tito Cruz for their careful work on the
IAPT Internal Audit**

**Rein Brouwer, Ruard Ganzevoort, and Bonnie Miller McLemore for their efficient
editorial teamwork on the next IAPT conference volume**

**Pamela Couture, Robert Mager, Solange LeFebvre, Karlijn Demasure
and all the local planning team for their hard and creative work in Toronto 2013
IAPT conference organizing**

**Riet Bons-Storm and Friedrich Schweitzer for contributing recollections of the
founding of IAPT**