

Call To Papers

14th Assembly of the International Association For Mission Studies

August 11–17, 2016 Seoul, South Korea

“Conversions and Transformations –Missiological Approaches to Religious Change”

Children, Youth and Mission Study Group

Christian transformation, and also conversion to Christianity, is one of the most immediate goals of any Christian mission activity. The issue of conversion is much debated, both within and between religious communities. This is often due to the controversial methods and aims some Christian communities have employed. The nature of the transformation brought about by religion is also a contested field: is it only spiritual or does it also have social, cultural, political and other dimensions? The Scripture and the different Christian traditions abound with ideas, models and impulses about the types of religious change to be followed, and those that are rejected. The way Christians perceive the nature of religious conversion and transformation influences the ways they relate to other Christians, to the people of other faiths and people of no faith. In this way, religious change, as viewed from theoretical, theological, ethical and practical perspectives, occupies a central place in the field of mission studies.

At the Seoul-2016 IAMS Assembly, we are going to examine issues of conversion and religious change from the multiple perspective shaping contemporary mission studies. The issues of conversion and religious change have not received enough scholarly attention by missiologists and Christian theologians working in the discipline. In many ways the questions of conversion and transformation have been dealt with by other sciences, such as social studies, general psychology and psychology of religion, philosophy, developmental studies, pedagogy, etc. These questions have often been answered by theologians and missiologists who would employ historical or denominational approaches to conversion and transformation; at the same time, we need wider exchange of views, thus better clarifying our own Christian view on these issues.

Such a wide and important conference theme – conversions and transformations in religious change – may pursue to achieve various goals. One of the aims is to contribute towards creating a space for critical and constructive dialogue among

scholarly disciplines, different Christian traditions and varying contextual backgrounds. From this perspective, we would expect to see paper contributions that relate mission studies with other relevant disciplines and sciences so that issues of conversion and transformation are critically analysed and theoretical approaches to religious change in interreligious contexts are elaborated.

The IAMS “Children, Youth and Mission” Study Group can greatly contribute to clarifying the important issues of conversion and transformation as seen from the perspective of the scholarly organisations and movements representing the study group at IAMS. Certainly, there is much to be further developed by the Child Theology Movement, the 4/14 (and 4/18) Window Global initiative, the Holistic Child Development Global Alliance, the various Mission and Youth Movements, the emerging movement The Nurturer, etc. We would expect that the IAMS representatives of each of these scholarly bodies develop the issues of conversion and transformation from the perspective of the achievements they have already reached in their own study and mission practice.

At the same time we need to point out that the main goal of the 14th IAMS Assembly is to further clarify the issues of conversion and transformation by focussing on the various missiological approaches to religious change. This means that we would expect missiological research and papers, not only research and achievements already done in the field of the respective scholarly bodies within the IAMS Study Group “Children, Youth and Mission”. In their paper proposals, each of the representatives of the above mentioned organisations and movements could focus on their own field and scope of research but also giving more missiological “shape and form” to the papers they would present at the Seoul Assembly.

And yet, the conference organisers and the IAMS Academic Committee would be happy with any theme and topic to be presented at the conference, provided they relate to the issues of the main theme.

There are several things to be kept in mind, while preparing for the Seoul Assembly.

First, there are eight IAMS Study Groups and they all will examine the issues of conversion and transformation from the perspective of their Study Group research. These are:

- BISAM: Biblical Studies and Mission
- Children, Youth and Mission
- DABOH: Documentation, Archives, Bibliography and Oral History
- Gender in Mission
- Healing/Pneumatology
- Interreligious issues
- Religious Freedom and Mission
- Theology of Mission.

Second, the paper proposals and acceptance procedure are as follows:

Proposed topics with 250-word abstract are due by 31 August 2015. Please send these to Dr. Dan Brewster at the following email address: drdanbrewster@gmail.com

Applicants will be notified of the acceptance of their papers in November and December 2015.

All proposals with abstracts will be reviewed by the IAMS Academic Committee who will finalize the Seoul programme in early 2016.

If additional clarifications are needed, paper presenters and the Chairs of the six IAMS Study groups will additionally review the submitted paper abstracts and notify the paper presenters by 31 March 2016.

Draft papers of 2000 words are due by 31 May 2016.

Papers presented during the conference are not to exceed 2000 words or 20 minutes to allow 10 minutes to be allocated to questions and answers.

If conference participants intend to submit their papers to Mission Studies for publication after the conference, they should develop them to between 6000 and 10,000 words, including notes. Authors are expected to strictly adhere to the Style Guide for Mission Studies:<http://missionstudies.org/index.php/journal/style-guide-for-mission-studies/>

The IAMS Study Group will aim to produce its own volume, containing the papers presented at the Seoul Assembly. The style of academic writing depends on the publisher and this issue will be discussed and clarified during the Assembly in Seoul.

Third, the requirements for papers' admission are:

- Relevance of paper to the IAMS-2016 Assembly general theme or the theme of your Study group;
- Originality of research and clear contribution to the chosen field of study;
- Clarity and logic of argument;
- Level of engagement with relevant scholarship;
- Accuracy of form, expression, and language inclusiveness.
- Please bear in mind that your paper abstract should be less than 250 words, and your draft paper for presentation less than 2000 words.

Fourth: correspondence and papers' submission:

All communication regarding proposed papers should be sent to Dr. Dan Brewster at the following email address: drdanbrewster@gmail.com. Dr Valentin Kozhuharov may also be copied at the the address: valentin_kozhuharov@yahoo.co.uk.

All correspondence with the IAMS is done on individual basis with the IAMS Secretariat:

*The International Association for Mission Studies
C/O Church Mission Society
Watlington Road, Oxford OX4 6BZ, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1865 787400
Fax: +44 1865 776375
E-mail: secretary@missionstudies.org*

Registration for the Seoul Assembly is done at the conference website; paper abstracts and papers are to be upload at this website: <http://www.teol.lu.se/forskning/konferenser-och-symposier/iams-2016/>

Correspondence is also kept between the Study Group's chair and co-chair, Dr Dan Brewster and Dr Valentin Kozhuharov, as well as between the Study Group members.

Note: You may know of others who could or should be invited to do a paper on this topic. If so, feel free to forward this to those persons.

Note on membership: All the presenters of papers at the IAMS Assemblies are IAMS members. Those of the potential presenters, who are not IAMS members yet, are encouraged to apply and then become IAMS members. This is done in due course online at the IAMS website: <http://missionstudies.org/index.php/membership/>.

If you have any difficulty with applying, please contact the respective IAMS Study Groups' regional representative (see details at: <http://missionstudies.org/index.php/page-2/>). The deadline for applying for IAMS membership for the Seoul-2016 Assembly is 31 March 2016, after all paper proposals have been accepted and approved by the IAMS Academic Committee.

For any other questions and enquiries please contact Dr Dan Brewster and Dr Valentin Kozhuharov.