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# CONTACT

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## Regional Conference, St. Petersburg, 1999

In March of 1996 Dr. John B. Hulst, Executive Secretary of IAPCHE, had an opportunity to visit St. Petersburg, Russia. Along with Dr. Rockne McCarthy of Dordt College, he met separately with Dr. Konstantin Ivanov, principal of the Institute for "Open Christianity," and also with Dr. Natalia Pecherskaya, a member of IAPCHE and director of the St. Petersburg School of Religion and Philosophy.

In each of the meetings it was clear from the conversation that for years Christian groups and individuals--especially in the area of higher education--had been isolated from one another or were forced to work in competition and conflict with one another. When asked about the greatest need of those involved in Christian higher education, both Pecherskaya and Ivanov stated the importance of finding ways to bring Christian scholars and academicians together to discuss their common tasks and how they can support one another in carrying out that task.

Given the purpose of IAPCHE, i.e., to provide a network for a worldwide community of Christian scholars and institutions, it was tentatively decided to arrange for a conference for Central and Eastern Europe--including Western Russian and The Ukraine. However, before proceeding with conference plans, arrangements were made for Hulst to visit with area Christian educators in St. Petersburg, Prague, Budapest,

and Amsterdam (many in The Netherlands have been supporting efforts in Christian education in Russia). In each place the idea of a regional conference received a positive response, with everyone agreeing that they had worked too long in separation from and in conflict with one another. At the same time, it became clear that arranging for a conference that would cover both Central and Eastern Europe was too large an undertaking. It was decided, therefore, to schedule an initial conference for 1999 in St. Petersburg, with the understanding that the conference agenda would include planning other conferences for the rest of the region.

A hosting committee has been appointed, with Konstantin Ivanov and Natalia Pecherskaya serving as co-chairs. IAPCHE sponsored Ivanov's and Pecherskaya's travel to and attendance at the Ways of Knowing Conference on Dordt's campus, August 12-15--where they were able to sense some of the dynamics operative within part of the reformational community. Prior to this conference they were introduced to IAPCHE's Executive Committee; and afterward they met with the Executive Secretary and his advisors: John De Jager, Rockne McCarthy, and John Vanderstelt.

During the consultation with the Executive Secretary the following decisions were made:

**Conference Theme:** "Higher Education in 21st Century Russian Culture: A Christian Perspective."

**Conference Date:** May 24-26, 1999

**Subthemes:**

1. The **meaning** of Christian higher education in Russian culture--e.g., a presentation or description of two, three, or more distinct voices in Russian culture.
2. The **history** of Christian higher education--positive and negative developments at the end of the nineteenth, turn of the twentieth, and rest of the twentieth century.
3. Certain **key issues** as far as the future of higher education is concerned--e.g., pluralism and tolerance in society in general, and higher education in particular.
4. Concrete **steps/strategies** to be taken--e.g., topics for research, consultations to be held, conferences to be scheduled, and other endeavors in Christian higher education to be initiated and/or endorsed.

**Purpose/Aim**

1. To provide a **forum** for a discussion of the presence/absence of Christian higher education in Russian culture today.
2. To take **inventory** of different voices within mainly Russian culture regarding the nature and role of Christian higher education.
3. To **react** to insights gained from this inventory in a way that will stimulate further reflection, possible reformulation, and new endeavors in higher education.
4. To **strategize** or determine the agenda for the development of Christian higher education in Russia (and neighboring countries) in the coming years.
5. To **publish** the main proceedings of this conference in an academically respectable and attractive manner in the Russian language.

Aware of the difficulties involved in sponsoring a conference in Russian, we covet the prayers of the Association's membership. At the same time, we look forward to the planned presentations and discussions, believing that they are important to the future of Christian higher education in Russian and eventually in neighboring countries as well.

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## **Editorial--Executive committee discusses international university**

It was several years ago that the Board of Trustees of Calvin College (Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA) instructed its president, Anthony Diekema, to initiate a discussion about the possibility of establishing a Reformed University in North America (RUNA). In response to this mandate Diekema formed a task force, composed of representatives from a number of Reformed, Christian institutions of higher education in Canada and the United States. Eventually this group developed a framework for a consortium-based Reformed university, in which it was observed that, "rather than proposing an elaborate and costly institution, we should begin where we are, as a loose association of sister institutions, by coordinating whatever existing graduate programs and plans we have. . ."

This cooperative venture was based upon two assumptions: 1) that graduate-level education founded upon a Reformed, Christian orientation is a goal worth pursuing; and 2) that this goal can be better accomplished in a cooperative manner rather than by one institution acting on its own. Four stages of development were agreed upon: 1) ongoing consultation; 2) a loose association; 3) a stronger affiliation; and 4) a federation.

The project is still at the initial stage where institutions which have graduate-level programs are meeting and consulting to coordinate their efforts. For example, an agreement has been reached with Christian Schools International (CSI) to conduct an Administrator Education Program. Beyond this, there are no other cooperative efforts that are presently under consideration. Recent discussions indicate, among other things, a desire to protect existing institutions and a fear concerning the financial costs involved in such a venture--which is understandable, up to a point.

Recently the Institute for Christian Studies (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) and The King's University College (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)--both represented on the RUNA task force--engaged in serious, extensive discussions concerning the possibility of institutional integration. Many saw this as a possible step toward the establishment of a RUNA. However, since a decision was recently made not to follow that route, it seems that the movement toward a Reformed university has been stalled for the present.

But that does not mean that the idea of a Reformed university has died. From the beginning there has been an international dimension to the thought and discussion of the RUNA task force. In fact, at one point the concept of an International Reformed University (IRU) was considered--and subsequently dropped. Further, however, whenever this international aspect was considered, reference was made to IAPCHE and the involvement of both its individual and institutional membership--many of which have participated in the RUNA discussions.

All of the above was discussed at the August 10, 11 meeting of IAPCHE's Executive Committee. The minutes of that meeting report the following decision:

As a result of the discussion and in light of 1)IAPCHE's commitment to the development of a world-

wide community of scholars and institutions, 2) the recognized need to prepare persons academically for positions of leadership in all sectors of society, and 3) present-day globalization and the educational opportunities available through world-wide means of communication, it is decided to authorize the Executive Secretary to inquire among the membership of the Association concerning the possibility of and interest in developing the concept of an International Reformed University and to report his findings to the Executive Committee.

Believing, as the RUNA report states, "that the rationale for Christian education applies to all levels of education," we take this mandate very seriously. And, given the fact that IAPCHE is "a world-wide community of scholars and institutions," it would seem reasonable to expect a good deal of interest from that community "in developing the concept of an International Reformed University." Only time will tell. Meanwhile we will pursue this inquiry in the conviction that we not only may, but must seek to promote Christian higher education on the university level. J.B. Hulst

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## **Report on Executive Committee Meeting**

**Executive Committee meets**

**Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, August 10 and 11, 1998**

### **Attendance:**

The meeting was attended by two of the regular members of the executive committee: Dr. John C. Vanderstelt (chair) and Dr. Sidney Rooy. Dr. Theodorus Setiawan was unable to attend due to difficulties in Indonesia. In addition the following were present: Dr. Bennie van der Walt, board member from Potchefstroom University, South Africa; Dr. John B. Hulst, IAPCHE executive secretary; and Mrs. Susan De Young, IAPCHE office manager.

### **Report of Executive Secretary:**

Dr. Hulst reported on the progress made in regard to the six assignments he was given in July, 1997.

1. He has continued to share the mission statement with institutional members. The response continues to be positive.
2. The database is continually updated. The web site is online and, it too, is updated regularly.
3. Individual and institutional memberships are growing steadily as a result of contacts Hulst has made and as a result of help from institutional liaisons.
4. The plans for a regional conference in Latin America are progressing very well. Sid Rooy continues to work with regional representatives on the details. The conference is scheduled for January 18-22, 1999. A conference is scheduled for Hilltop University, Mkar, Nigeria, in January 10-15, 1999. A conference is scheduled for St. Petersburg in May 1999. An institutional conference is scheduled for the campus of Dordt College, Sioux Center, IA, in August 2000. The Asia/Oceania regional conference is scheduled for the summer of 2001.
5. Regional profiles have been received from Bennie van der Walt on Africa (see January, 1997, issue of Contact), from Theodorus Setiawan on Asia/Oceania (see September, 1997, issue of Contact.) and from Sid Rooy on Latin America (see January, 1998, issue of Contact ). John Vanderstelt is providing a profile of North America for the September 1998 issue of Contact ( see pg. ?).
6. In regard to increasing our funding, Hulst has done the following:
  - focused on collecting membership dues
  - made contacts with foundations in the hope of receiving grant money

### **Regional Assistants/Board Development:**

A proposal to restructure the board was considered. This will continue to be explored, with the idea that a formal proposal will be ready for presentation to the membership in the year 2000.

### **Relationships with other Associations:**

Hulst reported that, though there is no official relationship with any of these associations, he maintains contact and dialog with the following:

- ▶ Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU)
- ▶ Association for Chr. Univ. and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA)
- ▶ Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU)
- ▶ Association of Christian Colleges and Universities: International Ecumenical Forum (ACCU:IEF)
- ▶ Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC)
- ▶ Christian Studies International: International Institute for Christian Studies (CSI:IICS)
- ▶ Association of Reformed Institutions of Higher Education (ARIHE)

### **Strategic/Long Range Planning:**

Since IAPCHE is currently in a three-year interim period, after which the future of the Association will be discussed, strategic/long range planning continues to a major part of the Executive Committee meetings.

In looking over the work done thus far in the area of strategic/long range planning it was noted that:

- ▶ we have our statement of core values--Basis
- ▶ we have our mission statement--Purpose
- ▶ we need a vision statement--what do we hope to be, to look like in the future?
- ▶ we need a three-year plan--how shall we work toward the realization of our vision?

It was agreed that we will proceed as follows:

1. formulate an initial vision statement--what do we want to be in the year 2010?
2. test the vision statement with the board
3. review the vision statement at the 1999 Executive Committee meeting
4. present the statement in its finalized form to the membership in the year 2000

Hulst was asked to use the initial vision statement to develop a three-year plan to be presented to the Executive Committee in 1999.

### **ICS proposal re Reformational Bibliography:**

The following proposal for an electronic bibliography was received from Harry Fernhout, president of the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, Canada:

The Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), in cooperation with the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE), will develop a service to make materials on the integrality of Christian faith and learning available by fax, photocopy, or electronic means (e-mail or FTP) to libraries and individuals around the world. While emphasis will be given to the Calvinian/Reformed tradition, other Christian reflection on faith and learning will be represented.

The initial response to the proposal was positive. The Executive Secretary was asked to consult with the ICS

as to ways in which IAPCHE can support and promote this important project.

**International Reformed University:**

As a result of a lengthy discussion and in light of 1) IAPCHE's commitment to the development of a world-wide community of scholars and institutions, 2) the recognized need to prepare persons academically for positions of leadership in all sectors of society, 3) present-day globalization and the educational opportunities available through world-wide means of communication, the Executive Committee decided to authorize the Executive Secretary to inquire among the membership of the Association concerning the possibility of and interest in developing the concept of an International Reformed University and to report his findings to the Executive Committee.

**Publications:**

The new Directory of Institutional and Individual Members was presented for evaluation. It was agreed that the directory is valuable. It will continue to be updated and published yearly with format changes and other improvements made as deemed necessary.

The content and format of *Contact* was also evaluated. Steps have been taken in trying to secure an ISSN for the publication.

The possibility of establishing a Speakers Bureau was considered. The Executive Secretary will explore this idea.

**Finances:**

There was an audit of the financial records for the period January 1, 1997 - December 31, 1997. The audit indicated that "no major errors were found in the records or financial report."

The financial report for the period January, 1998 through June, 1998 indicated a balance of \$10,608.52 with the following bills outstanding: travel and lodging expenses for those attending the executive committee meeting; printing and mailing of the fall issue of *Contact*; general operating expenses for the remainder of the year.

The Secretariat was authorized to change IAPCHE's fiscal year to follow the academic year rather than the calendar year. After meeting with a financial advisor, the budget for 1998/99 and 1999/2000 will be prepared.

**Assignments for 1999:**

The Executive Secretary was thanked for his work and given the following assignments for the coming year:

1. formulate a vision statement, develop three-year plan
2. develop a statement re Christian higher education
3. continue work on conferences
4. continue to explore fundraising possibilities
5. work on membership development on all levels
6. explore special projects such as 1) an International Reformed University (IRU) and 2) an electronic bibliography

**Resolution of Sympathy:**

The Executive Committee of IAPCHE extended sympathy to Mrs. Bernice Schrottenboer, the wife of Dr. Paul Schrottenboer. The association has deep appreciation for his work in promoting Christian higher education

around the world.

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## Paul Schrottenboer, 1922-1998

*(adapted from article in Christian Courier)*

On July 16, Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer left this life after a long struggle with cancer. Paul was a servant to both the Christian Reformed Church and the evangelical world beyond it.

His main work was his 25 years as the first general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (then called the Reformed Ecumenical Synod), but he also pursued his concerns in Christian higher education along the way.

After leaving the REC, Paul worked part-time for the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE). In spite of his illness, which emerged in 1990, he managed to arrange and attend several international conferences.

Paul wrote or edited several books. In the last few years, he was still working on a book called *Commitment in Learning*, which was intended to encourage Christian students in their studies. According to Bernice Schrottenboer, some friends will do the final editing and make sure the book is published.

Paul Schrottenboer's friends, colleagues and family--including those in IAPCHE--will surely miss him.

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## Conference commemorates Abraham Kuyper's Stone Lectures--Princeton, New Jersey, USA

*(submitted by Heidi Petersen, Dordt student)*

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Abraham Kuyper's Stone Lectures which were given in 1898 at Princeton Theological Seminary. To commemorate this event, Princeton hosted an international conference which featured Nicholas Wolterstorff as the keynote speaker and presentations by five panels of scholars from around the world. Nine students, twelve faculty members, an emeritus president, and ten alumni from Dordt College attended the conference. Many disciplines were represented among the Dordt faculty and students: philosophy, history, psychology, theology, mathematics, social work, education, engineering, English, and environmental studies. This wide variety goes to show the strong influence Kuyper's beliefs have had on all walks of life.

The conference went from February 25 through 28 and consisted of Wolterstorff's five stone lectures and five panels with four speakers each. Though many of us were somewhat disappointed with the lectures and some of the presenters who didn't seem to have a comprehensive grasp of Kuyper and his beliefs, there were still many insights which prompted fruitful clusters of discussion following each session. Some of the speakers that had an impact on me, as a student majoring in philosophy and psychology, were Mary Stuart Van Leeuwen of Eastern College and her paper entitled "Abraham Kuyper on Gender, Family, and Class: The Carrot and the Stick," Michael Welker from the University of Heidelberg and his paper, "Theology in Public Discourse outside Communities of Faith?", Richard Mouw of Fuller Theological Seminary and his paper on "Sphere Sovereignty, Cultural analysis, and Public Discourse Today," and the dynamic presentation on "Law, Religion,

and Human Rights: The American Calvinist Tradition" by John Witte, Jr. from Emory University Law School.

The panel discussions on Saturday centered around the racial issues present in Kuyper's thought. The room felt tense as speakers representing South Africa and the black community criticized the Kuyper of a century past and others encouraged us to be mindful of his unavoidable context in an earlier time period. The feminists's criticisms of Kuyper were also brought to light in various presentations throughout the conference. After the final Stone Lecture, a proposal was put forward to formally acknowledge some of the weaknesses in Kuyper's thinking regarding feminine and racial prejudice. These aspects of his thought, however, must be seen in the light of his incredible contributions to the reformed faith and should not dominate our work in applying Kuyper to our time and our particular social situation.

Despite the differing views on Kuyper's beliefs, all of us there were dealing with basic, fundamental questions of religion, pluralism and public life. Illustrative of this unity amidst the diversity was the exercise of M. Thomas Thangaraj from Candler School of Theology had us participate in. He asked half the audience to sing a particular note and the other half of the audience to sing the note a fifth above. Within the context of that drone, Thangaraj sang a beautiful parting doxology in his own language. Just as all of us were united together in song, so we were united in a common search for truth and a Kuyperian insight in the areas of contemporary theology, public justice, the role of government, human rights, religious pluralism, and the emerging global society. Director of the Center for Public Justice, Jim Skillen, put it exactly right in his banquet address to the conference attendees. He asked us the one question that he continually ponders: "What does it mean to be a citizen?" Indeed, all at this conference were there searching to find the answers to and implications for this question.

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## Conference 2000

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The International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education  
announces an international conference

# CONFERENCE 2000

## Christian Higher Education in the 21st Century

August 12-16, 2000

DORDT COLLEGE will host a conference of IAPCHE institutional members.  
Look for more information in the Winter 1999 issue of *Contact*.

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## Ways of Knowing Conference

## --Sioux Center, Iowa, USA

*(submitted by Dr. John Kok, conference director)*

This August, at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, more than one hundred women and men from as far away as Australia, The Netherlands, and South Africa gathered to focus their thoughts and discussion on various ways in which people know and come to know that are fundamental to human life. It was a four-day cross-disciplinary international conference under the title: "Ways of Knowing, In Concert: Christian Initiatives and Responses." The conference, which included four plenary sessions and eighteen concurrent workshop presentations--yes, more than forty papers were presented--was cosponsored by Dordt College, Calvin College (Grand Rapids), the Institute for Christian Studies (Toronto), and the Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam). The proceedings went very well and contributed to a positive and provocative experience of Christian academic encouragement.

The daily plenary sessions covered three topics: "Ways of Wisdom: Multiple Modes of Meaning in Pedagogy and Andragogy"; "Knowledge of Religion and Religious Knowledge: The Cultural Anthropology of Religion and a Religious Anthropology"; and "Neurons and Knowledge." Conferees were also invited on an optional site visit to the Dordt Agricultural Stewardship Center which focused on ways in which we know God's land and his creatures.

The workshop presentations addressed a great variety of important topics. These included bodily/carnal knowledge; knowing another personally; to know that which is individual; the relation of faith and knowledge and of knowing and being; knowing musically; the knowing that comes through writing and reading literature; how the stranger challenges one to renew cultural knowledge; knowing God and self and goodness; the difference between Western and African ways of thinking; the difference brain modules as well as faculties of the mind can make on how we think and know what we do; the nature of scientific and quantifiable knowledge; objectivity and subjectivity; imagination and aesthetic knowledge; and the propositional and narrative nature of things like Scripture, faith and news journalism.

In order to convey some sense of the spirit permeating this conference I want to highlight the conclusion of just one of the papers. I found that Tony Tol (VU) put into words what all those gathered were seeking, given their own interests and focus, to articulate in deed and word. Tony made a case for a "logos of love" that allows potentials to develop and gives diversity its due; this in contrast to a "logos of violence" in which our will-to-know is tied to a need for security through control. A Christian's willingness to know should be exercised according to the multiple ways and senses in which things give themselves to be know, in all their fragility, finitude, and worth. Do justice to every diversity. This logos of love enjoins serving what is good and requires that all of reason's uses be seriously and thoughtfully exercised; proceeding first and foremost from what "needs doing," namely, the demand and longing for righteousness. Science and theoretical pursuits, then, must be publicly accountable and morally acceptable. Likewise, the choices we make in coming to know will take the experience of human beings as genuine and treat phenomena as expressive of reality and an indication of its order. But the logos of love is not soft on crime; only it can adequately unmask the unjust workings of the logos of violence that often surrounds us.

A publication of selected papers is planned and should be available within a year. The next such "quadrilateral" conference is being planned for the summer of 2001, DV.

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## **ARIHE annual meeting held**

The Association for Reformed Institutions of Higher Education (ARIHE) held its annual meeting April 1-2

1998 in Indianapolis in conjunction with a major conference sponsored by the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). Colleges which are members of ARIHE are Geneva, Covenant, Calvin, Trinity Christian, Dordt, Redeemer, the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) and the King's. ICS president Harry Fernhout is chair of ARIHE. John B. Hulst attended as the representative of IAPCHE.

The meetings heard presentations on the future of Christian higher education from Dr. Joel Carpenter, Provost of Calvin College, and Dr. Harold Heie, President of Gordon College. The Association endorsed an Educational Leadership initiative in collaboration with Christian Schools International (CSI) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. CSI is developing a certificate program for new and aspiring school leaders. The ARIHE member institutions will supply courses, seminars and workshops for this program, and also provide appropriate academic credit.

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## **Plans for the Latin American conference are finalized--San José, COSTA RICA**

*(report submitted by Dr. Sidney Rooy, member of IAPCHE executive committee and Latin American conference planning committee)*

The central theme for the Latin American regional conference is "Educating as Christians for the 21st Century" and accentuates central educational issues for our context. Expected to be present from January 18 to 22, 1999, at the Conference are eighty university educators from most of the 21 republics of this region. Outstanding Latin American educators will present the main study papers and lead in the workshops.

The program uses four modes for presentations: plenary sessions, workshops, a field trip and Biblical expositions. The keynote address by Samuel Escobar will be on the conference theme. Representing the contribution from the non-Latin world will be, Bob Goudzwaard, who will consider "Christian Higher Education and the Global Socio-economic Reality". Other subjects include Christian perspectives on: art and literature, Latin American culture and ethnicity, and the nature of Christian education.

Six workshops, which will run concurrently as small groups for deepening pedagogical reflection, reflect various areas of university teaching: biotechnological advances, family and social crises, the economic dilemma en Latin America, art and cultural renewal, technology and the virtual world, and current philosophical currents.

One day the group will be led by the outstanding ecological expert, Rolando Mendoza, on a field trip to a typical coffee plantation and to the Braulio Carillo tropical cloud forest. The theme: Re-creation and Education. The daily devotions will include a Bible study on "Pedagogy seen from the Praxis of Jesus" by the New Testament professor Irene Foulkes.

Expected at the Conference are John Hulst and John Vanderstelt, the executive secretary and board president, respectively, of IAPCHE, to inform the participants about the purposes and the international activities of the organization. Other activities include an exposition of relevant books and other pedagogical materials, an evening of cultural presentations, and a conference banquet for participants and special guests.

Consideration will be given to the organization of a continuing representative committee for future contacts and activities. We hope to find enough funds to be able to publish the Conference papers and thus to extend

the benefits and influence of the sessions to other educational leaders in Latin America.

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## **Regional conference to be held at Hilltop University--Mkar, NIGERIA**

In January, 1997, a regional conference was held at Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya, under the theme "Christian Worldview and Scholarship" (see August 1997 issue of *Contact*). All agreed that the conference was successful in helping the participants gain a greater understanding of the implications of a Christian worldview on their various disciplines.

At a meeting following the conference members of IAPCHE, who had participated in the conference, decided to recommend that a similar conference be held at the newly established Hilltop University in Mkar, Nigeria. They did so feeling that this would assist Hilltop in its development and, at the same time, extend and strengthen the Christian academic community in Africa.

With board approval, Dr. John B. Hulst, Executive Secretary of IAPCHE, has been assisting in making arrangements for the conference, which is now scheduled for January 11-15, 1999. Along with Dr. T. James Mkena of Hilltop, much of the planning has taken place under the leadership of Dr. Bennie van der Walt and Dr. Ponti Venter, both of Potchefstroom University, South Africa. Dr. Rodger Rice, chair of Friends of Hilltop, has also provided a great deal of support and encouragement.

As at the Daystar Conference, the theme for the Hilltop Conference will be "Christian Worldview and Scholarship." Again, Dr. Hulst will keynote the conference; and, along with presenters from West Africa, there will be speakers from East Africa, South Africa, Europe, and the United States--most of them being subsidized for travel and conference expenses by the colleges/universities where they teach.

Given the fact that the political situation in Nigeria seems to be stabilizing, we trust that with the Lord's blessing the Hilltop Conference will be instrumental in promoting both institutions and programs of Christian higher education in Nigeria.

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## **NEWS FROM INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS**

### **Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA--**

#### **THE H. HENRY MEETER CENTER FOR CALVIN STUDIES**

To know Calvin scholarship is to know the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies. Based on the campus of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, the H. Henry Meeter Center is people, resources, and

services.

A director, curator, and administrative aide, in conjunction with a board, provide programs, reference help, and resources which promote scholarship concerning John Calvin, his peers, and Reformed history and thought. Located in a wing of the Hekman Library, the Center contains a growing collection of secondary sources, articles, and 16th century materials. Scholars from around the world, as well as college and seminary students and professors, use the collection for research and class presentations. All are welcome to visit or use the collection. Research grants are available for use at the center by teaching faculty, pastors, and students.

Our address is the: H. Henry Meeter Center, 3201 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Our phone number is: (616) 957-7081. Our e-mail address is: meeter@calvin.edu. Our Web site is: [http://www.calvin.edu/Meeter\\_Ctr/](http://www.calvin.edu/Meeter_Ctr/) Please contact us for information and application forms, or use the forms as found on our Web site.

### Upcoming Events

- ▶ **Thursday, September 17 - 10:00 a.m.** - Seminary Auditorium - Dr. David Yoo, Historian Professor at Claremont-McKenna College, "Main Themes in Korean Protestantism."
- ▶ **Thursday, September 24 - 10:00 a.m.** - Seminary Auditorium - Rev. Dr. Willis D. Van Groningen, "Challenges and Opportunities in Campus Ministry."
- ▶ **Saturday, October 3 - 8:00 p.m.** - Calvin College Chapel - Evening of Psalms service.
- ▶ **Thursday, October 8 - 10:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.** - Seminary Auditorium - Rev. John Oak, Sarang Presbyterian Church, Seoul, Korea.
- ▶ **Friday, October 9 - 10:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.** - Seminary Auditorium - Rev. John Oak, Sarang Presbyterian Church, Seoul, Korea.
- ▶ **Thursday - Saturday, October 29-31** - Calvin College & Seminary - "A Century of Christian Social Teaching: The Legacy of Leo XIII and Abraham Kuyper" conference.
- ▶ **Wednesday - Thursday, November 4-5** - Calvin College - Gezon Auditorium - Stob Lectures - Eleonore Stump, guest speaker.
- ▶ **Thursday, November 12 - 3:30 p.m.** - Calvin College - Meeter Center Lecture Hall - Dr. John Bolt presents "Perhaps, Why Not in America? Jonathan Edwards and Abraham Kuyper and the Millennial Promise of the New World."
- ▶ **Thursday, January 14 - 10:00 a.m.** - Seminary Auditorium - Prof. C. Stephen Evans - "Is the Historians' Jesus Historical?"
- ▶ **Wednesday-Thursday, March 4-5** - Seminary Auditorium - Dr. Charles Van Engen, Fuller Theological Seminary.

## Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, KENYA--

### INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION SETS AGENDA FOR 21ST CENTURY

Two hundred and thirty-five delegates from over 30 African nations, plus consultants and theological educators from England and the USA gathered for the week of January 12-16 [1998] to respond to an "Invitation to Dream: Revisioning Theological Education for the 21st Century," convened at the Nairobi

Evangelical Graduate School of Theology.

Plenary papers were presented on four key topics taken from the ICAA Manifesto adopted in 1983 by the WEF Theological Commission. The four topics were: "African Realities" presented by Dr. David M. Kasali, principal of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST), "Servant-leadership" presented by Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa, "Integrated Curriculum" presented by Dr. Victor Cole of NEGST and "Building Bridges with the Church" by Dr. Peter Bisem of the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK).

Theological institutions in Africa today have an opportunity to take the lead in solving the problems of the continent as never before, by sending well-trained leaders into church and para-church organizations. To address this challenge, each day of the consultation, panelists responded to the plenary papers, there was time for general discussions, and then the delegates went into work groups to grapple with particular aspects of doing theology in light of Africa's realities--issues like poverty, AIDS, urbanization, modernity and injustice.

Dr. Robert Ferris, of Columbia International University commented, "The consultation demonstrated a broad-based readiness to move beyond the limited visions of the past and to refocus on equipping ministries in the service of the church."

Dr. David Fraser of Eastern College says, "Doers dominated this conference, dreaming together of new action patterns that could revolutionize theological education. I am an optimist, believing God can turn our dreams into reality in the midst of today's nightmares."

Throughout the week a draft committee was working on a "Nairobi Manifesto" which was adopted as the official document of the consultation and unanimously signed by the participants. Principals and deans from theological institutions around the continent have agreed to implement change in their curricula and expresses a desire to meet again in three years to see what God has done.

For copies of the Nairobi Manifesto, contact Lois Shaw, Public Relations, Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, Box 24686, Nairobi, Kenya, <NEGST@arcc.or.ke>.

## **The Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, CANADA and The King's University College, Edmonton Alberta, CANADA-- ICS AND KING'S WILL NOT AFFILIATE**

Following an eighteen month review, it was decided that The King's University College (TKUC) in Edmonton and the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) in Toronto will not affiliate.

The prospect of affiliation, with ICS moving to the TKUC campus in Edmonton, was first raised in 1996. Both institutions decided that the proposal merited careful study, given the significant potential advantages of affiliation. The governing boards of the two institutions struck a joint Task Force to study the matter.

From the beginning, however, it was acknowledged that it may not be possible for the two institutions to join forces on the same campus, given the very significant challenges associated with any affiliation project.

In an extensive report to the spring meetings of the two boards, the joint Task Force proposed a two stage relationship. In an initial "affiliation" phase the two institutions would remain separate legal entities, but would cooperate in various ways and share services on the same campus. A later "integration" phase envisioned one entity, the beginnings of a Christian university with both undergraduate and graduate programs. In the integrated structure ICS would function as an identifiable unit with a special mandate to serve as a centre of graduate teaching and research. All faculty connected with ICS would also participate in undergraduate programs.

After thorough consideration and consultation with various stakeholder groups, the Board of Governors of TKUC voted in support of the Task Force proposals. A similar process at ICS, however, did not yield the required majority support. As a result the Task Force proposals will not be implemented.

ICS Board Chair Ed Den Haan stated that while the model proposed by the Task Force had clear strengths, in the final analysis ICS concluded that it did not provide sufficient opportunity to advance and develop the Institute's missions in graduate teaching and research. He stressed that the decision did not represent a negative assessment of TKUC and its mission "All of us at ICS have the deepest respect for TKUC, and for openness and integrity with which TKUC engaged in this exploration," said Den Haan. "Our decision comes with a sense of regret that we did not see our way clear to pursue this relationship."

[ICS] President Harry Fernhout stated that ICS remains committed to the importance of developing Christian university education in the reformed tradition. He noted that while most ICS people felt that the model proposed by the Task Force was operationally feasible, they were concerned about some of its implications. It was felt that faculty involvement in developing new and expanded undergraduate programs would result in a dispersion of energy which, combined with increased teaching responsibilities in these programs, would negatively impact the Institute's stress on foundational scholarship. Uncertainties about important issues such as the prospect of graduate degree accreditation in Alberta also played a role. Such considerations, combined with a keen awareness of the personal, professional, and institutional upheaval involved in a move, led to the conclusion that the benefits of the model proposed by the Task Force did not justify the cost and risk to ICS and its staff.

Fernhout added that the process of exploring affiliation with TKUC was a positive experience. "The process was characterized by much goodwill and a positive spirit. The discussions were honest, open and constructive. At ICS we learned to think about our future in a much more comprehensive way. The fact that ICS turned down this proposal does not mean an affirmation of the status quo. We will continue to explore new ways to pursue our mission with vigour and relevance."

TKUC President Henk Van Andel said that the process of considering affiliation was worth the effort, in spite of the negative outcome. "We wish the ICS well as it continues to fulfill its mission," said Van Andel. "The college felt that the long term benefits of the arrangements negotiated in good faith outweighed the short-term challenges, which were considerable, also from our point of view. However, we respect ICS's decision not to proceed, and we will continue to develop our university programs independently."

## **Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario,**

### **CANADA--**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF IMPORTANT MILESTONE**

The Board of Governors and Senate of Redeemer College are pleased to announce that the Colleges' provincial charter has been amended, allowing it to grant Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. Bill Pr17 was passed by the Ontario Legislature on June 25, 1998

The Bill's passage follow a positive report on the College by a three-person review panel appointed by the Minister of Education and Training, David Johnson. The panel followed a thorough assessment process established by the Minister and unanimously concluded that Redeemer provides an arts and science undergraduate education of an Ontario university standard.

A regular member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada since 1987 and the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities since 1986, Redeemer College now has the recognition it has been seeking as an independent undergraduate Christian university in Ontario.

Please join us in giving thanks to the Lord for this important milestone in the advancement of Christian higher education.

## **Soongsil University, Seoul, KOREA--**

### **SOONGSIL CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF GRADUATE SCHOOL**

IAPCHE Executive Secretary sent this message to Soongsil University: "IAPCHE wishes to congratulate Soongsil University on its 100th anniversary and on the opening of the Graduate School of Christian Studies. Rest assured that the membership of the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education will join you in bringing praise to God and in praying that God will bless your devoted efforts to promote the work of Christian higher education."

Following is the text of the message Rev. Prof. Yung Han Kim, Dean of the Graduate School for Christian Studies, presented at the opening ceremony held on April 12, 1998:

It is God's blessing that Soongsil has come to found the Graduate School of Christian Studies on the occasion of its centennial anniversary. Through this glorious work of the Lord, we believe, God shows us the direction Soongsil ought to follow for its second century. During the last 100 years, Soongsil has expanded its size into an enormous institution with more than 10,000 students. Soongsil, on the way to the second centennial year, has also been setting the goal of education to reconfirm the Christian spirit. To do that is the inheritance of our foundational idea.

One of such efforts was the establishment of the Graduate School for Christian Studies. This goal, at first, was set in 1992 in which we made the decision to hold a national conference on pastoral theology for church ministers. Since then, we have held six nation-wide annual conferences through which more than 1000 pastors have been given advanced studies for their pastoral work. All these efforts paved the way for opening the Graduate School. God finally answered our long prayers last year. The ministry of education permitted Soongsil to open SGCS granting 45 students to pursue degree programs in three departments: Christian Theology, Pastoral Counseling, and Christian Sociology. We were very pleased with the high competition among the 141 applicants who submitted their applications. We selected 45 students to pursue academic degrees: Th.M. and M.A. We also admitted 41 students for an advanced level of a non-degree program especially designed for pastoral leaders.

We are willing to inherit Soongsil's spirit as our spiritual guideline, which caused Soongsil to close its doors rather than obeying the Japanese Colonial order to worship at the Shinto shrine. We want to build

up our Graduate School on the foundation of Christ-centered faith which is the faith of martyrs rejecting Shinto shrine worship, a knowledge-nurturing evangelical faith, a faith of social service toward nation and society, and a faith of mission toward Asia and the world.

We hold the following theological guidelines on the basis of such faith. First, we are pursuing a theology of evangelical-ecumenical spirituality. Second, we are seeking a scripture-centered, religion-reformatory and culture-transformational theology. Third, we are pursuing a church-oriented, and mission-oriented theology, practicing the social responsibility of the church.

We also have three practical tasks as follows. First, we are going to implement the theological education which can contribute to the sound growth of church and mission. Second, we are going to carry out inter-disciplinary studies between Christian faith and other sciences. Third, we will testify to the Apostolic Gospel in Asia and the work exporting the right theology without liberal yeast, sending out missionaries to the work, and expanding the Kingdom of God. The holy Trinitarian God will be glorified through this Graduate School. I am earnestly asking for your support and prayer.

## **Russian-American Christian University, Moscow, RUSSIA / Wheaton, Maryland, USA--RACU THANKFUL FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS**

The Russian-American Christian University (RACU) in Moscow successfully completed the second year of its undergraduate program with 85 students enrolled as business and social work majors. Entrance examinations and personal interviews are currently underway for RACU's third freshmen class. From an applicant pool of approximately 60-70 students, 30 will be selected.

Dr. Stanley Clark, who served as RACU's Vice President for Academic Affairs for three years, has departed Moscow for the same position at Geneva College (Beaver Falls, PA); his wife Susan, who served as RACU's Director of Administration, will continue working for RACU as an "Assistant to the President." The Board and students of the university are very thankful for their leadership during the important early years of the school.

RACU's new Executive Vice President is Rev. Johannes (Hannes) Furter, a Dutch Reformed missionary from South Africa, who has lived and worked in Russia since 1993. Hannes and his wife, Annamarie, have taught and served as administrators at St. Petersburg Christian University in St. Petersburg, Russia, and they will bring their experience, credentials and language ability with them to RACU's leadership role.

Despite a difficult context in Russia's capital city, where the rules keep changing or are unknown, we have much to celebrate and we thank God for his grace toward our students, faculty and university!

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **RUSSIAN EDITION OF *INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION* IS PUBLISHED**

The second volume of John Calvin's 16th century work, "Institutes of the Christian Religion", in the Russian

language has been published in Moscow. This is the first time the classic Protestant work has been translated into the Russian language--the second volume of a planned 3 volume set. It is the result of a seven year translation project including the services of the best Russian Reformed and other scholars available. This is a project led by Christian Reformed World Literature Ministries (Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Characteristics:

Second volume contains Book III

480 pages

Hardcover, high quality edition

Third (final) volume print date planned for December 1998

Prices FOB Moscow:

Retail: \$7.00 or ruble equivalent

Quantity discounts available for small and large wholesale lots

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In His Service,

Jeffrey S. Busscher

Russian/Ukrainian Field leader

Christian Reformed Church

**U.S. EMBASSY BOMBING IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

*(This news release was received from Daystar University, Nairobi, KENYA, where IAPCHE board member Godfrey Nguru serves as Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academics.)*

*"The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."--John 1:5*

In the midst of darkness, comes a Light so great, so all-encompassing, its brilliancy transforms a night of tragedy into a "dawn of Spiritual enlightenment."

On Friday morning, August 7th, Nairobi, Kenya was thrust into an abyss of blackness. The bombing of the U.S. Embassy filled her streets with terror and despair. Kenyans and Americans played out horrific scenes as the impact of what happened began to unfold before their eyes.

But praise be to God. The One who is Light in the darkest night--the Daystar--moved in the hearts of the

people. Side by side, one African group with another, Americans, Kenyans, Israelis and others, worked together to remove debris and search for survivors. The compassion, love and comfort of our Lord ruled the night. Light overcame darkness.

Daystar University, Nairobi campus, located across the street from both Nairobi and Kenyatta Hospitals, sent medical teams and ambulances to help in the search and rescue efforts, while others donated blood or blankets, or counseled those who were grieving or injured. Daystar is being used greatly by God to bring hope in a time of suffering and confusion.

The Athi River Campus, approximately 20 miles away, heard the explosion. Students Alfred Kurobone and Lydia Rono sustained injuries in the blast. Student Tony Kihato Irungu, who worked at the U.S. Embassy, died in the explosion. Most from Daystar were personally shielded, though many lost friends and relatives. Over 5000 were injured, 550 hospitalized and over 250 killed.

Please pray for Daystar University as we mourn the death of loved ones. Pray that God will continue to restore hope and peace and that, in the aftermath of such evil, the life giving message of Jesus Christ will shine ever more brightly. To the glory of God!

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## IAPCHE considers name change

IAPCHE is soliciting your help. Over the years many complaints have been voiced over how cumbersome the name of the association is. We hesitate to change our name because we have been identified with the name as it is. However, we are open to suggestions and ideas for a new name and acronym.

Please submit your ideas to Susan De Young, IAPCHE, Dordt College, 498 Fourth Avenue NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250, USA, or by email to <iapche@dordt.edu>.

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## Regional Profile

The IAPCHE board members have been asked to submit profiles of the regions they represent. The following profile was prepared and submitted by Dr. John Vanderstelt, chairman of the IAPCHE executive committee.

### **PROFILE OF CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA**

In 1980, Charles Malik said, "The problem is not only to win souls but to save minds. If you win the whole world and lose the mind of the world, you will soon discover you have not won the world. Indeed it may turn out that you have actually lost the world" (as quoted by Mark A. Noll, "The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind" in Christianity Today, Oct. 25, 1993).

Malik's perceptive statement summarizes the challenge persons, foundations, and institutions involved in Christian higher education have faced during the last decades in the North American evangelical world. As far as financial, economic, and cultural opportunities are concerned, the Christian community in Canada and the United States has, compared to most other regions of the world, had more opportunities to be involved in Christian-oriented research, teaching, and centers of reflection or think-tanks.

These opportunities have, however, not been utilized in optimal fashion. They have either been missed altogether, because of a world flight and soul-saving mentality of Christians, or they have been misused by a privately well-intended Christian faith but publicly world-compromising academic theories and practices. Insisting upon allegiance to certain creedal statements, making chapel compulsory on college campuses, and confusing Christian higher education with theological training--these, as well as other, related strategies have done much harm to integrated Christian higher education not only in North America but also, via missionary activities, in many other countries of the world.

Contrary to what is commonly believed, the biggest problem of Christian higher education has not been so much the lack of financial support by governments, distrust by academic accreditation associations, or unwillingness by the larger Christian community to provide the necessary funding. Rather, the biggest problem has been the lack of clear vision on the part of so many Christians involved in higher education as to the real need for, distinctive nature of, and practical consequences of biblically directed undergraduate and graduate education. For Christians to defend classical "liberal arts" education, to be satisfied with forming Christian "cluster colleges," or to justify Christian higher education in terms of promoting, as a Christian educator once said, "the free and competent expression of conflicting doctrines and an intelligent, responsible choice among them," is not enough.

The real challenge of Christian higher education in North America is one of function and philosophy, i.e., its unique role in fostering a way of seeing things and living in a rapidly changing world and doing so as new creatures in Christ. Very much needed is a radical rethinking of "liberal arts" education, especially with respect to the real condition for and nature of genuine academic freedom. A careful reading of the history of higher education makes clear that an uncritical perpetuation of the classic Western understanding of academic freedom is fundamentally at odds with the kind of freedom that is called for by the charter of God's kingdom (cf. Matt. 28:18-20 and II Cor. 3:17 and 5:16-17).

Against this background and in this context, a number of institutions of higher education within a predominantly Calvinian tradition, as well as some Christians scholars and educators in Mennonite, Episcopalian, and other traditions, face the ongoing challenge of carving out their own identity, sharing their vision of integrated Christian higher education with others, and deepening and broadening their academic and educational ministries with others in North America and elsewhere in the world.

Important in this connection are various developments in Christian higher education in North America during the last thirty years. The founding in 1976 of what today is known as the Coalition of Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) is not insignificant. Approximately one hundred four-year colleges and universities, three of which are located in Canada, with curriculums rooted in the liberal arts and in the natural and social sciences are trying to identify and address key issues facing Christian higher education, including seeking ways of integration.

The Coalition seeks to provide cooperative off-campus programs for students within North America (American Studies Program, Los Angeles Film Studies Center) and in other parts of the world (Latin American Studies Program, Middle East Studies Program, Russian Studies Program, and the newly established China Program and Oxford Honors Program). The CCCU engages in public advocacy with the government, provides an information clearing house, participates in the Pew Global Stewardship Initiative, watches enrollment trends, cooperates with Messiah College in publishing Christian Scholars Review, and has published seven volumes in the well-known "Through the Eyes of Faith" series (on biology, business, history, literature, music, psychology, and sociology).

Not in terms of institutional size or financial resources, but in terms of the depth of understanding integrated

Christian higher education entails, perhaps no institution of Christian higher education in North America has been more on the cutting edge during the last thirty years than the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) in Toronto, Canada. With its focus on foundational issues in graduate education in philosophy, aesthetics, education, history, political theory, theology, worldview studies, and technology-related issues, the ICS has been able to exert influence upon Christian higher education since its inception in 1966, that is, in proportion to its small staff of nine faculty members, limited enrollment of approximately thirty-five students per year, and very limited, often even deficit, budget. Presently, IAPCHE is considering a request from ICS to make available to Christian scholars around the world bibliographical services, books, and other documents the ICS plans to develop in the coming years .

An example of the influence of ICS is its role two years ago in organizing, in cooperation with Trinity Western University (British Columbia), and Ontario Bible College (Ontario), the first-ever national conference on Christian higher education in Canada. Some eighty persons met for three days in Regina, Saskatchewan, to discuss thirty-seven papers dealing with formulating "mission statements," the spreading erosion of ethics in higher education, developing a maturing Christian view of the stewardship of creation, avoiding the danger of behaviorism with its stress on quantified or measurable knowledge, the construction of capstone courses, etc.

Various educational institutions, nearly all of which are associate members of IAPCHE, established in 1985 the Association for a Reformed University (ARU), for the purpose of, among other things, exploring the feasibility and possibility of establishing a Reformed University in North America (RUNA). A guiding principle in these decade-long explorations was the belief that perhaps something could be done by all the participating institutions together (in Canada and the United States) that no one of these institutions could do alone. Two years ago, it became apparent that there was not enough support to embark upon this imaginative and bold endeavor at this time. (For details, see editorial of Dr. John B. Hulst in this issue of Contact.)

In reaction, ARU changed its name to Association of Reformed Institutions of Christian Higher Education (ARIHE). Members of this association are (in alphabetical order): Calvin College, Covenant College, Dordt College, Geneva College, Institute for Christian Studies, Redeemer College, The King's University College, and Trinity Christian College. The agenda of ARIHE will focus, at least until the year 2000, on common challenges these eight Christian colleges face--for example, post-baccalaureate, non-degree teacher education programs; distance education; centers of research, etc.

The idea of a Reformed University is still alive in some of these institutions. Already in 1951, Dr. H. Evan Runner said that "for the future of Calvinism in the United States the establishment of a Free University of our own must be considered necessary; however, for such an undertaking the time is not yet ripe" ("Proposition XIII," his doctoral dissertation on Aristotle at the Free University in Amsterdam). The opening of (what today is known as) the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto in 1966 was a small but significant first step in the direction of establishing a Christian university which, in being bound by Scripture, is free from the control of any state or church.

At the Fourth International Conference of IAPCHE in 1984 in Breukelen, the Netherlands, Prof. Dr. H. Verheul, then Rector Magnificus of the Free University and a member of the Board of Governors of IAPCHE, believing that the time was ripe for such an undertaking, appealed to North American institutions to establish a Reformed or Christian university. The recent affiliation discussions between the Institute of Christian Studies, in Toronto, and The King's University College in Edmonton, to merge as institutions and form a fledgling accredited Christian university with a graduate and undergraduate program, is the latest example of the vision and hope for such a university.

Some persons and institutions within IAPCHE circles are continuing to explore the feasibility and possibility of establishing something like an International Christian University (ICU). In our global world the need for distinctively Christian higher education is not a luxury but a necessity. It calls (not first of all for financial resources but) for what Dr. Calvin Seerveld, of the ICS, once said, "Learning to make distinctions, uncovering and interrelating the meanings of different things," a "communal examination of created reality in which some new understanding of its nature and workings is born," and "[t]he free gift of God's grace and the play of the Holy Spirit inside wissenschaftlich investigation...." ("What Makes a College Christian?" Christianity Today, August 30, 1963, 3-4).

Thousands of Christians in North America are beginning to sense more clearly than before the strategic importance and crucial role of Christian higher education in one of the richest, if not the richest, regions of the world and in a culture of great confusion. Especially in undergraduate Christian education there are significant and exciting stirrings of the Holy Spirit. As far as graduate education is concerned, however, a deeper and more sustained commitment is called for. This is what John Calvin, a master strategist in higher education, had in mind when he founded the Academy of Geneva in 1559. Leaders from many different countries trained in this academy helped redirect, often in small but always significant ways, countries and cultures back to God, back to freedom in Christ, back to a more just society.

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## Books

- ▶ *The Gods of Africa or the God of the Bible?* by Lenard Nyirongo; Institute for Reformational Studies, Potchefstroom, South Africa  
Before the Gospel came to Africa, did Africans worship the true God or idols? Many prominent African theologians claim that they worshipped the true God. They way that the Gospel was not a beginning of the true knowledge of God but a continuation or a fulfillment of the faith that already existed in the pre-Christian African's heart. Some even go so far as to suggest that the African's method of approaching God's throne is as valid as the way of salvation taught by the Gospel. This book has been written to refute the theologians' reasoning. It begins by presenting their claims; then chapter by chapter, it compares and contrasts the indigenous African beliefs and what the Bible teaches. The author's prayer is that the book will help the reader make a clear and uncompromising stand for the Gospel. The Gospel is unique: it points us to Christ, the only light to the world, the only way back to God. He is the only true foundation; our religious past is sinking sand--a false security. For information on purchasing the book, write Institute for Reformational Studies, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, Potchefstroom 2520, SOUTH AFRICA.
  
- ▶ *Caring for Creation: Responsible Stewardship of God's Handiwork*, by Calvin B. DeWitt, with responses by Richard A. Baer Jr., Thomas Sieger Derr, and Congressman Bernon J. Ehlers, edited by James W. Skillen and Luis E. Lugo; Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI and The Center for Public Justice, Washington, D.C.  
Will the religion of self-centered consumerism win? Or can Christians offer an ethic of responsible stewardship for today's most pressing environmental concerns? Calvin DeWitt, evangelical leader in environmental studies, takes on this important matter in the second annual Kuyper Lecture of the Center for Public Justice, published with three critical responses. DeWitt is a professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and founder of Au Sable Institute in

Michigan, where people from all over the world come to study the environment. In this book, DeWitt paints a colorful picture of God's love for creation.

The author begins with a perplexing puzzle: Why do those who love God not always care for his handiwork? DeWitt's call is clear--Christians should fight environmental degradation, including soil erosion, deforestation, global toxification, and species extinction.

The respondents all appreciate DeWitt's insights but each raises important questions for Christians. For information on purchasing the book, write The Center for Public Justice, PO Box 48368, Washington, D.C., 20002-0368, USA.

▶ *Knowing with the Heart: Religious Experience & Belief in God*, by Roy Clouser, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois; ISBN 0-8308-1507-4

These days it is often considered offensive even to suggest that there might be "true" and "false" religious beliefs. Yet Christians profess to believe in and have a relationship with a living, actual God. And they believe the reality of that God means that certain religious beliefs are, when all is said and done, false.

Can such belief--belief that is not merely private preference--be intelligently defended? And on what grounds might such faith be based?

In *Knowing with the Heart*, Roy Clouser clarifies the nature of religious belief, cogently arguing that it is "a basic belief formed in response to experience rather than blind trust." He shows how such belief is unavoidable, however "secular" or "nonreligious" some people may think themselves to be. And he invigoratingly displays the ultimate reasonableness of Christian faith.

For information on purchasing the book, write Intervarsity Press, Box F, Downers Grove, IL 60515.

▶ *New Dimensions in Evangelical Thought: Essays in Honor of Millard J. Erickson*, Edited by David S. Dockery, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois; ISBN 0-8308-1517-1

Evangelical scholarship has shown remarkable vigor during the last half of the twentieth century with the publication of many notable books in biblical studies and, more recently, strong works in systematic theology. The turn of a new century marks a fitting point to take stock of current evangelical gains and to set a course for addressing outstanding issues in the theological disciplines.

Now an international, ecumenical team of twenty-six distinguished scholars join together to do just that and, at the same time, to honor the sixty-fifth birthday of Millard J. Erickson, one of the key evangelical contributors to the discipline of systematic theology. The resulting volume will be useful to students, scholars, pastors, and all who wish to be theologically informed on the state of evangelical thought today.

For information on purchasing the book, write Intervarsity Press, Box F, Downers Grove, IL 60515.

▶ *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, edited by James D. Bratt; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI; ISBN 0-8028-4321-2

This volume gathers sixteen writings by Abraham Kuyper never before available in English. Freshly translated and rendered in a clear, accessible style, these works present an excellent cross-section of Kuyper's wide-ranging Christian mind.

The volume includes Kuyper's definitive statements on politics, education, culture, and the religious currents and social problems of his time. Also included are Kuyper's own conversion narrative, his critiques of Modernism and of Holiness theology, his proposals on common grace and Calvinist politics, his reflections on a culture in thrall to pantheism and evolution, and his classic address on "sphere sovereignty."

"An excellent introductory essay from the editor. . . .not only sets Kuyper's work in its 19th-century context but shows the relevance of his ideas to contemporary debates on modernism, evangelicalism, and fundamentalism. A worthy addition."--*Library Journal*

For information on purchasing the book, write Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI,49503, USA.

► *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism*, by Peter S. Heslam; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI; ISBN 0-8028-4326-3

In this centennial year of the delivery of Abraham Kuyper's famous Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, this volume offers a valuable analysis of Kuyper's thought and the worldview that is his legacy. Peter Heslam discusses Kuyper's ideas in their context by providing a historical commentary on the book in which they receive their most significant expression, *Lectures on Calvinism*.

Heslam begins by reviewing Kuyper's importance in the history of ideas and explains why *Lectures on Calvinism* is still of special interest. In the main body of the book Heslam provides a probing analysis of each of the six lectures in turn. Central to Heslam's analysis is a discussion of the motivation of Kuyper's thought: why did he maintain the standpoints he did, and what did he hope to achieve by doing so? In answering this question, Heslam explores Kuyper's position relative to others of his time and in connection with the events of his career.

For information on purchasing the book, write Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI,49503, USA.

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## Essay

### ***Deep Water from the Kuyperian Well: The Future of Higher Education***

By Lambert Zuidervaart, Professor of Philosophy, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, USA  
(delivered at Trinity Christian College and reprinted with permission from *Perspectives*, March 1998)

#### **A Transforming Vision**

Reformed institutions of higher education in North America have inherited a grand vision of the church and the world. Stemming from John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, and Kuyper's successors, this vision emphasizes the transformation of society and culture. According to the Kuyperian vision, Jesus completely transforms human life and calls for committed partners in this transforming work. Not one institution in society, not one area of culture, not one square inch in the entire universe lies beyond the scope of Jesus' ministry.

This vision makes the details of life very important. If nothing lies outside Jesus' transforming work, then all our decisions and actions are significant, and conflicts about education or politics occur in two directions. The first conflict is with dominant forces in the world today. Though Christians are in the world for the sake of the world, they cannot simply be "of the world." We must resist forces that destroy the world God loves. The second conflict is with fellow believers. If we are partners in Jesus' transforming work, then there is little room for simply "doing one's own thing" and little room for simply letting the other side have its way. We are obliged to work together, even when we disagree about how to do this.

By emphasizing the details of life, a transforming vision often intensifies conflicts among Christians. How much easier it would be to think that God only saves individual souls, to nurture one's own soul, and to win other souls for Christ. There would be fewer causes for concern and much less about which to fight. Then we would not have to concern ourselves with poverty and racism and sexism, debate the pros and cons of Christian schooling, and ask whether our parenting or consuming pleases God and serves our neighbor.

But what does this have to do with the future of higher education in the Reformed tradition? In a sense, everything! Unless each generation embraces anew a transforming vision, our colleges will lose sight of their mission and their very reason for existence will gradually disappear.

Let me be more specific. After a lifetime in schools affiliated with the Kuyperian strand within Reformed Christianity--not only as a student in grade school, high school, college, and graduate schools but also as a faculty member at two Christian high schools and at two Reformed colleges--I have strong senses of both promise and peril for the entire enterprise of higher education in the Reformed tradition.

### **Promise**

The sense of promise comes from the fact that Reformed institutions have much to offer their own students, their supporters, and the larger world of higher education, and that there is a felt need for what we can offer. Let me mention three opportunities.

First, higher education is unsettled right now. Many institutions are looking for new models of curriculum, pedagogy, and scholarship, models that get beyond narrow specializations and isolated expertise. Consequently, this is a good time for our own institutions to reexamine their missions and strategies, and to share our findings and experiments with others. We could discover that some things we have done well in the past, such as placing academic work in larger social, cultural, and religious contexts, would prove even more valuable in the future.

Second, significant segments of the American population no longer embrace the myths of economic progress and geo-political domination that sustained much of higher education after World War II. The dark side of capitalism and the failures of the nation state have begun to emerge, now that the irresistible push to commodify everything has become obvious and national fears cannot be projected onto what Ronald Reagan called "the evil empire." Although such fears can easily be redirected toward gays and welfare recipients at home or toward Japan and Iraq abroad, this demythologizing has allowed alternative visions of life to flourish. Many of these alternative visions recognize the limits to human achievement and the interconnectedness of all creatures. A new thirst for spirituality has emerge, to which Reformed institutions can respond.

Third, leading Christian and Jewish intellectuals in North America now acknowledge that traditions whose substance has shriveled will not survive in the twenty-first century. I think here of studies by Mark Noll and George Marsden, which sound sobering notes about the weakness of intellectual pursuits among conservative Christians and the loss of faith traditions among liberal Christians. But I also refer to work by African-American voices of social conscience such as Peter Gomes and Cornell West and to the provocative politics of meaning being forged by Michael Lerner and Tikkun magazine. This is not a time of complacency for leading members of the religious intelligentsia, and it should not be for our own institutions either.

### **Peril**

Near every open door, I see forces that threaten to close it and to lock our own institutions into spaces where we are sure to lose our creativity, relevance, and substance.

First, much of the search for new educational models is driven by economic and technological imperatives that threaten the very identity of colleges and universities as independent centers for research, critique, and cultural creation. Feeling the crunch of decreased government funding, shifting job markets, and economic globalization, many institutions turn to the latest fund raising strategies, information technologies and

marketing plans without thoroughly examining their appropriateness for higher education. I speak in sound bites here, but I'm sure all of you know what I am talking about: wealthy donors playing an inordinate role in setting college policy; full-time tenured faculty positions being replaced by part-timers; recruiters selling college education simply as a path to a career or to personal gratification. Many of our students enter college with careerist and narcissistic views of the value of higher education. So it is not hard for colleges and universities to get caught up in a cycle where short term fixes spell long term disaster. If, in the end, all that we can offer society is job training and intellectual entertainment, we will be replaced by other institutions that are much more efficient and effective at providing these services. Small religiously based colleges will be the first to go.

Second, the new thirst for spirituality does not seem much in evidence within the academy as such. Nor, for that matter, do many churches of North America seem ready to offer living waters. Instead, both the academy and the church are caught up in a culture war that puts a premium on party lines and diminishes dialogue even among members of the same university or church communion. I do not wish to belittle the issues at stake in these skirmishes: abortion, civil rights, ecology, the entertainment industry, and identity politics all deserve serious public debate. Unfortunately, neither the academy nor the church has provided adequate forums in which genuine dialogue can take place, relatively free from the pressures of power and money. And, it seems, to me, Reformed denominations, such as the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) and the Reformed Church in America (RCA), and their affiliated educational institution, are as much at fault here as anyone else. To persons thirsting for a vision to replace materialism and nationalism, the church and the academy do not seem so much like oases as sand in the desert storm.

Third, the historians and prophets who seek substance often find ordinary religionists enamored with consumerist gimmicks. As the religious intelligentsia call for a renewing return to our sources, ordinary Christians happily march on to the latest tunes. Among institutions in the Kuyperian wing of the Reformed tradition, this march has taken a consumer-populist twist. While the official theology remains Calvinist, the lived theology--the type of personal piety, music and liturgy, cultural and political affiliations, media of communication, support for parachurch organizations, etc.--resembles a bland brew of feel-good religion mixed with reactionary social stances. A clear indication of where the CRC comfort zone lies occurred when its Synod endorsed affiliation with the National Evangelical Association and rejected membership in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Around the same time Calvin College revised its policy on church membership to allow faculty members to belong to an assortment of small evangelical or fundamentalist Presbyterian churches, who now want little to do with the CRC, but did not permit membership in the mainline Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), despite strong faculty support for the latter. When the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (5.2 million members) agreed in August 1997 to enter into "full communion" with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the RCA, this notable step toward unity among churches of the historic reformation was barely noted on Calvin's campus, even though the RCA is also one of the churches to which Calvin faculty may belong. The college, like its CRC mother church, seems sadly out of step with the larger world of Reformed Christianity, quite unlike our patron saint, who painted such a broad canvas in his Stone Lectures in 1898. My worry is that, cut off from the larger expressions of the Reformed tradition around the world, the Kuyperian tradition in North America will wither into empty phrases mouthed on ceremonial occasions but having little to do with the lives of our students and supporters.

### **The Shape of Education**

Let me make three suggestions for the future. My first suggestion has to do with the shape of our educational endeavors. The history of curriculum and scholarship at Reformed colleges after World War II spans three stages. Until about the mid-sixties, our colleges embraced a classical liberal arts approach, with a strong emphasis on history, literature, philosophy, and foreign languages, and the scholar teacher as campus

authority. There was little pressure on a professor to publish in academic journals. His or her scholarship (mostly his, at the time) served the classroom, campus, and church. In the eyes of the larger academy, many of these scholar teachers would have looked like dilettantes. But in the eyes of their students and the church, they were respected masters of the liberal arts tradition.

In the mid-sixties, the liberal arts approach gave way to a new disciplinary model. The new model emphasized broad exposure to the entire range of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, combined with specialized study in one discipline. Although classically trained masters still had some sway on campus, the locus of authority shifted to those professors who had won their spurs in the larger academic world, but who could also rearticulate the liberal arts and religious tradition for college supporters and church laity. My former colleague Nicholas Wolterstorff is a good example of such a professor.

Sometime in the early 1980s another stage emerged, one much harder to characterize because it has nowhere received a definitive elaboration. Let me describe this as the stage of activist professionalism. In curriculum this has involved adapting a liberal arts core to meet requirements of professional and pre-professional programs, as well as encouraging internships, service opportunities, and off-campus experiences. In pedagogy, this has meant relying less on lecturing about prescribed content and turning to more collaborative and dialogical approaches. In scholarship, an increasing amount of research and writing has been directed toward current issues in society and culture, and less toward either the classical or contemporary theories.

I think our colleges have nearly exhausted the potential of this third stage. Now we confront some weighty decisions about the future shape of higher education in the Reformed tradition. What I recommend is critical contextualism. By critical contextualism I mean an approach to curriculum, pedagogy, and scholarship that uncovers the historical, social, and cultural subtexts of the professions and disciplines in order better to understand, evaluate, and transform those professions and disciplines.

Let me briefly describe what I have in mind. I think all of us can recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of the first two stages--the classical and the disciplinary approaches. We are much less clear about the strengths and weaknesses of activist professionalism. I would suggest that this third stage gains relevance at the expense of creativity and substance. It encourages us to be engaged, but discourages us from taking the time to understand the larger forces at stake in contemporary issues. It does not inspire us to explore thoroughly the resources of our own tradition, much less those of other traditions.

The critique of activist professionalism is not something that individual educators can bring about on their own--our institutions and the academic profession cast a long shadow over much of our work. It is really a matter for institution-wide discussions and reform. In a sense, we have to go back to square one, and ask again: Why should students study some of the classics of Western Civilization? Why do we encourage students to pursue off-campus opportunities? What is the point of contributing or not contributing to the glut of professional and academic publications on any particular topic? Where in all of this lies the challenge to help transform society and culture? It is through such serious self-examination and critique that our colleges will transform our earlier stages of development into a new model of higher education that is not simply driven by economic and technological imperatives.

### **The Cultural Significance of Education**

My second suggestion pertains to the cultural significance of our educational efforts. I mentioned earlier a new thirst for spirituality, which the church and academy fail to address. I don't know what the climate at other campuses is like. At Calvin College, where I have taught for twelve years, a few explosive situations have punctuated long stretches of tense silence, with minor skirmishes rumbling continuously in the background.

We have failed as a college community to have serious and sustained academic discussion of hot-button issues. This failure has kept us from giving significant leadership to our own church communities, and it has decreased the opportunities for a Kuyperian intellectual voice to be heard in North America. Needless to say, an atmosphere of tense silence is hardly conducive to the development of a new and winsome Reformed spirituality.

I would like to single out one tension in the Kuyperian tradition that is present on many other Reformed campuses and deserves special attention. Scholars or artists who have grown up in the CRC and its affiliated schools cannot help but feel the tension between personal piety and social action deep in their bones. The complicated history behind it has been detailed by my historian colleague James Bratt (*Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, 1984). The struggle between pietism and social activism is constitutive of the Kuyperian tradition in North America.

There are two ways in which a constitutive tension becomes debilitating rather than creative in the life of a community. One way occurs when the two sides lock into a battle without resolutions. Then the community's energy gets channeled into rigid, defensive formations until communal paralysis sets in. The other occurs when the two sides go their separate ways and have little interaction. Then the community's energy drains away into projects that no longer represent the best potentials of its tradition.

I am not an historian. But my sense, as an insider on the margins, is that a little of each way has occurred during the past few decades in the CRC and its affiliated schools. More precisely, the pietist and social activist sides have set up defensive formations around controversial social issues such as women's rights, abortion, and gay liberation, and the two sides have gone their separate ways in matters of worship, evangelism, and congregational life. Such a combination of embattlement and isolation does not bode well for the future. It leaves each side free to turn away from the other toward hospitable allies on the larger North American scene--roughly liberalism and post-modernism on the one side, and fundamentalism and the Religious Right on the other side.

It would be a tragedy, I think, if the Kuyperian tradition in North America dispersed itself into the older forces of liberalism and fundamentalism or their more recent successors. For the genius of Kuyper and his followers has been to couple a critique of the modern world with active contributions to transforming it, always out of deep sense of personal gratitude and calling. One of the challenges facing Reformed institutions is to embody anew that genial spirit of holy worldliness. The best aspects of our tradition's pietism and social activism need to be renewed, not left in rigid battle or nonchalant isolation, but carried forward by a revitalized and more encompassing vision of transformation. One need look no further than Abraham Kuyper's meditation on Psalm 42 for a glimpse of what this might mean. I quote from the recent adaptation by James Schaap titled *Near Unto God* (1997):

How often have we truly desired, for God's sake, to be near to [God]?... How often do we authentically thirst for God?...

No creed will satisfy, no nicely formulated idea about God, no relic or symbol. What we need is the living water--and not brackish [sic], swampy stuff either. We need water that tumbles and leaps and rushes, water that is alive.

...Our being near unto God isn't limited by time and space. It's not something that happens only inside stained-glass windows. Zion is a sidewalk, an office, a kitchen, a classroom, a factory, and a library carrel. Zion is where we come to God through Christ. That's where we find our thirst finally relieved by living water. Zion is Christ really, our Mediator and our King, who is...God, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen!

## **Digging Deeper Wells**

That brings me to my final suggestion. It may seem from what I have just said that I wish somehow to recapture some earlier expression of the Kuyperian tradition that was more pure and less diluted. That is not at all my intention. In fact I think such a backward-looking approach, whether nostalgic or dogmatic, is more deadly for a tradition than is outright rejection. What Jürgen Habermas has said about ethnic cultures also applies to religious tradition in the modern world:

When a culture has become reflexive, the only...forms of life that can sustain themselves are those that bind their members while at the same time subjecting themselves to critical examination and leaving later generations the options of learning from other traditions or converting and setting out for other shores...Cultures survive only if they draw the strength to transform themselves from criticism and secession (*Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, 1994, 130-32).

Hence to maintain a tradition is not to isolate it or protect it but to renew it through self-criticism and through dialogue with other traditions. Every tradition that is worth its salt needs to form its own loyal opposition.

But this cannot occur if members of a religious tradition do not care enough about their own sources to pay them close scrutiny. Nor will it happen if no one in the tradition makes the effort to translate its sources into a language that makes them accessible to participants of other traditions. In our own setting, this is one of the urgent tasks facing Reformed institutions of higher education. Who among us is testing the insights and blind spots of Calvin, Kuyper, and Dooyeweerd? Who is exploring and recontextualizing the imagery, music, and stories of the Kuyperian tradition? Who is translating the central texts and debates of the tradition into a language for the twenty-first century? If we college educators fail to do this, and if our administrations and board do not give us the incentives and support we need to do this, then we cannot expect our supporters and church communities to embrace a transforming vision.

I grew up on a small farm in north central California. The soil was sandy, the climate hot and dry. Were it not for a wonderful public irrigation system, the area would have been a desert. Because water flowed freely through the canals and ditches, however (just right for swimming in the summer), lush pastures and thriving orchards covered the landscape. Even so, we needed our own well for household and garden use. When the water table dropped, or when too much sand sifted into the well, we would have to drill the well deeper.

Perhaps there's an image here for how our colleges need to relate to the Kuyperian tradition. In each generation we need to dig deep wells in order to release once again the nourishing currents of our intellectual and religious tradition, not simply for ourselves but for all the students, supporters, and future generations for whom we work. But we also need to find channels that allow these currents to flow toward the neighboring communities, and to let the best elements of their traditions flow toward us. And through all of this, perhaps, we will also receive and send onward the water of life, in Kuyper's words, "water that tumbles and leaps and rushes, water that is alive."