“Live, Move, and Have Being”: Migration and Practical Theology

Around the world today, across countries and within cities, people experience life-altering dislocation and relocation—migrating within and across the Middle East, Europe, Latin America, the United States, and many more places. People who want and need to move often confront great difficulties; others are moved against their will and risk much in resisting. In these migrations, dynamics of vulnerability and strength, force and choice, hope and despair, power and resistance are always present.

The 2016 APT Biennial Meeting in New York City, a place of migrations (into, within, and out of the city) for centuries, explores this theme of migration and practical theology. The theme invites deeper exploration of practical theology’s role in making impactful sense of the migrations to which we are related today.

There is much for practical theology to consider under this theme, such as practical theology and immigration, migrant work, refugees, stateless persons, trafficking, incarceration and detention, migration and mental health/wellbeing, migrations through religions, housing, and all theologically significant migratory experiences, forced or chosen, especially as seen in relation to dynamics of vulnerability and strength, force and choice, hope and despair, power and resistance.

How can practical theology engage migrations today, in the service of freedom to move or to stay, such that people are more able to “live, move, and have being”? (Acts 17:28)