

## In Memoriam Anthony Tol

May 11, 1943 - July 2, 2014

The Board of the Stichting D. H. Th. Vollenhoven has been deeply touched by the passing of Anthony Tol.

Our thoughts and prayers are first of all with Tony's wife and family. Among our board members, it was especially Dr. Kor Bril who for more than forty years worked most closely with Tony. Over the years their friendship deepened as they shared their interest in and their spiritual affinity with the method and message of Vollenhoven's philosophy, both historiographically and systematically.

Dr. Sander Griffioen too has fond memories of the many decades of consultation and collaboration with Tony. It was Tony who succeeded Sander in the early 1970s as assistant to Professor Vollenhoven.

Tony Tol was born in Boskoop and came to Canada with his parents in 1951. He grew up in Victoria, British Columbia, and studied mathematics and philosophy at Calvin College, where he was particularly captivated by the reformational philosophy taught in courses with Professor H. Evan Runner, who had himself been a student of Vollenhoven. In 1966 Tony returned to the Netherlands and enrolled in the graduate program in philosophy at the VU University Amsterdam. In 1970 he was assigned to Vollenhoven who enjoyed Tony's assistance until he ended his academic work in 1975.

The importance of Dr. Tol's connection with the Stichting is underscored in at least two ways. In the first place we can say that without Tony's dedication to Vollenhoven's thought it would not have come to the establishment in the early nineties of our Vollenhoven Foundation and the various publications by and about Professor Vollenhoven. Secondly, through the astonishing productivity that Tony displayed during the last years of his earthly life he has laid the basis for further study and elucidation of Vollenhoven's reformational thought. To do justice to our departed colleague this *In Memoriam* can almost close in the form of a bibliography.

As early as 1992 Anthony Tol, together with Kor Bril, published a collection of Vollenhoven texts in the series *Verantwoording*, entitled *Vollenhoven als wijsgeer; inleiding en teksten*. And in 2005 he and John H. Kok of Dordt College came out with a Dutch-and-English edition of

Vollenhoven's Introduction to Philosophy, the famed *Isagôgè Philosophiae* that was used for decades at the VU and regularly revised by the author until 1945. To top off this very useful contribution, Tony in 2010 completed his doctoral dissertation, published by Dordt College Press under the title *Philosophy in the Making: D. H. Th. Vollenhoven and the Emergence of Reformed Philosophy*. This substantial work of more than 500 pages offers a detailed survey of the evolution of Vollenhoven's thought up to his "initial definitive position" (p. 14), that is to say, up until approximately 1931. The English-language dissertation was accompanied by a critical Dutch edition of 466 pages of the *Isagôgè Philosophiae*, subtitled *Filosofie in de traditie van de Reformatie* and published by the VU Uitgeverij, Amsterdam.

Following these impressive feats, Tony did not rest on his laurels. Instead he produced an annotated translation of *Logos en ratio, beider verhouding in de geschiedenis der westersche kentheorie* (Kampen: Kok, 2013). This is the incredibly compact inaugural oration with which Professor Vollenhoven was inducted in 1926 in the chair in philosophy at the Free University. The English translation was edited by John Kok and published with the title *Reformed Epistemology: The Relation of Logos and Ratio in the History of Western Epistemology* (Dordt College Press, 2013). When writing this work Tony was fully aware of his terminal illness, but he carried on with his life's work of unlocking and clarifying what had inspired his teacher Vollenhoven.

Anthony Tol's valuable archive (of almost a thousand pages) will be deposited in the Historisch Documentatiecentrum of the VU. A complete bibliography is available at [www.allofliferedeemed.com.uk](http://www.allofliferedeemed.com.uk).

Our Foundation honours the name of Tony Tol with profound respect and warm affection. Those who feel affinity with the Calvinistic philosophy of Dirk Vollenhoven and his brother-in-law Herman Dooyeweerd and who wish in particular to gauge Vollenhoven's contribution to this philosophy cannot bypass the work of Tony Tol. Amid a sense of loss, we thank God who himself is wisdom and truth and who in Tony gave a special gift to his wife, to his children, to many others, and to us.

On behalf of the Board of the Stichting D. H. Th. Vollenhoven  
E. A. de Boer, chair

I. M de Graaf – van der Nol, secr.  
R. A. Nijhoff, vice-chair and treas.