

INTRODUCTION

In all previous issues of *Aspects* the introduction has been written by Albert-Kees Geljon. After eight years as a much-valued board member his work for this organisation and for *Aspects* has come to an end. We would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his dedication and hard work. We wish him all the best and God's blessing for the future. Starting with this issue I am taking over this part of his work.

Again, much has happened since the last issue, although not everything can be mentioned here. Let me briefly mention three things. First, Professor Henk Jochensen has delivered his inaugural lecture entitled "Als de olifanten vechten wordt het gras vertrapt" (When Elephants Fight the Grass gets Trampled). He stated that development aid should not primarily be directed at economic growth, but instead should focus at meaningful development in concrete human communities. Next, Professor Roel Kuiper celebrated an anniversary recently: for ten years he has held the chair of Reformational Philosophy at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. This was commemorated by a symposium which considered his latest book "Moreel Kapitaal. De verbindingskracht van de samenleving" (Moral Capital, The Unifying power of

Society). That was the occasion of a fascinating and memorable discussion between Professor Kuiper, some professorial colleagues and members of the audience. Finally, a commission has commenced work on the upcoming celebrations of our Association, when in December 2010 we will mark our 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee). Our aim is to mark this milestone with a special selection of activities. More information is provided in the following pages.



And so, now as the summer break ends, we begin a new season with much work ahead. We hope that we can all start the work with renewed energy!

On behalf of the board,
Ida Slump-Schoonhoven

GENERAL MEETING ARP

At the last general meeting of the Association for Reformational Philosophy, held at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam on June 25th 2009, it was decided, after hearing the views of members, that the names of the Foundation and the Centre should be changed to Foundation and Centre for Christian Philosophy. The names for Chairs will also be renamed accordingly. The name of the Association for Reformational Philosophy will remain the same. In English the names will remain the same also, 'Association for Reformational Philosophy' and 'Centre for Reformational Philosophy'.

The reason for this change is that the name, Reformational Philosophy, no longer covers all the themes and membership in the Netherlands, whereas internationally this is not an issue. The argument for a change was strengthened by the fact that the Foundation makes its contribution in education, and students have been unsure about the name of the body that supports those who present the classes. By keeping the name Association for Reformational Philosophy, the Foundation hopes to retain its position as the cradle for Reformational Philosophy, and of the works of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven in particular.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR!

DIAMOND JUBILEE: 75 YEARS OF RPH

The Association for Reformational Philosophy has something to celebrate; 2010 will mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Association (December 15th 2010 until December 14th 2011). So, in anticipation of that celebratory year, we are initiating a special Diamond Jubilee programme. For this the work has already begun.

There is now one specially formed committee which will oversee the organisation of the events of this upcoming celebratory year. At the same time, another committee has been formed to organise the International Symposium to be held in 2011. The driving force behind this Symposium is Professor Gerrit Glas (Extraordinary Professor of Reformational Philosophy at the University of Leiden, Professor of Philosophical Aspects of Psychiatry at the University of Leiden and holder of the professorial Dooyeweerd-chair at Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam). You can read more about this international symposium in the following pages.

So we identify a goal that is already before us - using the anniversary to accomplish many things. For instance, 2011 will be a year in which the Association seeks to step out, to give ourselves a voice in public debate. Another aim is to specially serve diverse membership within the Association. To realise this goal various activities will be organized for members, for students, for those involved in education, or those involved in the media, and also for people who don't yet know us, and maybe more besides. We are also thinking about special editions of our publications and a Dooyeweerd publication is already in preparation.

In all, we hope that 2010 will be a great year for our Association. As we now look forward to this anniversary we are glad that so many hands are busily working to help us attain these goals. We will keep you posted!

JANUARTAGUNG EVANGELISCHE FORSCHUNGS-AKADEMIE 2010

FROM JANUARY 8TH UNTIL JANUARY 10TH, **2010 THE ANNUAL EFA TAGUNG** WILL BE HELD AT THE BERLINER STADTMISSTION IN BERLIN. THIS MEETING IS REGULARLY EXPLORE A NOTABLE INTERDISCIPLINARY THEME. THIS YEAR THE THEME WILL BE : 'WIDERFAHRNIS UND ERKENNTNIS. ZUR WAHRHEIT MENSCHLICHER ERFABUNG'.

To introduce the theme the EFA has taken a quote from Wilhelm Kamlah from his *Philosophische Anthropologie*: 'Unser aller Leben ist eingespannt zwischen den Widerfahrnissenn Geburt und Tod. Gleichsam das erste und das letzte Wort hat für uns nicht unser eigenes Handeln. Aber auch, wenn wir handeln, widerfährt uns stets etwas. Es gibt Widerfahrnisse ohne Handeln, aber es gibt kein pures Handeln. Auch ein so mächtiges Handeln, wie das sogenannte 'schöpferische' ist doch stets auf vorgegebene Bedingungen angewiesen und Störungen ausgesetzt, so daß es mehr oder weniger oder gar nicht 'gelingt. (...) Indem uns Gutes und Schlimmes widerfährt, indem unser Handeln gelingt und mißlingt, machen wir 'Erfahrungen', lernen wir für unser künftiges Verhalten

This EFA Tagung promises to become a fascinating meeting including speakers including professor dr. Hartmut Böhme (Berlin, HU), professor. dr. Michael Großheim (Rostock) and professor dr. dr. Olaf Breidbach (Jena) and moderators including professor dr. Albert Krabbe, professor dr. Christian Ammer and professor dr. Andreas Lindeman. You are all warmly invited!

Januartagung EFA 2010

Theme: 'Widerfahrnis und Erkenntnis. Zur Wahrheit menschlicher Erfahrung'

Date: 8 – 10 januari 2010

Location: Berliner Stadtmismission, Zentrum am Hauptbahnhof, Lehrter Straße 68, Berlin.

Registration and further information: efa@uek-online.de

Website: www.evangelische-forschungsakademie.de.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2011

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR GERRIT GLAS

THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM WILL BE ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR REFORMATIONAL PHILOSOPHY. OUR MEMBERS INCLUDE MANY PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD. THE SYMPOSIUM WILL BE HELD **AT THE VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT IN AMSTERDAM FROM MONDAY AUGUST 15TH UNTIL THURSDAY AUGUST 19TH 2011**. ALTHOUGH THE SYMPOSIUM IS HELD EVERY FIVE YEARS, THIS OCCASION WILL BE SPECIAL SINCE IT WILL COINCIDE WITH THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSOCIATION. THEREFORE A SPECIALLY FORMED COMMITTEE IS WORKING TO MAKE THIS AN EVENT TO REMEMBER. CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE IS PROFESSOR GERRIT GLAS, WHO, BESIDES HOLDING VARIOUS CHAIRS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, IS THE CURRENT OCCUPANT OF THE DOOYEWEERD CHAIR AT THE VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT IN AMSTERDAM. WE WERE HAPPY TO INTERVIEW HIM SO HE CAN GIVE YOU SOME INSIGHT AS TO WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE UPCOMING SYMPOSIUM.



You are the chair of the committee that is mandated to organise the IS2011. Can you tell us something about the committee and its members?

The members of the committee include Jonathan Chaplin, Govert Buijs, Hillie van der Streek and myself. Dr. Jonathan Chaplin is a social and political philosopher and currently Director of the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics in Cambridge (UK). Jonathan is also teaching at the Free University in the Christian Studies of Science and Society (CSSS) program. Govert Buijs is associate professor of social and political theory at the Department of Philosophy of VU University in Amsterdam (NL) and coordinator of the CSSS program. Hillie van der Streek is Director of the Centre for Reformational Philosophy in Soest (NL). I am psychiatrist and philosopher, currently holding a chair in Philosophical Aspects of Psychiatry (University of Leiden, NL) and in Christian Philosophy (Dooyeweerd chair VU University, Amsterdam). I am also practicing psychiatrist and director of residency training at Dimence, a state psychiatric hospital located near Zwolle.

Our committee has a wide circle of philosophers and scientists who serve as a sounding board, helping us to generate ideas. To clarify the overall

theme and possible directions for the conference we seek advice from scholars who are specialists in the various fields.

From where you sit what is major contribution of the international symposium to the life of the Association? What has been the long-term benefits from previous symposia?

For me, the distinctive characteristic of this movement's international conferences has been the communal effort that is generated amongst us. These conferences have demonstrated a willingness for genuine encounter with, and discussion about, the meaning of Christian faith for philosophy, the sciences, the professions and society. Another important function is how the symposia bring us together. Some groups and individuals work in relative isolation. And these days, reformational philosophy is dispersed over many countries, branching out in many directions. There is a great variety of individual talents, preferences, local circumstances, and ways in which we collaborate with other groups. Over the years this has led to differences in development, emphasis and the resultant focus of attention. The conference offers a unique opportunity to meet, to understand, and to learn from one another.

Can you tell us something about the theme of the symposium and the invited speakers?

The working title of the conference is 'The future of order'. We have the feeling that developments in both the life sciences and the social sciences make the topic of order (law, universal principles) timely and challenging. Biology, especially developments in evolutionary theory, are often considered as the final blow to the Aristotelian and scholastic idea of a fixed and pre-given world order. Reformational philosophy with its concepts of law, principles and creational structures, has in some places been interpreted as a Protestant variant of this conception - which it is not. Evolutionary thinking learns instead that the living world should be seen as utterly contingent. If order exists, it only exist as permanently changing order. The evolutionary conception of 'order' not only affects biology but also anthropology, the humanities and philosophy. The social sciences, on the other hand, are still under the influence of historicism and postmodernism with their criticisms of order and pre-given structures. Add to this that pluralism, in our society, is regularly taken to mean that there are no absolute rules and norms. In short: both evolutionary theory and social philosophy challenge the idea of the pre-giveness of norms, laws, and structures; they suggest that there are no such norms, laws, and structures and that they all are either the product of the contingency of the process of natural selection or the product of human construction and subjective interpretation.

Reformational philosophers have always made a distinction between evolutionary thinking as scientific theory and evolutionism as a worldview, between factual plurality and pluralism as worldview. There has, in fact, been an extensive internal discussion on the nature of law: is there a difference between laws and the law-side of reality; can laws change; can new laws 'emerge' in the process of differentiation and disclosure of reality? Important as these discussions have been, we have also to acknowledge that these discussions have not been settled and that new developments in the life sciences and the social sciences urge us to engage in renewed debate.

In what way will Reformational Philosophy be featured in the programme?

The issues I mentioned have been at the heart of reformational philosophy from its very beginning. What does it mean to say that God rules by creational laws and norms and that the natural and social world reflect these laws and norms and that we human beings respond to them? This question was answered with a philosophy of the 'law-idea'. We have to rethink this notion of law-idea in the context of a worldwide and, at this moment, very lively debate about the relationship between science and religion.

How will this symposium be different from previous symposia, in light of the anniversary of the Association?

I think the conference will become a little bit less 'worldviewish' and a bit more scientific, both in a philosophical and in a scientific sense. There will be more input from the special sciences. On the other hand, the difference will not be too great. The science-religion debate has always been central in reformational philosophy. It was Dooyeweerd who - convinced of the fact that all sciences, including philosophy, are ultimately rooted in a pre-theoretical religious perspective - began with the great conceptual questions of philosophy and the special sciences, working from them into the direction of their religious roots. I believe this conference cannot better celebrate his work, and that of Vollenhoven as well, than by concentrating again on this inner connection between science and religion from the perspective of the idea of law and of order.

When will you call this symposium a success?

The symposium will be judged a success when three criteria are met: (a) when we make at least some progress with respect to the notion of order (and of law) in the systematics of reformational philosophy, (b) when we succeed in establishing new platforms for collaboration and (c) when young scholars are attracted to, and become enthusiastic about, the tradition of reformational philosophy.

TO CLARIFY: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2011

For those expecting an International Symposium in 2010, we need to emphasize at this point, before any confusion arises, that the next symposium will be held in 2011. In this way we have more time for preparation and, moreover, the Symposium can be part of the 75th Diamond Jubilee Celebrations! This is not the first time we have celebrated 1936 as the founding year of the ARP. Do readers remember the 1986 Jubilee? But now, 25 years on, the International Symposium will happen in 2011! Mark your diaries now!

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

January 8th -10th 2010 – ‘Widerfahrnis und Erkenntnis. Zur Wahrheit menschlicher Erfahrung’, annual interdisciplinary and international congress by the Evangelische Forschungsakademie, focused on debating a specific theme.

December 15th 2010 until December 14th 2011 – 75th Anniversary Year, Reformational Philosophy. Many different activities, publications and actions to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Reformational Philosophy.

August 15th-19th 2011 - ‘The future of order’, Free University Amsterdam, The Netherlands
International Symposium of the Association for Reformational Philosophy

RECTIFICATION MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS

In the last issue there was information concerning the best manner of payment of membership dues, donations and other payments from the US and Canada. This had to be described differently. Because donations to this kind of cause are/can-be tax-deductible, it would be better that US/Canadian dollar checks be made out to the “Association for Reformational Philosophy” (and not to John Kok). You are requested to label the check referring to the subject of goal of the payment, for example “NCTT” or “ARP dues [year]”. These checks can be sent to:

Association for Reformational Philosophy

Attn: Dr. John H. Kok
Dordt College
498 Fourth Avenue NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250
USA

We would like to take this opportunity whilst discussing this matter to emphasize our gratitude for all gifts, especially in these times of financial uncertainty. We continue to need your support and are therefore very thankful for all donations.

VOLUNTEER WANTED

VACANCY COLLABORATOR INTERNATIONAL TEXTS (VOLUNTEER M/V)

To support the work at the Centre we are currently looking for a volunteer to collaborate on international texts. We are looking for a native speaker to translate texts into English in order to make them available for the international community. Other tasks include writing short specific articles to be placed on the website, aimed at an international readership. We estimate the effort to cost less than 6 hours a month.

More information:

Hillie van de Streek (035-5880205, not on Wednesdays; reform.philos@planet.nl)

Association for Reformational Philosophy

Aspects of Reformational Philosophy is the international information bulletin of the Foundation for Reformational Philosophy and the Association for Reformational Philosophy. The Association pursues philosophy in the light of the Bible as the Word of God. The Foundation aims to spread the fruits of this pursuit. Both do their work in the conviction that all philosophy is religiously determined. Aspects will be sent on request.

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