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Antoon Vergote passed away



Antoine Vergote, a prominent and probably the most influential figure of European psychology of religion, passed away at age 92. Through an immense intellectual work he has shown the importance of putting into dialog psychology, psychoanalysis, and theology.

Antoon Vergote, professor emeritus of the [Faculties of psychology and educational sciences](#) of the two Catholic Universities of Louvain ([KU Leuven](#) and [UCL Louvain-la-Neuve](#)), passed away Thursday, October 10, 2013, in Leuven at the age of 92. Theologian, with a doctorate in biblical theology, as well as philosopher and psychoanalyst, having also studied in Paris with Claude Levi-Strauss, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Jacques Lacan, Vergote has been a prominent figure among the Belgian intellectuals of the second half of the 20th century, and composed, together with [Jean Ladrière](#) and [Alphonse de Waelhens](#), the sacred triad of Louvain's promoters of interdisciplinarity in human and social sciences during the 70s-90s.

He founded at the University of Louvain in 1961 the [Centre for Psychology of Religion](#) (that became double after the split of the University in two linguistically distinct ones, in [Leuven](#) and [Louvain-la-Neuve](#)), which has developed for more than 50 years an intense research activity and quickly became and still is a leading laboratory in the field of psychology of religion in Europe and internationally. Vergote has probably been the most important figure in the dialogue between theology, psychology and psychoanalysis, in particular within the Catholic world, and has crucially contributed to the reconciliation of Catholicism with psychoanalysis, the two having maintained relatively hostile relations till the 60s. He has been consultant of ecclesiastic authorities on psychological and clinical issues, as well as co-founder of the [Belgian School of Psychoanalysis](#). He has directed around 70 doctoral dissertations of researchers who came in Louvain from many different countries, with many of them having become afterwards professors in different Universities in Europe and other parts of the world.

With other colleagues, he founded in the 70s the network of the European Psychologists of Religion, which from the early 2000s has evolved to the [International Association for the Psychology of Religion](#), an association whose current President is the [chair of the UCL Centre](#). Vergote's work has been translated in many languages and has itself become the subject of several doctoral dissertations. Today, the grains Vergote has planted, together with others, have given their fruits and the discipline of psychology of religion has developed in Europe and the world, with a good insertion, on the one hand as an empirical discipline within the psychological sciences, and on the other hand as a serious partner in the interdisciplinary area of sciences of religion, which know today a tremendous development. Understanding how religion works in humans' life is part of a maturation process for both believers and non-believers.

See [Wikipedia](#) on A. Vergote

See a web page on [Vergote's work](#) (in French)

See [Memorial Tributes](#)  to A. Vergote

Articles and Obituaries: [La Libre Belgique](#) (FR), [Catho.be](#) (FR), [Kerknet](#) (NL), [La Croix](#) (FR), [Ecclesia.gr](#) (GR), [News Cattolice](#)  (IT)

Antoine Vergote's funeral: [Eulogy](#) by Jozef Corveleyn (NL) and [Eulogy](#)  by Vassilis Saroglou (FR)

Recent pictures (photos 2, 4-6: by Mario Aletti; 3: by Patty Van Cappellen)



Antoon Vergote



with Dirk Hutsebaut and Jos Corvelen (Bari, August 2011)



with Jean-Marie Jaspard (50 years of the Centre celebration, LLN, November 2011)



with Jacob Belzen and Mario and Daniela



during the IAPR symposium in his honor



Herman Westerlinck and Jessie Dezutter as



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