

IN MEMORIAM

In memoriam Professor Fons van de Vijver

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Alphonsius Josephus Rachel (“Fons”) van de Vijver was a world-renowned Dutch psychologist. His work is so profound and impactful that it is difficult to characterize. Probably his most brilliant contributions are in the field of cross-cultural psychology, but naming him a cross-cultural psychologist would do an injustice for his many contributions to research methodology, international testing and other domains where he has been active in.

It was with great sadness that we received on June 1st the news of his sudden and untimely death, at the age of only 66 years. Although retired from Tilburg to Maidenwell (Brisbane, Australia), Fons was still extremely active in conducting research, publishing, giving lectures and workshop, participating in conferences and advising students and colleagues. His death has been received with a heavy heart by all those who knew him.

Fons was born on October 4, 1952 in Koewacht (The Netherlands) and died on June 1, 2019 in Maidenwell, Queensland, Australia, at the age of 66. Fons had studied psychology at Tilburg University in the Netherlands, where he also earned his PhD, and where he stayed as a faculty member for all his career. Fons has held a Professorship in cross-cultural psychology at Tilburg University, the Netherlands as well as a number of other formal collaborations with institutions of higher education: extraordinary Professorships at in South Africa (The North-West University) and in Australia (the University of Queensland), and a senior researcher



fellowship in Russia (the Higher School of Economics in Moscow).

Fons is likely the most frequently cited cross-cultural psychologist in the world. He authored or co-authored a significant number of peer-reviewed publications (over 400!) and many of them are highly influential. His probably greatest contribution was in the domain of cross-cultural comparisons, specifically bias and equivalence. He covered however a large number of other topics, both in methodology, testing and assessment, multiculturalism, response sets, emic vs. etic approaches, acculturation, migration, translations and adaptations, large-scale testing and others.

Fons was a member of a large number of professional organizations, among others the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP), the International Test Commission (ITC), the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), the European Association of Psychological Assessment (EAPA), the International Academy for Intercultural Research (IAIR). He has held leadership positions in many of these and other organizations and has been honored with fellowships and awards for both his intellectual and scientific accomplishments and for his service for these communities. He has served in editorial roles in over a dozen peer-reviewed journals, most prominently for the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Among others, Fons has received the American Psychological Association's Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology (for his contributions to international cooperation and to the advancement of knowledge of psychology), the Fellows Award of the International Test Commission, and the Fellows Award of the International

Association of Applied Psychology (for contributions to applied psychology).

Fons van de Vijver was a committed scientist with great integrity, an excellent scholar and a giant in his field. But more than anything, Fons was a kind, warm, open-hearted person, who had the power to inspire and enthuse, both by speaking to large audiences and in informal and personal one-to-one discussions.

Fons was a friend of Romania: he has visited our country three times, being invited as Keynote speaker in various conferences. He has been the Guest Editor of one issue of this very journal (Issue 2/2017). He enjoyed Romania, and especially loved the old Saxon cities in Transylvania – Sibiu and Brasov more than any others.

Our heartfelt sympathies go to Fons' family, to his friends and colleagues. To paraphrase a good colleague and his words about Fons, I will also say that many of you believe that we will miss his contributions tremendously, but those who had the privilege to know him personally will miss his friendship more. May he rest in peace.