

Trouw (Dutch Christian daily), January 20, 2014—

Kuyper Attracted Globally; Unpopular Locally¹

“Abraham Kuyper attracts many South Koreans: Theological University restricts the number of Asian post-graduates.” (Selective passages).

The Theological University of Apeldoorn, The Netherlands, has placed a restriction on the number of post-graduate students from South Korea., according to Herman Selderhuis, professor of Church History and Church Order at the University. Their number of Korean post-graduate students, both at masters and doctoral level, has doubled over the last decade. “They are too many,” says Selderhuis.

Two other theological institutions, the Free Reformed University of Amsterdam and the Theological University at Kampen have also benefited from a high number of Korean students.

This stream of Korean theologians is due to the popularity of Dutch Calvinism in Korea. Dutch Calvinist leaders such as Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are regarded unremittingly relevant. “I uphold Kuyper as my theological role model,” says Haemoo Yoo, professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Cheonan.

In Korea, a doctorate from the Free University of Amsterdam, the university founded by Kuyper, has high prestige.

--Editor, Religion & Philosophy

“The Village of Beesd is not impressed with Kuyper: The Reformed preacher in this congregation became the pioneer of the new Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) tradition.” (Selective passages)

The Pieter Church in Beesd was totally filled this past Saturday morning. People from far and near came to this monumental Protestant church to remember Abraham Kuyper, the architect of the *Gereformeerde* tradition. They came to listen to ex-Premier Peter Balkenende and two other contemporary prominent leaders in the Kuyperian tradition. In 1863, Kuyper was called to serve the Reformed state church in the village.

The speakers emphasized Kuyper’s accomplishments. However, few Beesden residents attended the occasion. Kuyper gained enormous influence in The

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Netherlands, but his pastorate in Beesd ended in 1867 with a lasting upheaval. Kuyper moved to Amsterdam.

Almost nowhere did Kuyperian Reformed thought gain as little traction as it did in Beesd. In Beesd the people are either Catholic or Reformed (*Hervormd*—the tradition from which Kuyper seceded). Nevertheless, Beesd is sort of a Mecca for the Kuyperian Reformed in The Netherlands. The village played a leading role in the founding history of that tradition. It came to expression in their own Kuyperian Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) denomination, a university (Vrije Universiteit—Free Reformed University), five premiers, a newspaper, a political party and numerous social institutions. The despised preacher of Beesd works himself up to Premier. Balkenende honoured his predecessor with a talk characterized by enthusiasm and praise.

--Eildert Mulder
Editor, Religion & Philosophy, p. 8