
Kuyperania 1890s-1950s: A Survey of English-language Literature on Abraham Kuyper

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Abstract

This survey examines a significant number of articles written in English on the Dutch neo-Calvinist Abraham Kuyper from the 1890s to the 1950s. It provides a broad overview of the scholarly discourse surrounding Kuyper's ideas and influence during the period from 1898 until 1959 with brief biographies of the authors.

Key words:

Abraham Kuyper, B.B. Warfield, Henry Beets, Dirk W. Jellema

Introduction

Abraham Kuyper, born in Maassluis during the nineteenth century and passing away in The Hague in the twentieth century, left an enduring impact and legacy that resonates powerfully into the twenty-first century. In his time, Kuyper (1837-1920) ardently endeavoured to rouse Christians from what he deemed “a pietistic slumber”. Today, his profound insights and writings continue to illuminate the richness of God’s good creation, guiding many to embrace the fullness and implications of this divine gift. His intellectual contributions serve as a potent antidote, dispelling the dualistic daydream that has ensnared countless minds over the years, and inspiring a contemporary understanding that transcends the limitations of outdated perspectives.

Some argue that “the real Kuyper century” was the twenty-first century.¹ However, as the publications discussed below show Kuyper was a person of influence in the nineteenth and early twentieth century as well.

The articles and book reviews from 1898 to 1959 address several key themes and critiques related to Kuyper’s work. These include publications that touch upon Kuyper’s significance as a theologian-statesman, his multifaceted roles in various spheres of life, and some minor critiques related to the content of his work. Overall, the reception of Kuyper is positive and laudatory.

The reception of Kuyper’s work evolved over time, with his ideas and influence being subject to various interpretations and critiques. Some of the major developments in the scholarly discourse surrounding his ideas and influence are as follows:

1. *Early reception*: In the late nineteenth century, Kuyper’s work was received with enthusiasm by many in the Dutch Reformed tradition, who saw in his ideas a way to revitalise their faith and engage with contemporary challenges. However, there were also some critiques of his epistemology and the content of his work.
2. *International recognition*: In the early twentieth century, Kuyper’s work gained international recognition, with translations of his works appearing in English and other languages. This led to a wider dissemination of his ideas and influence, as well as increased scrutiny and critique.
3. *Impact on social and political thought*: Kuyper’s engagement with social and political issues, particularly his emphasis on the sovereignty of God in all spheres of life, had a significant impact on social and political thought. His ideas on common grace and the role of the state in society influenced the development of Christian democracy and social conservatism.
4. *Continued relevance*: Despite some critiques of his work, Kuyper’s ideas continued to be relevant and influential in the early-20th century. His emphasis on the Calvinistic worldview and life, as well as his engagement with social and political issues, resonated with many Christians seeking to apply their faith to contemporary challenges. Overall, the scholarly discourse surrounding Kuyper’s ideas and influence evolved over time, with his work being subject to both praise and critique. However, his ideas continued to be relevant and influential, particularly in the areas of social and political thought, and his legacy as a theologian-statesman remains significant to this day.

1 John Vriend (1925-2002) cited on Jan Boer’s Social Theology site: <https://www.socialtheology.com/kuyperiana.htm#others>

Many articles express admiration for the diverse roles Kuyper played in his lifetime, including theologian, statesman, journalist, author, church reformer, university founder, preacher, leader, organiser, and traveller. They included recognition of his impact on theology, politics, and education.

Kuyper's engagement with themes such as social problems, private property, state intervention, ownership of land, and social legislation are mentioned. There is also an exploration of Kuyper's views on the class struggle and the relevance of his work to contemporary social challenges. These themes and critiques reflect the diverse and multifaceted nature of Kuyper's work, encompassing theological, ethical, social, and political dimensions, and the ongoing relevance of his ideas in various spheres of life. While some authors delve into Kuyper's political principles and activities, others concentrate on his theological significance and doctrinal contributions. This results in varying emphases on Kuyper's work and its implications.

These similarities and differences highlight the diverse perspectives on Kuyper's legacy and contributions, illustrating the multidimensional nature of his impact on theology, politics, and society.

Several articles, particularly those by Beets, express concerns about translating and publishing Kuyper's works in English. There is scepticism about the reception of Kuyper's writings among American readers, citing challenges in style, uniqueness, and potential lack of interest. Some, including Beets' review of a biography, acknowledge Kuyper's faults and inconsistencies. This suggests a nuanced view of Kuyper, recognising both his positive contributions and areas where he might have been lacking. One review even expresses surprise at the continued relevance and vitality of Calvinism, particularly noting that Kuyperian Calvinism is still alive.

It is significant that all articles about Kuyper in English up to 1930 were published in North America. The first piece written on him in English outside of North America was by a German, Wilhelm Kolfhaus (1870-1954), in a then Scottish journal, *The Evangelical Quarterly*. Although an anonymous review of Kuyper's *Work of the Holy Spirit* did appear in *The Expository Times* in 1912.

Initially, it was B.B. Warfield (1899; 1900) who championed Kuyper. Henry Beets assumed this role in the 1920s (1902; 1904; 1920a, b, c; 1921a, b, c, d, 1925) and then by Dirk Jellema in the 1950s (1950a, b., 1957, 1958). In the early 1980s Jellema went on to edit the short-lived *Kuyper Newsletter*.

1890s

de Savornin Lohman, Witsius H. 1898. Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 9(36).

Witius Henry de Savornin Lohman (1864-1932) was a Dutch jurist and became president of the supreme council of the Netherlands in 1914. His father was Alexander, a co-worker with Kuyper. This article published just after Kuyper had delivered his Stone lectures was translated for inclusion in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* from a Dutch booklet edited by Dr E.D. Pijzel. B.B. Warfield (1899) describes this as “a rather superficial and not very correct sketch of [Kuyper’s] life” (p. xiii).

Vanden Berge, Ebenezer 1898. Dr. A. Kuyper. *Banner of Truth* 33 (October): 60.



Ebenezer Vanden Berge (1855-1939) was ordained in the Christian Reformed Church. He obtained a diploma from Calvin Theological Seminary in 1888. He served churches in:

Summer St., Passaic, NJ, 1888-91; First, Orange City, IA, 1891-93; South Olive, MI, 1893-96; Englewood, NJ, 1896-99; West Sayville, NY, 1899-1903; Dispatch, KS, 1903-04; Rotterdam KS, 1904-05; Firth, NE, 1905-07; Second, Pella, IA, 1908-11; RCA: Galesburg, IA and Killduff, IA, 1911-15; Muscatine, IA, 1915-17; UPCNA: Muscatine, IA, 1924-39

Earl Kennedy, in his *A tale of two churches* describes him thus:

Vanden Berge grew up in Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan. His father was an elder in the First Reformed Church of Holland, under the ministries of Van Raalte and his successor Roelof Pieters. Vanden Berge went to Hope College, worked for five years as a public school teacher, graduated from both the United Presbyterian Seminary in Xenia, Ohio, and from the CRC theological school in Grand Rapids, and took a Christian Reformed congregation in Passaic, New Jersey from 1888 to 1891. Soon after coming to Orange City, he married a non-Dutch New Jersey Presbyterian woman. Although she could not understand Dutch, she attended her husband’s church regularly, but since she had difficulty in adjusting to Orange City, the newlyweds left for other fields (was Steffens’ English-speaking wife a factor in his departure from Orange City?). Vanden Berge was totally bilingual and, after leaving Sioux County, served a half dozen

Christian Reformed congregations in both the Midwest and the East. He left the CRC in 1911, transferring to the RCA, where he had two successive ministries to dying congregations in eastern Iowa; retiring in 1917. He vanished from the roll of the Classis of Pella in 1924.

In this piece he signs it off E.V.D.H. He welcomes the arrival of Kuyper to the USA, describes the purpose of his visit, and remarks “May the visit of this eminent theologian —statesman prove a blessing to the cause of the Master on American shores.”

Warfield, Benjamin B. 1899. Introductory note. In: A. Kuyper *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology, Its Principles*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

B.B. Warfield (1851-1921), professor at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1877, introduces Kuyper to an American audience. Warfield was instrumental in getting Kuyper invited to give the Stone Lectures at Princeton and there was a demand for his other works. Hence this translation by Revd J. Hendrik De Vries (1859-1939) of Kuyper’s *Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid*. Warfield describes Kuyper as “probably to-day the most considerable figure in both political and ecclesiastical Holland” (p. xii)

Hulst, John B. 1899. Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *Banner of Truth* 34 (December):86-87.

This was originally a paper for Henry Beets’ class on Calvinism. *John B. Hulst (1868-1948)* begins by citing Frans Netscher, editor of the *Hollandsche Revue* description of Kuyper as “A liberator of the faith and a persecutor; a clergyman and a polemicist; a minister of the Gospel and a champion in politics; a teacher of toleration and a hot debater; the school with the Bible and the hand with the sword.”

Hulst goes on:

In the church he is a theologian, in Parliament he is a statesman, in press-circles he is a journalist, in society he is a citizen, in his family he is a father and husband, and *all over* he is a *Calvinist*. On the title page of his *Calvinism* we find honorary titles adorning his name, such as Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Laws and Member of Parliament.

1890s reviews

Minton, Henry Collin 1899. Review of Kuyper's Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology. *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 10:677-685



Revd Henry Collin Minton (1855-1924) was, at the time of writing this review, chairman of Systematic Theology in the San Francisco Seminary. He opens his review by stating that this English translation is only a “torso of the original work” and that “we are quite ready to believe it when we are told that the original is the *magnus opus* of its illustrious author”. He fears that the title is misleading – it is not a lexicon of theology. Minton thinks that the “most important discussion in

the book, is that of the *Principium Theologia*”. By which he means “the self-revelation of God to the sinner”. A few times Minton expresses dissatisfaction with Kuyper's epistemology but doesn't spell out why.

1900s

Warfield, Benjamin B. 1900. Introductory note. In: Kuyper, A. *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. Funk and Wagnalls, xxvxxxix-xxxv

B.B. Warfield observes that he no longer has to introduce “Dr. Kuyper to the American religious public” (p. xxv). He then notes several of Kuyper's works that have appeared in English. He describes the book as a “very valuable gift” (p. xxvi) and “Dr. Kuyper's book comes to us not as something of a novelty, but as a specially finely conceived and executed presentation of a topic on which we are all thinking” (p. xxiv).

Beets, Henry 1902. Dr. Abraham Kuyper; his life and principles [Parts 1-3]. *Banner of Truth* 36 (May):170-174; (June): 186-188; (July):10-13.



Henry Beets (1869-1947) was born in Koedyk, Noord Holland, Netherlands and immigrated to America in 1886. He graduated in 1895 from Calvin College and was subsequently ordained as a minister in the Christian Reformed Church.

In 1911, he received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Muskingum College (now Muskingum University) in New Concord, Ohio.

Beets served as the minister of the Christian Reformed Church in Sioux Center, Iowa (1895-

1899); LaGrave Avenue Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan (1899-1915); and a congregation in Burton Heights, Michigan (1915-1920). In 1920, he became secretary and director of missions for the Christian Reformed Church (1920-1939). He also took on the responsibilities of editing the weekly publication, *the Banner*, and *De Heidenwereld*, a monthly missionary publication. He was the editor of *The Banner* from 1903 to 1928. He also wrote a foreword to the 1931 edition of Kuyper's Stone Lectures. Bratt (1984:47) describes him as "positive Calvinist", i.e. an optimistic "supra" neo-Calvinist.

He retired in 1939 and died 29 October 1947.

These three articles were originally read at the Grand Rapids Ministerial Conference on 7 April 1902. In the first article he describes the life of Kuyper. The second and third examines "His Principles". In these articles he proceeds to summarise Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism*, which had been delivered only a few years before.

Beets, Henry 1904. Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *Banner of Truth* 39:65-68.

Beets opens this article with: "Before beginning our articles on Calvinistic principles we trust we render a service to many of our readers by placing before them the picture and brief biography of the man who, more than any one else, has been instrumental in their development and spread. That man is Dr. Abraham Kuyper Sr." He then outlines in brief the biography of Kuyper.

Beets, Henry 1907. Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *The Banner* 42 (October):520-521.

This piece was written to celebrate Kuyper's 70th birthday. It is again a "sketch of his life".

1900s Reviews

Darling, Timothy G. 1901. Review of *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 12:499-506.

Revd Timothy Darling was Professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology, Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, New York. He starts by seemingly lamenting the length of the book, though he states, "there is little in this large volume which is not the outcome of Scripture teaching, little that it would be a loss to eliminate". Several times he compares the work with that of Owen. Owen, he thinks, is more theological and that Kuyper's method is "less formal and less exegetical". He suggests that "Throughout the book there is a fine vein of devoutness. It is a book for edification in the enlightening of the mind and the warming of the heart and in the incitement of

the mind and the warming of the heart, and in the incitement to holy activities under the influence and blessing of the Holy Spirit.”

Unknown 1912. Review of *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. *Expository Times* 12(11):512-513.

The review begins by expressing surprise that Calvinism is alive and well: “So that if Kuyper-Calvinism is not dead, as it evidently is not, Calvinism must be very much alive.” The unnamed reviewer expresses surprise at the size and the scope of the book: “The work of the Holy Spirit goes right through revelation, touching every doctrine that touches man, from the Creation to the Final Restitution.”

1920s

Beets, Henry 1920a. Dr. Kuyper’s Biography. *The Banner* 55 (January):53.

This piece mentions the debate in the Netherlands over a biography of Kuyper by Revd W.F.A. Winckel *Leven en Arbeid van Dr. Kuyper*. It then favourably reviews the book. Noting that while Winckel is laudatory, he does not fail to point out some of “his hero’s faults and inconsistencies”.

Beets, Henry 1920b. Editorial: Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *The Banner* 55 (December):730-731.

This editorial marks the death of Kuyper. In doing so Beets, once again, provides a summary of Kuyper’s life.

Beets, Henry 1920c. Editorial: Dr. Kuyper’s Principles. *The Banner* 55 (December):746-748.

In a second editorial on Kuyper’s death Beets looks at and summaries his *Lectures on Calvinism*. Echoing Beets (1902).

Beets, Henry 1921a. The Calvinism of Dr. A. Kuyper. *The Banner* 56 (February):69.

This editorial responds to the suggestion that some view Kuyper’s Calvinism with some “suspicion”. It responds by acknowledging that what Kuyper has done is “instead of a mere reprimostination and slavish imitation of the old Calvinistic models, he has sought a development of the principles of Calvinism to meet the needs of our modern consciousness, together with their application to every department of life”.

The piece is signed “The Presbyterian”.

Beets, Henry 1921b. Editorials: Two Publications of Loving Tribute to Dr. A. Kuyper. *The Banner* 56 (February):100-101.

The two publications in the title are Van Lonkhuyen's (1921) article in *Princeton Theological Review*. It begins with an effusive endorsement of Van Lonkhuyen's article:

The touch of personal acquaintance, warmth of a disciple's love and a well-trained combine in timeliness of the publication to render welcome Van Lonkhuyen's contribution to the "Princeton Review" of January 1921.

It continues with large extracts from the article and suggests:

We are thankful to our esteemed Chicago brother, for this loyal, loving tribute which he, as it were, placed on his great leader's tomb as a wreath of immortelles.

The other publication reviewed is *De Levensavond van Dr. A. Kuyper* by two of Kuyper's daughters, H.S.S. and J.H. Kuyper. Here they write of their father's "sunset" years – from 1917 onwards.

Beets, Henry 1921c. Publishing the Works of A. Kuyper. *The Banner* (March):164-165.

In this editorial Beets draws attention to the plans of Revd I.D. Kruger of the Reformed Church of Bloemfontein to publish some of Kuyper's works. Beets wrote to Kruger expressing some concerns:

But, finally, I fear, when it comes to translating Dr Kuyper's works publishing them, that we look for a sad disappointment. Somehow our American people do not take to reading books like those of Dr. Kuyper. You know his Stone lectures on Calvinism were published in English and the first edition is not yet exhausted. The work on the Holy Spirit, published in 1900, has become a regular drug on the market, although it was gotten out in fine style by a leading publisher. And the part of *his Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology*, in so far as its principles are concerned, also had such a poor sale so that the volume I just named is the only one that has yet appeared. Even the best of our publishers like Charles Scribner and Funk & Wagnalls seemed to be unable to make a success of it. Moreover, it is very hard to translate his works faithfully, and after they are faithfully translated, they seem to be too heavy for the mass of our American religious people. And so do not expect too much in regard to the English translation.

Beets, Henry 1921d. Publishing Dr. Kuyper's Works. *The Banner* (April):229.

Two responses were received, Beets notes, to his letter to Kruger. Mr A.S. De Jong agrees that the Americans don't take to reading books like those of Kuyper's, but he ponders, if there is a way of "educating them up to it". He

wonders if a volume of Kuyper's meditations, might be valuable. The other respondent, Clarence Bouma, who writes:

The task of translating Dr Kuyper's works is a formidable one, much more formidable than to render, say, the works of Dr. Bavinck into English. Doctor Kuyper's style is absolutely unique; it is masterful, and therefore in many parts quite untranslatable. Of course, this would not be an insurmountable obstacle in undertaking the translation, but I do think it makes the task a difficult and often disappointing one.

Tanis, Edward J. 1921. An appreciation of Dr. A. Kuyper. *The Banner* 56 (January):9.



REV. E. J. TANIS, 1943-56

Edward Tanis (1887-1958) was a minister in the CRC, ordained in 1911. His charges included: Kenosha WI, 1911-12; Broadway Av., Grand Rapids, MI, 1912-19; First, Grand Rapids, MI, 1919-27; Leave, 1927-28; Second Englewood, Chicago, IL, 1928-42; Bible faculty at Grand Rapids (MI) Christian High School, 1942; Second, Grand Haven, MI, 1943-56.

James Bratt (1984): 55) also describes Tanis as a positive Calvinist. He was the *Banner's* 'Timely Topics' commentator.

Tanis begins by noting that it is regrettable that many in the CRC are ignorant of Kuyper. He then provides a long quotes from a review of Kuyper's "Nabij God te Zijn" in the *The Presbyterian*, as an example of someone who in American circles who appreciate Kuyper.

Van Lonkhuyzen, Jan 1921. Abraham Kuyper - a modern Calvinist. *The Princeton Theological Review* 19(1):131-147.



Revd Dr Jan Van Lonkhuyzen (1873-1942) was a minister in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) and also served in the CRC in a congregation in Grand Rapids and Chicago. He obtained a doctorate from the Free University (VU) in 1905. He was a friend of Kuyper and had been a missionary pastor to Dutch Reformed immigrants in Argentina.

His charges included: GKN: Wilnis, 1899-02; Aarlanderveen, 1902-08; Missionary, Argentina, 1908; Rijswijk, 1909-11; Zierikzee, 1928-39; CRC: Alpine Ave, Grand Rapids, MI, 1911-18; First, Chicago, IL, 1918-28.

Bratt (1984:47) describes him as an “antithetical Calvinist”. Robert P. Swierenga in *Dutch Chicago* (2002:180) describes him as the “Abraham Kuyper of Chicago”. Van Lonkhuyzen wrote numerous articles for the American magazine *De Wachter* and promoted international co-operation among Calvinists in the United States. He played a role in the Bond van Gereformeerden (Calvinisten) in the Netherlands. This organisation organised the (second) international congress of Calvinists in Amsterdam in 1934.

In this article, Van Lonkhuyzen writes of Kuyper:

Truly, the more I think of him, the more I marvel! Theologian, statesman, orator, university-founder, preacher, journalist, author, church-reformer, leader, organizer, traveller, all this and more, and pre-eminent in every capacity, and above all a humble and devout Christian!

He poses the question: Was Kuyper a follower of Calvin?

Beets (1921b) reviews the article.

No author given 1925. Through modernism to unshakable Christianity. *Sunday School Times*. 67(38) (19 Sept):577-578.

A short introductory piece – ends with a quote from *Handelsblatt*:

The bells are tolling in the Netherlands. They are tolling from the towers of the churches, for the most part little churches where rigid and substantial men go in with rigid faces to listen to rigid teaching and to comfort their souls with psalms. They are the mourning bells rung by Kuyper’s, humble folk because the great Kuyper’s death. They toll in the press of both parties and far over the limits of that land will they toll – that land which is too often small for Kuyper’s great figure. And the bells are ringing long and heavily in the hearts of thousands for whom Dr Abraham Kuyper was more than a statesman, journalist, theologian, professor, author, leader, man. For to these he was a great prophet sent of God who raised them out of the dust, who with God’s help bored into the souls new power from God.

Beets, Henry 1925. Editorial: Dr. A. Kuyper as seen through German and American eyes. *The Banner* 60 (September):612-613.

Beets discusses Dr W. Kolffhaus’ life of Kuyper (the German eyes). Kolffhaus was a pastor in Westphalia. The book’s title in English is *Dr. Kuyper Looked at Through the Eyes of a Sympathetic German Author*. Beets’ analysis is that “here and there [Kolffhaus] describes [Kuyper] and his work too sympathetically. Not all that Kuyper advocated will stand the test of time”.

The American eye is that of “Through modernism to unshakable Christianity” which appeared in *Sunday School Times*. There is a long – three and a half columns of the paper – section from the article.

1930s

Kolfhaus, Wilhelm 1930. The significance of Dr. Abraham Kuyper for Reformed theology. *The Evangelical Quarterly* 2:302-312.

Wilhelm Kolfhaus (1870-1954) (born in Krefeld, Germany) was the author of *Dr. Abraham Kuyper 1837-1920: Ein Lebensbericht*, Elberfeld Buchhandlung des Erziehungs-Vereins, 1924. This piece, the first to be published in a British journal on Kuyper, is split into three parts: I The Word of God, II The sovereignty of God and III the Church of God. Kolfhaus states that he is “not contemplating a description of the whole life and work of Dr Kuyper”, rather it is his purpose “to give here a short summary of his work as a theologian, just throw some light on the significance he has had for his homeland and reformed Theology in general”.

Kuyper had a strong belief in “the absolute authority of His Word”, that is one “significance of Dr. Kuyper for Reformed Theology” writes Kolfhaus. Kuyper’s Calvinism was an “all-embracing system of principles, without exception deduced from the first principle: the sovereignty of God”. Kuyper’s views of the church changed at Beesd. He came long for a “Church unfettered by the state, governed by Christ its king and living according to His Word.” The sovereignty of God is monarchical, but church government is to be democratic. The Covenant was “at the very bottom of his doctrine of the Church”. Kuyper fought for “a free church, not a creation of the secular government,” “a self-supporting Church”.

Sherda, Zacharias J. 1930. Kuyper’s Calvinism. I-III. *The Banner* 65 (February):28; (March):225; (March):249.



Zacharias Sherda (1886-1953) was a CRC minister. He served churches in: Highland IN, 1913-16; Evergreen Park, IL, 1916-30; First, Cutlerville, MI, 1930-53.

“Not dead but dormant” is how Sherda describes Calvinism in North America. He recognises the rise of International Calvinism but laments the difference at Princeton from 1898 to 1930. In 1898 Kuyper delivered his Lectures – but no one seems to read them:

Perhaps someone might say that we should urge our people to read these lectures. Of course, we might do that. The fact, however, is that they do not read them. If the mountain will not come to Mohammed, then Mohammed will have to go to the mountain. If our people do not have the time or the inclination to read what Kuyper has to say about Calvinism, then let us bring Kuyper to them.

To that end Sherida summarises Kuyper's lectures. In doing so he attempts to apply it to contemporary American Christianity. He maintains that: "It is obvious that the Calvinistic conception cannot be held by any person who accepts the doctrine of evolution" (p 225).

He finishes the series with this comment:

If Kuyper's Calvinism is a correct interpretation of a Calvinistic worldview and life. Then I am tempted to say Calvinism as a political and social force has never been known the American continent (p 249).

Hendrik de Vries, John 1931. Biographical note. In: Kuyper, A. *Lectures on Calvinism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, i-vii.

Revd De Vries (1859-1939) translated a number of Kuyper's works into English. He was a pastor at American Presbyterian and Protestant Episcopal churches. This is a short biography of Kuyper adapted from his translation of *To Be Near Unto God*.

Beets, Henry 1932. Introductory chapter: Calvinism's advances and set-backs since the 'Stone Lectures' were published. In: Kuyper, A. *Calvinism*. London: Sovereign Grace Union.

Beets takes a look at the "program [Kuyper] entrusted to us in these days". He attempts to show what has been done during the last three decades, as to the working out of the [Calvinist] program. He takes a survey of the Western world, and the impact and influence Calvinism has had. It is a partly encouraging one.

Berkhof, Louis 1935. Abraham Kuyper on Revelation. *The Calvin Forum* (November):92.

Berkhof reviews Kuyper's commentary on Revelation. He begins by eulogising Kuyper: "The name of Dr. Kuyper is well and favorably known among us. We cherish his memory as that of one of the greatest and most brilliant theologians of the recent past, a many-sided man, professor, statesman, journalist, and author of many books, a veritable genius who proved a master in every field" (92). He is more reserved in his praise for this volume: "While this work is the product of his declining years and in

some respects does not reveal the author at his best, it nevertheless testifies to his great learning, his tremendous grasp of the most difficult problems, and his profound insight into the truth of the inspired Word of God” (92). Berkhof notes that the book marks a change in Kuyper’s interpretation of chapters 4 onwards. Previously Kuyper had seen them as “struggles that repeatedly recurred in the history of the Church; but in the present work he takes the position that they are reserved for the time immediately preceding the *parousia*” (92).

1937 was the centenary of Abraham Kuyper’s birth two journals, *The Banner* and *The Calvin Forum*, had articles celebrating Kuyper.

Kromminga, Diedrich Hinrich 1937. Dr. Abraham Kuyper, Sr. *The Banner* 72:1012-1015.



Kromminga (1879-1947) was a Christian Reformed minister and president of Gundry College, Grundy Center, Iowa. He was the father of John H. Kromminga. He was born in Germany, was ordained in the CRC in 1907 and served: Home missionary in Iowa, 1907-08; at Bunde, MN, 1908-11; Lafayette, IN, 1911-14; Ackley, IA, 1914-16; Faculty, Grundy College, Grundy Center, IA, 1916-22; Peoria, IL, 1922-26; Neland Av., Grand Rapids, MI, 1926-28; Faculty, Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI, 1928-47.

Kromminga begins the set of three articles in this issue of *The Banner* that celebrate the centenary of Kuyper’s birth. Here he provides a brief biography of the man.

Bouma, Clarence 1937. Abraham Kuyper: kingdom warrior and kingdom builder. *The Banner* 72:1013-1014.



Clarence Bouma (1891-1962) ThD, had joined the faculty of Calvin Seminary in 1924 as professor of systematic theology but had in 1926 chosen to assume the newly established chair of ethics and apologetics. He obtained a BD from Princeton Theological Seminary (1918), a ThD from Harvard Divinity School (1921) and studied at the VU University (1923). He was ordained in 1923 and served at Hope Ave, Passaic, NJ (1923-1924) before joining Calvin Theological Seminary. He was

the managing editor of *The Calvin Forum*.²

Bouma remarks, not only of Kuyper's "wide sweep and universal outlook", but also his "uncompromising devotion to the biblical antithesis of the believer and the unbeliever; of truth and falsehood: of the kingdom of God and that of the devil".

Bouma then focuses on Kuyper as a university builder, as a church reformer, and as a statesman. Regarding the former he observes: "Kuyper became a university builder. He became a university builder because he believed in the antithesis and in the universal calling of the Christian" (p 1103).

Volbeda, S. 1937a. Abraham Kuyper as a theologian. *The Banner* 72:1014-1015.



Samuel Volbeda (1881-1953) was born in the Netherlands. He was ordained in the CRC in 1904 after studying at Calvin Theological Seminary. He obtained a ThD from the VU University (1914). He served at Beaverdam, MI, 1904-05; Alpine Ave, Grand Rapids, MI, 1905-11, until joining the faculty at Calvin Theological Seminary (1914-1952) from 1944-1952 he was the president.

The author notes:

The genius of Dr. Kuyper's version of Reformed theology was constructive rather than analytical. Accordingly, his strength lay in dogmatics rather than exegesis. The tone of his theology was absolute, surely it was not relativistic. Nor did he hesitate to be exclusive in his capacity of Reformed theologian. At the same time he abundantly manifested that catholicity of spirit that roots in the fertile soil of a deep love for all who love the Lord Jesus and trust in him for salvation, meanwhile serve him as their king.

Kuiper, Henry J. 1937. "How Abraham Kuyper influenced our churches in America." *The Banner* 72 (November):1060.



Henry J. Kuiper (1885-1962) was born in Grand Rapids and studied at Calvin Theological Seminary (1907). He was ordained in the CRC in 1907 and served: Luctor, KS, 1907-10 and Prairie View, KS, 1909-10; Prospect Park, Holland, MI, 1910-13; Second Englewood, Chicago, IL, 1913-19; Broadway Av., Grand Rapids, MI, 1919-29; Neland Av., Grand Rapids, MI, 1929-44.

² On Bouma see Kenneth Stewart (2023).

He was *The Banner* editor, from 1944 until his retirement in 1956.

This article was originally part of a lecture. He identifies four channels in which the influence of Kuyper has reached the church in North America. These are his writings, the Free University, the Dutch immigrants to North America, and Kuyper's brief visit to the continent. He poses the question as to what can be done to keep the channels open. He reflects on Kuyper's writings:

The second channel, which is still open, is the writings of Doctor Abraham Kuyper. It is alarming thought this channel is only partially open, and it is gradually closing because the knowledge of the Holland language is fast disappearing among our young men, and young women. Is there no way to keep the shut open, to widen and deepen it? Translations can be made of such great works as the "Gemene Gratie" and "Pro Rege". If no publisher will undertake the work because of the financial risk involved, that is, establish a fund for the purpose.

It was several decades before this vision bore fruit.

Tanis, E. J. 1937. The World Today: My acquaintance with Kuyper. *The Banner* 72 (October):966.

Tanis reflects on his first introduction to and the influence on him of the writings of Kuyper.

Tanis, Edward J. 1937. Kuyper's centenary. *The Banner* 72 (December):1134.

Tanis reflects on the impact of Kuyper over the previous century. He summarises H. Colijn's – the then prime minister of the Netherlands – address, "Dr. Kuyper as a National Figure".

Van Til, Cornelius 1937. Reflections on Dr. A Kuyper Sr. *The Banner* 72 (December):1187.



Cornelius Van Til (1895-1976) was born in Grootegast, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was on the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary Philadelphia from 1936 until his retirement in 1976.

Considers Kuyper's significance in light of the centenary of his birth. The article reflects other articles written for this centenary. He notes that Kuyper "stood up for the rights of the layman", his "greatest contribution to the doctrine of Scripture has been that he has shown more fully than anyone how the doctrine about Scripture itself is organically

related to the whole body of Scripture teaching about other matters, “and finally looks at Kuyper as reformer of the church”. He laments that the churches in North America have strayed from these kuyperian principles by “playing with Barthianism”.

Bouma, Clarence 1937. The centenary of Abraham Kuyper’s birth, and honoring the memory of Kuyper. *Calvin Forum* 3:51-52.

Bouma’s editorial is reprinted here in full:

OCTOBER 29, 1837, is the birth date of that greatest and most versatile of all modern Calvinists, Abraham Kuyper. There is a peculiar propriety in our devoting this and some of the succeeding issues of *THE CALVIN FORUM* at least in part to the memory of this Christian statesman and Calvinistic theologian. Every living group that believes in Calvinism, not merely as a theological system but as an all-inclusive world and life view with definite implications and applications in the realm of education and scholarship, statecraft and politics, business and industry, looks to Abraham Kuyper as the embodiment of great whole-souled and God-consecrated leadership. He was a giant. His versatility was phenomenal. He was a stylist and journalist of the highest order. He was a church reformer of massive proportions. He was a preacher and public speaker of unexcelled power. He was a theologian and scholar worthy to be mentioned in one breath with St. Augustine and John Calvin. He was a leader of men and an organizer of inexhaustible resourcefulness and indomitable perseverance. He was a statesman of greater stature than any of his Dutch contemporaries. He started a weekly and a daily and edited both for decades. He founded a university, the only consistently Calvinistic university in the world. He served as prime minister and as a member of both houses of the Dutch parliament. He virtually created the Anti-revolutionary party and remained its inspiring head until his cloak fell upon his spiritual son, Hendrikus Colijn, the present premier of Holland, known for his statesmanship throughout Europe. He edited Latin theological treatises of the old Reformed writers; he wrote massive works in the fields of Dogmatics, Apologetics, and Ethics; and he wrought the most tender, the most touching, the most brilliant Scripture meditations that have ever flowed from any pen. None of these superlatives are inspired by excessive admiration: they are statements of sober fact.

As we pause to honor his memory on the centenary of his birth this month, there is neither need nor room for laudation. Laudation of such a man would be cheapening the occasion. We enumerate his achievements and wonderful endowments only to remind ourselves what this great-souled master did not for himself but for *his* Master, whose he was and whom he ‘Served. For that is the challenging thing about this giant among men: he lived passionately with all the energy that was in him for his Lord and King. It was all *Pro Rege*, as the title of one of his three-volume works has it. He moved in realm after realm as a master – only to dedicate all of them to *his* Master, the Christ. He was a one-holy-passion Christian *par excellence!* Averse to all narrowness on

the one hand, having an outlook that tolerated no exclusion of any sphere of human endeavor from the range of his interest, he was on the other a fearless proponent of the absolute antithesis between the people of God and those of the world. One does not know which to appreciate most in the man: his masterful exposition and application of the doctrine of common grace, or his consummate reaffirmation, in religious thought as well as in ethical practice, of the absolute antithesis between those who serve God and those who are of the world. Precisely in this twofold emphasis, both in theology and in the practical Christian life of the people whose lives he touched and molded, must be seen the greatness and the lasting significance of this man of God for the coming generations.

Berkhof, Louis 1937. Dr. Kuyper and the revival of Calvinistic doctrine. *Calvin Forum* 3(5) (December):104-106.



Louis Berkhof (1873-1957) was born in the Netherlands. He studied at Calvin Theological Seminary and obtained a BD from Princeton Theological Seminary (1904). He was ordained in the CRC in 1900 and served at Allendale MI (1900-1902) and Oakdale Park, Grand rapids (1904-1908) before joining the faculty at Calvin Theological Seminary (1906-1944). He is the author of *Systematic Theology* (1939).

This article celebrates the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Kuyper. Berkhof notes that he was thus requested “to write an article on the doctrinal significance of Dr. Kuyper’s work”. The article has several sub-headings: The rise of modernism; Attempts to stem the tide; Kuyper revives Reformed theology; His labors as a dogmatician; Some characteristics.

Berkhof observes that Kuyper saw “doctrinal truth in its relation to the whole of theology. Moreover, he saw it in relation to the broader aspects of Calvinism” (106). Berkhof states that while Kuyper “was highly intellectual, he was averse to dry intellectualism ... It was his ambition to present the truth as a vibrant force in life” (106).

Noteboom, J. W. 1937. Kuyper’s significance for Christian politics. *Calvin Forum* 3(4) (November):88-90.

J. W. Noteboom, was the Director and general Secretary of the Kuyper Institute, The Hague. This essay is one of several in the *Calvin Forum* that commemorated the centenary of Kuyper’s birth (the others were by Berkhof, Volbeda, Vogel and Tanis). In this article, Noteboom examines Kuyper political contributions. It has the following subheadings: Founder of

Calvinistic politics; Kuyper's background and arena; his political principles; Divine authority in action; champion of liberty; *Soli Deo Gloria*.

He remarks that Kuyper was a champion of both authority and liberty, "and each of these as demanded by the principles of Holy Scripture and by divine providence ..." (89).

Tanis, Edward J. 1937. Abraham Kuyper, Christian Statesman. *Calvin Forum* 3(3) (October):53-56.

This is another essay in the *Calvin Forum* that commemorated the centenary of Kuyper's birth (the others were by Berkhof, Noteboom, Vogel and Volbeda). Tanis, at the time of writing this piece was a minister at Second Englewood Christian Reformed Church in Chicago. Tanis is in no doubt about the abilities of Kuyper: "he was a marvelously well-balanced genius" (53).

The article has the following subheadings: Calvinism – Philosophy of life; Kuyper, the journalist; Political achievements; The statesman in action; Kuyper and industrial legislation; Kuyper and Colijn.

Volbeda, Samuel 1937b. Dr. Abraham Kuyper as a churchman. *Calvin Forum* 3(4) (November):85-88.

This essay is one of several in the *Calvin Forum* that commemorated the centenary of Kuyper's birth (the others were Berkhof, Tanis, Noteboom and Vogel).

The subheadings for this article comprise: Kuyper's ecclesiastical sense; Calvin and Kuyper; Sore need of church reform; an imposing task; His writing on Church reform; His reformatory labors; Leader in church union.

Dr. Abraham Kuyper, 1837-1920, was a churchman from principle. He believed that the institutional church was God's creation; that it was the House of God and the pillar and ground of the truth; that it was a mighty power for good in the past and that it could serve in that capacity in a still larger measure in time to come. Accordingly, he identified himself with the church in a deeper sense than merely sustaining relation of membership and exercising office in it; he invested in it all the rich and varied talents which God had put in his trust; he earnestly and faithfully sought to promote its welfare and usefulness, even to the extent of undertaking, along with others, its reformation, when he discovered that the blight of deformation had settled upon it; and he bequeathed to it at his death in 1920 a shining example of ecclesiastical devotion, diligence and loyalty, as well as a vast fund of theological and devotional literature.

In the article Volbeda examines Kuyper's ecclesiastical mindedness, his interest in canonical matters and his reforming labours.

Vogel, Leroy 1937. The political party of Abraham Kuyper. *Calvin Forum* 3(3) (October):58-60.

This essay is another one in *The Calvin Forum* that commemorated the centenary of Kuyper's birth (the others were Berkhof, Tanis, Noteboom and Volbeda).

At the time of this article Vogel was a German Exchange student of Princeton Seminary at Heidelberg University.

The article comprises the following subheads: Beginnings; Laying foundations; Political success; A new coalition; Catholic co-operation; The party since Kuyper.

Kromminga, D.H. 1938. A doctor's thesis on Kuyper. *Calvin Forum* 3(6) (January):142.

Kromminga (1879-1947) reviews Leroy Vogel's thesis "Die Politischen Ideen Abraham Kuypers und seine entwicklung als statesman". Vogel, according to Kromminga "discovers with Kuyper on the basis of his Calvinism three main political ideas, viz., the fundamental principle of the family as the unit of the social structure, the antithetical principle of the spirit of the French Revolution, and the elucidatory principle of History" (142).

Kromminga concludes:

I am in full accord with Dr. Vogel's explanation of Kuyper's effectiveness in the political sphere. Into it as a most fundamental factor enters Kuyper's Calvinism. Calvinism is a faith that leads to a philosophy, a duty, and a calling. It presents a world-view drawn from the Word of God. Kuyper's devotion and many-sided genius was aided by the presence of a sound Calvinistic core in the Dutch nation. Thus, of all the Christian political reactions to the spirit of apostacy and subversion, his alone proved to be permanently effective and successful.

Vanden Berg, Frank 1937. Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *Young Calvinist* 18 (November):3-5.

(Not Seen)

Kuyper, L. J. 1939. The Doctrine of Sin in the Old Testament with Special Consideration Given to the Position of Reformed Theologians in the Netherlands viz. A. Kuyper, H. Bavinck, G. Ch. Aalders. *ThD Thesis*. New York: Union Theological Seminary (194 pages).



This is a Union Theological ThD thesis by Lester Jacob Kuyper (1904-1986) (no relation to Abraham). He taught for over thirty years at Western Theological Seminary (1939-1974).

(Not Seen)

1930s reviews

Feinberg, Charles L. 1936. Review of Kuyper's *Women of the Old Testament*. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 93 (372) (October):495.

The review in full:

Women of the Old Testament. By Abraham Kuyper, LL.D., D.D. Translated by Henry Zylstra. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. 1936. 148 pp. \$1 in cloth, 65¢ in paper.

This volume contains fifty character sketches of women of the Old Testament. Each sketch is preceded by a Scripture passage and is followed by suggested questions for study and discussion. The book has not suffered from translation from the Dutch. Throughout the work Dr. Kuyper has shown both a clear insight into Scripture truth, as well as a sympathetic and discerning appreciation of different types of human nature. The book is well adapted for study in women's groups of all kinds, but is equally valuable as a rich store for preaching material.

E. F. Harrison. 1936. Review of Kuyper's *Revelation of St John*. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April):238-240.

The review in full:

A word of thanks is due to Dr. John Hendrick De Vries, who has translated this work from the Dutch. Making available to English readers the writings of the distinguished theologian of the Netherlands is a worthy life ministry in itself.

Readers of other works by the same author will be prepared for the satisfying way in which Dr. Kuyper treats the Word. He is at once reverent and scrutinizing. There is no arbitrary handling of the text such as mars the liberal works on the Apocalypse. One meets here a fine discrimination reared upon a broad basis of historical and doctrinal understanding. One can commend this book heartily, despite extensive disagreement with the author's viewpoint at certain places, simply because the book has decided intrinsic worth.

As to method, the author describes his own work as "a comprehensive study of the Consummation" rather than an exegetical analysis. True to this purpose, we find a broad treatment of the ruling ideas and movements of the Apocalypse.

This type of treatment is perhaps more demanding than a detailed exegesis, as it calls for balance and perspective all along the line. Unfortunately, it also offers an easy way of escape from dealing with individual sections of the book. We have no intention of accusing Dr. Kuyper of deliberate avoidance of uncongenial matter, but one is rather disappointed to find no survey of chapters 12 and 13, which are generally regarded as crucial divisions of the book.

Dr. Kuyper separates himself uncompromisingly from the historical school of interpretation. His position is that the main portion of the Apocalypse is a description of what will transpire in the end time, when "normal" history will be superseded. As to the chapters which contain the messages to the seven churches, the following quotation will show the viewpoint. "These seven churches present the main types which would show themselves in the church of Christ in every age, in all lands and among all nations."

Hence even the introductory matter has pertinency for all the ages down to the end.

There is an extensive discussion of the millennial question. With due modesty, Dr. Kuyper begins by saying that it is doubtful that the proper explanation of the first ten verses of chapter 20 has been found. He finds difficulty in taking the figure 1000 at its face value, because to him it is unthinkable that such a long period should be interposed so as to delay the judgment that the coming of the Lord in chapter 19 seems to promise as imminent. But when Dr. Kuyper states that Christ comes here for the last judgment, we must disagree. He comes for judgment, true, and that will be executed prior to the millennium, but it is the judgment described in Matt 25:31 and following. These nations are the very ones upon whom the seals, trumpets and vials have been visited, hence there is no lame frustration of judgment such as Dr. Kuyper pictures.

The author finds another obstacle in the way of accepting this long period in the prophetic scheme. He cannot account for it, because at the end of it, "literally nothing would have happened and nothing would have been accomplished to justify this uncommonly long delay". In our judgment, the writer holds the key in his hand for a moment, only to let it slip through his fingers. When he says, "This binding of Satan was no experiment to see how life on earth would go on in case the satanic influence were temporarily suspended" he is rejecting a proposition which deserves serious consideration. May we not say that in the millennium one great end will be achieved, namely that even under the most ideal conditions, with Satan bound, and with Christ actually present, the unregenerated heart of man will so clearly testify to its own wickedness by following Satan once more after this long probation, that God's final retribution against the ungodly will fall with all the greater justice. Man's final testing will find him wanting.

One is gratified to discover the author's position concerning the mode of life to be enjoyed by God's children in the perfected state. Chapter XLI on "The Renewal

of Heaven and Earth" is a marvellous bit of writing. The old spiritualizing method is tried and found wanting. It is clearly perceived that Scripture statements present this life as externally observable, to use Dr. Kuyper's phrase. Based on the original creation, the new creation, no matter how far it may transcend the first, cannot violate its objectivity. The analogy of Christ becoming flesh and never retracting that incarnation constitutes proof of the correctness of this position.

E. F. Harrison

1940s

Vanden Berg, Frank 1940. The seven cities of Dr. Kuyper. *Christian Home and School* 19 (November):9-10.

(Not Seen)

Van Til, Cornelius 1941. Common grace. In Edward Heerema (Ed.) *Proceedings of the Calvinistic Philosophy Club*, edited by Edward Heerema.

This is the original version of the booklet *Common Grace* (1945) and *Common Grace and the Gospel* (1947).

1. The Christian Philosophy of History
2. Abraham Kuyper's Doctrine of Common Grace
 - a. Relation of Common and Special Grace
 - b. Relation of Common Grace to Providence
3. The Debate about Common Grace
 - a. Criticism of Kuyper [Danhof, Hoeksema]
 - b. Positive Construction of General Principles
 - c. The Controversy in its First Stage [Kalamazoo]
 - d. The Controversy in its Second Stage [Schilder]
4. Suggestions for Further Discussion
 - a. The Danger of Abstract Thinking
 - b. The Positive Line of Concrete Thinking

These were also condensed and published in three parts in *Westminster Theological Journal*.

1945 Part I 8(1):39-60.

1946 Part II 8(2):166-200

1946 Part III 9(1):47-84.

Van Til, Cornelius 1947. Abraham Kuyper's doctrine of common grace. *Common Grace and the Gospel*. Nutley: Presbyterian and Reformed.

These three chapters were originally articles in *WTJ* (1945-1946) and published in this book form.

The three chapters in this booklet are:

1. The Christian Philosophy of history
2. Abraham Kuyper's doctrine of common grace
3. Common grace in debate

It was republished in 1954 in paperback. It was subsequently published with several other chapters in a fuller book *Common Grace and the Gospel* Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972. These chapters formed Part 1 of the 1974 book.

Van Til's concern for common grace stems from its significance for apologetics.

In these articles van Til starts by looking at a Christian view of history. To do this he starts by exposing the myth of brute facts. He divides Christians into three camps: Reformed, Arminian and Catholic. Only a Reformed Christian is concerned with common grace, he maintains, and it is only Reformed Christians that expect to find "a consistently Christian philosophy of history". He then makes distinction between analogical and concrete thinking and discusses the notion of limiting concept.

He then looks at Kuyper's common grace. He detects a growth in Kuyper's views from a negative one to include a more positive role for common grace: the restraint of sin and to provide for development. This chapter is primarily descriptive. He defines Kuyper's view of common grace as: "... primarily a restraining power of God, working as an instrument, by which the original creation powers of the universe are given an opportunity for a certain development of the glory of God".

In chapter 3 he looks at the debate over common grace noting a range of views from V. Hepp (support for Kuyper) to Herman Hoeksema and Henry Danhof (who deny that common grace exists). For Hoeksema and Danhof it seems that common grace denies the doctrine of total depravity. He then looks at more detail at the views of K. Schilder who seeks to reconstruct common grace. Schilder denied that common grace offers a "neutral field of operation between Christians and non-Christians".

Van Til then criticises Kuyper's views. He draws on C. Veenhof's analysis [*In Kuyper's Lijn* (1939)]. He sees:

- a vagueness inherent in Kuyper's treatment of common grace
- the danger of abstract thinking in Kuyper (as in Hepp and Bavinck)
- platonic elements in Kuyper's position
- a weakness in his epistemology. Kuyper doesn't start "unequivocally from the presupposition of the ontological Trinity"
- evidence that there is "a lack of clarity in Kuyper's thought as to the distinction between Christian and non-Christian notion of limiting thought"

Van der Kroef, Justus M. 1948. Abraham Kuyper and the rise of neo-Calvinism in the Netherlands. *Church History* 17(4):316-334.

This piece by Van der Kroef provides a useful brief biography of Kuyper. He sees as his greatest achievement "the foundation of a system of religious dogma upon which he erected a political and social philosophy". Van der Kroef also contends that *De Gemeene Gratie* (Common Grace) was Kuyper's most significant work. He stresses the continuity of Kuyper's work from Calvin.

1940s Reviews

Van Til, Cornelius 1948. Review of *De Theologische Cultuurbeschouwing van Abraham Kuyper*, by S. J. Ridderbos and Algemeene Genade en Antithese by I. A. Diepenhorst. In: *Westminster Theological Journal* 11(1) (Nov):97-101.

Van Til reviews two books on that "deal with the Christian philosophy of culture as this has found expression in recent Reformed theology, and particularly in the works of Abraham Kuyper".

On Ridderbos he remarks that he "has done a fine service in bringing together the materials that bear on Kuyper's conception of human culture. ... Ridderbos, however, is inclined to leave Kuyper's structure intact. He likes the old mansion pretty much as it is. We are inclined to think that in this he is too optimistic. We do not agree with [Herman] Hoeksema in thinking that Kuyper's mansion needs to be destroyed. But we do think that it needs a new roof." On Diepenhorst Van Til thinks that he "does take notice of Hoeksema's criticism of Kuyper. He also concedes, implicitly if not always explicitly, that Kuyper's views on common grace need considerable modification".

Danhof, R.J. 1948. A theological orientation of culture: Review of *De Theologische Cultuurbeschouwing van Abraham Kuyper*, by Dr. S. J. Ridderbos. *Calvin Forum* (November) 76-

Danhof notes the "illustrious family" from which S.J. Ridderbos (b. 1914) comes: he is the son of John (of Kampen Theological seminary) and brother

to H.N. (the successor to S. Greydanus) and to N.H. (a pastor at Amersfoort). They all obtained their degrees from the Free University in Amsterdam. In this thesis S.J. provides “a study of Kuyper’s presentation of a Christian philosophy of history, of which the doctrine of common grace is an integral part. Ridderbos seeks to critically analyze the solution of the problem of Christian culture as submitted in various writings of Dr. A. Kuyper” (77).

According to Danhof:

Ridderbos does not deny the necessity of reconstruction of Kuyper’s views of culture, but he cannot approve of the work of reconstruction offered by critics of the present day. Ridderbos seeks reconstruction rather by addition than subtraction. He desires to remove the inconsistencies evident in the work of Kuyper especially on the problem of the kingship of Christ in regard to the doctrine of common grace, and also in the light of Romans 1:20b desires an expansion of the views of Kuyper. Ridderbos desires to continue to move in the line of approach adopted by Kuyper in the construction of a theological view of culture (78).

He notes that Riddebos is unaware of Van Til’s attempts to modify Kuyper’s common grace and suggests that an analysis and evaluation of Van Til should be included in an updated version of this book.

1950s

Jellema, Dirk W. 1950a. Abraham Kuyper: forgotten radical? *Calvin Forum* 15(5) (April):211.



Dirk Jellema (1924-1982) wrote this as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, Michigan. He obtained his PhD from Wisconsin in 1951. In 1961 he began teaching history at Calvin College. He founded and edited the *Kuyper Newsletter*. Jellema was the son of William Harry Jellema (1893-1982), the founder of the philosophy department at Calvin College, and with Henry Stob, a major influence on Alvin Plantinga.

Here he views Kuyper as a radical because he rejects both liberalism and socialism. Jellema claims that Kuyper was “one of the acutest [critics] both of ‘laissez-faire’ Liberalism and of Marxism Socialism”. Kuyper “had an overwhelming sense of the “social question”, the maldistribution of wealth, the class struggle, rich against poor ...” The root of the class struggle is atomistic individualism. The solution is found in neither Marxism nor Liberalism as both

enthroned the individual. The answer is to be found in “Calvinistic socialism or Calvinistic corporatism”.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1950b. Kuyper and the crisis of the West. *The Banner* 85 (February):156-157.

Jellema reflects on the crisis in the West and draws upon some insights of Kuyper. “The only one thing that can stop the downward drive of the West, says the “Christian Renaissance” today; a return to Christianity. That is Eliot’s idea, and it was Kuyper’s. He sums up Kuyper’s idea: “*the West is dying, and we must act*”.

Kuyper, Catherine M. E. 1950. Abraham Kuyper: his early life and conversion. *Calvin Forum* (1950) 16(4): 64-67. Also, in: *International Reformed Bulletin* 3 (April 1960):19-25.

This has also been republished in Bishop and Kok (2013). Catherine was Kuyper’s daughter. Here she offers an “insiders” biography of Kuyper’s early years. She writes that “he was a particularly looking little chap with an extraordinarily large head”! The result, it seems, of “an unusual supply of gray matter”. She then looks at the three key incidents that shaped his early life: the “miracle” of finding the à Lasco books, his reading of the *Heir of Redclyffe*, and his meeting with one of the Reformed discontents at Beesd, Pietje Baltus.

Van Der Weele, Steve 1950. *Abraham Kuyper on Evolution*. Grand Rapids: Youth and Calvinism Group.

Rullman compiled a bibliography of Kuyper’s works. “This pamphlet consists of a translation from the Dutch of two summaries of Kuyper’s 1899 oration.” There are introductory notes by Steve van der Weele. Reviewed by Boyle (1951).

Van Der Weele was a student at the University of Wisconsin. Van der Kroef wrote of the Youth and Calvinism Group:

Calvinist youth is demanding that its religion be brought to bear upon such a diversity of contemporary problems as the atom bomb, labor disputes, modern parenthood and family life.

Van Heukelom, Raymond R. 1952/53 Abraham Kuyper’s view of the function of the church in the world. *PhD Thesis* Northern Baptist.
(Not Seen)

Rooy, Sidney H. 1956. Kuyper vs. Warfield: an historical approach to the nature of apologetics. *STM Thesis*, Union Theological Seminary.



Sidney Rooy was born in Oskaloosa, IA, he was ordained in 1954 to the CRC. He obtained his BD from Calvin Theological Seminary in 1953 and his PhD from the VU University (1965). He was a missionary in Argentina from 1965 to 1991.

(Not Seen)

Jellema, Dirk W. 1957. Abraham Kuyper's attack on liberalism. *Review of Politics* 19(4):472-485.

Jellema's own note on this in *The Kuyper Newsletter* vol 1(2) (DWJ in *KN* 1(2)) summarises it well: "Treats K. especially as a critic of secularised capitalism."

After a short biographical piece on Kuyper Jellema focuses on Kuyper's politics and his battles against liberalism. Contains much helpful details of Kuyper's political skirmishes.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1958. Kuyper's visit to America in 1898. *Michigan History* 42:227-236.

DWJ (Jellema) in *KN* 1(2) notes: "Deal's with K's *Varia Americana* and his sometimes-interesting impressions of the USA."

Kuiper, Henry J. 1959. Abraham Kuyper on inspiration. Parts 1-3. *The Banner* 94 (8 May):9; (29 May):9; (12 June):9.

In a series of three articles Kuiper provides a summary of Kuyper's view of inspiration from his *Encyclopedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid* (pp 362-390).

He begins with a helpful summary:

In this profound chapter we meet with the thought, developed in very extensive fashion, that inspiration must be viewed as part and parcel of that constant and irresistible working of the divine energy whereby God, in spite of all opposition, brings his kosmos to the goal for which it was designed in his council. It is therefore a miracle ("wonder"). The incarnation of Christ, the regeneration of the sinner, the miracles of Christ, the inspiration of Scripture, and the final restoration of all things are all of one piece. They are anticipations of the world to come. Hence, inspiration belongs to the realm of re-creation, not of creation. It must not be end identified with religious experience or illumination.

Kuiper, Henry J. 1959. Kuyper on the criticism of scripture. *The Banner* 94 (19 June):9.

Following on from his summary of Kuyper's view of inspiration, Kuiper provides a summary of Kuyper's address on "Biblical criticism".

Van Til, Henry R. 1959. Abraham Kuyper: theologian of common grace. In *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*. Nutley, Presbyterian and Reformed, ch. 8.



Henry Van Til (1906-1961) was on the Faculty of Calvin College from 1946 until his retirement in 1961. He studied briefly at the Free University under Herman Dooyeweerd before becoming an associate professor at Calvin College in 1946. While at Calvin he served as president of the Calvinistic Culture Association in 1955.

Kuyper is dealt with in Van Til's historical section along with Augustine, Calvin and Schilder. He describes Kuyper as the "theologian of common grace". In this chapter he examines "Kuyper's theological conception of culture". He focuses primarily on common grace and identifies a positive and negative role for it in Kuyper. For Kuyper, van Til maintains culture is "a gift of common grace". He looks at Kuyper's views on art and the impact of his abnormal and normal distinction on the sciences. He concludes by evaluating Kuyper's contribution. He sees Kuyper's philosophy of culture as being over against the idealism of Hegel and the Naturalist's evolutionary materialism. He stresses that Kuyper's common grace isn't to be construed as an uncritical appreciation of "neutral" culture, as common grace is under the sovereignty of God; cultural activities are to be pursued pro Rege. He, however, thinks Kuyper's common grace lacks full biblical support. At times it is "pure phantasy" and others "dangerous speculation". He sees a polar dualism in Kuyper between common and particular grace.

1950s reviews

De Jong, Alexander C. 1950. Stimulating a social consciousness: review of Kuyper's *Christianity and Class Struggle*. *Calvin Forum* (October):53-54

De Jong reviews Jellema's translation of Kuyper's *Christianity and the Class Struggle*. He remarks:

This small book deals with various concrete questions as well. There are the perennial problems of private property, state intervention, ownership of land, social legislation and others. These pages warrant more than a cursory reading, for in sober reflection they continue to challenge the clearness of one's thinking and the sensibilities of the soul. The best recommendation for this book is this. Do not buy it if you do not want to be disturbed in your thinking on the social problems of our world.

Stob, George 1950. Abraham Kuyper on evolution [book review]. *The Banner* 85 (September):1075.

A review of Steve Vander Weele's (1950) translation of two summaries of Kuyper's Evolution address. He laments the fact that, "The summaries are obviously too sketchy to be eminently serviceable. No doubt a translation of Kuyper's oration would be more desirable ..." Fortunately, that is now the case (Bratt, 1988).

Boyle, Samuel 1951. *Christianity and the Class Struggle*. *Blue Banner Faith and Life* 6(1):7-10

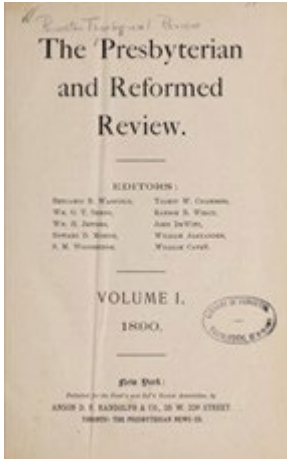
A positive review of Kuyper's *Christianity and the Class Struggle*. Boyle concludes:

Surely there is urgent need now for the Christians in America to study God's Word on social questions in the light of today's communistic revolt. Kuyper wrote against the French Revolution, but described it **simultaneously in its appalling necessity and its deeply sinful character** . . . (p. 22, footnote). This sentence has stayed with me. It sums up my personal opinion of the Chinese revolution — "**its appalling necessity and its deeply sinful character**". Let us in the West never think that this atheistic revolution will leave us at peace. We shall not escape. In view of that peril, Abraham Kuyper's little book is an excellent handbook. Buy it.

Willon, S. Bruce 1951. Review of Abraham Kuyper on Evolution. *Blue Banner Faith and Life* 6(1):47.

A brief review of Steve Van Der Weele's (1950) summary of Kuyper's *Evolution* by J.C. Rullman and W.F.A. Winckel.

Appendix: A note on the journals and magazines



Presbyterian and Reformed Review

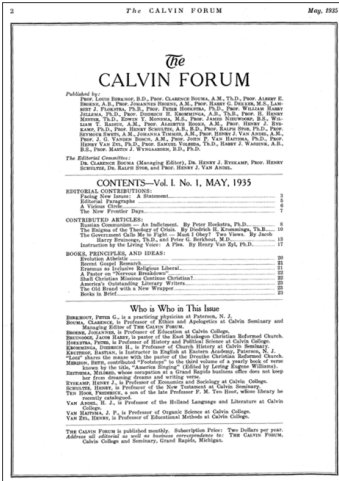
This started publication in 1890 it was published quarterly. Its main editor was B.B. Warfield. Its aim was “adequately represent the theology and life of the American Presbyterian Churches”.

Banner of Truth/Banner

Banner is the official magazine of the CRCNA. It was originally called the *Banner of Truth* (1866-1906). Its name was shortened in 1904 and it became a bi-weekly publication. The CRC took over its publication in 1914. *The Banner* is still published.

Henry Beets was the editor from 1903-1928 and H.J. Kuiper from 1928-1956. Other editors included John Vander Ploeg (1956-1970), Lester De Koster (1970-1980), Andrew Kuyvenhoven (1980-1989), Galen Meyer (1989-1992).

It should not be confused with the Edinburgh publishers, The Banner of Truth, who also published a magazine called *The Banner of Truth* which began publication in 1955. It is still published.

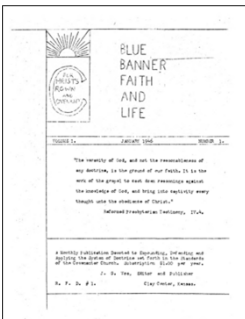


Calvin Forum

The *Calvin Forum* began publication in 1935. It ceased publication in 1956. The editorial committee included Dr. Clarence Bouma (Managing Editor), Dr. Henry J. Ryskamp, Prof. Henry Schultze, Dr. Ralph Stob, and Prof. Henry J. Van Andel. It was published monthly and associated with Calvin College.

Torch and Trumpet/Outlook

Torch and Trumpet (1951-1971) became *Outlook* in 1971. It was published on behalf of the United Reformed Church of North America.



Blue Banner Faith and Life

Blue Banner Faith and Life (1946-1979) was begun by J.G. Vos (1903-1983), of Geneva College and the son of Geerhardus Vos, it was "A Monthly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Standards of the Covenant Church".

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