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# Kuyperania 1980s: 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 in the 1980s. It highlights the reception of Kuyper's ideas amid debates about his political involvement and its impact on his theological legacy, as well as his enduring role as a model for integrating faith with public life.*

## **Key words:**

Abraham Kuyper, common grace, sphere sovereignty, Christian social thought

## Introduction

This is a continuation of Bishop (2024 and 2025), which discussed work written about Abraham Kuyper from the 1890s to the 1950s and in the 1960s and 1970s. The articles under review here cover the period from 1980 to 1989. Overall, in the period 1898 to 1959 the reception of Kuyper's work was positive and laudatory. In the period of the 60s and 70s some critiques of his work began to appear. The 1980s proved to be a boom period for Kuyper articles. Two major events contributed to this, the launch of the *Kuyper Newsletter* and the 150th anniversary of Kuyper's birth. There are several

recurring themes which serve to illustrate diverse engagement with Kuyper's thought during the 1980s, encompassing theological, political, cultural, and educational dimensions.

## 1. Theological Contributions

Kuyper's impact on Reformed theology is widely known, especially through his *Principles of Sacred Theology* (Veele, 1981; Howe, 1981). Central to Kuyper's theological approach was his development of common grace (Vander Kam, 1986; Langley, 1981) and sphere sovereignty (McCarthy, 1980).

Common grace provided a framework for positive engagement with culture and emphasis on *sphere sovereignty*, the idea that different societal structures (e.g., church, state, family, education) operate under God's authority with distinct responsibilities, was also seen as an important contribution to Christian social thought (McCarthy, 1980; Monsma, 1986). These approaches shaped Reformed theology in Europe and North America but also paved the way for the development of Reformational philosophy by Herman Dooyeweerd and others (Langley, 1981; Dooyeweerd, 1982).

## 2. Political Engagement and Public Life

Kuyper gave up his pastoral ministry to take up politics. He became the leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party and later became the Dutch Prime Minister (1901-1905). This, however, proved controversial. Many praised his vision for a public theology rooted in Christian principles. They noted his efforts to integrate faith with public life and his role in establishing Christian schools and institutions (Hexham, 1983; Langley, 1984).

However, some, such as Martyn Lloyd-Jones (cited in Jellema, 1980) accused Kuyper of compromising Christian convictions by entering politics. They thought his coalition-building with the Roman Catholics and the theological sanctioning of specific political stances as being problematic. For Lloyd-Jones, Kuyper's political strategy diluted the distinctiveness of a Christian political witness.

## 3. Cultural and Artistic Engagement

Similarly, Kuyper's influence in the realm of art and aesthetics was not uncontroversial (Begbie, 1989). Nick Van Til (1981) critiqued Kuyper's

lectures on art for being philosophically inconsistent. He argued that elements of Kuyper's aesthetic theory were shaped more by Platonism and Hegelianism than by the Reformed tradition.

Velema (1988) suggested that Kuyper was influenced by idealism, and Stellingwerff thought he was influenced by Romanticism. However, this is refuted by Ericson (1987), who discusses Kuyper's use of the term "organic".

Kuyper's broader cultural vision, as expressed through his journalism, university leadership, and political work, was viewed as groundbreaking (Langley, 1988).

#### **4. Kuyper's Role in Education and Journalism**

One of Kuyper's most lasting influences was the founding of the Vrije Universiteit (VU) in Amsterdam. The VU embodied his vision for an independent Reformed scholarly community; an academic institution that was free from the influence of both church and state. However, some suggested that the VU, under Kuyper's leadership, was insufficiently grounded in Reformed thought and encouraged a synthesis of ideas (de Jong, 1981; Wolterstorff, 1989).

Kuyper's prolific journalistic output was also recognised as playing an important role in disseminating his ideas and shaping public thought. As McKendree Langley (1988) observed, Kuyper's journalism may be the most important lens through which to understand his life and influence.

#### **5. Influence on South Africa and apartheid**

Richard Mouw (1980), among others has called for further exploration of Kuyper's legacy in South Africa. There, Kuyper's sphere sovereignty and common grace were misappropriated in complex and often contested ways (Smit, 1988). Some theologians accused Kuyperian thought of contributing indirectly to the development of apartheid ideology, though others argued that such uses misrepresented or contradicted Kuyper's actual views. As Smit (1988) notes that while Kuyper's writings were at times used to justify nationalist or segregationist views, he never advocated apartheid.

## 1980

*Kuyper Newsletter* 1(1) (January) 1980.



*The Kuyper Newsletter* was edited by Dirk W. Jellema (1924-1982) and Richard Mouw of Calvin College, and *Rockne McCarthy* of Dordt College. It was published out of Calvin College. The aim of the newsletter was to be an informal clearing-house for Kuyperian scholarship rather than a formal journal. The intention was for it to appear quarterly. In the end, only five issues were published.

Spykman, Gordon 1980. A Kuyper logo: 2-3.

This piece discusses Hahn's cartoon of Kuyper used on the cover of the first issue and subsequently in the newsletter's masthead.

McCarthy, Rockne J. 1980. The Kuyperian tradition and mediating structures. 3-4.

McCarthy highlights a book on Mediating structures by Berger and Neuhaus and a conference on the topic at Syracuse University.

Spykman, Gordon 1980. Kuyper on political cartooning: 4-6.

What do you give the person who has everything? Kuyper's family proposed a compilation of the best cartoons for Kuyper's 70th birthday. Spykman discusses Kuyper's preface to the book produced: "From good cartoons I experienced only pleasure." Spykman observes: "Kuyper believed that political cartoons must serve the cause of public justice."

Mouw, Richard J. 1980. Kuyper and South Africa: 6-7.

Mouw notes that "There is important work waiting to be done on the influence of Kuyper's thought on the South African situation" and on "the question of how Kuyper's own theological and political views were received and implemented." He draws attention briefly to works on this theme by John W. de Gruchy, T. Dunbar Moodie, W.A. de Klerk, Charles Villa-Vicencio and Danie Strauss.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1980. Bibliographical notes.

Brief observations on recent work on Kuyper.

*Kuyper Newsletter* 1(2) (June) 1980.

Mouw, Richard 1980. Our readership: 1-2.

He notes that the first issue reached a diverse readership of 400.



Spykman, Gordon 1980. Flashbacks: 2-3.

Spykman mentions that the newsletter will feature political cartoons of Kuyper.

The cartoon pictured is one with Kuyper holding a pestle and mortar – with the caption:

A beautiful combination! Christian-historical saccharin 2 parts; catholic pulverizer 5 parts; social democratic acid 1 part; anti-revolutionary sulfur 8 parts; aqua neutralis 80 parts. How can I come up with a strong medicine out of such a mixture?

Source: A. *Kuyper in de Caricatuur*. (Amsterdam: Van Holkema & Warendorf, 1909).

Jansen, John F. 1980. A Kuyper vignette: 3-4.

A brief mention of an inscription by Kuyper in an old family Bible.

Brinks, Herb 1980. Abraham Kuyper: it might have been: 4-5.

Why didn't Kuyper emigrate to North America? A letter from N.M. Steffens may have been the advice Kuyper needed at the time: "... don't give it serious thought. There is little in America to offer hope, even though personally speaking I would personally love to have you and your people among us."

Skillen, James W. 1980. Kuyper on covenant and politics: 5-6.

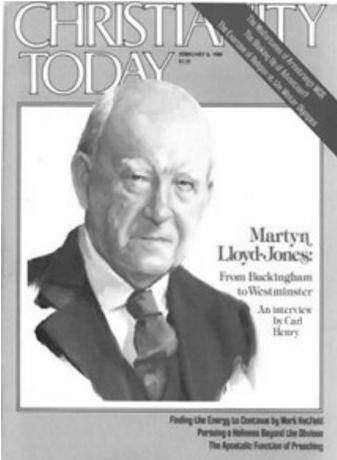
Skillen summarises a paper he presented at a conference at Temple University. The paper was "From Covenant of Grace to Tolerant Public Pluralism: the Dutch Calvinist contribution." Skillen mentions Kuyper's "unconditional disapproval" of the burning of Servetus and that Kuyper began to articulate a concept of tolerant public pluralism which was a consequence of his commitment to the covenant of grace.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1980. Martyn Lloyd Jones on Kuyper: 6-7.

This reads in full:

Free Church preacher and leader, well-known evangelical. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is featured in the 2/8/1980 *Christianity Today*, interviewed by Carl Henry. In the course of sometimes gloomy discussion ("I'm afraid I see nothing but collapse ... there now looms either dictatorship or complete chaos"), Lloyd-Jones mentions Kuyper in passing. The Christian should engage in politics, he says, but should never claim that his position is *the* Christian political view: "That approach was the

mistake of Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper placed himself in a compromise position: a Christian minister becoming prime minister and then needing to form a coalition with Roman Catholics and claiming Christian sanction for specific political positions.”



This is the section from the *Christianity Today* interview:

**Q:** Would you be happier if Sir Fred Catherwood, your son-in-law, were in the Christian ministry rather than in his present political work in the European Parliament?

**A:** No, I wouldn't. In fact, I was glad he resisted when pressure was brought upon him to go into the ministry. I've always tried to keep men out of the ministry. In my opinion a man should enter the ministry only if he cannot stay out of it.

**Q:** Did you indicate to him the remarkable contribution that he could make in the political arena?

**A:** Yes. But I also said that he should never—speaking as a Christian—claim that “this is the Christian political view.” That approach was the mistake of Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper placed himself in a compromise position: a Christian minister becoming prime minister and then needing to form a coalition with Roman Catholics and claiming Christian sanction for specific political positions. (Lloyd-Jones, 1980)

Jellema, Dirk W. 1980. *Evolutionism*: 7.

Mentions Bulhof's (in Glick (Ed.) *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism*, 1972) discussion of the reception of evolution in the Netherlands as being useful for placing Kuyper's views in context.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1980. *Bibliographical notes*: 7-8.

Brief notes on several publications.



*Kuyper Newsletter* 1(3) (December) 1980.

Mouw, Richard J. 1980. One hundred years of Kuyper's ARP: 1.

Mouw briefly describes the activities of the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) to celebrate their anniversary. This included unveiling a bust of Kuyper and the publication, in English, of *Christian Political Options*.

Spykman, Gordon 1980. The sly cartoon: 2-3.

Spykman continues his look at political cartoons involving Kuyper. In this one of Hahn's caricature of Kuyper is cracking the whip and dangling a carrot of social legislation over the heads of the oppressed.

Voskuil, Louis J. 1980. A note on Emile Boutmy: 3-4.

Boutmy was a French contemporary of Kuyper; his work is briefly described here.

Vander Weele, Steve J. 1980. Kuyper's devotional works: an overview: 4-5.

This is a list of Kuyper's devotional works that have been translated into English. Vander Weele particularly recommends *To Be Near Unto God*.

McCarthy, Rockne J. 1980. Kenneth McRae on societal pluralism: 5-6.

McCarthy looks at the work of McRae.

McCarthy, Rockne J. 1980. Sphere sovereignty – strategy or ideal?: 6.

Draws attention to D.Th. Kuiper's historical survey of the ARP. Kuiper maintains that Kuyper's sphere sovereignty was a pragmatic device.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1980. Bibliographical notes on materials in English: 7.

Notes that Vanden Berg's (1978) biography of Kuyper has been reissued. The only item in the bibliography is Kossman, *The Low Countries*.



Lee, Francis Nigel 1980. Abraham Kuyper and the rebirth of knowledge. The 1980 Commencement address Graham Bible College, TN, USA.

*Francis Nigel Lee (1934-2011)* was born in England and was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church. He and his parents relocated to South Africa, where he was raised as a Roman Catholic before becoming an atheist; he converted to Christianity in 1957. He was awarded the B.A., M.A. and LL.B. degrees from the University of Cape Town. From the Dutch Reformed Theological Seminary at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, he was

awarded the B.D., Th.M., and Th.D. he also received a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Natal.

In this address Lee examines Kuyper's view of knowledge. He draws primarily on Kuyper's *Principles of Sacred Theology*. He writes: "man's scientific knowledge involves three elements. For it involves man's true knowledge: of the subject of science; of the object of science; and of the law governing science" and goes on to expound on each of these points. He then examines the effects of the fall on knowledge, and the need for rebirth as an essential "prerequisite for acquiring true scientific knowledge." He closes for a call for universities to be concerned with the rebirth of true knowledge in all the sciences.

## 1981

de Jong, James A. 1981. Henricus Beuker and De Vrije Kerk on Abraham Kuyper and the Free University. In *Building the House: Essays on Christian Education*, edited by James A. De Jong and Louis Y. Van Dyke. Sioux Center: Dordt College Press, 27-45.

This article focuses on Beucker's views on free, Christian higher education. He had an admiration for Kuyper and was very supportive of him. Beucker had some reservations but wanted to strengthen rather than undermine the higher education project. He had a much stronger view of the role of theology than Kuyper.

*Kuyper Newsletter* 2(1) (April) 1981.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1981. Kuyper and Pierre Van Paasen: 1-2.

Van Paasen was an anti-Fascist journalist – Jellema quotes from a letter Van Paasen sent to him.

Vander Weele, Steve J. 1981. *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology*: 3-4.

A review of Kuyper's *Encyclopaedia*—then recently republished with a new title *Principles of Sacred Theology*. He notes that "By any standards this work is a magnificent achievement."

McCarthy, Rockne J. 1981. Kuyper and South Africa:4-5.

Following on from Mouw's comments in *The Kuyper Newsletter* 1(2) McCarthy discusses a work by Arthur Keppel-Jones who points out that ways in which Kuyper's ideas were used by Afrikaners.

Mouw mentions that Kuyper is mentioned in James Michener's best-seller *The Covenant*. Mouw remarks:

Once again, then, Kuyper's name is superficially linked to the development of racist policies of the South African government—and this time in a best-selling

American novel! It is unlikely, of course, that this modest reference to Kuyper in Michener's work will do much to affect Kuyper's reputation or lack of it, in North America. But the mention of his name in this context is one more reminder that scholars who are both sympathetic to Kuyper and hostile to racism should devote themselves to a careful examination of the actual influence of Kuyper on South African ideologies and politics.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1981. Notes and queries: 5-6.

A list as the title suggests of notes and queries!

Jellema, Dirk W. 1981. Bibliographical notes on materials in English: 6-7.

More brief notes on several recent publications.

*Kuyper Newsletter* 2(2) (Winter) 1980-81.



This was the last issue of the Kuyper Newsletter.

Bolt, John 1981. Kuyper and Herman Bavinck (1): 1-2.

Introduces what was planned to be a series comparing Kuyper and Bavinck.

Brinks, Herb 1981. Kuyper in Michigan: 2-3.

A description of Kuyper's visit to Michigan in October 1898.

Spykman, Gordon 1981. Fido with his bone: 4-5.

Spykman discusses Hahn's cartoon "Fidel met de Kluif" [Fido with his bone].

De Jong, James 1981. Henricus Beuker and Kuyper: 5.

A brief overview of de Jong's article (1981) – see above.

Carpenter, Joel 1981. On Kuyper as evangelical leader: 6.

A short quotation from Richard Lovelace's *The Dynamics of the Spiritual Life*

Jellema, Dirk W. 1981. Notes and queries: 6-7.

Jellema, Dirk W. 1981. Bibliographical notes on materials in English: 7.

As usual the newsletter closes with these notes.

The newsletter ceased publication after this issue, following the death of its editor, Dirk W. Jellema, in 1982 at the age of 58.



Langley, McKendree R. 1981. Creation and sphere sovereignty in historical perspective. *Pro Rege* 9: 12-22.

McKendree Langley (1945–2005), at the time holder of the Abraham Kuyper Chair in the Studies Institute of Dordt College, looks at sphere sovereignty from Groen van Prinsterer to Bob Goudzwaard—with Kuyper and Dooyeweerd in between. Kuyper developed the principle of sphere sovereignty between 1873 and 1880. Kuyper developed Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer's ideas and saw that sphere sovereignty was rooted in creation. Dooyeweerd in turn extended these ideas of spheres into his modal theory. The economist Goudzwaard later adapted it in the economic sphere. All these thinkers were key members of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Langley concludes:

Abraham Kuyper had an intuitive perception of the reality of sphere sovereignty. Herman Dooyeweerd gave this perception philosophical coherence, and Bob Goudzwaard radicalized the Christian understanding of the economic sphere in order to make this Kuyperian perspective relevant to the problems of the world economic order (p. 22).

Seel, David John, Jr. 1981. Critical comparison of Abraham Kuyper's and Klaas Schilder's views on the basis of Christian cultural responsibility. *Salt: Official Student Publication of Covenant Theological Seminary* 9(2) (Spring): 20-29.

David John Seel, Jr. is a cultural renewal entrepreneur, film producer, and educational reformer. He is a Senior Fellow at the Work Research Foundation and adjunct professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He was a college student at the time of writing this paper.  
(Article Not Seen)

Van Til, Nick 1981. Calvinism and art (1). *Pro Rege* 9(3): 10-20.

In this, the first of three articles on Calvinism and art Nick Van Til, professor at Dordt College, looks at Kuyper's view of art in his Stone Lectures. He maintains that Kuyper's lecture on art is "inconsistent with the Reformed tenor of his other lectures." He contends that Kuyper's thought reflected residual Platonism and Hegelianism.

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## Reviews

Howe, F. R. 1981. Review of *Principles of Sacred Theology* by Abraham Kuyper. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138(552) (Oct): 366.

The review in full reads:

*Principles of Sacred Theology*. By Abraham Kuyper. Translated by J. Hendrik DeVries. 1898. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980. 683 pp. Paper, \$12.95.

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) was a Dutch theologian and statesman working in the Reformed theological tradition. This book is an exhaustive study of theological prolegomena, dealing with the nature of theology, the place of Scripture in theological construction, and a total framework of an approach to theology as a bona fide science. Modern readers will appreciate the timeliness of Kuyper's careful case for the full inspiration of the autographs of Scripture from all the data. There is much here for students and teachers of systematic theology.

## 1982

Gaffin, Richard B. 1982. Old Amsterdam and inerrancy. *Westminster Theological Journal* 44(2): 251-289.

This was republished as Chapters I and II of Gaffin (2008). A subsequent paper by Gaffin (*WTS*, 45(1983): 219-272) dealt with Bavinck's views of scripture which was also published in Gaffin (2008).

He writes to refute the arguments of Rogers and McKim in *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible* (1979) that the concern for inerrancy is a deviation from "classic church doctrine." Gaffin summarises Rogers and McKim's approach thus:

Kuyper and Bavinck were in reaction against Reformed scholasticism, culminating in the old Princeton theology, and anticipated recent efforts at recovering the Reformed tradition that include the work of Karl Barth and G.C. Berkouwer as well as the United Presbyterian Confession of 1967.

Rogers and McKim maintained both Kuyper and Bavinck "were in reaction against Reformed scholasticism, culminating in the old Princeton theology, and anticipated recent efforts at recovering the Reformed tradition which includes the work of Karl Barth and C.G. Berkouwer as well as the United Presbyterian (now PCUSA) Confession of 1967." Gaffin Jr's aim is to test the validity of this hypothesis.

Rather than provide an exhaustive survey of the views of Kuyper and Bavinck he examines several 'controlling questions':

The following set of questions, then, is prompted by the discussion of Rogers and McKim:

- (1) How, in general, did Kuyper and Bavinck view themselves in relation to post-Reformation Reformed orthodoxy, and how did they see the latter in relation to the Reformation itself?
- (2) How did they view the activity of the Holy Spirit, in particular, the internal testimony of the Spirit, in relation to the recognition of Scripture and its authority?
- (3) How did they view the relationship between form and content in Scripture?
- (4) Closely related to (3), how did they view the analogy between incarnation and inscripturation? What significance did they attach to the fact that divine and human factors conjoin both in the person of Christ and in Scripture?
- (5) How did they view biblical criticism? What on the whole was their attitude toward the mainstream of biblical scholarship in their day?
- (6) How did they view the notion of biblical inerrancy? This is not to ask whether they used the terms "inerrancy" or "inerrant" in relation to Scripture (apparently, they did not, certainly not with any detectable frequency). Nor is it to ask whether they believed the Bible makes pronouncements with modern scientific exactness. Rather, the precise question is whether or not they held to a view of biblical infallibility that at the same time allows for the actual presence or possibility of errors in Scripture. Did they believe there were errors in Scripture? Did they think there was any sense in which the category of error could be properly or meaningfully applied to the Bible? (Gaffin, 2008: 4-5)

Gaffin argues the views of Rogers and McKim which they attribute to Kuyper are those of the Ethical theologian, "views which in fact he regularly and implacably opposed."

Dooyeweerd, Herman 1982. Dooyeweerd commemorates Kuyper. *Anakainosis* 5(1): 9-13.

This is a translation by Al Wolters from *Volhardt*, the proceedings of the 19th annual rally of the League of Young Ladies' Societies of Reformed Persuasion in the Netherlands. It was delivered on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kuyper's birth in 1937. He notes Kuyper's "no square inch" quote signifies a radical break with a presupposed split between the Christian religion and the temporal life of the world and the battle of the antithesis between the world and Scripture. Dooyeweerd then looks briefly at Kuyper's sphere sovereignty. It is "an invaluable asset in Kuyper's spiritual legacy."

Monsma, Timothy Martin 1982. Kuyper and Orange City. *The Banner* 117 (June): 2, 4.

Monsma (1933-2013)  
(Article Not Seen)

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Skillen, James W. and Carlson-Thies, Stanley W. 1982. Religion and political development in nineteenth-century Holland. *Publius* (Summer): 43-64.

Skillen and Carlson-Thies take a look at the influence of Johannes Althusius before looking at the “General without an Army”: Groen van Prinsterer. Kuyper “carried the program forward with remarkable genius.” They identify seven key principles of Kuyper:

- (1) divine authority for, and sovereignty over, human life;
- (2) the divine origination of the state for the preservation of the human race in the face of sin;
- (3) the responsibility of each sphere of life (family, education, church, business, etc.) to follow God’s ordinances;
- (4) the mutual obligation of government and citizens in the constitution of civil government;
- (5) the antirevolutionary spirit of obedience to government on the part of the citizenry;
- (6) the necessity for positive, civil laws to reflect the law of God which demands public equity; and
- (7) recognition of the fact that the possibility of having a relatively just government is due to the common grace of God.

Van Schouwen, Cornelius J. 1982. A. Kuyper on headship. *Outlook* 32: 24.

*Revd Van Schouwen (1903-1994)* was born in the Netherlands. He trained for church ministry at Calvin Theological Seminary. He was on the faculty of Dordt College (1954-1968).

(Not Seen)

## 1983

Hexham, Irving 1983. Christian politics according to Abraham Kuyper. *Crux* 11(1) (March): 2-7.

Hexham takes a look at Kuyper’s life and political thought as both the left and right in evangelical political thought claim to have their roots in him. After a short biography, Hexham focuses his discussion on the Stone Lectures. He takes a look at sphere sovereignty, the state and society. He identifies some perceived ambiguities in Kuyper’s approach: Kuyper’s “reference to the sphere of the State as being ‘above’ the sphere of society is puzzling.” And: “At times Kuyper *almost* falls into the class of theologians who say that the state is a result of sin.” He describes Kuyper’s work as a vision and model rather than a blueprint.

Vander Goot, Henry 1983. Portraits of Kuyper. *Christian Renewal* 1 (April): 2.

(Not Seen)

## 1984

Deenick, J. W. 1984. Christocracy in Kuyper and Schilder (the theory and the practice of it). *Reformed Theological Review* 43: 42-50.

The Australian Bill Deenick (d. 2011) observes:

It is obvious that there are significant differences in detail between Kuyper and Schilder, but their agreement on the Kingship of Christ and what it means to Christian cultural and social involvement should not be overlooked.

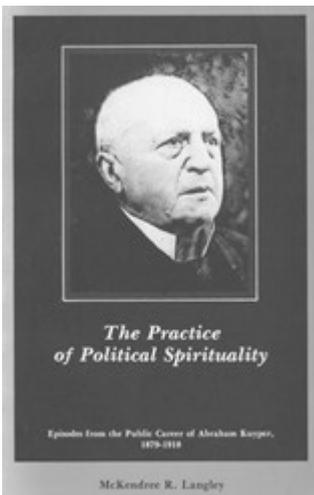
As S.U. Zuidema has pointed out: in Kuyper the Pro Rege concept became increasingly the kingpin of his system. In Schilder it was central from the word go. Moreover, both Kuyper and Schilder recognised the essential (and radical) antithesis between Christian and non-Christian action.

Gousmett, Chris 1984. Bavinck and Kuyper on creation and miracle. *Anakainosis: A Newsletter for Reformational Thought* 7(1/2): 1-19.

A revised and updated version of this paper dealing with Kuyper's views alone is published in Bishop and Kok (Eds) (2013). Here Gousmett, at the time of writing was a student at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto and editor of *Anakainosis*. He focuses on the influence of scholastic philosophy on Bavinck and Kuyper, as well as "insights they gained into the biblical confession."

Hexham, Irving 1984. Abraham Kuyper. In *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, edited by Walter A. Ewell. Carlisle/Grand Rapids: Paternoster/Baker, 616.

A short biographical entry. He proposes Kuyper's view of the kingdom of God was influenced by F.D. Maurice. (See also Hexham, 1988).



Langley, McKendree R. 1984. *The Practice of Spirituality: Episodes in the Public Career of Abraham Kuyper*. Ontario: Paideia.

McKendree Langley (1945–2005) was a professor of history at WTS. His dissertation was on the history of the Anti-Revolutionary party in The Netherlands, a party Abraham Kuyper helped to shape. In this excellent book, we have some insights into the political spirituality of Kuyper. Langley explains:

Kuyper's simple yet profound Christian vision was based upon a deep faith in Christ as the King over the entire cosmos. The exercise of this Christian vision in public affairs can be called "political spirituality"—the ability to discern the directions sin and grace take in public affairs. Political spirituality is an integrated Christian attitude which enriches both thought and action. This book will present and briefly evaluate

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aspects of Kuyper's public career as examples of political spirituality. This attitude of political spirituality must not be confused with Kuyper's political tactics. Tactics change as times and situations differ; "political spirituality" remains part of a Christian's obligation to do all things to the glory of God. The attitude of Christians towards secularized society determines what they think and do. (p 25)

The book is split into three main sections each dealing with different periods in Kuyper's political career: party leader, prime minister, and elder statesman.

For many Christians politics and Christianity do not mix. Kuyper is evidence that Christian faith does shape politics, and it can in a distinctively Christian way. Kuyper steered a middle way between Conservatism and Liberalism, between individualism and collectivism. He was involved in politics because "obedience to the Lordship of Christ and the future of the nation were at stake". Kuyper shows it is possible to serve Christ in politics.

Langley is an excellent tour guide. He explains and exegetes Kuyper's approach; showing Kuyper's desire to transform politics—but not just politics also education, insurance, labour conditions and suffrage—arose out of his deeply held Christian principles and convictions. Kuyper campaigned for principles not for votes. In all that he did not fall into the trap of a social gospel; he knew that the Christian faith could not be reduced to politics, but that politics had to be shaped by Christian principles.

As Langley shows Kuyper "touched so many disciplines" hence this book will interest all those concerned to integrate Christian faith and society (which should include all Christians!)—in whatever sphere. Kuyper provides no blueprint, but he does provide an excellent role model.

Tangelder, Johan D. 1984. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)—the antithesis theologian. *Christian Renewal* 3 (November): 8.

Revd Tangelder (1936-2009) was born in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He obtained his doctorate from the VU University in 1963. He was ordained into the CRCNA in 1967.

This short piece looks at the antithesis and Kuyper. Tangelder describes the antithesis as "a conflict of faith and unbelief, between the Christian and non-Christian views of life."

Westra, Johan G. 1985. Abraham Kuyper and his influences on church and state. *Reformed Review* 38(2): 119-129.

He observes: "If Kuyper had lived in England or in Germany, he would be as well-known as Gladstone or Disraeli or Bismarck who were his contemporaries" (121). Westra (1922-2020) confesses he writes as a political scientist not as a theologian. He provides a useful overview of Kuyper's life with emphasis on his political achievements.

## 1985



Du Toit, Andre 1985. Puritans in Africa? Afrikaner “Calvinism” and Kuyperian Neo-Calvinism in Late Nineteenth-Century South Africa. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27(2): 239–240.

Du Toit explores the question: “What significance should be given to the linkages between the Kuyperian revival of Calvinism in the Netherlands and the emergence of “Christian-National” ideas of calling and mission among Afrikaners from the end of the nineteenth century?” He maintains that “this Calvinism was not particularly representative of, or influential on, contemporary political thinking.” The article contains some helpful bibliographic comments.

Praamsma, Louis 1985. *Let Christ be King: Reflections on the Life and Times of Abraham Kuyper*. Ontario: Paideia.

*Louis Praamsma (1910-1984)*, a church historian, was born in Den Helder, the Netherlands, and soon moved to Canada. His doctorate from the Free University was on “Abraham Kuyper as Church Historian”. He was on the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary (1962-1963).

This is a popular-level biography of Kuyper. While perhaps slightly less accessible than Vanden Berg’s (1978) biography, it provides a valuable complement.

Both volumes deal well with the education and political issues Kuyper struggled with, but Praamsma provides more detail on the church reforms Kuyper was involved in. He also concentrates more on the religious and cultural background. The first three chapters provide an excellent summary, particularly for those unfamiliar with Dutch history and culture.

Praamsma is much more referenced (10 pages of endnotes) than Vanden Berg. Both are “friends of Kuyper” and so are largely uncritical. Though Praamsma does highlight some of the issues others had with Kuyper, he also quotes more from Kuyper.

This is a memoriam notice for Praamsma published in *JETS* 29(1) (March 1986) p. 126-7.

Louis Praamsma passed away December 2, 1984, at the age of 74. He succumbed to a heart attack in the Peel Memorial Hospital of Brampton, Ontario, Canada.

Praamsma was the author of numerous books and articles, most of which related to the Church and its history. He earned his Th.D. degree at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1945 with a dissertation entitled *Abraham Kuyper: Church Historian*. He published *The Foolishness of God*, a book on the history of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. This book appeared in 1952 in revised

and extended form. Even in his retirement, Praamsma kept writing. He authored a four-volume work on the Church in the twentieth century. Posthumously his last book, *Let Christ Be King*, on Abraham Kuyper and his times, came off the press in 1985.

In his frequent articles Praamsma sought to strengthen the faith of the fathers in the denomination (Christian Reformed Church), which he faithfully served as pastor. He once wrote: "The present generation must know what the fathers have fought for."

Praamsma pastored three churches in the Netherlands before he and his family immigrated to Canada in 1958. In Canada he also served three congregations until he retired in 1974.

He was appointed professor of Church history at Calvin Theological Seminary in 1962, but because of his health he returned to the pastorate the following year. He had suffered a serious automobile accident in 1960, which crippled him for life. The first nine months of 1961 he spent in the hospital until he was able to assume his duties again.

Praamsma loved the Church, which he served wholeheartedly in sermon, article and book. As pastor he took personal interest in the individual member.

No matter how large the congregation he served, he knew each member by name. As a scholar he constantly advanced the cause of Christ's Church.

The Christian Reformed Church has lost in Praamsma a spiritual leader who was an evangelical theologian true to the Scriptures. He became a member of ETS in 1971.

## 1986

De Jong, James A. 1986. Abraham Kuyper's edition of the Institutes. *Calvin Theological Journal* 21(2): 231-232.

In this brief "Scholia" piece De Jong, the president of Calvin Theological Seminary (1983-2003), notes that 1986 is not only the 450th anniversary of the first edition of Calvin's Institutes; it is the 98th anniversary of Kuyper's Dutch edition. Kuyper republished Wilhelm Corsman's 1650 Dutch translation of the 1559 edition with a "substantial, informative introduction." He concludes "Kuyper's republication of the *Institutes* both reflected and contributed to a rekindled interest in Calvin's systematic exposition of the Christian faith."

De Jong, Peter 1986. 1886—a year to remember. *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 2: 7-52.

De Jong looks at the background to two key movements in Dutch church history, the 1834 Secession and the Doleantie. The roles of Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), Isaac da Costa (1798-1860), Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), Hendrik de Cock (1801-1842) are mentioned briefly.

Monsma, George N., Jr 1986. Abraham Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty and government economic policy. In *Through the Eye of a Needle: Readings on Stewardship and Justice*: For use in introductory economics courses at Calvin College 1986. Department of Economics and Business, Calvin College.

This essay is in a collection of readings produced for Calvin College's economics students. In it Monsma argues for government involvement in the economy. He cites Kuyper at length with approval. He remarks:

Yes, this is Abraham Kuyper and not Karl Marx speaking. In an age when the injustices of an unrestrained capitalism have been lessened by various forms of government intervention (some of them supported by Kuyper himself, as is discussed below), we should remember the evils such capitalism brought about in the 19th century and thus not fall prey to those who would again seduce us with the siren-song of prosperity for all, if only the government will end its interference in the economy. It was just such a false gospel of the "liberals" of his day that Kuyper was working against.

Praamsma, Louis 1986. A great enterprise. *Christian Renewal* 5 (October). (Not Seen)

Vander Hart, Mark D. 1986. Abraham Kuyper and the theonomy debate. *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 2(1): 63-77.

Kuyper's programme of the lordship of Christ over every area of life underlies theonomy (aka Christian reconstructionism, for example Greg Bahnsen, Gary North, and R.J. Rushdoony). Vander Hart looks at theonomy and concludes with some observations of where Kuyper's own position would be.

For theonomists the Mosaic law constitutes a norm for humanity, and it is still binding. The state has a role to play in prohibiting and restraining *public* unrighteousness.

Vander Hart identifies several common emphases between Kuyper and the theonomists; but there are also differences. Kuyper denied that Christians should create a modern-day theocracy, he also considered the historical differentiation that has gone on in creation. Yet both would agree that confessing Christ as Lord in political and social areas means that God's law as revealed in his Word must be put into practice.



Vander Kam, Henry 1986. Some comments on Kuyper and common grace. *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 2(1): 53-62.

Vander Kam (1917-1966) at the time of writing this piece was a CRC minister at Doon, IA. He obtained a Th.B. from Calvin Theological Seminary.

Here he briefly describes Kuyper's common grace and notes its origins in Calvin, he also briefly describes Bavinck's

contribution to the subject. He concludes by lamenting the hasty decision of the 1924 Synod in respect with the disagreement over common grace by Hoeksema and Danhof. It dealt with the important doctrine of common grace, but not one that was so fundamental as to divide over it.

Goudzwaard, Bob 1986. Christian Social Thought in the Dutch Neo-Calvinist Tradition. In Walter Block and Irving Hexham (eds) *Religion, Economics and Social Thought: Proceedings of an International Conference Vancouver*, Fraser Institute 1986, pp. 251–279.



Bob Goudzwaard, (1934–2024) was professor emeritus, at the Free University in Amsterdam. He was elected to the Dutch Parliament in the 1970s and served for a time at a Christian policy research institute in The Hague. He observes: “More than sixty years after his death, one can undoubtedly say that the Netherlands today would be a markedly different nation had Abraham Kuyper not lived.”

Goudzwaard explores three key themes that of vocation or calling; the antithesis and common grace; and an architectonic critique of society.

There is a response from Irving Hexham and a reply from Goudzwaard.

## Reviews

Hexham, Irving 1986. Review of *The Practice of Political Spirituality* by McKendree R. Langley. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29(2) (June)

The brief review in full reads:

Few nineteenth-century religious leaders made a greater impact on their society than Abraham Kuyper, and yet he remains a relatively unknown figure in the English-speaking world. Langley has written an intriguing book that introduces the reader to some of Kuyper’s many activities. At a time when “Christian” political activity is a live topic in North America, this book provides the reader with many valuable insights into an earlier Christian attempt to think and act politically. One also hopes that Langley will follow it up with a full-scale modern biography of Kuyper.

## 1987

Bratt, James D. 1987. Abraham Kuyper's public career. *The Reformed Journal* 37(10): 9-12.

This and the subsequent piece trace Kuyper's public and private careers. They provide the initial stirrings of what would become a full-blown biography of Kuyper (Bratt, 2019).

Here he observes:

Kuyper's North American followers have largely read him as a theologian and a cultural philosopher—that is, as a man of ideas. That they have argued heatedly about these ideas I have detailed in another place (*Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*); but it is still the Ideas—"common grace" and "antithesis," "the church as institute" and the "church as organism", "sphere sovereignty" and "divine sovereignty", the psychology of "principle" and the sociology of "separate organization"—that have been taken to matter, to be what "Kuyper" means.

He begins by comparing Kuyper with Jerry Falwell and closes with comparisons with Martin Luther King Jr.

Bratt, James D. 1987. Raging tumults of soul: the private life of Abraham Kuyper. *The Reformed Journal* 37(11): 9-13.

Also, in Bishop and Kok (Eds) (2013). Bratt starts by looking at Kuyper's nervous breakdown after his visit to Brighton in 1875. Kuyper undertook an "iron regimen", an exacting schedule, but still suffered recurrences of "neurasthenia." This short piece provides a glimpse into Kuyper's personal life.

Bratt, James D. 1987. Abraham Kuyper: 150th birthday anniversary. *Origins* 5(2): 23-27.

Bratt asks how should we remember Kuyper? For Kuyper the key problem was the relationship between religion and modern society. Kuyper knew nothing as being too earthly for Christian redemption—this Bratt maintains is "Kuyper's clearest legacy in America." (25) Kuyper held that America was founded on a Calvinistic basis, it was the land of preeminent modernization, and that Christianity was compatible with advancing, modern culture. These coloured his view of the States: "America was of all the world *the* land of common grace" (26).

Bratt concludes that we should not view Kuyper as an infallible authority.

Ericson, Edward E. 1987. Abraham Kuyper: cultural critic. *Calvin Theological Journal* 22(2): 210-227.

Also, in Bishop and Kok (Eds) 2013.

In this paper Ericson examines the notion that Kuyper was influenced by the Romantic movement. He claims two Kuyperians have maintained this position—however, he doesn't name the two. Ericson's thesis is that Kuyper rejected Romanticism and that

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Kuyper saw Romantic and Enlightenment thought as allied; the one issuing from the other.

He starts by outlining the contours of Romanticism then examining some of Kuyper's key writings and in particular "Pantheism's destruction of boundaries" shows how these contours are absent in Kuyper and that he even undermines them.

He focuses on the term "organic". A term much loved by the Romantics and much used by Kuyper. Kuyper's use of the term is imprecise. Kuyper applied the term to:

- the organic unity of the body of Christ
- the organic unity of the cosmos
- the organic character of Encyclopedia
- the organicism of science
- the organicism of theology

He notes that for Kuyper "the notion of organic seems to mean coherence, fittingness. All things fit together coherently. And the reason that things are inextricably intertwined in an overall unity is that God has placed an order in his creation." (p. 223)

De Jong, Peter Y. 1987. 1837–1987: reflections on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of Dr. Abraham Kuyper. *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 3(2): 196-217

October 1987 was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kuyper's birth. This article celebrates that fact with a short appreciative biography of Kuyper drawing upon Vanden Berg (1978) and several Dutch works including those by H.H. and J.H. Kuyper, W.F.A. Winckel and J.C. Rullman. The article closes with a short evaluation of Kuyper's achievements and a reminder that we are not to look for another Kuyper, as the 'sovereign God does not duplicate men anymore than he does events'.

De Jong, Peter Y. 1987. Abraham Kuyper on Russia and the "Filioque" clause. *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 4(1): 54–82.

Kuyper on his Mediterranean journey in 1905 visited Russia, it was a country that fascinated him. This article looks at how and why Kuyper viewed Russia as he did and how his view of history shaped his views. Kuyper maintained that in part Russia's history was shaped by the rejection of the "filioque" clause which was linked to a "deep-seated mysticism". As De Jong notes Kuyper "reminded his hearers that no nation and its history can be understood apart from its religious impulses and convictions."

Pronk, C. 1987. F.M. Ten Hoor: defender of Secession principles against Abraham Kuyper's Doleantie views. *Master of Theology Thesis*. Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary. (Not Seen)

Pronk, a minister in the Free Reformed Churches in North America, is critical of neo-Calvinism. This thesis was developed into his book *A Goodly Heritage: The Secession of 1834 and Its Impact on Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and North America*, Reformation Heritage Books, 2019.

Schöffer, Ivo 1987. Abraham Kuyper and the Jews. In *Veelvormig verleden: Zeventien studies in de vaderlandse geschiedenis*. Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 159-170.

Schoffer discusses two of Kuyper's articles in *De Standaard* in 1875 and 1878, where Kuyper criticised the Jews for not converting to Christianity or strengthening their religion, instead aligning with liberalism, which Kuyper saw as a greater threat.

Wintle, Michael J. 1987. *Pillars of Piety: Religion in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century, 1813-1901*, (Occasional Papers in Modern Dutch Studies No 2) Hull: Hull University Press.

In this short (91 page) monograph Wintle provides an account of the religious background of nineteenth-century Netherlands and to summarise research done in the Netherlands. It provides an excellent overview of the background to Kuyper's life and work. The final chapter deals with education and vertical pluralism.

## 1988

Durand, Jaap. 1988. Church and State in South Africa: Karl Barth vs. Abraham Kuyper. In *On Reading Karl Barth in South Africa*, edited by C. Villa-Vicencio. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 121-138.

Durand (1934-) was professor of Systematic Theology and later Deputy Vice-Chancellor, at the University of the Western Cape. Elsewhere, Durand identifies several models of public theology: the Roman Catholic nature-grace model, the Lutheran two kingdom model, the Reformed Christocentric model (Calvin, Barth and Kuyper) and the revolutionary-eschatological model.

Here Durand compares the approaches of Barth and Kuyper in South Africa with particular regard to the relationship between church and state in the light of apartheid. Durand maintains that Kuyper's views of church and state were remarkably similar to the Lutheran approach: the state has its origin in common grace and the church in particular grace. The church's prophetic voice can become silenced: "the Kuyperian model combines an active Christian witness in the political field with an almost silent church" (131).

Hexham, Irving 1988. Abraham Kuyper. In *New Dictionary of Theology*, edited by S. B. Ferguson and D. F. Wright. Leicester: IVP, 374-375.

A short c. 500-word biographic entry in this theological dictionary. Adapted from Hexham (1984). Identifies the development of sphere sovereignty as his greatest contribution.

Morbey, Michael M. 1988. Kuyper, Dooyeweerd, and the Reformational vision: theosophy reformed. *Nuances* (an online journal, now discontinued) Morbey, an independent researcher, identifies a number of links between Kuyper's

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thought and the theosophy of Franz Xavier von Baader (1765-1841). As Morbey notes: “Kuyper had taken up the reformational political project of Groen van Prinsterer, who had been greatly influenced in his second period after 1850 by the Lutheran legal philosopher, Friedrich Julius Stahl. Stahl appealed in particular to the “positive philosophy” of Schelling, who sought to solve the problem of the relation of God to creation by the method of theosophy.”

In a footnote, Morbey makes an important observation: “‘Theosophy’ is intended here as a special, technical term from the study of religion and ideas, and does not refer in the first place to the particular system of Madame H.P. Blavatsky.”

These links and themes have been taken up and developed by Glenn Friesen (see for example Friesen, 2003).

Casey, Ramon J. 1988. Abraham Kuyper’s Political Worldview. *PhD Thesis* Regent University, Virginia.

(Article Not Seen)

*Reformed Ecumenical Council’s Theological Forum: Abraham Kuyper: his international influence* 16(2) (June 1988):

This is a special edition to commemorate Kuyper’s birth 150 years ago.

Langley, McKendree 1988. A sketch of Abraham Kuyper’s life. 4-8.

Langley, at the time editor of *Eternity* magazine, provides a biographical introduction. He provides “further insight” by looking at one or two of Kuyper’s *De Standaard* articles. He highlights four aspects of his career:

1. Pastor-theologian (1863-1874)
2. Statesman, as ARP leader and then as prime minister (1901-1905)
3. Educator, as founder and professor (1880-1908) at the VU University
4. Journalist, as editor of *De Standaard* and *De Herald*.

Langley maintains Kuyper’s “journalism is the key to understanding his life.”

De Moor, Henry 1988. Kuyper’s imprints on the Christian Reformed Church in North America. 29–31.

Drawing on Henry Zwaanstra’s *Reformed Thought and Experience in a New World* De Moor looks at “some developments in the Christian Reformed Community around the turn of the century.” He looks at Christian Day Schools, Calvin College and Seminary, Christian Labor Associations and Church polity.

Schrotenboer, Paul G. 1988. Abraham Kuyper: his international influence. 1-2.

In his editorial introduction Schrotenboer describes the aim as “to evaluate the influence of Abraham Kuyper upon Reformed thought and life in the international community of Reformed people.”

Skillen, James 1988. Kuyper was on time and ahead of his time: an essay on religion as a way of life and societal differentiation. 15-19.

Skillen, then the director of the Association for Public Justice, highlights two areas in which Kuyper's importance has not been appreciated: the differentiation of modern society and the power of religions in shaping modern cultures.

Smit, Kobus 1988. Kuyper and African theology. 20-28.

Smit, of the University of the Orange Free State, South Africa, notes that Kuyper's standing in South African Reformed circles is not very high. He examines recent work by three South African theologians, A.J. Botha, W.J. de Gruchy, and G.J. Schutte, on Kuyper and apartheid. Botha's work is restricted to the Stone Lectures and finds a scapegoat for apartheid in Kuyper's idea of the "volk." De Gruchy "steers clear of over-simplification." In his *Bonhoeffer and South Africa*, he does not doubt that Kuyper's ideas have been "misused to support the ideology of apartheid" and that the "end product was ... a contradiction of Kuyper's doctrine." Schutte attempts to trace the roots of the ideology of apartheid. "Schutte gives ample evidence that Kuyper's 'Program of principles' used by S.J. du Toit had very little success in South Africa and that President Kruger, in spite of all his contact with Kuyper, was not a Kuyperian." This piece provides a helpful review and overview of Kuyper and apartheid up to 1988. He concludes that Kuyper "never advocated apartheid" and observes that a total reassessment of Kuyper is overdue and that the investigation of apartheid as an ideology has just begun and "should not exclude problems related to Afrikaner nationalism and cultural difference".

Van Dyke, Harry 1988. Kuyper in post-war Canada: an interim inventory. 34-40.

Van Dyke looks at the approach of Canadian Kuyperians in setting up "separate but parallel" organizations. They applied van Prinsterer's watchword "In isolation lies our strength." The strategy was applied "with varied results, in education, the economic sector and the media."

Velema, Willem Hendrik 1988. Abraham Kuyper – born 150 years ago: a study in strengths and pitfalls. 9-14.



W.H. Velema (1929-2019), professor of ethics at the Theological College, Apeldoorn, the Netherlands, had written a dissertation "Abraham Kuyper's teaching concerning the Holy Spirit." He sees Kuyper's strengths and pitfalls in the way his theology "proves its value in the way he acted as a theologian, politician and churchman." He thinks that Kuyper's theology had a Reformed intent but was influenced by idealism. This is especially seen in his view of the relation of general and special grace.

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No author given 1988. Bibliography. 32-33.

This is a brief list of the books and articles mentioned in the papers. These include doctoral dissertations on Kuyper's theology—all of which are in Dutch.

## 1989

Begbie, Jeremy 1989. Creation, Christ, and culture in Dutch neo-Calvinism. In *Christ in Our Place*, edited by Trevor A. Hart and Daniel P. Thimell. Allison, PA: Pickwick Publications, 113-132.

This article in the *feestschrift* for James Torrance looks at Kuyper and Bavinck and their emphasis on the sovereignty of God and Kuyper's sphere sovereignty, and then common grace. Begbie then looks at Herman Dooyeweerd's development of Kuyper's ideas into a Christian philosophy.

He thinks that neo-Calvinism is "plagued by certain weaknesses which at root concern the fundamental doctrines of God, Jesus and the created order." He nonetheless recognises the wealth of insight to be gained for its concern for a Christian approach to culture. He goes on to apply some of these insights in his 1991 *Voicing Creation's Praise*.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. 1989. On Christian learning. In: Paul Marshall, Sander Griffioen and Richard Mouw (editors) *Stained Glass: Worldviews and Social Change*. Lanham: University Press of America, 56-80.

Also reprinted in Joldersma and Stronks (Ed.) (2004).

Wolterstorff opens by noting that neo-Calvinists maintain that scholarship is not neutral; this is in contrast to the Leibnizian ideal. He then turns to Kuyper's "The twofold development of science" in *Principles of Sacred Theology*. For Wolterstorff the weakness of Kuyper's position is in his dividing up humanity: Christians and non-Christians. Kuyper's "brandishing of metaphors does not illuminate the way religion influences scholarship or supports the contention that this influence must resort in two kinds of science." (64) Too many have accepted Kuyper's thesis: "two kinds of people, hence two kinds of science." Wolterstorff is sceptical of this thesis but does not doubt that there is such a thing as Christian learning. For him Christian learning is *faithful* learning not different learning.

Wolterstorff also takes issue with some: "The notion that scholarship may at times yield religious illumination is, to many neo-Calvinists abhorrent." He rejects a one-directional, non-interactionist view.

## Reviews

Langley, McKendree. 1989 Review of *Dr. Abraham Kuyper en de Vrije Universiteit* by J. Stellingwerff. *Westminster Theological Journal* 51(2) (Fall): 404-405.

Langley writes:

In spite of the wealth of facts contained in this work, it is a bad book because it is so unbalanced. Stellingwerff has done a disservice to those seeking to understand Kuyper's inspiring example of living the Reformed faith in a secular world yet with more successes than failures, with more commitment to God than capitulation to base motives. One has the clear impression throughout the book that Stellingwerff was determined to discredit Kuyper because he seems to be so upset with the continuing impact of the Kuyper legacy.

As Langley points out Stellingwerff presents a largely negative portrayal of Kuyper, portraying him as a power-driven, manipulative, and romanticized figure influenced by nineteenth-century imperialism and paternalism. He maintains that Stellingwerff deconstructs both Kuyper's personal narrative and the theological worldview upon which the VU was founded.

## Conclusion

Clifford Anderson recently suggested that prior to the late 1990s "Much of the previous literature in English [on Kuyper] was of a conservative bent and hagiographic in nature" (Anderson 2025: 50). This survey has shown that it was not always the case. Kuyper's legacy, as seen in the 1980s, is marked by an appreciation of both his strengths and weaknesses. He was an inspired leader whose theological, educational, political, and cultural endeavours left a lasting mark on Reformed Christianity and the Netherlands. His ideas, however, raised difficult but relevant questions. Work on Kuyper during this decade highlights the enduring influence of his thought but also the tensions and compromises that shape its reception.

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