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## PILLARS, PLURALISM AND SECULARISATION: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF DUTCH SCIENCE(S) OF RELIGIONS

To Lammert Leertouwer  
In gratitude for bringing me to Leiden

The purpose of this contribution is to present a first draft of a social history of Dutch Science(s) of Religions.<sup>1</sup> In modern (post-1970) Dutch Science of Religions, religions are mostly investigated empirically, that is as cultural phenomena only.<sup>2</sup> Their meta-empirical origin, postulated by believers, is neither denied nor affirmed, because it is meta-testable, and, for that reason, cannot be an object of Science of Religions. Religions are, consequently, regarded only as parts, and products, of the cultural, social and other contexts of historical societies.

Just as religions are shaped and constrained by the time- and place-bound cultures, so is the academic Science of Religions itself also a product of particular societies. It too is born and bred in, and shaped and constrained by, particular societies, or even parts of them, and their specific historical contexts. So, if modern methodology requires Science of Religions to study religions as cultural products, then that same methodology demands too, that it analyses and understands itself also as a time- and place-bound phenomenon. The aim of this essay is to show that Dutch Science of Religions is shaped and constrained by the peculiar social, political, religious and academic histories of the Netherlands of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and may, therefore, correctly be termed a product of that history.

The title of this essay presents a synopsis of its contents. ‘Pillars’ [83] refers to the segmentation of Dutch society into ideologically opposed communities between 1880 and 1960, and to their demise after World War II. ‘Pluralism’ and ‘secularisation’ are labels for two dominant features of 20<sup>th</sup> century history of Dutch religions. The first tag, ‘pluralism’, refers to the remarkable change in the Dutch religious scene: from fairly monochromatically Christian, but even so heavily polarised and segmented, in the first half of that century to a dazzling diversity, tolerance and religious indifference in its second half. Factors that caused that change were de-colonisation, (religious) globalisation, and labour and ‘refugee’ immigration. The second label, ‘secularisation’, captures the rapid rate of disaffiliation from the Dutch mainline churches and Jewry (and from the other religious communities probably as well), which turned Dutch society from the ‘most Christian’ nation of Europe in 1950, to, most probably, the most secularised and irreligious one in 2000.

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<sup>1</sup> Translations from Dutch in this article are by the author.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Van Baaren & Drijvers 1973.

Lastly, ‘Science of Religions’ (*godsdienswetenschap*)<sup>3</sup> is an ambiguous term in the Netherlands. It may be used in three different, partly overlapping meanings. It is used commonly to refer to the disciplines pursued in chairs and departments (*vakgroepen*) of ‘Science of Religions’ (*godsdienswetenschap*) in Dutch Faculties of Theology. They are the History of (‘Non-Christian’) Religions – itself a conglomerate of diverse disciplines engaged in the historical study of single religions, mainly Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and some ‘Ancient Religions’ of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and perhaps others –, and the Comparative Study of Religions. *Godsdienswetenschap* has, however, been used also as a strategic term by the other departments and disciplines of Dutch *duplex ordo* Faculties of Theology in the public (or former ‘state’) universities in order to claim academic status for themselves, and exclude ‘confessional’ – church-tied – theological disciplines from it.<sup>4</sup> In addition, it has been used to refer to the scholarly study of any religion by any academic discipline in any faculty: Theology, Arts, & the Social Sciences, in Dutch universities.<sup>5</sup> I use ‘Science(s) of Religions’ in this article in this widest meaning. I subsume under it, therefore, not only (the several distinct disciplines of) Dutch History of [84] Religions – including that of Christianity, ‘biblical studies’, and Judaism in other departments of Dutch Faculties of Theology than Science of Religions –, and the Comparative Study of Religions, but also Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, and Anthropology of Religions. Within this wide array, however, my emphasis will still mostly be on Science of Religions in the first meaning, partly for the substantive reasons which I will discuss below, partly because I happened to belong to it for three decades, be it mostly, and now again, in peripheral positions.

The structure of my contribution follows from the fact that Dutch history in the past century and a half of has been marked by *verzuiling* (or vertical ‘segmentation’) and *ontzuiling* (‘de-segmentation’). *Verzuiling* refers to the period 1880-1960 when Dutch society was organised into a number of distinct *zuilen*, ‘pillars’ – vertical segments separating Dutch society along confessional and ideological lines. *Ontzuiling* refers to the demise of these ‘pillars’ after 1945. This article might, therefore, at first sight be divided into two distinct periods. But it is actually better divided into three fuzzy, partly overlapping periods: 1850-1960: the period in which the pillars emerged and achieved dominance; 1940-1970: the transitional period, in which they reached ripe old age, achieved a few more major successes, and began to collapse; and 1960-2000: the ‘post-pillar’ period. The purpose of this article is to show that these historical processes of segmentation and de-segmentation of Dutch society,<sup>6</sup> and their concomitant changes in the religious domain, deeply affected Dutch Science of Religions in the three periods to be discussed.

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<sup>3</sup> The best approximation in English of its first and third meanings is ‘the academic, or scholarly, study of religions’. Its second meaning may be rendered as ‘Religious Studies’. The literal translation of *godsdienswetenschap* into English is ‘Science of Religion’. I translate it as ‘Science of Religions’, because the singular ‘religion’ is deeply determined by the cognitive legacy of the Christian past of Western societies and much more misleading as a heuristic and analytical tool in research than the plural ‘religions’. Moreover, religions, in all their diversity, are the primary object of study of ‘Science of Religions’. Cf. Snoek 1999; Platvoet 1999: 498-505.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1998a. Cf. also below notes 15-23.

<sup>5</sup> As did Chantepie (1871: 3-7).

<sup>6</sup> The closest translation of *verzuiling* into English would be ‘pillarisation’, and *ontzuiling* might be rendered as ‘de-pillarisation’. Instead of these neologisms I use ‘segmentation’ and ‘de-segmentation’.

The first part of this article is, therefore, devoted to Dutch ‘pillar’ society between 1850/1880 and 1940/1960, to its ‘plural’<sup>7</sup>, *i.e.*, segmented, polarised, isolationist religious scene, and to the segmented Science of Religions they produced. The second part, 1945 to 1960/1970, deals with the transitional period, in which the pillars achieved great successes as political instruments of internal regimentation, and of political, social and economic emancipation, and began to collapse, being defeated by their successes as instruments of emancipation. In the third part, 1960/1970-2000, I examine first how, and then in how [85] far, pillars disappeared from Dutch society. Secondly, I present a summary of the religious developments: the rapid disaffiliation from the mainline churches and the increase of diversity in the shrinking and fragmenting religious scene – within the wasting churches by modalities; and without them, by the ‘fringe’ and immigrant religions. And thirdly, I discuss how these political and religious changes affected Dutch Science(s) of Religions.

*Pillars, Plurality, & Dutch Science(s) of Religions, 1860-1945/1960*

*In this part, I first review briefly the fons et origo of the Dutch pillar system: the modalities into which the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (NHK-church) was split after 1850. These modalities themselves originated in the polemics about ‘Modern Theology’ and its Science of Religions. I will, therefore, next briefly review the dominant position Modern Theology achieved in the theological training of NHK-ministers, and the kind of Science of Religions it produced. Then I will survey the ways and means by which the most powerful opponent of liberal theology, the orthodox NHK-minister, journalist and political leader, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), created the first of Dutch pillars, and a training for ministers from which Science of Religions was banned.*

*In this first of the two future ‘confessional’ pillars, a confrontation with, and isolation from, Science of Religions was cultivated for a number of decades. Segmentation, confrontation, and isolation also marked Science of Religions in the other confessional pillar, that of the RC-church as represented by Bellon’s Thomistic, apologetic methodology of Science of Religions. Isolation, and a modicum of confrontation also marked that of the secular, positivist, early social scientific studies of religions, as represented by Fahrenfort. And it inevitably, therefore, also confined that of the liberals in the NHK-church to a pillar – be it one that was imposed on them rather than freely chosen. In that ‘pillar’, moreover, a tug-of-war over the duplex ordo and Science of Religions was fought time and again, e.g., by the neo-orthodox scholar of Christian missions, Kraemer, who was, mirabile dictu, appointed successor to Kristensen in 1937. Lastly, I will draw attention to some other detrimental consequences of segmentation for Science of Religions.<sup>8</sup>*

*Modalities as (source of) pillars*

The emergence of the ‘pillars’ in Dutch society in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was directly connected with the rise of ‘modalities’ in the NKH-church between 1854 and 1913. In this Calvinist, former ‘public’ church, to which in 1849 54.6% of the

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<sup>7</sup> I understand by a ‘plural society’ one that is divided into communities cultivating their distinct identities, guarding their ‘borders’, and sanctioning crossborder contacts by which their separation from the other communities might be jeopardised. In a ‘pluralist’ society boundary fading is encouraged.

<sup>8</sup> These two introductory paragraphs have been omitted from the published version.

Dutch belonged,<sup>9</sup> divergent belief positions began to be competitively articulated in a new way after 1850. Institutions began to be developed in order to vie with other emerging modalities for the control of local congregations and the regional and central organs of NHK-church. Four such internal NHK-‘pillars’ developed and were organised as modalities between 1854 and 1913: three of the orthodox kind, and a liberal one.

The first, in chronological order, was the weak and poorly organised *Ethisch-ire-nische Richting* (‘Ethical-irenic Persuasion’), founded in 1854.<sup>10</sup> The next was the better organised and more powerful *Confessionele Vereeniging* (‘Confessional Association’), established in 1864. The development was completed and sealed when, between 1906 and 1913, the *Gereformeerde Bond* [86] (‘Reformed Covenant’)<sup>11</sup> was also organised as a modality. It left the liberals with no choice but to organise themselves too, reluctantly, into the *Vrijzinnige Vereeniging* (‘Liberal Association’) in 1913. These modalities were organised as exclusive associations of NHK-ministers. By 1914, every single congregation of the NHK-church was affiliated to one of these four modalities, and no minister could be appointed to a congregation unless the prospective candidate was a member of ‘its’ modality association.<sup>12</sup>

The original rift, however, was not between four associations, but between the influential liberals (*vrijzinnigen*), and a divided front of dissenters. The liberals were powerful because they dominated not only the NHK-church theologically but also the Dutch nation economically, politically and intellectually till it began to segment into pillars after 1880.<sup>13</sup> The subtly pervasive, and persuasive, power of ‘modern[ist]’ theology stirred the dissenters into defending, and attempting to salvage, traditional Calvinist orthodox positions by means of doctrinal polemics, in the course of which they considerably radicalised their positions into neo-orthodox theologies.<sup>14</sup>

These doctrinal battles led not only to modalities, *i.e.* doctrinal ‘pillars’, within the NHK-church, but also to the first proper pillar without it, when the followers of the orthodox NHK-minister, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), seceded ‘in grief’ (the so called *Doleantie*) from the NHK-church in 1886. His numerically small community was strengthened in 1892 by merging with an earlier (1836) secession from the NHK-church to form the neo-orthodox Calvinist *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN-church[es]). By these, and a number of other moves, Kuyper became the architect, first, of the (small) confessional GKN-pillar,<sup>15</sup> and its political party, the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* (AR, the ‘Anti-Revolution Party’), which had a wider electoral base among Dutch orthodox Protestants at first than his own GKN-followers only.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Faber *e.a.* 1970: 28; Dekker 1995: 18. Van Rooden (1996: 191-197; also: 167, 173, 181, 182, 185-188, 198-199) argues that the national confrontations on doctrinal matters from the 1850s onwards caused ‘modalities’, liberal and orthodox parties in matters of doctrine, to emerge in NHK-congregations. In his view, there is virtually no evidence for the existence of orthodox groups in the local congregations before 1850. Quoting van der Laarse (1989), he states that ‘the pillarised “religions” emerged in the process of the [political] pillarisation itself’ (Van Rooden 1996: 191). The reverse seems true.

<sup>10</sup> Abraham Kuyper (see below) branded the movement as a ‘half orthodoxy’ only, when it refused to join him in his battle against Modern Theology in the late 1870s. In his view, it would inevitably slip into liberalism because of its ambiguous view of Scripture (Augustijn & Vree 1998: 38-39, 122, 132-134).

<sup>11</sup> Its full title is: *Gereformeerde Bond tot verbreiding en verdediging van de waarheid in de Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*, ‘Reformed Alliance for Divulging and Defending Truth in the NHK-Church’.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. van Rooden 1996: 173, 174, 181, 182, 184-185; on the *Gereformeerde Bond*, cf. also Wiegeraad 1991: 61-79.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. Kruijt 1968: 50-57.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. also Molendijk 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. below note 72 on its size.

But, secondly, through these models, he became the architect also of a new, segmented political system: [87] the organisation of Dutch society into four ideological pillars between 1880 and 1960, as I will explain below.

*The liberal modality and its Science of Religions*

Dutch Science of Religions emerged with Modern Theology in the 1860s at the close of the unified, pre-pillar period of nineteenth century Dutch society, and as the intellectual, theological and political product of the elite ruling it. It achieved an unassailable position in the faculties of theology of the *openbare* ('public', 'state') faculties of theology at Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen and the municipal one at Amsterdam by the *duplex ordo* rule, introduced into the teaching of theology by the law on higher education promulgated in 1876. By that rule 'confessional', or church-tied, theology was banned from the 'public' faculties of theologies.<sup>16</sup> But that law allowed the NHK-Church and other churches<sup>17</sup> to appoint its *kerkelijke* ('clerical') professors at the university for instructing the numerous students of theology, preparing there for the ministry in these churches,<sup>18</sup> in the beliefs and traditions of those churches. These clerical professors were to receive a salary from the state coffers<sup>19</sup> and were permitted to take part in the academic rituals of the university.<sup>20</sup>

But they were not made part of the university, because they were deemed to lack in the scholarly impartiality and neutrality, their research and teaching being presumably tied to, and inspired by, the particular Christian doctrines of their churches.<sup>21</sup> Their research was deemed not to be '*op en om zichzelf*', ('by and for itself [only]'), but to be determined also by the particular faith of their church.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, by virtue of their appointment by a church, they were seen as remaining under its supervision and control.<sup>23</sup> As a [88] result, the 'clerical' professors were appended to the Faculties of Theology in a section, termed *kerkelijke opleiding* (the 'clerical training [department]'), apart from the faculty of theology, and accorded a status distinctly inferior to that of the faculty.<sup>24</sup> The members of the faculty, appointed by the state – more

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<sup>16</sup> By the articles 41-43, 103-107 of the law, the *duplex ordo* was introduced into the faculties of theology (Platvoet 1998a: 126-127). Cf. also Leertouwer 1989; Platvoet 1998a: 116-119, 125-130; Van den Broek 1995: 14.

<sup>17</sup> The Arminian church also had one clerical professor at Leiden University since 1873 already, C.P. Tiele (cf. Tiele 1873); the Lutheran and Mennonite churches had theirs at the Municipal University of Amsterdam after 1876. Tiele delivered his inaugural address as *kerkelijk hoogleraar*, however, '*in het Groot Auditorium der Leidsche Hoogeschool* (Tiele 1873: 1) as if he were a professor of Leiden University (which he became in 1877). He thanked Leiden University for granting him a doctorate in Divinity *honoris causa* (Tiele 1873: 37).

<sup>18</sup> In 1858, 465 students were enrolled at Leiden University. 186 (40%) were students of theology preparing for the ministry in the NHK-church (Van Rooden: 1996: 179)

<sup>19</sup> Article 104 of the law of 28 April 1876.

<sup>20</sup> Article 105 of the law of 28 April 1876.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. e.g. De Boer 1979: 2; Kloos 1979: 15; Van den Broek 1994: 13-16.

<sup>22</sup> De Boer 1979: 2, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Van Koningsveld (1979: 36n15) quotes the relevant articles of the 1969 rules of the NHK-church; cf. also Kloos 1979: 14.

<sup>24</sup> In the course of the twentieth century, however, the position of the *kerkelijke hoogleraren* was considerably strengthened by the tacit agreement that they too had *ius promovendi*. That is, they could supervise, and serve as *promotor*, for a PhD on a subject in confessional theology and from the point of view of that theology (Kloos 1979: 20). Their position was further strengthened in 1961 by the *Wet op het Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs* (WWO). Article 84 WWO awarded them the position of advisor in meetings of the faculties of theology, and the right to sit in on, and take part in, its examinations (Kloos 1979: 13). From this grew another tacit consensus that students of theology might take a discipline of

recently by the university – were deemed to research the religions of humankind as a human phenomenon only, in exactly the same manner as their colleagues in the historical, philological, philosophical and social sciences in other faculties of Dutch universities.<sup>25</sup> That is, they were viewed as studying religions, and Christianity, without any regard to the theology of the particular church, the NHK-church, to which they as a rule belonged.<sup>26</sup>

The faculties ‘proper’ were limited to the professors appointed (formally) by the Crown to teach – in Tiele’s terminology – ‘scientific theology’,<sup>27</sup> untrammelled by supervision from a Christian church.<sup>28</sup> They mainly taught the new disciplines of the critical study of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, Philosophy of Religion, and the General History of Religions.<sup>29</sup> Through the pioneering works of Tiele (1876-1902) and Kristensen (1902-1938) at Leiden, Chantepie de la Saussaye (1878-1899) at Amsterdam, and Van der Leeuw (1918-1950) at Groningen, the Science of Religions developed strongly in these faculties and deservedly acquired an international reputation for its high academic standards.

But *duplex ordo* (‘public’, *i.e.*, state-supervised) theology was also clearly ancillary to Protestant pre-occupation with the Bible as the canon of Christian doctrine, and to the consequent preoccupation of liberal Protestants with the critical, historical and philological, study of the Bible. The historical research of liberal Science of Religions scholars was directed virtually exclusively at the *Umwelt* of the Bible: the religions of the ancient Near East religions before and during Old Testament [89] times:

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confessional theology as a *bijvak* (minor) in their *doctoraal examen* (M.Th exam) in *duplex ordo* (‘neutral’, ‘public’) theology (Kloos 1979: 13-15).

<sup>25</sup> For this received view of the neutrality incumbent on, and practised by, [present-day] Dutch *duplex ordo* theology, and its methodological foundation, cf. Van den Broek 1994: 16, 20-25; Van Wilgenburg 1994: 33-34; Van der Horst 1994: 84; De Groot 1994: 142, 143, 152, 156; Van den Berg 1978: 207, 209-213. *Duplex ordo* theology is not, Van den Broek (1994: 22) writes, ‘science of God, but science of religions[, because God] is a transcendent reality [and] can never be an object of study. [... *Duplex ordo* theology] researches canonical scriptures not as infallible revelation, but merely as human reactions to the experience of the transcendent. [...] Scholarship in a public faculty of theology is not ‘Scripture-bound’ nor determined by the [NHK-] church and [its] dogms’. Van Wilgenburg (1994: 33-34) terms God ‘meta-testable’ and, therefore, a province of research which is alien to modern science, for the ‘proofs’ of his existence are not reproducible in a forum of neutral, competent scholars. They cannot be demonstrated in ways acceptable to at least a majority of the community of scholars. He holds that ‘scientific theology’ must not only use the techniques of modern science, but also operate within the strict boundaries imposed by them (48). But cf. below notes 25, 32-38.

<sup>26</sup> Before 1950, however, some faculties and professors traditionally disregarded this separation of confessional theology and academic scholarship in religions in their teaching practice and publications. The Utrecht Old Testament scholar J.J.Ph. Valetton (1848-1924) publicly denounced the *duplex ordo* in 1898 as ‘a mistake, and actually as a crime’. In 1905, he pleaded that theology – which at that time served virtually exclusively for the training of the future NHK-ministers – be transferred from the public universities to special institutes for theology, to be located in the cities in which the universities were housed (Broeyer 1994: 64-67).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Platvoet (1998a: 117-119) on Tiele’s programme of ‘scientific theology’. Cf. also Tiele (1873: 39): ‘Theology and Science of Religions must not be practised separately. If Theology is to be truly scientific, it must [...] fuse with Science of Religions’.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Tiele (1873: 39): ‘Science has no fatherland, nor is it bound to churches’; cf also Platvoet 1998a: 116-117, 126-130, 138. Schreuder (1990: 29) viewed Leiden ‘Modern Theology’ as the uninhibited, radical ‘breakthrough of the Enlightenment *post festum*’, *i.e.*, as anachronistic. If that is so, then it is only fair to point out, that it took nearly another century for this Enlightenment to dawn upon Dutch Roman Catholic Theology.

<sup>29</sup> As well as the History of the ‘Israelite’ Religion; the History of Christianity and of the Christian beliefs; the History of the Doctrine concerning God; Ethics; and the Encyclopaedia of Theology (article 42 of the law of 28 April 1876).

Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the ancient extra-biblical Semitic religions.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, some attention was given to the religions of ancient Greece<sup>31</sup> and Rome; and to the ‘problem’ of the ‘primitive’ religions by Tiele, Visscher and Van der Leeuw.<sup>32</sup> However, only scant, perfunctory attention was paid, in generalist, introductory surveys, to the numerous other major religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.

In addition, despite its emphasis on ‘the empirical origin of all knowledge, [Modern Theology] also found room for a special organ for bringing man into contact with the supernatural’.<sup>33</sup> That postulate turned this Science of Religions into, at heart, a normative theological discipline,<sup>34</sup> most explicitly so with Van der Leeuw who simply chose to ignore the *duplex ordo* in the mono-denominational Groningen faculty and re-confessionalised Science of Religions from the very outset.<sup>35</sup> As did many of colleagues in the pillar period.<sup>36</sup>

In retrospect, it is clear that the ‘Science’ of Religions of these Christian theologians was based on a number of non-verifiable/non-falsifiable axiomatic belief postulates.<sup>37</sup> Two respected the reality of the transcendent realm and the human soul.<sup>38</sup> Another assumed that it was normal and necessary for humans to be in touch with that a-

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1998a: 128-129.

<sup>31</sup> Particularly by Van der Leeuw; cf. Hofstee 142-170

<sup>32</sup> Tiele 1873; Visscher 1911; Van der Leeuw 1937.

<sup>33</sup> Otterspeer 1989a: 206-207.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1998a; cf. also De Boer 1979: 3-4. De Knijff (1994: 87-89, 100-101) correctly infers from the inclusion of the new discipline of Philosophy of Religion in *duplex ordo* faculties of theology that they were meant to abstract only from the truth claims of particular Christian churches, not from ‘the question of God as quest for ultimate, all-encompassing truth’, that is from attempting to establish universally valid religious truths.

<sup>35</sup> Platvoet 1998a: 130-133; Van der Leeuw 1918: 17-18; 1933: 647, 652. Van der Leeuw (1947/48: 655-656) pleaded for ‘a powerful Christian witness in the public university’. Protestant scholars, who hid their religion in a bombproof shelter, lived in a fool’s paradise, he said.

<sup>36</sup> Before 1950, professors of Dutch *duplex ordo* theology were nearly always professing members of the NHK-church, who actively participated in the life of that church, local and national. They often served, or had served, as ministers of that church, and regarded the training of pious ministers for that church as their first and foremost task. Their scholarly ‘objectivity’ was more often than not an optical illusion (cf. Broeyer 1994: 65). They saw the training of pious ministers for the several modalities of the NHK-church as their most important task (cf. e.g. Edelkoort, H.W. Obbink, van Selms & Vriezen 1939; note 25)

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1994a: 27-30.

<sup>38</sup> Van den Broek (1994: 16-18) explicitly denies the ‘curious view’ that [present-day] *duplex ordo* theology is normatively inspired by some extra-scientific norm. He greatly regrets the emergence of views and patterns of institutional organisation of research in recent decades [1970-1990] that increasingly stress that Science of Religions is different from its ‘sisters’ in the *duplex ordo* faculties of the theology. It is true that a neutral attitude has increasingly prevailed in Dutch *duplex ordo* theology after 1960, when theology was de-pillarised, as I will show below. But that scholarly dispassionate distance towards either liberal, supra-confessional theology or the confessional theology of one of the NHK-modalities was regularly absent from *duplex ordo* theology in the pillar period, as I have shown elsewhere (Platvoet 1998a, 1998b) and here again. Cf. also De Knijff (1994: 91-92, 100-101) on modern *duplex ordo* theology reflecting on the one hand modern [materialist] concepts of science and being fundamentally different from *duplex ordo* theology as established in 1876, and on the other, surreptitiously retaining its traditional engagement with the quest for ultimate religious truth. I may add that the earlier tradition of the several *duplex ordo* faculties keeping in close touch with their ‘own’ NHK-modality and its denominational theologies has also not been abandoned. The boundary between ‘academic’ and ‘confessional’ theology remained quite permeable, though more in some faculties and some departments than others. That is clear from the persistent practice that the NHK-church appoint some faculty member to teach a specific clerical subject, or that a clerical professor is also given an appointment in a faculty department. That was, and is, the case, e.g. with Missiology in the past decades. The NHK-appointee for *apostolaat* (‘mission’) was appointed also in the faculty department of Church History (cf. e.g. Den Besten e.a. 1980; cf. also above, note 23).

empirical realm;<sup>39</sup> and that humans possess spiritual faculties through [90] which they may enter into a relationship with it.<sup>40</sup> Another again, that man is *homo religiosus*, that is: all humans are religious by nature. All religions are, therefore, basically equal, and equally worthy of respect.<sup>41</sup> Kristensen based on this latter postulate the important methodological rule of the Science of Religions of liberal Protestant theology that all religions should be understood with empathy, and be described after the beliefs of the believers, and not be judged as idolatry or naive superstition after those of the scholar.<sup>42</sup> By insisting that Science of Religions should not be evaluative, but only present the reader with accurate historical information about other religions,<sup>43</sup> Kristensen contributed significantly to the dissolution of the intimate link between Science of Religions and Philosophy of Religion in Tiele's time.<sup>44</sup>

Another postulate was that religion, as the relationship of humans with the transcendent, and vice versa, was *sui generis*, i.e., unique, among human institutions.<sup>45</sup> Van der Leeuw insisted that God's revelation was the origin and heart of all human religion,<sup>46</sup> and that phenomenology of religion is 'readiness to accept revelation' (*Bereitschaft zur Offenbarung*).<sup>47</sup> It must, therefore, on no account be subjected, said Van der Leeuw in 1924, to investigation by the natural sciences and their 'the naive illusion of objectivity'. It must also 'keep far from [disciplines] which [...] explain religious phenomena [91] by [...] non-religious ones: nature, human society, primitive science, etc.'.<sup>48</sup> For, however important the influence of these phenomena upon religions may actually have been,<sup>49</sup> by disregarding the meta-empirical part of religion—by which it was only properly constituted—, they reduced them to something purely human and natural. By this reduction, they explained religion 'away', assuming implicitly or explicitly on ideological grounds, that religion was a merely human, time- and place-bound phenomenon.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> E.g. Chantepie (1871: 10): 'the relationship between humans and God is the first and necessary condition of religion. Without it, religion would be null and void [...]and] nothing more than a disease of the human mind.'

<sup>40</sup> E.g. Chantepie (1871: 10-11): the spiritual nature of humans is the second necessary condition of religion, not because man has mental faculties (as noted by Darwin), but because man alone among all creatures may enter into a relationship with God. Cf. also Kristensen 1980: 37.

<sup>41</sup> Chantepie (1871: 9, 14): religion permeates human existence completely; his spiritual nature is essential in man and distinguishes him from all the other creatures. Cf. Van der Leeuw 1933: 643-646; 1937: 159-167.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. e.g. Kristensen 1980: 8-10, 21-23, 24; 1960: 6-7, 11, 13, 22, 23; Van der Leeuw 1948: 2, 6-7; 1933: 640-643, 648, 649. Cf. however also Platvoet (1998a: 150n115) on important differences in the methodological positions of Kristensen and Van der Leeuw in this respect.

<sup>43</sup> Kristensen 1980: 16, 18-19, 21-23; 1960: 1-2, 11-15.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. also Van der Leeuw 1933: 651-652.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Obbink 1933: 14, 21. 'The Church' – another theological postulate – was also *sui generis* to Van der Leeuw (1946/47: 78, 79).

<sup>46</sup> Van der Leeuw 1933: 634-635, 643-648; 1948: 8-10.

<sup>47</sup> Van der Leeuw 1933: 648. He is quoting here the Jesuit E. Przywara, the RC pioneer in Philosophy of Religion, whom he praised for his exclusion of [RC] apologetics from Philosophy of Religion and for practising an RC *duplex ordo* approach by strictly separating science and faith (Van der Leeuw 1933: 647). Cf. also Van der Leeuw (1937: 162) on the 'reality' (*realiteitskarakter*) of the 'experience of the Presence, of the Encounter' in religious rituals.

<sup>48</sup> Van der Leeuw 1948: 8. N.B.: The title and pagination of the 1948 second edition differ from those of the first edition in 1924, but the text is fully identical.

<sup>49</sup> Van der Leeuw 1948: 8.

<sup>50</sup> Chantepie (1871: 11-12) refused to accept Darwin's postulate that man had evolved from lower creatures without religion. Cf. also Kristensen 1960: 15-18.



And its last postulate was, therefore, that the scholar of religions must himself be a believer.<sup>51</sup> The rule of method that a scholar should approach his object of study with scholarly impartiality was derisively dismissed by Van der Leeuw as an impossible, undesirable and even ‘positively fateful’ *standpuntloos standpunt* – ‘standpointless standpoint’.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, just as faith – *i.e.*, Van der Leeuw’s liberal Christian beliefs – did not, he held, exclude *epochè* (the suspension of normative Christian theological or philosophical judgements of the scholar in respect of the truth claims of specific religions), so did *epochè* not exclude faith. Even though it was advisable and expedient, as a rule of method, to have *epochè* precede the study of religions in order to forestall that it was replaced by some crude bias, a scholar could not possibly understand religious life by contemplating it from afar. *Epochè*, said Van der Leeuw, was not the relationship of the cold spectator, but the loving gaze of the lover at the object of his love.<sup>53</sup> Actually, it was the gaze of the believer at the object of his faith. Van der Leeuw actually proposed a (liberal) theological epistemology in these pages. He argued that all understanding is ultimately religious, for its last ground is being understood (and loved) by God.<sup>54</sup>

#### *De Graaf’s Psychology of Religion*

The liberal theologian and psychologist H.T. de Graaf (1875-1930) was appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Ethics & the Encyclopedia of Theology in the [92] *duplex ordo* Leiden Faculty of Theology in 1926. He was the first Leiden Professor to specialize in Psychology of Religion. But he died already in 1930.<sup>55</sup> He wrote the earliest (1905) survey of American Psychology of Religion, other articles, and a general introduction to (his) Psychology of Religion. He separated Psychology of Religion, as an ‘analytical [and empirical] science’, from matters of truth as decided upon in (confessional) theology, philosophy of religion and the (reductive) ‘psychologisms’ of Freud and others.<sup>56</sup> ‘Religious experience’ was also not an object of Psychology of Religion, for its definition was always a religious assessment, *e.g.*, in the theological tradition of Schleiermacher. So was the notion of the ‘nature of religion’. Phenomenological bracketing, too, had resulted only in religion and religious experience being described from the modern Protestant theological perspective. Religious experiences could only be researched ‘in their [full] particularities’, as conditioned by centuries-old, rich and varied traditions.<sup>57</sup>

Questions of the truth and the nature of ‘religion’ should, therefore, said De Graaf, be decided on the basis of ‘the religion of one’s own circle’. Psychology of Religion had to offer little to [confessional] theology ‘proper’,<sup>58</sup> but much to history and phenomenology of religions, and in particular to pastoral theology for the ‘purification’ of religious life.<sup>59</sup> Despite his sharp separation of empirical Psychology of Religion from theology and ideologically inspired ‘psychologisms’, De Graaf he had no problem in regarding his empirical Psychology of Religion as *ancilla theologiae prac-*

<sup>51</sup> E.g. Kristensen 1980: 20-21; 1960: 9-10.

<sup>52</sup> Van der Leeuw 1918: 15; 1933: 613; cf. also Platvoet 1998a: 131-132, 150n115.

<sup>53</sup> Van der Leeuw 1933: 648-649.

<sup>54</sup> Van der Leeuw 1933: 647-648.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Van Belzen 1991: 26-27; 1992: 322, 325, 327, 330; 1999a: 15-16; 1999b: 294, 301-302.

<sup>56</sup> De Graaf 1905/1999: 30; 1928: 155-171, 174, 181, 182, 183.

<sup>57</sup> De Graaf 1928: 172-184.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. however the curious line in De Graaf (1905/1999: 34): ‘*Apologetisch werkzaam is onze wetenschap, zonder het te willen*’ (‘Our science [Psychology of Religion] is unintentionally active as apologetics’).

<sup>59</sup> Graaf 1928: 184-185; 1905/1999: 34.

*ticae*, i.e., as serving the pastoral interests of the liberal modality in the NHK-church. And in matters of theological truth, he withdrew upon his own circle.<sup>60</sup> By the 1920s, a measure of self-chosen isolation was pervading even De Graaf's *Psychology of Religion*, because the pillars were effectively segregating the Dutch by that time. [93]

#### *Kuyper's confessional pillar*

Kuyper was not only an orthodox NHK-minister, but also a journalist, and a superb political agitator and leader. He created the first of the four pillars from a part of the then emerging orthodox modality in the NHK-church by his use of six new religio-political strategies. First, he took a leading role, for nation-wide and local consumption, in the polemical confrontation on doctrinal matters between the new organisations of orthodox ministers and 'modern theology'. The second strategy was that of organising mass rallies and petitions to muster support for these religious confrontations, in particular that of April 1878 against the ('liberal') government's decision that the 'special' (i.e. confessional) schools would receive no support at all, not even a penny, from government funds.<sup>61</sup> Its success laid the basis for the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* (ARP), the orthodox-Protestant political party, which Kuyper founded in 1879. The third strategy was that of organising his followers, most of them *kleine luyden*, 'common people', into a separate community by developing an encompassing identity complex with its distinctive marks,<sup>62</sup> rituals,<sup>63</sup> associations and institutions for them. Fourthly, these effectively isolated<sup>64</sup> them from the dominant, liberal part of the NHK-church, as did their secession into the Neo-Calvinist GKN-church, which Kuyper endowed with a sense of mission, that it must preserve the 'true' Calvinist religion.<sup>65</sup> A fifth strategy was that he developed a full-fledged system of confessional education at all three levels for it, by which its special mission could be inculcated. And the sixth strategy consisted in making the GKN-church a force in national politics despite its small numbers<sup>66</sup> by concluding tactical political alliances in parliament with that other, much larger, and more underprivileged, minority, the Roman Catholics.<sup>67</sup>

[94] The orthodox-Protestant pillar, however, was politically divided because it was religiously divisive. Two Protestant parties heaved off from from Kuyper's ARP: the *Christelijke Historische Unie* (CHU) between 1894 and 1908; and the *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij* (SGP) in 1918. The CHU had its electoral basis in (most of) the modalities of the NHK-church, which caused its political unity to be impaired greatly by that religious division.<sup>68</sup> The electorate of the tiny SGP consisted of two small, rightwing Calvinist churches, the *Gereformeerde Gemeenten* and the *Christelijke Ge-*

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Van Belzen 1992: 322-324, 326-332; 1999: 13, 16 on this *ancilla theologiae* function.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. e.g. Augustijn & Vree: 1998: 20, 21, 35; Lijphart 1976: 109-111.

<sup>62</sup> Such as authoritarianism, moralism, and strict gender separation (Van Rooden 1996: 39).

<sup>63</sup> E.g. babies were to be baptised in church on the first Sunday after their birth (Van Rooden 1996: 35).

<sup>64</sup> On Kuyper's strategy of isolation, cf. Van Rooden 1995: 22-23; 1996: 166.

<sup>65</sup> Van Rooden 1996: 34.

<sup>66</sup> Kuyper's 415,000 followers made up 8% of the Dutch population in 1899 (van Rooden 1995: 24; 1996: 35). The NHK-church stood at 2,471,000 members, or 48% of the Dutch, at that time (Faber e.a. 1970: 28).

<sup>67</sup> Roman Catholics counted 35.6% of the Dutch population in 1879, and 35.1% in 1899 (Dekker 1995: 18; Faber e.a. 1970: 28). The political party of the RC-church in the Netherlands was the *Rooms-Katholieke Staatspartij* (RKSP) between 1896 and 1940. After 1945, it was reconstituted into the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (KVP).

<sup>68</sup> Lijphart 1976: 36, 125.

*reformeerde Kerk*, as well as part of the *Gereformeerde Bond*, the orthodox wing of the NHK-church.<sup>69</sup>

#### *The four pillars*

The Roman Catholics happened to be politically and religiously as conservative as the followers of Kuyper were at the time. They soon eagerly, and even more thoroughly, followed Kuyper's example of establishing their own confessional pillar.<sup>70</sup> In addition to these two confessional pillars, two secular segments came into being, a socialist and a neutral one. The socialist pillar consisted of labourers who had left the churches and synagogues<sup>71</sup> and had organised themselves in the early trade unions for waging their battles against their employers.<sup>72</sup> The 'neutral', or 'liberal', pillar consisted mainly of the former upper-class bourgeoisie. It organised itself only reluctantly<sup>73</sup> and in a fragmentary way into a pillar,<sup>74</sup> and remained politically divided.<sup>75</sup> The relative voting strengths of the four pillars were roughly 20 per [95] for the orthodox Protestants, 40% for the Roman Catholics, 20% for the Socialists, and 20% for the Liberals.<sup>76</sup>

These 'pillars', or vertical segments, of Dutch society provided their members with institutions that allowed them to heave off into separate communities with a strong group identity and boundary consciousness. A pillar usually developed its own institutions for seven distinct domains of Dutch society: the religious, juridical, educational, political, socio-economic, socio-cultural, and health and social welfare domains.<sup>77</sup> In addition to their separate religious and/or ideological institutions, they founded their own political parties, separate school systems, trade unions, newspapers, broadcasting corporations, hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the disabled and the old aged. In addition, they developed pillar-bound academic,<sup>78</sup> professional, recre-

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<sup>69</sup> On the SGP, cf. Janse 1993; Zwemer 1993; Stoffels 1993: 121-123; 1998: 138.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. also Schreuder 1990: 29-20.

<sup>71</sup> On the part of the secularised Jewish labourers in Amsterdam in unionism and the socialist pillar between 1870 and 1914, cf. Hofmeester 1999: 21-125, esp. 35-41, 50-51, 57-92.

<sup>72</sup> This was a fairly well-developed pillar too, but it lacked the important institution of its own school system (Ellemers 2000: 89). Its political party was the *Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij* (SDAP) founded in 1894. It steadily grew in number of seats in Parliament, from 2 in 1898 to 23 in 1937, when it took part in a government coalition for the first time. Its successor in the post-war period is the *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA).

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Molendijk 1996: 128-131.

<sup>74</sup> Ellemers 2000: 89.

<sup>75</sup> In three parties at first: the larger *Liberale Unie*, founded in 1894, and the smaller *Vrijzinnig-Democratische Bond* (1901) and *Bond van Vrije Liberalen* (1906). The first and the last fused in 1921 to become the *Liberale Staatspartij* (LSP). In 1946-1948, the LSP was transformed into the *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD), which has served as the political party of the (conservative) 'liberals' in the post-pillar period.

<sup>76</sup> Van Rooden 1995: 27.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Rath, Penninx, Groenendijk & Meijers (1996: 8-9) who follow Lijphart (1976).

<sup>78</sup> Two kinds may be mentioned here. The first consisted of the (GKN) *Vereniging voor Christelijk Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs* (1878), and the (RC) *Radboud Stichting* (1905). The former founded the Free University at Amsterdam and runs it to this day. Until 1923, the main activity of latter was preparing for the establishment of a Roman Catholic University at Nijmegen. Presently, it promotes RC views in the public universities by appointing professors extraordinary in RC theology and philosophy in them. The second kind is made up of the three academic institutions of the two confessional pillars. They are the two 'denominational universities': the Free University at Amsterdam, founded in 1880; the Roman Catholic University at Nijmegen, inaugurated in 1923; and the RC *Handelshogeschool* (University College for Trade and Economics) at Tilburg, which opened its doors in 1927. The degrees of the Free University were granted civil effect in 1905, and those of the RC University at Nijmegen in 1923. The RC *Handelshogeschool* was renamed, and expanded into, *Katholieke Hogeschool* first, and then into

ational, and other associations. By these institutions, the Protestant and RC-pillars (re-)confessionalised all, or most of the, activities, which were already regarded as secular in modern Western societies.<sup>79</sup>

In this manner, the pillars effectively divided Dutch society between 1880 and 1960 into four ideologically based blocks, of variable organisational thoroughness, two of which were religiously based, and two on a secular ideology. One was that of the orthodox Protestants, with pockets of virulent anti-papist sentiments. The other confessional one was that of the Roman Catholics,<sup>80</sup> with a strong [96] ultra-montanist loyalty to the Pope.<sup>81</sup> The third was the secular pillar of the Socialists; and the fourth the indistinct, secularising, neutral/liberal/conservative, reluctant one of the former elite.

These four pillars converted Dutch nation it from a relatively unified Protestant nation into a vertically segmented, plural society in the period 1880-1960. The functions of the three proper pillars were the emancipation of the deprived; the cultivation of separate identities; and social control *ad intra*. A function shared by all four was the cultivation of traditional Dutch pluralism *ad extra*.<sup>82</sup> Dutch society was, therefore, run in the pillar period by means of two complementary mechanisms. One was religious and ideological polemical rhetoric for the purpose of group separation and political contest. The other was that of tactical co-operation in Parliament for the purposes of a stable type of government and the emancipation of the minorities of Dutch society.

It was Kuyper again who created the political instrument for the latter: a polemical rhetoric of the irreconcilable antithesis between believers and ‘paganists’<sup>83</sup> in Parliament and in the nation. He reiterated time and again that the believers among the MPs represented the (orthodox, confessional) Christian half of the nation, and the ‘paganists’ among them its modern half. The former were unified by their Christian world view grounded in the Divine Revelation, and the latter by their modern naturalist and mechanistic world view founded on human reason. It had Darwin’s theory of evolution and its survival of the fittest for its centre-piece, and hallowed brute force, materialism and hedonism. In the religious domain, this ‘paganistic’ modernism suffered at most, if at all, a liberal, so-called ‘supra-confessional’, emasculated Christianity, based on a rational natural religion common to all humans.<sup>84</sup>

Alliances were concluded between the confessional parties in the Dutch Parliament on the basis of that ideological and political antithesis, which became the foundation of a coalition between the [97] confessional parties in Dutch politics from the late 1880s to the mid-1920s.<sup>85</sup> Against the claim of the ‘paganists’ in Parliament,

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*Universiteit Brabant*, its present designation. A third kind, denominational institutes of sociology of religion, will be mentioned below.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. e.g. Eisinga, Felling & Lammers 1996: 78; de Hart 1997: 107; Ellemers 1998: 436.

<sup>80</sup> This was the most unified and best developed pillar with an ‘all-embracing network of institutions covering virtually all activities [of Dutch Roman Catholics] from cradle to grave’ (Ellemers 2000: 89).

<sup>81</sup> E.g., some 3000 R.C. Dutch young men travelled to Italy in the late 1860s to join the military corps of the ‘Papal Zouaves’ in order to defend the claims of the Pope as a sovereign over parts of Italy.

<sup>82</sup> Ellemers 1998: 428, 431.

<sup>83</sup> Kuyper’s neologisms *paganist* and *paganistisch*, are retained as ‘paganist’ and ‘paganistic’. Kuyper coined these neologisms to point to the Greek-Roman roots of modern Western-culture. He avoided *heiden*, ‘pagan’ or ‘heathen’, because of its ‘idolatrourous’ connotations. (Augustijn & Vree 1998: 187-182, esp. 180).

<sup>84</sup> Augustijn & Vree 1998: 48-52, 165-182.

<sup>85</sup> It resulted in the ‘confessional governments’ of Mackay (ARP, 1888-1891), Kuyper (ARP, 1901-1905), Heemskerk (ARP, 1908-1913), and Ruys de Beerenbrouck I (RKSP, 1918-1925) and II (1929-1933).

that their non-confessional stance served the interests of the nation as a whole best, the confessional parties insisted on a policy of ‘parallelism’, *i.e.*, of equal government funding for the ‘Christian’ and ‘modern halves’ of the nation.<sup>86</sup>

The main goal of this contest and those coalitions was the emancipation of the minorities of nineteenth century Dutch society by the gradual expansion of the new constitutional means of voting rights from those for taxpayers only in 1848, to universal male suffrage in 1917, and universal adult suffrage in 1922. The coalition of the two main ‘confessional’ parties, ARP and RKSP, won half of the elections between the late 1880s and 1917. After 1917, the voting blocs of the three mainline churches (RC, NGK and NHK) enabled the three main confessional parties, RKSP, ARP, and CHU, to take part in all government coalitions from 1917 till 1940, as did their successors from 1946 to 1994.<sup>87</sup> That position in the centre of the Dutch political establishment for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century allowed the confessional parties to strengthen the confessional pillars considerably and procure for them all the funds and facilities they were in need of.

### *Kuyper and Science of Religions*

One of Kuyper’s main drives in assembling *het Volk des Heeren*, ‘the People of the Lord’<sup>88</sup> (the future GKN-pillar), was to defy, and defeat, the law of 28 April, 1876 on Higher Education in respect of the organisation of the faculties of theology at the public universities. The *duplex ordo* had ‘de-churched’ Modern Theology, as developed at the Leiden Faculty, and constituted it into a statutory part of the training of the future ministers of the NHK-church in all four public faculties.<sup>89</sup> In Kuyper’s view, the NHK-church needed ministers who had not been subjected a state-imposed liberal theology, as he had [98] been himself. He defeated that *duplex ordo* by using Article 99 of the Law of 28 April 1976 which permitted churches or certified associations to found their own special (*bijzondere*) institutes for higher education. In 1880, the *Vereniging voor Hoger Onderwijs op Gereformeerde Grondslag* (‘Association for Higher Education on the Basis of Calvinist Principles’) founded such a ‘special institute’: the Free University at Amsterdam, endowing it with three faculties: Theology, Law, and Arts.

Kuyper himself served as its professor of the Encyclopaedia of Theology from 1880 to 1901. It enabled him to ensure that the Faculty of Theology would be one with orthodox Calvinist dogmatic theology as its backbone and heart, *i.e.*, a *simplex ordo* faculty of theology, free from state-imposed liberal theology.<sup>90</sup> It also allowed him to determine which theological disciplines were to be taught in it, and which ones were to be removed from it. It enabled him also to permeate the faculty with his theological ‘antithesis’:<sup>91</sup> his radical opposition to modern liberal theology, its criticism of the Bible, its Philosophy of Religions, and Science of Religions. He banned the latter two from the Faculty of Theology to the Liberal Arts Faculty,<sup>92</sup> with the proviso that the latter was to be taught there by a scholar trained in the refutation of the heathen religions after the principles of orthodox Calvinism. In the Faculty of Theology itself, Science of Religions was replaced by *Elenchtics*, Kuyper’s neo-Calvinist version of

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<sup>86</sup> Augustijn & Vree 1998: 174.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Van Rooden 1995: 24, 27-28; 1996: 36.

<sup>88</sup> Augustijn & Vree 1998: 26, 40.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Augustijn & Vree 1998: 18, 20-21; Holtrop 1999: 256-258.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Augustijn & Vree 1998: 35-42.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Augustijn & Vree: 48-50, 167-168, 170-172.

<sup>92</sup> Stoker 1999: 179.

the patristic *refutatio paganorum*. Its special task was the refutation of all non-Christian religions as pseudo-religions.<sup>93</sup>

By making this attitude of refutation obligatory on the grounds of the exclusivist salvific claim common to all varieties of orthodox Christianity, Kuyper condemned the Free University to sterility in the academic study of religions for most of the pillar period. His colleague H. Bavinck,<sup>94</sup> and his Ph.D. student G.J. Geelkerken,<sup>95</sup> [99] proved greatly interested in Psychology of Religion, as developed in the US after 1880, as is clear from their well-informed reviews of it in 1907 and 1909. They were interested in it because it might be instrumental in the development of a more effective religious pedagogy, and for other pastoral concerns. Even so, they concluded that Psychology of Religion must be rejected, because it excluded the question the truth of religions and religious experiences. Being ‘a-metaphysical’, it neglected the ‘objective’ elements in religious experience, and therefore had to be rejected. Being a ‘subjectivist’ and ‘relativist’, introspective science, it was also dangerous, for it would ultimately cause ordinary believers to view religion as an illusion, because they would take its findings for objective truths. Another thesis on Psychology of Religion in Germany, defended at the Faculty of Theology of the Free University by K.J. Cremer in 1934, took the same position: Psychology of Religion should not evade matters of religious truth.<sup>96</sup>

The pastoral theologian and professor of Pedagogy, Psychology and Religious Education at the Free University, J. Waterink (1890-1966), developed a (neo-orthodox) ‘Christian Psychology’. In matters of religion, he based it on the *vera-falsa religio* dichotomy and held that only *falsa religio* was the object of study of Psychology of Religion. The *sui generis* character of *vera religio* and its origin in God’s revelation put it beyond the competence of Psychology of Religion.<sup>97</sup> Sociological reflection on churches and religion failed to develop in GKN-academic circles until the mid-1950s.<sup>98</sup>

Kuyper’s apologetic antithesis thus ruled out any Science of Religions other than a theological one based on neo-orthodox Calvinism. Thereby it effectively isolated the GKN-pillar and forestalled that it contributed to Psychology of Religion and the other Sciences of Religions in Dutch universities and elsewhere, despite a definite interest in modern (religionist) Psychology of Religion for the sake of improved pastoral training. Below I will show that it took a confrontation with living religions elsewhere by the missiologist Bavinck to break through this orthodox-Christian isolation and point to the need to introduce the academic study of religions also into the Faculty of Theology at Kuyper’s Free University.

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<sup>93</sup> Kuyper 1909, III: §§ 53-55, 78-79; Stoker 1999: 198n25; Holtrop 1999: 257.

<sup>94</sup> H. Bavinck (1854-1921) was Professor of Systematic Theology from 1883 to 1903 at the GKN-seminary at Kampen and from 1903 to 1921 at the Free University.

<sup>95</sup> G.J. Geelkerken (1879-1960) was excommunicated from the GKN-church in 1926 for not accepting the literal truth of Genesis 3 in respect of the snake speaking audibly to Eve. He seceded with his followers from the GKN-church. In 1946, he and they joined the NHK-church again.

<sup>96</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 27-30; 1992: 322-324; also 1999a: 16, 23; 1999b: 293-300, .

<sup>97</sup> Waterink 1927/28: 512-513, quoted in Van Belzen 1991: 30n15; cf. also 26n3, 161n65; 1992: 321n10; 1999b: 303-304. Cf. also Alma (1999: 307-310) on Waterink and other GKN-theologians.

<sup>98</sup> Stoffels 1999: 315-316.

*Bellon's Science of Religion in the RC-pillar*

The RC-church and pillar founded its own university at Nijmegen in 1923 with, of course, a *simplex ordo* faculty of theology for 'postgraduate' studies in RC theology.<sup>99</sup> The Flemish secular priest and Neo-Thomist<sup>100</sup> theologian, K.L. Bellon (1891-1957), was appointed to the chair of History of Religions, Christian Archaeology and Philosophy of Religion in that faculty in 1927. He developed a polemical methodology of Science of Religion<sup>101</sup> for apologetic purposes on the basis of a Neo-Thomist epistemology and metaphysics. He argued that a much higher degree of objectivity would be achieved in the study of religions, if the brilliant solutions elaborated by Thomas Aquinas in respect of the human knowledge about God, and the relationships between religion and revelation, and religion and reason, were honoured and applied.<sup>102</sup>

Bellon praised Wilhelm Schmidt as 'the prince of modern ethnology'.<sup>103</sup> Like Schmidt, Bellon held that the 'culture area' (*Kulturkreis*) approach to the study of pre-literate religions<sup>104</sup> proved beyond reasonable doubt that humankind's earliest religion had been a primeval rational monotheism.<sup>105</sup> It was 'rooted in man's most noble capacities of intellect, heart and will, already at the time of earliest humanity'. Although he admitted that the ethnological data on primeval monotheism assembled by Schmidt did not amount to a conclusive proof of the 'truth of the faith about primitive revelation', they did not contradict it either, he said, but rather supported it. In his view, they certainly did not support the theories of the evolutionists who explained earliest religion only from several purely human factors. Bellon likewise followed Schmidt in severely criticising the theories of anthropologists and other scholars on [101] 'primitive religions' as 'purely a-priorist' and 'reductionist', and as leading to religious indifference, agnosticism and atheism.<sup>106</sup>

Bellon admired Van der Leeuw,<sup>107</sup> studied his 1933 Phenomenology of Religion of 1933 thoroughly, and wrote a critical, but fair and extensive review of it.<sup>108</sup> He agreed with Van der Leeuw that Science of Religions should be the unbiased search for an objective understanding of other religions and cultivate an attitude of empathetic understanding in order that scholars may produce objective descriptions.<sup>109</sup> However, he berated him for only understanding them: they must also be explained. The reductionists' abuse of explanation for anti-religious or apologetic purposes did not invalidate explanation itself, but only its abuse, he said. Van der Leeuw, however, had bracketed explanation because of it. He restricted Phenomenology of Religion to a subjective understanding of religions, because his epistemology, said Bellon, was an idealist one, based on the religious a priori. And in last instance not even on that, but

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<sup>99</sup> Dutch RC priests did six years of training in philosophy and theology before their ordination in one of the more than forty RC seminaries in the Netherlands. They were those of the four dioceses (Utrecht, Haarlem, 's Hertogenbosch, and Roermond), the several religious orders, and the numerous missionary societies. Only a few of the priests were sent for advanced studies to the papal universities at Rome, Louvain University, or the Nijmegen Faculty of Theology.

<sup>100</sup> On the rise of Neo-Thomism after 1850 and its demise after 1950, cf. Van Melsen 1980.

<sup>101</sup> Bellon (1942: 142) admitted that his attitude towards Van der Leeuw's Phenomenology of Religion had 'hardly been conciliatory' (*weinig tegemoetkomend*).

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Bellon 1932: 20, 41-44.

<sup>103</sup> Bellon 1932: 52.

<sup>104</sup> On Schmidt's theory of *Urmonotheismus*, cf. Brandewie 1983: 41-46.

<sup>105</sup> Bellon 1932: 6, 316-348, esp. 325-331, 349, 378, 380.

<sup>106</sup> Bellon 1932: 380, 18-19, 24, 37, 46, 55-64.

<sup>107</sup> Bellon 1942: 121, 124, 132-133, 135, 142.

<sup>108</sup> Bellon 1942: 124-132.

<sup>109</sup> Bellon 1942: 132-133, 150.

on the religious intuition of the scholar of religions, thereby turning his Phenomenology of Religion into proper theology.<sup>110</sup>

Bellon, however, felt that he, as a Neo-Thomist, adhered to a ‘realist’ epistemology. It required that religions should not only be understood but also explained. For a negative reason because in Husserlian phenomenological reduction, the claim to the ontic<sup>111</sup> validity of the phenomenon studied was radically renounced and bracketed. What ‘appeared’ and was understood and contemplated, were phenomena of the mind, not realities as they existed in themselves. Indeed, the meaning discovered in the mental phenomena was imposed by Van der Leeuw upon those in reality. For a positive reason, because the object of Bellon’s ‘Natural Science of Religions’ was time- and place-bound human (empirical) religions, the meaning of which could not be properly understood unless their time- and place-bound, historical as well as psychological, particularities were properly explained. Their peculiarities were also a road to the essence of religious phenomena, because the human mind was capable of discerning the [102] general in the particular. ‘Understanding and explanation [...] are [therefore] absolutely in need of each other’.<sup>112</sup>

Bellon’s realist epistemology was founded, however, on Neo-Thomist ‘metaphysical realism’.<sup>113</sup> The *sui-generis* nature of religion demanded that one investigate not only the empirical particularities of religions at the level of the material and psychical realities, but also at the spiritual one. The spiritual was ‘as real as the material and therefore has causes which are also real and which can be investigated’. Van der Leeuw ignored that reality completely, said Bellon, and so failed to discover that ‘the mental capacities of humans and the objective world are so fine-tuned towards each other that the thought of God and the conviction that God exists must force itself upon man’.<sup>114</sup> ‘Every religious person is therefore convinced that superior powers interfere in his life’.<sup>115</sup>

Rejecting the ‘Protestant’ distinction between general and special revelation, Bellon also rejected Van der Leeuw’s view that God’s revelation was ultimately the source of all religions, all culture, and all understanding. Bellon also asserted that man might also be religious on the basis of his conviction that God exists, which conviction was not the result of divine revelation, but of ‘the normal activity of the natural abilities of humans under the influence of the objective world’. This ‘ontological structure’ of man as a ‘spiritual and moral being’ was the basis of (the) ‘natural religion(s)’ to be investigated in ‘natural phenomenology’.<sup>116</sup>

Bellon’s *simplex ordo*, Neo-Thomist Science of Religions was thoroughly conditioned by developments peculiar to an in-crowd of RC Thomist philosophers and theologians in France and Belgium at the time. They served as a mechanism for cultivating RC academic group identity, boundary maintenance, and emancipation.<sup>117</sup> As a re-

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<sup>110</sup> Bellon 1942: 128-129, 132-144, 152-153.

<sup>111</sup> This technical term is perhaps best rendered as ‘inherent in objects as they actually exist in empirical reality in and by themselves’.

<sup>112</sup> Bellon 1942: 123, 124, 127, 128n12, 133-138, 142, 150.

<sup>113</sup> The label is mine, but cf. Bellon 1942: 138, 141.

<sup>114</sup> He also failed to discriminate between ‘religion’ and ‘magic’, ‘religion’ and ‘pseudo-religion’, ‘God’ and supernatural ‘powers’ or lower ‘spirits’ (Bellon 1942: 142-144).

<sup>115</sup> Bellon 1942: 138-141.

<sup>116</sup> Bellon 1942: 153-154. An RC orthodox *vera-falsa religio* dichotomy is implied here. Though Bellon did not qualify original natural religion as ‘false’, it did ‘degenerate’ into historical ‘pseudo-religions’ full of ‘magic’.

<sup>117</sup> On Neo-Thomism as RC academic pillar ideology and instrument of emancipation, cf. Van Melsen 1980: 96-98.



sult, Bellon's attempts to debate the theory of Schmidt on primeval [103] monotheism with Van der Leeuw in *Studia Catholica* in the late 1930s failed dismally.<sup>118</sup> The isolation was reciprocal, however. Despite their exchanges in *Studia Catholica*, Van der Leeuw never mentioned any book or article of Bellon in his major publications, and referred only very exceptionally to those of Wilhelm Schmidt.<sup>119</sup> By the pillar mechanisms on both sides, Bellon's well-informed and often astute methodology for a 'natural phenomenology of religions' remained one of splendid isolation in the self-contained RC-pillar.

RC Psychology of Religion and Sociology [of Religions] likewise were none-existent for most, or all, of this period because of this splendid isolation. Only two RC authors reported about Psychology of Religion, as it developed in the US, before 1920. They took the same position as the GKN-authors: its approach to religion was wrong, because it bracketed the truth question; and its results would hurt religious life. Bellon, on the other hand, regularly reported on developments in Psychology of Religion in *Studia Catholica* in an irenic, matter-of-fact manner after 1930. However, F.J.T. Rutten, who was appointed professor of Psychology at Nijmegen University in 1931, was summoned by the diocesan bishop who cautioned him not to endanger RC teachings about the 'free will' in his classes by propounding the 'determinist' views of modern Psychology. Though Rutten acknowledged in 1937 that Psychology of Religion was a legitimate discipline, and useful for apologetics, if the scholar teaching it were a believer, no appointment was made in the RC University at Nijmegen till 1957.<sup>120</sup>

Modern Sociology, and the Sociology of Religion, did not develop in the Dutch RC academic pillar at all, for three reasons. One was that RC authors writing on religion and society from an RC point of view rejected modern, empirical sociology as 'extremely one-sided', because it excluded (RC normative) philosophy on society. The other was that 'RC Sociology' remained within the perimeters of recent RC teaching on the 'correct', or 'proper', social order, set out in the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) for (all) human societies, to wit that they were to be organised in 'corporations'. Such a social structure, it was held, would overcome all the evils of [104] socialism and liberalist capitalism, because it was believed to be grounded in human nature and 'natural law'. The third reason was that such a distinctive social teaching served the identity and political aims of the RC-pillar well as separating mechanism during the pillar period.<sup>121</sup>

#### *Fahrenfort's secular Science of Religions*

Another fairly self-contained pocket of Science of Religions was that of the social geographers and early anthropologists, particularly at Amsterdam University, who researched religions in a 'naturalist' spirit. Many of these scholars were 'free-thinkers', disaffected with religion, theology, churches, and missions. They took positivism as their discipline's normal, and normative, frame of reference, partly on grounds of ideology, partly for reasons of methodology. Ideology and methodology might, and did, subtly reinforce each other. Their ideology also served as an inspiration of 'functionalist' research, the main paradigm in Anthropology at the time. Its results were

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<sup>118</sup> Steur 1951: 241n84.

<sup>119</sup> Van der Leeuw 1933: 143, 145, 146n1; 1937: 15n1, 75; 1948: 64.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Van Belzen 1991: 26, 30-31, 249; 1992: 325, 331; Rutten 1937; Berger & Janssen 1980: 27.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Goddijn & Sloot 1978: 168-173; Schreuder 1980: 192-202.

sought not only for scientific reasons, but also because they were credited with an explanatory reductive ‘force’ on ideological grounds.<sup>122</sup>

It should be stressed, however, that an explicitly ideological intent seems most often to have been absent, or at most to have been a muted and minor background element. Most functionalist research into religions in the social sciences in the Netherlands in this period did not explicitly have a reductive intent. This is also apparent from the fact that positivist reductionism, as an ideological programme, had no major champions in Dutch secular Science of Religions. Dutch Social Science before World War II was marked not only by the relative absence of polemics, but also of communication between the schools. If social science scholars did communicate and criticise each other’s positions, a pervasive sphere of tolerance was common. The social sciences were in addition marked by ideological plurality, pillarisation, provincialism and conservatism; and by the virtual absence of polemics between ‘reductionists’ and ‘religionists’.<sup>123</sup>

[105] An exception to this rule was J.J. Fahrenfort (1885-1975), Reader (1933-1946) and Professor (1946-1955) of Ethnology at Amsterdam University. He was well known for his Ph.D. thesis of 1927 in which he critically examined Schmidt’s theory of primitive monotheism. He termed it ‘an artificial construct which collapses as soon as its foundations are investigated’.<sup>124</sup> His main objection to it was that it was built on data produced by selective, defective and tendentious ethnography.<sup>125</sup> Schmidt’s pupils had been instructed by him in his theory and then had been sent out on research trips for the express purpose of gathering the data that would prove Schmidt’s theory correct. In Fahrenfort’s view, such a method was flawed, for preconceived research would ‘naturally’ produce the data it required’. If a researcher was ‘totally preoccupied with a theory, he could no longer approach his object of studies in the detached way of the truly scientific scholar’. He would take as objective observations what were actually the ‘projections of his own mind upon the cultural life of the people to be studied’. He would only detect data that confirmed the theory and ignore those that contradicted it.<sup>126</sup> Whereas ‘every theorist is free to draw from the facts the conclusions which these seem to him to warrant, the facts themselves must be presented in a manner that is absolutely free from theory’.<sup>127</sup> As this was not the case with the re-

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<sup>122</sup> Cf. Van der Geest 1987: 4-8, 10-11; Kloos 1986: 204; Van Heek 1978: 16. Cf. also Hofstee 1997: 9; Locher 1978; Meerum Terwogt 1978; Kloos 1978; Grunell & Westerbeek van Eerten 1978: 240-241.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Van Heerikhuizen & Köbben 1978: 9-10; Van Heek 1978: 24-25; Hofstra 1978: 28; Ellemers 1978: 39-40, 42-46; Bovenkerk & Brunt 1978: 73-78; Locher 1978: 83-84, 92; Van Heerikhuizen & Wilterdink 1978: 192, 193-200, 206; Hofstee 1997: 10, 232. Cf. also Van Belzen (1999: 17-18) on the absence of polemics about Freud’s views of religion in the Netherlands in the pillar period. Because of the confessional context of much psychiatric care, discussions about Freudian psychoanalysis were avoided.

<sup>124</sup> Fahrenfort 1927: 22; cf. also 34-35, 42, 125. On Fahrenfort, cf. Köbben 1988: 83-84.

<sup>125</sup> Fahrenfort 1926; 1927: 133-168; 1930: 54-63.

<sup>126</sup> Fahrenfort 1927: 133-136, 144-145, 167-168.

<sup>127</sup> Fahrenfort 1930: 55. This is, of course, ‘an impossible demand’ (Köbben 1988: 88), as Fahrenfort (1938: 193-194, quoted in Köbben 1988: 88-89) later recognised. This privileging of ‘facts’ and aversion to ‘theory’ in the Amsterdam school of Ethnology had its origin in the ‘empiricism’ and ‘sterile inductionism’ of ‘the founder of Dutch Sociology’, S.R. Steinmetz, the first professor of Ethnology (1907-1933). It has been much criticised after World War II; cf. Van Heek 1978: 16-20, 25; Ellemers 1978: 37; Bovenkerk & Brunt 1978: 69-73, 77-78; Locher 1978: 84, 90; Meerum Terwogt 1978: 95-96, 97; Kloos 1978: 102-104; Woldring 1978; Goddijn & Sloot 1978; Heerikhuizen & Wilterdink 1978: 205-206; Grunell & Westerbeek van Eerten 1978: 236, 242.

search of the pupils of Schmidt, Fahrenfort termed the whole enterprise a classic example of selective and biased ethnography.<sup>128</sup>

This attack touched a raw nerve in Schmidt. He immediately [106] wrote a rebuttal full of invectives.<sup>129</sup> He qualified Fahrenfort's scholarship as the 'ethnology of the copyist, which achieves its highest possible success when it succeeds in copying [ethnographic data] without clerical errors' [*ohne Schreibfehler*]. He also characterised it as 'incredibly superficial', 'disingenuous', 'very inadequately documented', 'disconcertingly ignorant of the most elementary facts', and 'fanatic'.<sup>130</sup>

Fahrenfort responded in kind: 'Schmidt really seems to expect that the readers of his article [against Fahrenfort] would not critically test his assertions and, having read it, would be lured by his juggling [of ethnographic data] into retaining the [false] impression of the author whom he meant to destroy'. He rejected the 'unsavoury' manner in which Schmidt conducted his polemics.<sup>131</sup>

Fahrenfort was, however, only a relative exception to the virtually complete absence of polemics between 'reductionists' and 'religionists', for the primary inspiration of his polemics with Schmidt and others was not the reductive explanation of religion,<sup>132</sup> but concern for 'inductive' methodology. Fahrenfort insisted that 'facts' must be carefully verified, should be presented as they were in themselves, unsullied by any theory, and that they must not be selected or twisted to suit a theory.<sup>133</sup> He sharply opposed Friederich Engels' theory of 'original communism', and in particular the theories of Lévy-Bruhl and Gerardus van der Leeuw on 'primitive mentality', whom he accused them of representing 'primitives' as so radically different from 'modern men' as virtually to deny the unity of humankind.<sup>134</sup> He insisted that there was no essential difference between 'primitive' and 'modern' men: the capacities and cultures of the two were very similar. These similarities vanished from sight if one focussed [only] on 'the triumphs of the natural sciences of our civilisation'. He held that the [107] study of 'primitive man' was a fit means by which 'modern man' might learn a great deal about himself. Critical thinkers were as few in modern societies as they were in primitive ones, Fahrenfort said on the basis of his long experience as teacher in secondary schools.<sup>135</sup>

### *Kraemer*

In the NHK-church, the liberal modality had meanwhile weakened considerably by disaffiliation, and the reduction of the number of the liberal congregations; by hostile appointments to the *duplex ordo* faculties of theology by confessional coalition governments; and the rise of Barthian neo-orthodoxy among the 'clerical' NHK-professors teaching *at* these faculties. The most notorious hostile appointment was made in 1903 by the government, in which Kuyper himself was Prime Minister as well as

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<sup>128</sup> Fahrenfort 1927: 4, 44, 79, 101, 106, 115-116, 125-126, 129-132, 134-136, 149-151, 154, 158, 163; 1930: 55.

<sup>129</sup> Schmidt 1928; Fahrenfort 1930: 54; cf. also Brandewie 1983: 116-118.

<sup>130</sup> Quoted in Fahrenfort 1930: 11, 12, 18, 20-30, 30-37, 62.

<sup>131</sup> Fahrenfort 1930: 5, 12-13, 43, 53-54, 58. Cf. also Köbben 1988: 83-84; Triebels 1988: 119; Bellon 1932: 243n2, 326.

<sup>132</sup> Fahrenfort (1933: 172) merely observes that 'the conditions for the survival of the belief in supernatural influences have become very inauspicious in our society' because of modern men's increased reliance on the natural sciences and technology.

<sup>133</sup> Fahrenfort 1933: 19. 'For the rest, tendentious ethnography, *from whatever direction it may come*, must naturally be rejected in the sharpest manner' (Fahrenfort 1930: 56; his italics).

<sup>134</sup> Fahrenfort 1933: 10-11, 16, 19-23, 26-28; 1934, 1945, 1946. Cf. also Hofstee 1997: 232-233.

<sup>135</sup> Fahrenfort 1933: 168-174; 1958: 15. Cf. also Köbben 1988: 84-86; Kloos 1978: 101.

Minister of Internal Affairs. In the latter capacity, he was in charge of appointments to professorships in the public universities. In 1903, he appointed the orthodox Calvinist theologian Hugo Visscher (1864-1947) Professor of Science of Religions (1903-1929) in the Utrecht Faculty of Theology against the express wishes of that faculty.<sup>136</sup>

So, the tug of war about the *duplex ordo*, and Science of Religions, was renewed time and again. It was even carried into its very heart, the Leiden Faculty of Theology, in 1937, when at the behest of Kristensen himself and with the consent of the Faculty, Hendrik Kraemer was appointed as successor to Kristensen. Kraemer was a neo-orthodox missionary scholar of Javanese languages and Islam, trained by Snouck Hurgronje. He strongly disapproved of the *duplex ordo*. He held that Science of Religion(s) must be taught in the public universities in 're-unified', that is in re-confessionalised, *simplex ordo* faculties of theology. A 'dialectical' and 'radically biblical' *theologia religionum*, exposing the religions of humankind as diametrically opposed to the Christian faith, was to 'crown' (and control) Science of Religions.<sup>137</sup>

Kraemer taught courses on the modern non-Christian 'world religions' of Asia in the Leiden Faculty of Theology from mid-1937 to [108] the end of 1948, but actually did very little teaching for a number of reasons. He was heavily involved in international missionary work before the war. To cover at least for the classes in the ancient religions (deemed crucial by the faculty as ancillary to Biblical studies), the Leiden Faculty appointed, at Kraemer's request, the Egyptologist A. de Buck as Professor Extraordinary in the History of Ancient Religions in 1939.<sup>138</sup> During the greater part of the war, Leiden University was closed and Kraemer was interned by the German in St. Michielsgestel from July 1942 till early 1943. During the rest of the war and after it, Kraemer was heavily involved in 'revitalising' the NHK-church, so much so that he suffered a nervous breakdown in 1946. At the end of 1948, he resigned from his chair to take up a World Council of Churches directorship.<sup>139</sup>

#### *Pillarised scholarly communication*

Generally speaking, it may be said that political segmentation, religious modalities and ideological polarisation greatly strengthened the tendency towards isolation to which academic disciplines were already inclined by themselves, especially in a period like this in which a diversity of disciplines was emerging. Whatever small attempts at communication were actually made, in writing and even face-to-face,<sup>140</sup> virtually stood no chance of building bridges, but served to maintain distance and emphasise difference.<sup>141</sup> Hofstee's statement that there was virtually no communication in the pillar period between Anthropology of Religions in Faculties of Arts and the Science of Religions in Faculties of Theology is, therefore, generally speaking, correct.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Kruijt 1933: 2, 5, 15-19, 39-150 *passim*, 230-233, 243-299, 306-310; Wiegeraad 1991: 47-49.

<sup>137</sup> Kraemer 1937: 21-25; 1938: 101sq; Van Leeuwen 1959: 116, 118-119.

<sup>138</sup> De Buck 1939: 3, 5, 22-23. The disjunction of the General History of Religions into the History and Phenomenology of the Ancient Religions, and those of the Modern Religions, was followed by the Utrecht Faculty in 1968, and the Amsterdam Faculty in 1969.

<sup>139</sup> Van Leeuwen 1959: 93-113, 120, 126-157.

<sup>140</sup> Van der Leeuw was invited to attend the annual meeting of the Dutch Ethnologists of 1933 to present his views of Fahrenfort 1933 (Van der Leeuw 1934: 19).

<sup>141</sup> E.g. the Utrecht professor of History of Religions from 1913 to 1938, H.Th. Obbink (1869-1947), added the warning *roomsch* ('Roman Catholic') to references to Roman Catholic scholars (Obbink 1933: 27, 211, 212, 281), Wilhelm Schmidt and RC 'modernists' like Loissy excepted. The warning was dropped from the 1947 second edition.

<sup>142</sup> Hofstee 1997: 10. The Faculties of Social Sciences were founded only after World War II.

[109] But it is of interest that it needs to be qualified for Utrecht University, for reasons of religious affinity, that is for pillar and modality reasons. Two examples are J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, professor of Ethnology from 1913 to 1935, and his successor H.Th. Fischer ([1935-]1946-1970). They kept in close touch with H.Th. Obbink and were greatly interested in the History of Religions as taught by Obbink<sup>143</sup> and in the role of the Christian missions in the Dutch colonies. Fischer stressed the need for cultures to have a religious foundation, regretted the secularisation of Western society and was greatly interested in Parapsychology.<sup>144</sup>

A third example is J. van der Spek (1886-1982), psychiatrist and theologian, who gained a Ph.D in theology and medicine in 1927. He became director of a psychiatric hospital, and was admitted as *privaat docent* (unsalaried university lecturer) to Utrecht University in 1931.<sup>145</sup> In his public lecture on the ‘knowledge of God of humans as a psychological datum’, he defined Psychology as a biological science, which did not deal, therefore, with validity and truth in religious matters. He surmised that humans were genetically endowed with a ‘religious sense’. Taking ‘normal’, mature persons, educated by parental care and their environment towards commitment to their religion, as his object of research, he found that they established a personal relationship with ‘the above’, similar to that postulated by Schleiermacher, but also with a strong sense of sin. He doubted whether there were actually any unbelievers. Psychology of Religion was important especially because of the great services it could deliver to pastoral theology.<sup>146</sup>

The last example is H.C. Rümke (1893-1967), Professor of (Phenomenological) Psychiatry at Utrecht University from 1936 to 1963, who was friendly not only with Obbink but also with Van der Leeuw and Ph.A. Kohnstamm (1875-1951). The latter was a convert [110] to the NHK-church and a ‘Christian personalist’ professor of pedagogy at Utrecht University since 1932, who worried about the increase of unbelief in Dutch society. He persuaded Rümke to contribute a volume to a series on ‘the psychology of unbelief’ for the general public.<sup>147</sup>

Rümke’s book, *Karakter en aanleg in verband met ongeloof* (1939), was his one and only contribution to Psychology of Religion. It became a best seller, because it was generally perceived as reversing the Freudian thesis, for Rümke asserted that religion was a sign of mental health in mature believers. It enabled them to overcome, he said, self-centred egoism and to surrender themselves in love to others, society, the universe, and ‘God’ as the all-embracing principle. Unbelief, in his view, was a developmental disorder and a neurosis. The book greatly boosted the shaken confidence of Dutch *homo religiosus* Sciences of Religion(s).<sup>148</sup>

Rümke, however, actually wrote that Freud’s analysis was valid for all ‘infantile, neurotic religion’, and in particular for that which developed into unbelief. By this

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<sup>143</sup> Very much a confessional one, as his students testified: ‘You have always succeeded in making your classes in the History of Religions fruitful for theology and church. Their purpose was to introduce your students to the world of the religious phenomena in such a way that they would become good ministers through them. Pure academic science, alien to your students’ later positions, was foreign to you. [...] Your purpose was guided ultimately by an all-pervasive worship of Him who could testify about himself that He is: the Way, the Truth and the Life’ (Edelkoort *e.a.* 1939: VII, VIII).

<sup>144</sup> De Wolf 1988: 95, 98, 99, 102, 105-106, 109, 110.

<sup>145</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 33-34, 160, 224; 1992: 326n37, 328; also 1999: 18, 22, 23-25.

<sup>146</sup> Van der Spek 1933/1999: 49-51, 54, 56-57, 58, 59-60.

<sup>147</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 50-51, 62-63, 166-168, 120-127, 233-234, 240, 241n47.

<sup>148</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 20-24, 64-66, 137, 171-173, 177-180, 201-202, 213-214, 216-217, 221-222, 244-248, 249-250, 270, 272-273, 276-278; 1992: 328-329. Cf. also Rümke 1939, 1952/1962, and Van Belzen 1991: 270-280 for an extensive summary of Rümke 1939.

move he turned Freud from an opponent into an ally and his psychoanalysis into a tool. But he also held that Freud's psychoanalysis was not valid for 'mature, true religion'. Once religious belief had been purified from all infantile projections, and "God" had become 'the unknowable, ineffable, indescribable, unfathomable, utterly different [being or principle], of whom we know only a feeble reflection through the Mediator',<sup>149</sup> it was *sui-generis* and irreducible, and no object for Freudian psychoanalysis.<sup>150</sup>

Rümke was aware that the argument he constructed was based on a religious a priori, and not on scientific, testable grounds. They were the subjective data of phenomenological psychiatry: his introspection into himself as a [barely] believing scholar, and his professional empathy as a psychiatrist into the experiences of some of his patients.<sup>151</sup>

[111] In terms of the academic 'modalities', the publications of Van der Spek and Rümke belonged to a minority of scholars of religions who were mostly privately religiously committed, or – in Rümke's case – barely religious and unchurched,<sup>152</sup> and opposed reductive approaches to religion and religions in non-polemical ways. In terms of the pre-war modalities of the NHK-church, they belonged to, or were friendly with, the rapidly weakening liberal modality.<sup>153</sup> In the political spectrum, their place was indistinct and liminal: they actually dwelled in the *interstitia* between the confessional and ideological pillars. That implied both isolation and limited opportunities for communication, *e.g.*, without and within the (politically divided) 'Protestant' pillar.<sup>154</sup> After the war, several liberal scholars of religion(s) were in the forefront of the battle for the political de-segmentation and re-unification of the Dutch nation.

#### *Other consequences*

The very heart of confessional segmentation demanded that Religious Education (RE) be confessional, *i.e.* that it be aimed at fostering 'the' (*i.e.*, its) faith in its pupils. The teaching of (the Christian) religion, the other religions and the other Christian denominations ought to be fully pillar-governed at all three levels of the Dutch educational system: primary, secondary, and tertiary. The purpose of RE in the *bijzondere* ('special') schools of the confessional pillars was, therefore, exclusively catechetical: its purpose was to instil the particular modality of the Christian religion of this confessional pillar into the pupil, and to impart its particular normative views about other churches and religions to them. Its aim was never academic: to inform them in a neutral manner about the religions of humankind and the many varieties of Christianity. In the public and other non-denominational schools, formal RE was either absent, or optional and then taught by ministers of the denomination of the pupils. Moreover, in as far as information about religion(s) was incidentally touched upon in class in non-

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<sup>149</sup> Rümke 1939: 61, quoted by Van Belzen (1991: 80, 276). Cf. also Van Belzen 1991: 185-197 on Rümke's 'personalist pantheism'.

<sup>150</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 15-18, 45-46, 48, 54, 57, 59, 61, 78, 79-80, 87, 93-95, 134, 146-172, 174, 201-202, 216, 270, 272, 273, 275-278; 1992: 328.

<sup>151</sup> Van Belzen 1991: 54, 57, 78, 127-128, 134-138, 162, 183-184, 197-199, 210, 216, 245-252, 271.

<sup>152</sup> Cf. Van Belzen 1991: 232-243.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. also Van Belzen 1991: 146.

<sup>154</sup> Rümke served at the GKN-Valerius mental hospital of the Free University at Amsterdam from 1918 to 1927. As he was not a member of the GKN-church, its Board was very reluctant to admit him. It kept him on annual contract, and watched him closely to forestall that he spread 'wrong' ideas and attitudes (Van Belzen 1991: 234n37).

confessional [112] schools, it was often presented from anti-religious, biased perspectives because of the pillar animosities which pervaded Dutch society.

Political segmentation thus forestalled that a state-supervised, neutral and academically sound syllabus on Christian diversity and the huge variety of the religions of humankind was developed for RE in Dutch schools.<sup>155</sup>

This was, and still is, greatly detrimental to Science of Religions in the Netherlands. It caused its Departments of Science of Religions in Faculties of Theology<sup>156</sup> to have much smaller and different student bodies to teach, and much smaller bodies of staff, throughout the pillar period than in e.g. Germany, the Scandinavian countries and the UK. They mainly teach the much more numerous bodies of student preparing for a career as RE teacher in (mainly) secondary schools. Dutch scholars of religions did not teach, and hardly teach now, future teachers of the subject Religion or *levensbeschouwing* (religious and secular cosmologies) in secondary schools, whether public or confessional, because such a teaching subject did not, and does not, formally exist as an examination subject in Dutch secondary schools.

The student body of the Science of Religions was restricted, therefore, mostly to students reading theology, of two kinds. They were, first, the candidates for the ministry in the NHK-church and the small Arminian, Lutheran and Mennonite churches, studying Protestant liberal theology at an academic level at the 'public', *duplex ordo* Faculties of Theology as required, or at least tolerated,<sup>157</sup> by their church or modality. And, secondly, they were (the very few) RC priests sent to Nijmegen University for further studies in neo-Thomist philosophy and theology.

[113] During the pillar period, Dutch Science of Religions was, therefore, heavily dependent for its institutional setting and opportunities for development on the *duplex ordo* faculties, and for its paradigm in academic research on their liberal Protestant theology. This was so for three reasons: ideological affinity, the law of 1876, and the segregation inherent in the pillar system, and the isolation it imposed. Science of Religions was, therefore, not only a modality but also a pillar phenomenon,<sup>158</sup> bearing the imprints of liberal academic theology,<sup>159</sup> of Fahrenfort's ideological, or of Bellon's theological opposition to it. Its history in the Netherlands was, therefore, mainly linked to the vicissitudes of academic liberal theology in Dutch universities. That was be, however, even more the case in the post-pillar period, when the walls of segregation collapsed.

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<sup>155</sup> Nor has it emerged even now, in 2000, after four decades of post-pillar period despite the huge changes in the religious scene described below. Attempts have been made since the 1980s to develop neutral, state-supervised, de-confessionalised syllabi on the plurality of *levensbeschouwingen* (religious and secular cosmologies) in modern Dutch society. The national boards of the different confessional school systems (RC, NGK, and those of the orthodox-Protestant mini-pillars) have so far effectively thwarted their development and introduction. More research into this development is needed, but cf. for recent developments in the RC-schools, Dirven 2001.

<sup>156</sup> I am not considering here the (few) students in the Faculties of Arts specialising in the various historical-philological disciplines in the academic study of religions, and after 1950 those in the Faculties of Social Sciences.

<sup>157</sup> E.g., by the orthodox *Gereformeerde Bond* modality, and other orthodox-pietist groups, such as *Het Gekrookte Riet*, the future ministers of which were mostly trained at the Utrecht Faculty of Theology.

<sup>158</sup> At least by political fact. Cf. Platvoet 1998a: 126-130.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1998a, 1998b.

*The Pillars at Ripe Old Age,  
1945-1970*

*The pacification period*

If the period from 1853 to 1913 was that of the contest between religious modalities in which the political pillars emerged and were established by religious and political contest, the period of 1917 to 1967 was the one in which they were pacified, securely established and matured to a ripe old age.

In 1917, three major political issues were settled. First, the battle over the state funding of the confessional primary schools was concluded by an agreement that they were to be paid by the state as fully as the public schools, that is in proportion to the number of their pupils. Second, all census limitations on voting rights were removed and universal suffrage introduced for all adult males in 1918, and for all adults in 1922. Thirdly, the often tense relationships between employers and employees were much improved by the institution of the *Hoge Raad van Arbeid* ('High Council for Labour [Issues]') in 1919. A period of great internal political stability followed in which the four pillars, on the one hand, agreed to disagree on the theological and ideological issues separating them and to accept a segmented, 'confederate' organisation of the Dutch state. On the other hand, they [114] developed a political praxis of regular, formal and informal, deliberation between the pillar elites, political, economical, cultural and other, for resolving issues in a pragmatic, conciliatory spirit.<sup>160</sup>

This pacification effected the political emancipation of three 19<sup>th</sup> century political minorities: RC, orthodox Protestants, and the de-churched socialist labourers by the political system of 'one person one vote' and proportional representation. It enabled the confessional pillar parties, RKSP/KVP, AR, and CHU, to take part in all coalition government cabinets throughout the pacification period (1917-1967) and after that till 1994, and the socialists from the late 1930s onwards. It also allowed the confessional parties to gradually increase the state funding for the secondary and tertiary levels of their educational systems. By the early 1950s, the confessional school systems were fully paid for from the state coffers, from pre-primary level to the university. By that time, they had far outgrown the public school system in numbers of pupils and schools at all levels but the universities, though even at the universities their student bodies were organised after the pillars.<sup>161</sup>

For the purpose of separation, the confessional pillars used an anti-modernist rhetoric. Even so, they proved highly successful modernising forces. Their political position enabled them to achieve both their aims of religious regimentation and socio-economic emancipation. In the pacification period, the mainline churches acquired their greatest hold ever on the religious beliefs and practices of their members.<sup>162</sup>

I take a few examples from my own background, the RC-church. In the period 1945-1955, devotions to the Eucharist (solemn masses, benediction, perpetual adoration, special feast days with solemn processions), novenas to the Sacred Heart, the rosary devotions to Mary in May and October, etc., were very popular among Roman Catholics, as was the practice of regular confession and receiving 'holy communion'. It was also the period in which the odd forty major seminaries (and as many minor seminaries) of the dioceses, religious orders and missionary societies, were full of candidates for the priesthood, and convents full of nuns. In the 1950s, the number

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<sup>160</sup> Lijphart 1976: 85-168, esp. 85-121

<sup>161</sup> Van Rooden 1995: 27-28; Knippenberg (1992: 229): in 1960, 71% of Dutch primary schools were confessional. Cf. also Ellemers 1998: 433; Lijphart 1976: 64-65.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Kruijt 1957: 204-206; *passim*; Knippenberg 1992: 228, 229.



[115] of children in the confessional schools reached an all-time high, and that of mixed marriages an all-time low.<sup>163</sup>

The confessional pillar churches, on the one hand, successfully used the schools, the media, trade unions, political parties, professional and numerous other associations to permeate the members of their pillars with their particular identities and group spirits. They provided them with the historical consciousness proper to 'imagined communities'. As a result, more than eighty per cent of the Dutch indicated that they were members of the mainline churches, and three quarters of them filled out that they were regular churchgoers in the censuses of 1947 and 1960. The confessional parties gathered in over half of the votes cast in elections before 1967. In the 1956 elections, 97% of the orthodox Protestants, and 84,7% of the Roman Catholics, voted along confessional lines. In brief, in the 1950s, the Netherlands was a very Christian nation, indeed acclaimed as the most Christian nation of Europe.<sup>164</sup>

On the other hand, by this very success, the confessional pillars sowed the seeds of their own destruction. Even by integrating their members into Dutch society politically and economically in segregated ways, and into the wider world by their missionary associations, they enabled them to develop vested interests in the Dutch society as a whole, and the world at large, and move upwards economically and socially. The seeds of destruction, planted into them by their very success as instruments of emancipation, matured towards the end of the pillar period. At the height of their success, the pillars began to wobble and collapse.<sup>165</sup>

These developments also sowed the seeds for a shift from orthodox to liberal positions in respect of the religions of humankind, and so of their study in Science of Religions, in RC and GKN *simplex ordo* theology. I briefly deal with three examples. First, the missiologist J.H. Bavinck initiated a shift from Kuyper's confrontational Elenchtics to a liberal theology of accommodation to, and dialogue with, other religions at the Free University. Secondly, the need to [116] stem defection from the Dutch mainline churches gave rise to pillar Sociology of (mainline church) Religion of an ecumenical kind. And thirdly, RC and GKN emancipation was completed and crowned by their seminaries being replaced by state supported institutions at an academic level and with an academic status. That enabled them to participate as equal partners in the reintegration of *duplex ordo* and *simplex ordo* theology after 1970.

#### *Bavinck and the morphology of religions*

Kuyper's neo-Calvinist exclusive salvific claim entailed the mission to save the 'pagans' by converting them to this version of orthodox Christianity. The Dutch colonies offered opportunities for the GKN-church to begin to practise that commission in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The confrontation with the living religions there caused J.H. Bavinck (1895-1964) to re-examine the relationship between Kuyper's Elenchtics and the religions of the world. Bavinck stayed as a GKN-minister on Java from 1919 to 1939, serving first two terms as minister to Dutch GKN-congregations there, and then a third terms as lecturer in the GKN-School of Theology at Jokja, on Java. Throughout his stay on Java, he showed much interest in meeting with the Chinese and Javanese and insisted on localising Christian theology by the study of Javanese culture and literature. He joined Kraemer in his study of, and meeting with,

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Bouritius 1979: 148-149; Knippenberg 1992: 229; Kruijt 1957: 209-210, 213-214, 221-225; Ellemers 2000: 96; Lijphart 1976: 69-70.

<sup>164</sup> Kruijt 1957: 214, 221-225; Faber *e.a.* 1970: 28, 108-112, 116-121; Van Rooden 1996: 10, 17, 39; Knippenberg & de Vos 1991: 46-47; Becker, de Hart & Mens 1997: 34n17; Lijphart 1976: 36-48.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. also Wichers 1994: 198; Becker & Vink 1994b: 439; Eisinga, Felling & Lammers 1996: 78-79.

*abangan* (Javanese) Muslim mystics, whose religion he described in his *Christus en de mystiek van het Oosten* (1934). From 1939 to 1964, he served as the first professor of Missiology at the Free University.<sup>166</sup>

Bavinck found a universal religious consciousness and involvement in Javanese and in ‘pagan’ religions generally, and concluded against Kuyper that ‘missionary work is much more than saying no. Its heart and meaning are rather a saying yes [...] to God’s speechless self-manifestation in the world, which the pagan also “knows”, even though he does not know it, because he has deformed and replaced it’.<sup>167</sup> By 1949, Bavinck had clearly transgressed the perimeters of Kuyper’s Elenchtics, was reconnoitring a liberal *theologia religionum* [117] and preparing the way for the introduction of Science of Religions at the Free University.<sup>168</sup> Eliade was so impressed by Bavinck’s morphological analyses of religions that he invited him as visiting professor to Chicago.<sup>169</sup>

Likewise, localising theologies of accommodation were developed in RC Missiology from 1927. They served as a bridge from the orthodox dichotomy of *vera-falsa religio* to the liberal theology of dialogue, which became standard in 1960s, in part because they required that missionaries and missiologists study Cultural Anthropology, Science(s) of Religions, and Linguistics as auxiliary disciplines.<sup>170</sup>

#### *Pillarised Sociology of Religion*

The patently growing disaffiliation from the NHK-church,<sup>171</sup> and the latent one in the RC-church,<sup>172</sup> became a major concern for the pillars, ecclesiastically as well as politically, after World War II. In the wake of the revitalisation movement which Kraemer and others had initiated, the NHK-church was eager to stem disaffiliation. The *doorbraak* (the first post-war attempt at the political de-pillarisation of Dutch society) was frustrated in the 1946 elections and the confessional pillars were restored to political power again. A new (mini) pillar, the *Humanistisch Verbond* (HV), was eager to acquire pillar amenities in order to become the ideological and ‘spiritual’ home of the de-churched, and also to acquire the right, as well [118] as the government-paid posts, to assist them with its *raadslieden* (‘counsellors’) in hospitals, prisons, and the army.

As a result of the political praxis of pacification and its rules of ‘distributive justice’, four denominational institutes of sociology of (mainline church) religion were founded between 1945 and 1954, which received substantial government subventions till the mid-1960s. The NHK-*Sociologisch Instituut der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (SINHK) was founded in 1945, the RC-*Katholiek Sociaal-Kerkelijk Instituut* (KASKI) in 1946, and the GKN-*Gereformeerd Sociologisch Instituut* (GSI) and the HV-

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Verkuijl 1975: 60-66.

<sup>167</sup> Bavinck 1949: 191; 8-26, 38-50; Holtrop 1999: 262. On the polemics his approach engendered in GKN-circles, cf. Stoker (1999: 184-193), Heitink (1999: 282-285) and Alma (1999: 307-310).

<sup>168</sup> It is remarkable that there is not a single reference to Kuyper’s *Encyclopaedia of Theology* in Bavinck 1949, but five to Schleiermacher, and several to Otto, Söderblom, Van der Leeuw, Jaspers, etc.

<sup>169</sup> Verkuyjl 1975: 65.

<sup>170</sup> Camps 1964: 10-12; Mulders 1963: 138-139, 143-145; Vriens 1960: 72-80, 98-118.

<sup>171</sup> Well documented in Kruijt 1933; cf. also De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 77-78; Hilhorst 1992: 11-12.

<sup>172</sup> The RC-church also had considerable numbers of drop-outs in its *non-paschanten* (RCs who were registered as not fulfilling the minimal duty of annual confession and communion at Easter). They were especially numerous in Amsterdam (38% in 1930, 37,2 in 1955), Rotterdam (35% in 1930, 43,9% in 1955), The Hague (25% in 1930, 33,9% in 1955), and Utrecht (14% in 1930) (Kruijt 1933: 52, 88, 107-108; Tabel III; Vrijhof 1970: 67). This fairly large rate of RC defection was, however, easily compensated, and masked, by the RC high fertility rates between 1920 to 1960. Their rise from 35,6% to 40,4% of the Dutch population caused apprehensions among Protestants that the number of RCs might rise to over 50% and destroy the ‘Protestant character of the Dutch nation’ (cf. Lijphart 1976: 127).

*Humanistisch Instituut voor Sociaal Onderzoek* (HISO) in 1954. These four co-operated in the first major postwar sociological research into the causes of the growing *buitenkerkelijkheid*, ‘disaffiliation from the churches’, in 1959-1960. By that trans-denominational research project, they not only investigated the processes of disaffiliation and the demise of the pillars, but were also an expression of, and a significant contribution to, them.<sup>173</sup>

When government subsidies were withdrawn from these pillar institutes of Sociology of the Dutch mainline churches in the mid-1960, only KASKI was continued in much reduced form, the other three being disbanded. By that time, however, Sociology of Church and Religion was being introduced into the curricula of the (new) Faculties of the Social Sciences, and those of Theology, *duplex ordo* first, and then also the *simplex ordo* ones; and also into the *simplex ordo* institutes of academic theology to be discussed now.<sup>174</sup>

#### *New simplex ordo institutes of academic theology*

The full emancipation in matters of the theological training of their candidates for the ministry was achieved in the 1950s and 1960 in two steps by the confessional pillars. In retrospect, it was both the pinnacle of the academic emancipation of the confessional pillars, and a Pyrrhus-victory.

The first step was taken in 1951, when the *simplex ordo* faculties of theology of the GKN- and RC-churches at Amsterdam and Nijmegen were granted full subvention from the Dutch government. This allowed them to greatly improve the academic level of their studies, [119] e.g. in biblical studies. That in its turn contributed to their becoming much more open to, and entering into a sympathetically critical dialogue with, the other mainstreams of contemporary Christian academic theology in the Netherlands. They soon began to be accepted by them, and to accept others, as respectable traditions of Christian thought. As a result, they became ecumenically minded, de-segmented rapidly as self-contained, non-communicative traditions of Christian theology, and began to fail to articulate and promote the segmentary and separatist ideologies of their pillars.

The second step was taken in 1966, when four new RC institutes of *simplex ordo* academic theology, the other major GKN-institute for training ministers, as well that of one other small orthodox Calvinist church were granted full government subvention. One was granted 49% at its own request. Another preferred not to receive any government subvention at all. All seven were given the status of *Theologische Hogeschool* (‘College of Divinity’).<sup>175</sup> Their degrees were accorded the same civil effects under Dutch law as those of the universities.

The four RC institutes were the *Katholieke Theologische Hogeschool Amsterdam* (KTHA) at Amsterdam; the *Katholieke Theologische Hogeschool Utrecht* (KTHU) at Utrecht; the *Stichting Theologische Faculteit* (STF) at Tilburg; and the *Hogeschool voor Theologie en Pastoraat* (HTP) at Heerlen. The one fully subsidised Protestant institute was the *Theologische Hogeschool der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (THGK) at Kampen. The *Theologische Hogeschool der Christelijk-Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (THCGKN) of the small CGKN-church at Apeldoorn requested

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<sup>173</sup> Cf. Kruijt 1960: 270-271; Faber *e.a.* 1970: 1-19; De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 77-85; Hilhorst 1992: 11; Stoffels 1999: 315-317.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Goddijn & Goddijn 1966; De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 78, 85-94; Hilhorst 1992: 10-12; Stoffels 1999: 316.

<sup>175</sup> Upgraded to (one faculty) ‘Theological University’ in 1987.

and received 49% subvention.<sup>176</sup> The *Theologische Hogeschool van de Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt* (THGKV) of the small GKV-church, which seceded in 1944 from the GKN-church, also at Kampen, received no state-subvention, because it did not apply for any.<sup>177</sup>

The four RC *simplex ordo* institutes were founded at a crucial moment in the history of Dutch RC theology. On the one hand, it had massively, and definitively, turned liberal and ecumenical with official approval – for a few years only – because of Vatican II. Various theologies of dialogue (RC, NHK and GKN) with the other religions of humankind as valid co-religions were articulated in the new [120] disciplines of Missiology<sup>178</sup> and Science of Religion(s)<sup>179</sup> in the 1960s. They introduced global perspectives into *simplex ordo* theology by three new kinds of studies. One was the world-wide study of the ‘inculturation’ of new Christian communities into cultures moulded by very different religions. Another that which aimed to encounter, and enter into dialogues with, representatives of other religions. And the third was the description of other religions from the perspectives of their own believers by the Science of Religions, which also ‘contextualised’ them as parts of the histories of their societies and their political, social, economical and other processes, and developed the comparative study of religions including Christianity.

Ironically, especially for Missiology, these new approaches effectively signalled the end of the modern period of missionary activity of the Dutch mainline Christian churches (1800-1960). The number of candidates volunteering for lifelong missionary work as priest, lay brother, or nun, dropped dramatically in a very short time in the early 1960s, in particular in the Dutch RC-church. At the same time, disaffiliation was gaining speed rapidly in that church, and the number of aspirants to the priesthood, secular, regular<sup>180</sup> and missionary, dropped to a dramatically low number too. So, the other major reason why the five RC *simplex ordo* institutes for academic theology were founded was that the odd-forty Dutch RC major seminaries (diocesan, regular, and missionary) for training future priests had to fuse for lack of candidates.<sup>181</sup>

By the late-1960s, in addition to the four NHK-*duplex ordo* faculties of theology at Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, and Amsterdam, and the two *simplex ordo* faculties of theology, the GKN-one at Amsterdam and the RC-one at Nijmegen, six more *simplex ordo* theological institutes were fully paid by the government. They were four RC ones, at Amsterdam, Utrecht, Tilburg and Heerlen, and another GKN-institute at Kampen. The CGKN-institute at Apeldoorn received 49% at its own request. The GKN-V-one, also at Kampen, preferred not to receive state-subvention. [121] Liberal theology was the dominant paradigm in eleven of these thirteen institutes of academic theology, which were fully paid from state coffers. In all eleven, at least some Science of Religions was part of their curricula.

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<sup>176</sup> Its political party is the *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Party* (SGP).

<sup>177</sup> Its political party was the *Gereformeerde Politiek Verbond* (GVP).

<sup>178</sup> E.g. by the missiologists Camps (1964; 1976; 1977) and Verkuyll (1964; 1975: 460-504), dogmatic theologians Schoonenberg (e.g. 1965), and philosophers of religion De Vos (1962) and Kuitert (1974).

<sup>179</sup> Cf. e.g. Cornélis 1965; Bleeker 1965, 1967; Mulder 1970.

<sup>180</sup> In this context, ‘regular’ refers to priests keeping the *regula*, rule of life or discipline, of an RC religious order. Well-known examples are the Franciscan friars, the Dominicans, and the Jesuits.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. Hendriks 1968: 60-61.

*The Post-Pillar Period*  
1960-2000

*I first discuss the demise of the classical, or maxi-pillars, the rapid disaffiliation from mainline churches, the emergence of modalities and religious diversity within the former pillar churches. Even before the pillars disappeared from Dutch society, they vanished from Dutch theology, when liberal theology became dominant also in most simplex ordo, confessional theology, and, like the waning churches, to began to shrink. The profound secularisation of Dutch society found its parallel in the emergence of a new paradigm in Dutch Science of Religion: methodological agnosticism. Pillars did not, however, disappear completely, for mini-pillars replaced the maxisones, but their demise seems also imminent. Then I briefly indicate the dazzling diversity of the modern Dutch religious scene outside the Dutch churches. It is of two kinds: the huge diversity of the fringe religions of the native Dutch, and of the religions of the immigrants. I briefly discuss how this religious pluralism and globalisation affects Dutch Science of Religions.<sup>182</sup>*

*The demise of the pillars*

A first attempt at the re-unification of the Dutch nation was made immediately after the war in the *doorbraak*. It was the attempt of the new socialist *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA) to usher in a Dutch society without pillars by ‘breaking through’ the confessional solidarity of the RC and GKN pillars. It failed. However, the threat that it would lure away labourers, trade unions, and intellectuals inclined to socialism away from the confessional pillars remained quite real in the first post-war decade, for one reason because the PvdA became largest political party in 1952. The RC bishops, therefore, issued an ‘episcopal charge’ to the Roman Catholics in 1954, forbidding them to join the socialist (NVV) labour unions, read socialist papers, and listen in to the socialist broadcast (VARA), on pain of being refused the sacraments and Christian burial.<sup>183</sup> Till the early 1960s, indices of RC, GKN, (and part NHK)-fidelity to the organisations of the confessional pillars remained high and seemed to indicate that the confessional pillars were unabatedly vigorous.<sup>184</sup>

The turning point came in the mid-1960s. In 1965, the RC bishops revoked their 1954 charge. In the turbulent 1967 elections, when the RC-political party, KVP, lost eight seats, and the PvdA six, the political scene became increasingly polarised. The major confessional parties (KVP, AR, and CHU), which had gathered in 52% of the votes in 1946, lost heavily in the 1971 and 1981 elections, their share dropping first to 37% and then to 30%. This dramatic loss forced the three confessional parties to merge into the *Christen Democratisch Appel* (CDA) in 1982. By that time, the socialist NVV labour unions had already fused with the RC NKV ones into the *Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging* (FNV) in 1976, as had the RC, NHK, and GKN organisations of employers. In the 1994 [122] election, CDA saw its share of votes drop dramatically again, to 22%, and for the first time since 1918, the now fused confessional parties were excluded from the next government coalition.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> This italicised paragraph is not in the published version.

<sup>183</sup> Bisschoppelijk Mandement 1954: 27-30, 42-43. Cf. Lijphart 1976: 48, 52

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Lijphart 1976 (= 1968<sup>1</sup>): 27-92.

<sup>185</sup> Cf. Lijphart 1976: 11-23; Hippe & Lucardie 1998: 165-166.

### *Modern Dutch society*

Though some old pillar structures were still being defended vigorously by the confessional pillar elites, particularly in the fields of education and broadcast, and new, mini-pillars were being founded (as I will explain below), Dutch society was very different by 2000 from what it was five decades ago. In the decade after the war, Dutch society was a plural society divided into highly institutionalised, sharply bounded and opposed segments with authoritarian moral cultures. In 2000, it was a very prosperous, open, urbanising society with a great mobility, socio-structural as well as in terms of transport, and an exponential growth in information, communication, travel and tourism. It was also a secular, pluralist, fragmented, and permissive society with a liberal and pragmatic approach to pre-marital sex, abortion, the cohabitation of unmarried couples, and gay relations. It recently granted gays by law the right to marry, and legalised euthanasia. It also permitted the sale and consumption of additives (soft drugs, alcohol, and tobacco) and fostered a culture of assertiveness in individuals. It seemed also to pass through a marked shift towards greater equality in gender relations, between seniors and juniors, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc., and to promote the entry of females into the professional networks, which were all-male circuits until recently.

There was also great interest in modern cosmology: the big bang theory, astronomy, space exploration and space travel, science fiction and Star Trek. Likewise in history: the evolution of life and man, palaeontology, archaeology, and the history of religions; and in the cultural and religious diversity of modern humankind. Educational tourism was an expanding business. Dutch universities saw a huge expansion of student numbers (from 30.000 in 1955 to over 100.000 in 1970) and staff, and a continual increase of bureaucratic management of research and teaching from the 1970s onwards. Adult education and *éducation permanente* became a vogue. All but a few confessional schools and universities abandoned the purpose for which they [123] were founded: the cultivation of the hegemonic missionary mentalities by which pillars come into being and thrive. They have shifted instead towards integrating their members into the open and globalising Dutch society. These, and the high degree of formal education of most Dutch, fostered critical and individualist, yet open and tolerant attitudes in respect of religions. They inclined many to abandon religion, others to drift to the margins of the churches, again others to 'complement' Christian endogenous beliefs with exogenous ones, and a last group to passionately defend traditional orthodoxy.

### *De-churching*

A major consequence of these huge mental changes, and cause of the demise of the confessional pillars, was the 'de-churching' (*ontkerkelijkking*) and secularisation of Dutch society. The massive defection from the mainline churches between 1960 and 2000 turned the Netherlands from the most Christian nation of Europe in 1950 to the most unchristian one in 2000.<sup>186</sup>

Disaffiliation from the churches, *buitenkerkelijkheid* in Dutch, stood at 0.1% in 1859, at 17% in 1947, and in 1999, according to the estimates of the *Sociaal en Cultu-*

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<sup>186</sup> Becker, de Hart & Mens 1997: 34n17; Van Rooden 1996: 17. Cf. also Schepens (1994: 51): formal disaffiliation was highest in the Netherlands (49%) [by 1990] as compared to 42% for the UK, 39% for France, 32% for Belgium, and 11% for the Western half of Germany. In the former DDR, now the Eastern half of Germany, church defection, however, exceeds that of the Netherlands. Informal disaffiliation (of members who lost all touch with their church; in Dutch: *randkerkelijkheid*), however, is higher in the UK, Scandinavia and France than in the Netherlands (Schepens 1994: 60-61).

*reel Planbureau* (SCP), at 63%. It expected the number of the ‘de-churched’ Dutch to rise to 73% by 2020.<sup>187</sup> The NHK-church had suffered from disaffiliation since 1850. It continued to do so after 1950, but at a reduced rate. It lost 1,1 million members – more than a quarter of its [124] members – between 1960 and 1995 and fell back from 22% of the Dutch in 1958 to 9% in 1997. The heaviest losses were incurred by the tiny liberal Protestant churches. The Lutherans, the Arminians and the Mennonites lost over half of their members between 1960 and 1995.<sup>188</sup> So did the *Oud-Katholieken*.<sup>189</sup>

As bulwarks of pillarisation by their use of modernisation for building a collective identity and maintaining group boundaries, the RC- and GKN-churches had remained fairly immune to defection till 1960. The political process of segmentation delayed the effects of modernisation. After 1960, the pillar churches caught up with the ‘regular’ process of membership loss. Among Roman Catholics in particular, defection was rapid and massive. Their numbers dropped from 4,6 million in 1960 to 3,2 million in 1995, and from 38% of the Dutch population in 1958 to 18% in 1997. Defection from the GKN-church began only in the late 1960s, and has remained relatively small so far. It lost 14% of its members between 1970 and 1995, and declined from 10% of the Dutch population in 1958 to 6% in 1995. The steady loss of members – between 1% and 2% each year – forced the NHK-, NGK-, and Lutheran churches to attempt laboriously to enter into another post-pillar merger in the past decade, that of the *Samen-op-weg* (SOW) church.<sup>190</sup>

In addition, there was a significant internal, *i.e.*, latent, disaffiliation. The percentage of Roman Catholics, who hardly ever or never attended church, rose from 8% in 1966 to 48% in 1996. That of the NHK-members rose from 33% in 1966, to 45% in 1975, and then dropped again to 35% in 1996.<sup>191</sup> In [125] the GKN-church, their number rose from 2% in 1966 to 16% in 1996.<sup>192</sup>

As a result, CSP divided the native Dutch in 1991 into four parts in terms of affiliation and defection. 11% were *kerks*, *i.e.*, went to church regularly, and 28% belonged to the *randkerkelijken*, the ‘peripheral members’, who had not yet de-registered, but were on their way out. The *ontkerkelijken*, the ‘de-churched’ who were raised in a church but had left it, constituted 33%, and the *buitenkerkelijken*, the ‘unchurched’ who never belonged to a church, 28%.<sup>193</sup> Most of the latter two groups became irreligi-

<sup>187</sup> Faber *e.a.* 1970: 28; Kruijt 1960: 269; Knippenberg 1992: 227, 231-238; Dekker 1995: 18; Becker & Vink 1994a: 49-51, 69-70, 163-164, 168-171; Becker, de Hart & Mens 1997: 57-61, 81-82; Becker & de Wit 2000: 13. The estimates of the *Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek* (CBS) are much more conservative (41% for 1999; Becker & Vink 1994a: 46), but most researchers accept the upward trend, as postulated by the SCP-estimates, as generally correct, although they scale it down slightly. Compare, *e.g.*, the CSP estimate for 1995 of 60% with the 59% of Peters, Felling & Schreuder (2000: 189) for 1995. Dekker (1997: 12), however, puts disaffiliation at 53% in 1996. Lack of space forbids that I discuss the methodological and definitional problems involved in these estimates.

<sup>188</sup> Stoffels 1998: 141-142; Lutherans lost 55%; Mennonites 59%; Arminians 61%.

<sup>189</sup> This church seceded from the RC church in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It had 12.000 members in 1970 and less than 6.000 in 1994 (Visser 1974; Schepens 1994: 56).

<sup>190</sup> Dekker (2000: 70): the NHK- and GKN-churches lost 1,8% of their members in 1999. Cf. Mönlich 1972: 766; Knippenberg & de Vos (1991: 49; Becker, de Hart & Mens 1997: 57-58; Stoffels 1998: 141-142; Becker & de Wit 2000: 13, 24, 67; Dekker 1995: 17-19; 1997a: 12; Ellemers 2000: 87-88, 92

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Peters (1997: 53-52, 75-76) and Becker, de Hart & Mens (1997: 89) on secularisation slowing down, or perhaps even coming a halt, in the NHK-church. He and others attribute that development to the ‘solid core effect’: ‘Secularisation has progressed that far [in the NHK-church] that only a small, solid core of faithful church members remains’. Many of these belong to the *Gereformeerde Bond*, the orthodox wing of the NHK-church.

<sup>192</sup> Roebroek 1979: 170; Dekker 1997: 47; Peters 1997: 86-87; de Hart 1997: 95.

<sup>193</sup> Becker & Vink 1994: 174; Van Tillo 1994: 188.

gious, either as ‘atheists’ who explicitly deny that anything meta-empirical exists, or as ‘agnostics’ who neither deny nor affirm its existence. The others mainly adhered to hesitant beliefs in a vague transcendent power, and used their church of birth as a service institute for the satisfaction of their limited social and emotional needs at birth, marriage, death and Christmas. For the rest, they were religiously self-servicing by exploring the well-stocked, open market of the ‘fringe’ religions. Unbelief, vague beliefs, and religious self-service<sup>194</sup> were also found among many peripheral members of the churches, as was traditional Christian theism, which was the position of most regular churchgoers.

Space forbids that I deal with methodically difficult problem of the estimates of the shifts from traditional Christian theism to belief in something vaguely transcendent, agnosticism and atheism in the post-pillar period. I give one indication only. Dekker found in a random sample of 1313 respondents that 10% took an atheist, and 27% an agnostic, position, whereas 39% believed in ‘something out there’, and 24% in the Christian creator God.<sup>195</sup>

#### *Religious pluralism within the churches*

Disaffiliation, external and internal, however, was not the only development concomitant with the demise of the confessional pillars. [126] Another was the emergence of modalities and religious diversity in the former pillar churches. In the pillar period, they were consolidated churches, highly successful in shaping, informing, regimenting and dominating their own believers as well as Dutch segmented society. In the post-pillar period, they were transformed to constantly shrinking, fragmenting, privatising, client-oriented religious service institutes with limited distinctiveness, hardly any specific group identity and boundary consciousness, and no sense of a particular (‘trans’-)historical mission.

Three well-defined ‘modalities’ emerged in them: a fairly large group of liberal believers, tiny groups of orthodox ‘dissenters’, and the charismatics. In addition, there were three ill-defined ‘types’ of believers: the indistinct majority, the peripheral church members, and – in the RC-church – the folk believers. The ‘modalities’ competitively articulated and asserted distinct positions in the matters of belief and ritual practices. They often also developed institutions to vie with other modalities for the control of the central organs of a church. The ‘types’ neither articulated belief nor organised themselves, and were numerically large and passive. The modalities were usually numerically rather small, but articulate and active, especially the largest and most powerful liberal one. It comprised the intellectual establishment of a church: (most of) its theologians, church leaders, church personnel, and – in the RC church – the ‘grassroots communities’ (*basisgemeenschappen*). The latter were utopian communities of believers who were critical of both church and society and opted for a position in their margins in order to be autonomous in their critique of them, in their renewal of traditional beliefs, and innovative in ritual practices.<sup>196</sup>

Space forbids that I discuss all six varieties. I will only make a few remarks about the liberal modality. It excelled in vague and faint religiosity. The traditional transcendent dimension of the Christian belief was only hinted at in veiled metaphors in ma-

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<sup>194</sup> Cf. Van der Velde 1994; Kranenborg 1989; Schepens 1994; Dekker 1997: 20; Janssen 1998: 115.

<sup>195</sup> Dekker 1997: 18. For other estimates of the shifts in matters of belief and unbelief, cf. Schnabel 1982: 269-271; Schreuder 1990: 25-26; Schepens 1994: 58; De Hart 1997: 95-96; Becker, de Hart & Mens 1997: 65; Peters, Felling & Scheepers 2000: 196.

<sup>196</sup> On RC liberal movements and grassroots communities, cf. Laeyendecker 1995; Versluys 1995; Winkeler 1995: 123-128.



ny songs, sermons and liturgical texts. As the *credere quid* evaporated by ‘theological secularisation’,<sup>197</sup> a resigned agnosticism in respect of doctrinal matters prevailed among liberal believers. It was very much akin to the tolerant agnosticism about religion(s) and the preternatural which [127] pervaded most of Dutch society. Uncertainty about anything extra-empirical was a core cultural value, doubt an inherent part of the (post)modern intellectual culture, and the constant critical testing of the validity of accepted views an ingrained mindset.<sup>198</sup>

#### *The dissolution of the pillars in theology*

Pillars disappeared from nearly all Dutch academic theology a decade before the socialist and RC labour unions merged in 1976, and other signs of dissolution of the pillars became manifest. As liberal theology became the established paradigm of both the *duplex* and *simplex ordo* faculties and colleges of the NHK, RC, GKN and other allied churches, Dutch theologians increasingly interacted in conferences, journals, publications, research projects and institutes, and in other ways.

Examples were the joint research of the four denominational institutes for Church Sociology into the causes of disaffiliation in 1959-1960; and *Vox Theologica*, which served as journal for students of both *duplex* and *simplex ordo* faculties and colleges since the mid-1960s when Leertouwer served as its editor. Others were the Inter-University Institute for Missiology & Ecumenics (IIMO), founded in 1969, its periodical *Exchange* (1971-), and its ecumenical introduction to Missiology;<sup>199</sup> and also the fusion of the RC and NHK-missiological periodicals *Het Missiewerk* and *De Heerbaan* to become *Wereld & Zending* in 1971. Again another example was the *Hendrik Kraemer Institute* at Oegstgeest near Leiden, at which the NHK- and GKN-churches concentrated the training of their missionaries in 1971.<sup>200</sup>

Another important example was the near-fusion the NHK-*duplex ordo* Utrecht Faculty of Theology and the RC *simplex ordo* KTHU (College of Divinity at Utrecht) entered into for a trial period of five years in 1970. External pressure prevented them from converting it into a permanent union in 1975. Though remaining two separate institutes, they continued to co-operate closely in teaching and research, being housed on adjacent floors in the same building. The other faculties and colleges also began to appoint staff trained in another denominational tradition from the late 1960s onwards. [128] Lastly, overarching research organisations were developed in the past three decades, the most recent one of which is the (virtually) nation-wide *Nederlandse Onderzoeksschool voor Theologie en Religiewetenschap* (NOSTER) in which nearly all *duplex* and *simplex ordo* faculties and colleges take part on an equal footing.

As a result of this close interaction, the confessional distinctiveness of some disciplines in modern Dutch theology evaporated.<sup>201</sup> But not in the Science(s) of Religions.

#### *The Science(s) of Religions in simplex ordo liberal theology*

The huge changes in Dutch society required that all faculties and colleges of theology introduce (Pastoral) Sociology of Church and/or Religion, and (Pastoral) Psychology of Religion. A fair number of appointments to chairs and other positions in them were made, mainly, and later exclusively<sup>202</sup> – with the exception of the RC University at

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<sup>197</sup> Laeyendecker 1996: 88, 89.

<sup>198</sup> Cf. Laeyendecker 1995: 31-36.

<sup>199</sup> Camps *e.a.* 1988.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. also Stoffels 1999: 317-318, 319-320 on the renewed GKN-HKN relations in the early 1960s.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. *e.g.* Vos 1999.

Nijmegen<sup>203</sup> –, in theological institutions.<sup>204</sup> As Psychology of [129] Religion was subservient to Pastoral Theology,<sup>205</sup> and Sociology of Church nearly exclusively pre-occupied with the rapidly shrinking mainline churches and their ‘renewal’,<sup>206</sup> they

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<sup>202</sup> Cf. Van Belzen (2000: 205-206) on the absence of research on ‘religion’ in Psychology after 1960, because Dutch (and other) ‘psychologists [were] the least religious’ among academics; and Hilhorst (1992: 14) on Dutch sociologists losing interest in religion as an object of research in the 1980s, ‘because religion is hardly of interest to the highly schooled, critical citizens of modern secular society’.

<sup>203</sup> The RC priest and psychologist H. Fortmann (1912-1970, 1957-1970), and the psychologists J. Weima (1971-1977), and J. van der Lans (1933-, 1977-1998) were successively appointed to teach Psychology of Culture & Religion in its Faculty of Social Sciences with the additional commission to teach it also in its Faculty of Theology. This was also the case for Frans Haarsma, professor of Pastoral Theology, and his fellow researchers in that discipline (Visser 1994: 136n11), and for the Franciscan friar and sociologist O. Schreuder (1963-1984), and the sociologist J. Peters (1937-, 1984-1998) who taught Church Sociology and Sociology of Culture & Religion in both faculties. Other appointments outside theological institutions were those of J.P. Kruijt as Professor of Sociology (1947-1968) in the Utrecht Faculty of Social Sciences, and of P.H. Vrijhof as Lecturer in Sociology of Church and Religion (1919-, 1961-1979) in that same faculty. Again another was that of the RC (married) priest and sociologist L. Laeyendecker (1930-) as Reader in Sociology of Religion in the Faculty of Social Sciences of Amsterdam University (1969-1973), and as Professor of Sociology at Leiden University (1973-1989). Very recently (1998?), J. Corveleyn was appointed Professor of Psychology of Religion in the Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogy of the Free University (Alma 1999: 312). Others obtained appointments in Church Sociology at research institutes: the priest and sociologist L. Spruits (1942-) at KASKI (1977-) and the psychologist T. Bernts (1954-) also at KASKI (1991-); and the church sociologist J.J.M. de Hart (1954-) at SCP (1993-). No completeness is claimed for this list.

<sup>204</sup> Again without claiming completeness, the following persons and posts may be mentioned. At the Leiden Faculty of Theology, Psychology of Religion was taught successively by the theologians and psychologists H. Faber, C. Ouwkerk and H. Zock; and Church Sociology, *c.q.*, Sociology of Religion, by the theologian and sociologist W. Banning (1888-1971, 1946-1962), and the sociologists M. Tung (1926-, 1979-1986), and M. ter Borg (1986-). In the Utrecht Faculty of Theology, Sociology of Religion was taught by the economist H.J. Tieleman (1946-, 1988-), and Pastoral Psychology by the theologian J. Visser, and now by the clinical psychologist H.A. Alma, the pastoral theologian C.J. Menken-Bekius, and the psychologist C. Vergouwen. In the Faculty of Theology of Groningen University, Sociology of Religion (and the Media) was taught till 1990 by P. Hofstede, and now by Y. Kuiper; and by Psychology of Religion was taught successively by R. Nauta, H.-G. Heimbroeck, and now by P. Vandermeersch and Jongsma-Tieleman. In the former Faculty of Theology, now Faculty of Humanities, of Amsterdam University, Psychology of Religion is taught by J.A. van Belzen (1994-) and U. Popp-Baier, and Sociology of Religion by the sociologist G. van Tillo (1993-) and S.J. Vellenga. In the Faculty of Theology of the Free University, Church Sociology was taught by the sociologists G. Dekker (1969-1994), J. Hendriks (1973-), and more recently by the sociologist H. Stoffels. Clinical Pastoral Psychology of Religion was developed first by the theologian and psychologist J.C. Schreuder (1980-1987) and is now taught by the clinical psychologist H.A. Alma. In the Nijmegen Faculty of Theology, Pastoral Psychology was taught by the priest and psychologist W.J. Berger (1919-) since 1963, and Psychology of Religion since 1977. At the RC SFT college of divinity at Tilburg, Psychology of Religion was taught successively by the theologian and psychologist H. Faber, and the psychologists J. Weima and R. Nauta; and Church Sociology by the Franciscan friar and sociologist W. Goddijn. In RC KTHU college of divinity at Utrecht, Sociology of the Churches, *c.q.* of Religion, was taught successively by the priest and sociologist E. Roebroek (1971-1982), the sociologist H.A.W. Hilhorst (1982-1994), and by the sociologists S. Hellemans (1995-) and A. de Boer-Groenendijk (1996-); and Psychology of Religion by the psychologist H. Burggraaff (1975-). Cf. De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 85, 94-95; Hilhorst 1992: 11-12, 14; Stoffels 1999: 320-323.

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Van Belzen 1992: 321n12, 329-332; 2000: 196-198, 203n12. On the relationship between Pastoral Psychology and Pastoral Theology in the *duplex ordo* Faculty of Theology of Utrecht University, cf. Visser 1994: 124-130. Only recently have a few authors – e.g. Van Belzen and Alma (2000: 198, 202-203) – opted for a ‘non-religious Psychology of Religion’, independent from Pastoral Psychology and emancipated from (Pastoral) Theology.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 85-90, 93-94, 96-102; Hilhorst 1992: 13-14. Exceptions were P.H. Vrijhof (1970: 3-65 *passim*) and H.W.A. Hilhorst (1976, 1992: 12-13, 16), who, following the ‘sociology of knowledge’ approach of Luckmann and Berger, opted to research privatised forms of ‘invisible’

were closely tied to Western-Christian mainline church views and problems, and to a [130] 'religionist' – *i.e.*, religiously inspired – approach to their object of study.

The shift of confessional, *simplex ordo* GKN- and RC-theology from an exclusive, orthodox to an inclusive, liberal view of the other human religions in the 1950s also paved the road for the introduction of the historical and comparative study of religions at their institutes in the 1960s.

Other than in the case of Church Sociology and (Pastoral) Psychology of Religion, the contribution of the RC and GKN *simplex ordo* institutes to Dutch History of Religions, and their comparative study, was quite small in number of posts. The position of the scholars of religions manning them was, moreover, subordinate and marginal, more in particular in the RC institutes. In addition, they were under institutional pressure to study religions from the perspectives of liberal, or neo-orthodox, Christian theologies of religions. Some were happy to comply; some others, however, did not but contributed to a paradigm shift and the development of an empirical and secular Science of Religions in a theological setting.<sup>207</sup>

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religion in modern secular society outside the churches (cf. also De Groot & Habibuw 1987: 86-87, 90, 95-96). Another exception was the sociologist and philosopher M. ter Borg (1991). He viewed any explicit or implicit attempt by humans to face, or hide, the distressing condition of human finitude as ('implicit') religion. All humans are, therefore, in his view inevitably and necessarily 'religious', even those who are fully secularised atheists or confirmed agnostics. He also maintains that presently, with the evaporation of traditional transcendental religion, 'eternity is fanning out', that is religion reappears in secular society in the 'implicit' forms of consumerism, politics, and sports (cf. Ter Borg 1991). Ter Borg regards *e.g.* football matches as expressing the 'religion' of football fan(atic)s and, therefore, as a valid object of study of (a secular) Sociology of (Implicit) Religion.

<sup>207</sup> In the Free University, the islamologist D.C. Mulder (1919-) was appointed to the new chair of 'History and Phenomenology of Non-Christian Religions' in 1965, and published much on dialogue with other religions. He founded the Institute for Science of Religions at the Free University in 1971. R. Kranenborg was appointed to it for the study of new religious movements in the Netherlands in 1971, as well as C.J.G. van der Burg for Indian religions, including the development of diaspora Hinduism in Surinam and the Netherlands. The Institute published the important bi-annual *Religieuze Bewegingen in Nederland* from 1980 to 1996 for research into the increasingly complex religious map of the Netherlands. Mulder also joined with his colleagues in the Faculties of Theology of Amsterdam and Utrecht Universities in the production of a new introduction to the academic study of Religions (Hoens, Kamstra, Mulder, *et alii* 1985). Mulder served as Chair of the sub-unit for Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies of the World Council of Churches from 1975 to 1984. On Mulder's anti-ethnics position, cf. Fernhout 1985: 12-14; Mulder 1980. For Mulder's publications, cf. Bakker *e.a.* 1985: 152-161. R. Fernhout served as Lecturer for the Comparative Study of Religions from 1976 to 1995; C.W. Anbeek was appointed Lecturer for Buddhism in the early 1990s.

On Mulder's retirement at the end of 1984, his chair of Science of Religions was, however, merged with that of Missiology, held by the missiologist and islamologist A. Wessels, and the Institute for the Science of Religions was disbanded. A Christian inspiration, liberal in the case of Mulder, Kranenborg and Anbeek, and an uneasy neo-orthodox one in the case of Fernhout, may be discerned in their publications. Fernhout (1994: IX, 8, 13, 14-15, 60, 193, 209-216, 277-282, 295-301) attributed absolute authority to the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Bible in his comparative study of canonical texts. The VU-missiologist Verkuyl took a similar neo-orthodox position by asserting discontinuity between 'human religions and the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ' (Verkuyl 1964: 107). Against Mulder, he claimed that 'Science of Religion should suffer that theology of religions looks forward meta-phenomenologically to Jesus Christ who was and will come, and probes all religious phenomena' (Verkuyl 1975: 486; cf. also Kamstra 1992: 180).

Anthropology of Religions was also developed well at the Free University with the successive appointments to a chair of 'Non-Western Religions' of the missiologist J. Blauw in 1962, the RC priest and anthropologist J.-M. Schoffeleers (1918-) in 1976, and the anthropologist A. Droogers in 1989.

In THGK, the GKN-college of divinity at Kampen (Koornmarkt), Science of Religion(s) remained minimal, marginal and completely ancillary to Missiology. D.C. Mulder served also as Professor of History of Religions at the THGK from 1965 to 1974, after which the Utrecht Islamologist J.D.J. Waardenburg was hired to teach classes on a freelance basis till 1987. Since 1989, Science of Religions

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#### *Secularisation and methodological agnosticism*

In 1990, the Nijmegen sociologist Schreuder wrote: 'The Netherlands is no longer a Christian nation. On the contrary, our country harbours primarily a secularised people, which is no longer in need of [132] the supernatural for living and dying in a meaningful manner.'<sup>208</sup> Just as pillars disappeared from Dutch theology a decade or so before they began to disappear from Dutch society itself, so also Dutch *duplex ordo* Science of Religions 'secularised' a decade or two before it became visible that Dutch society was rapidly secularising. Dutch *duplex ordo* Science of Religions secularised by a paradigm shift in methodology: from a 'religionist' (religiously inspired) approach to the study of religions to the empirical Science of Religions and 'methodological agnosticism'.

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has been taught by another Islamologist, H. Mintjes. No Science of Religions was taught in the orthodox colleges of divinity of the GK-V church, also at Kampen (Broederweg), and of the GKC church at Apeldoorn.

In the RC theological institutes, History of Religions and the Comparative Study of Religions was also staffed minimally compared to the many appointments in (Pastoral) Psychology of Religion and in Sociology of Churches and (Western) Religion. They remained joined usually to Missiology or Theology of Religions and inspired by their concerns for the 'implantation' of the Christian religion elsewhere or for 'dialogue' with other religions.

In the RC University of Nijmegen, Anthropology of Religions remained closely connected to the W. Schmidt's Kulturkreis Ethnology and Missiology after World War II with the appointments of the missionary anthropologist B. Vroklage (1897-1951) in 1948, and the German priest, R.J. Mohr (1900-1978) in 1952. It was, however, laicised in the mid-1960s, when it became part of the new Nijmegen Faculty of Social Sciences, with the appointment of the anthropologists L.F. Triebels, G. van den Steenhoven, and A. Trouwborst as Readers in 1963 and 1964. A. Blok was appointed Professor of Anthropology in 1973. On the Faculty of Theology, the Belgian Dominican priest, theologian of religions and scholar of Buddhism, E. Cornélis, was appointed as successor to Bellon in 1958. For teaching Islam in the Faculties of Arts and Theology, the Jesuit scholars J. Houben and J. Peters were appointed in respectively 1963 and 1977, the latter being succeeded in the late 1980s by the German islamologist H. Motzki, first as Senior Lecturer and recently (2001) as Professor.

However, when dwindling student numbers in the Faculty of Theology made reduction of staff inevitable in the mid-1980s, the chair of History of Religions was fused with that of Philosophy of Religion, held by W. Dupré, on Cornélis' retirement in 1986. In 1995, however, P. van de Velde was appointed Lecturer in Indian Religions.

In order to remain afloat, the Nijmegen Faculty strongly developed 'Religious Studies' in the past decade, i.e., the study of religions within the framework of RC liberal theology of religions. Even though this might not necessarily affect the classes of a particular scholar of religions, this strategy renewed forcefully the tradition of the Faculty that the other religions could not be studied in and for themselves as historical phenomena only. Even in RC modern theology, there was no place for the empirical, non-normative study of religions. (Empirical) Science of Religions, e.g., could not – and cannot – be taken as a major. Institutionally, Science of Religions was fully ancillary to RC Theology of Religions (cf. Kamstra 1992: 180-182).

This was also the case in the two remaining RC-colleges of divinity, in which Science of Religions could only be taken as a minor. STF at Tilburg appointed the missionary and scholar of Japanese Buddhism J.H. Kamstra as Lecturer in Science of Religions in 1967, the missionary and anthropologist G. Bouritius as his successor in 1970, and the Leiden-trained islamologist H. Beck in 1990. In the late 1970s, the Utrecht-trained scholar of Buddhism, T. Nugteren, was appointed as parttime Lecturer in Indian Religions. At the KTU at Utrecht, I myself was appointed Lecturer in Science of Religions in 1969, and seconded to the vakgroep ('department') of Science of Religions of the Utrecht Faculty of Theology. I was succeeded in that post in 1991 by G. ter Haar, whose post, however, was reduced to halftime in 1995, and to an 0.2 post in 1997, when the C. Anbeek, (part time) lecturer in Buddhism at the Free University, was appointed to it.

Because of the dwindling numbers of students, the RC bishops ordered the HTP, later UTP, at Heerlen to fuse with the Faculty of Theology at Nijmegen in 1991, and the KTHA, later KTUA, at Amsterdam to merge with the the KTU at Utrecht.

<sup>208</sup> Schreuder 1990: 22; cf. also Kamstra 1992: 184-185.

Before 1960, the study of religions in the Netherlands was perceived as dominated by two paradigms, each with its own institutional location, in which they served as pillar mentalities: a taken-for-granted perception of the group identity of ‘the others’, by which one’s own group identity was constituted and cultivated. They were in principle irreconcilable and polemically opposed, but mostly served as mute separating mechanisms only, as I set out above. They were, on the one hand, the various forms of scholarship in the faculties of *duplex* and *simplex ordo* theology in which a plural tier cosmology was essential, and religions were studied religiously. And, on the other hand, the secular and positivist one in the social sciences in the Faculties of Arts & Philosophy, and after 1945 in the new Faculties of Social Sciences, which on ideological and methodological grounds adhered to a one tier cosmology.<sup>209</sup>

Between 1968 and 1973, a middle position emerged, at Utrecht [133] and Groningen. An important element of it was formulated by the Utrecht anthropologist of religions, Jan van Baal (1905-1992), when he defined ‘religion’ as ‘all explicit and implicit notions and ideas, accepted as true, which relate to a reality which cannot be verified empirically’. The non-verifiability of religious beliefs implied that empirical science could neither prove nor disprove their truth, or falsity. It could neither prove, nor disprove, the reality, or non-reality, of the extra-empirical realms, beings or forces which religions postulated. Van Baal also held that ‘the anthropological study of religion [and] the science of comparative religion belong together and share the principle that they study religion as a human phenomenon’, and more precisely as a cultural phenomenon.<sup>210</sup>

The other Dutch scholar of religions, who was even more instrumental in the emergence of the paradigm of methodological agnosticism, was Th. P. van Baaren (1912-1989), successor to Van der Leeuw in Groningen (1952-1981). He was born into a Utrecht RC family but came under the influence of a liberal Protestant minister in his teens. In teacher training college, however, he became irreligious, and during the war he developed an interest in spiritism. After the war, he studied theology at the Utrecht Faculty of Theology, and obtained his MA degree in theology with a major in Science of Religions and Egyptology under H.W. Obbink, who also supervised his Ph.D. thesis.<sup>211</sup> That thesis and his other publications in Science of Religions were in the religionist tradition of Eliade until the early 1960s.<sup>212</sup> His criticism of Van der Leeuw’s 1933 Phenomenology of Religion was directed in 1957 at the outdated and untrustworthy ethnological data used by Van der Leeuw’s, and at his ‘tendency to simplify [them] till they fit[ted] into the [theoretical] box he had prepared for them’. But he did not attack his theology, as Sierksma done fiercely – to the detriment of his career – as early as 1949, or the ‘eidetic vision’ (*Wesensschau*) in Van der Leeuw’s phenomenology.<sup>213</sup> He merely insisted that facts must be respected, and that ‘neglect of the[ir] historical and cultural context leads to wrong interpretations’.<sup>214</sup>

[134] Van Baaren’s turn to methodological agnosticism was, as I wrote earlier, a silent revolution, from the mid-1960s onwards, which was completed in 1973 with the publication of the papers of the research group on problems on methodology in

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Platvoet (1990: 183-187) on ‘cosmologies, ideologies and the study of religions’.

<sup>210</sup> Van Baal 1971: 3, 7; Van Baal & Van Beek 1985: 7.

<sup>211</sup> Van Baaren 1951. For the biographical data, cf. Oosten 1990; Calis 1990: 22; Leutscher 1990: 15-16; Van Straaten 1990: 37.

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Platvoet 1998b: 340-341.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. Van der Leeuw & Sierksma 1949; Platvoet 1998b: 336-339.

<sup>214</sup> Van Baaren 1957: 347-348.

Science of Religions he chaired since 1968.<sup>215</sup> In his contribution, he seems to summarise the views of that research group. It contended that theological and metaphysical presuppositions must be eliminated from the Science of Religions, and that religions must be studied as functions of cultures. That is not ‘an attempt at reduction [...] but a protest against theological absolutism’. Science of Religions ‘is limited to an empirical study of religions as they are’; it does ‘not acknowledge the authority of any religion to influence or determine its results’. All judgements relative to religious truth and value must be suspended permanently. Philosophy of Religion was, therefore, excluded by them from the Sciences of Religions. Intuitive Science of Religions, practising *Wesensschau* (the contemplative grasp of essences), like that of Van der Leeuw, was now rejected.<sup>216</sup>

Methodological agnosticism became the dominant paradigm in Dutch Science(s) of Religions, for two reasons. One is that it could be harmonised with virtually all academic institutional positions in which modern Science(s) of Religions were practised, for it merely stated that the meta-empirical is meta-testable and outside the scope and competence of scientific research.<sup>217</sup> The other is, that it therefore could also be squared with all private belief positions of scholars of religions except two: the (militantly) Christian orthodox one, and the (publicly) militant positivist-atheist one, both of which were, and are, rare in Dutch Science(s) of Religions.

Methodological agnosticism became the dominant paradigm in the academic research into religions not only in Faculties of *duplex ordo* Theology,<sup>218</sup> but also in Faculties of Social Sciences, in Faculties of Arts, and even with a number of scholars of religions in *simplex ordo* theological institutes. Space forbids that I document this statement. For the moment, it is offered on the basis of my own personal acquaintance with a fair number of Dutch scholars of religions and their publications. It caused the ‘religionist’ and ‘reductionist’ academic ‘pillars’ to fade away, for these two paradigms lost their fixed institutional locations in the faculties of theology and the social sciences, and no longer functioned as mechanisms [135] of pillar mentalities. Instead, ‘poly-paradigmaticity’ developed: all three paradigms were found in any institutional location of Science of Religions.

### *Poly-paradigmatic Science of Religions*

A few Dutch scholars of religions in the Social Sciences explicitly adopted religiously inspired positions in the past decades, and reductive positions were at least implicitly adopted by some in Faculties of Theology. Ter Borg was an example of the latter. His

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<sup>215</sup> Van Baaren & Drijvers 1973; Platvoet 1998b: 339-343.

<sup>216</sup> Van Baaren 1973: 35, 36-37, 42, 43, 44, 47-50.

<sup>217</sup> Cf. also Van den Broek 1994: 22 (‘God can never be an object of study’ because he is transcendent); Van Wilgenburg 1994: 33 (Academic ‘theology does not have God as its object of study, because such an object of research is alien to the scientific community’).

<sup>218</sup> Cf. e.g. Van der Horst (1994: 76-80): ‘In [modern] post-Christian society, in which Christianity is but one among several philosophies of life and systems of meaning and orientation, [Christian] exegesis or theology as normative science is all but dead’. It must develop from a normative, kerygmatic discipline, proclaiming Christian doctrine to a church audience, into an informative, factual, dispassionate discipline for the general public. It must provide the latter with arguments for criticising religious notions and institutions in order that the many social evils, which churches and religions have sanctioned, such as the oppression of women and Jews, may be combatted. Van der Horst is professor of New Testament, Early Christianity and its Jewish and Hellenist Contexts at the Utrecht faculty of theology since 1991. He stresses that all documents from the first centuries CE should receive equal and identical attention and strongly criticises the extreme lopsidedness of research on them by the virtually exclusive focus of his colleagues on canonical literature. Van der Horst holds that the religion of the New Testament is entirely different from modern mainstream Christianity (83).

*homo religiosus* position is a positivist inversion of the *homo religiosus* position of liberal theologians. For Ter Borg, humans are necessarily ‘religious’ by their lack of nerve in facing death as annihilation of personal existence. This general *condition humaine* of failure to face human finitude provides Ter Borg with a reductive functionalist explanation of not only ‘substantive’ (traditional, plural tier) religion, but also of ‘implicit religion’, under which he subsumes obsession with anything ‘superhuman’, e.g. that of fans with football or popstars.<sup>219</sup>

Jan van Baal was an example of the former. Coming from a GKN-background, van Baal studied (colonial) ‘Indology’ at Leiden from 1923 to 1932 for a career as a civil servant in the Dutch Indies, now Indonesia. In this ‘positivist’ environment, he was active in the GKN-student society SSR (*Societas Studiosorum Reformatorum*). Because of the 1929 stock exchange crash, he failed to obtain a post and instead devoted himself to a Ph.D thesis in Ethnology on the Marind-anim in New Guinea. From 1934, he served in several posts in the Dutch Indies, among them in Merauke in New Guinea from 1936 to 1938, and was interned in a war prisoner camp from 1942 to 1945, where one night he had overwhelming religious experience.<sup>220</sup> After having been elected as MP for the AR in 1952, he served as Governor General of New Guinea from 1953 to 1957,<sup>221</sup> and as Professor of Anthropology of Religions at Utrecht University from 1960 to 1975. As Van Baaren trod the road from religionism to methodological agnosticism at Groningen in the late 1960s, so did Van Baal travel from the positivism of the social scientific study of religions to an explicitly religionist position. His assertion of the methodological-agnostic position in 1971, to wit, that religious beliefs about the reality of the meta-empirical are meta-testable and so outside the province of empirical science, proved in retrospect a halfway station only. After his retirement, he proclaimed forcefully in [136] his ‘messages from the silence’ of his retirement, that religions must be studied religiously.<sup>222</sup>

It will take another article or book to document more precisely the relative strengths of the three paradigms in the Dutch Sciences of Religions in their various institutional settings in the post-pillar period. Of these, the explicitly secular reductive one seems weakest, the secular agnostic one strongest, with religionism in a fairly strong second position. However, they no longer serve to segregate academic ‘pillars’, but function all three as respectable, and heuristically fruitful, strategies of research.

### *The mini-pillars*

Though the ‘great’ pillars of the past disappeared from Dutch society since the 1970s, pillar mentality, behaviour and structures appeared since 1970 in other quarters for pragmatic reasons, or in protest against de-pillarisation.<sup>223</sup> The pragmatic mini-pillars emerging aimed to share in the benefits the Dutch political system awards to pillarised groups, and protest mini-pillars abhorred the impending merger of the confessional political parties in the late 1970s.

The pragmatic ones were, in chronological order, the Anthroposophical Society; the *Humanistisch Verbond* (HV); the orthodox Jews; the Hindustani Hindus;<sup>224</sup> the several Muslim communities in the Netherlands;<sup>225</sup> and most recently the Bud-

<sup>219</sup> Cf. above note 204.

<sup>220</sup> Van Baal 1986: 45-56, 91-320, 392-450, 448.

<sup>221</sup> Van Baal 1989: 278, 339, 356, 371-591.

<sup>222</sup> Van Baal 1985, 1990, 1996. Cf. also Platvoet 1991, Van Beek 1996, Leertouwer 1996, Vroom 1996.

<sup>223</sup> Ellemers 1998: 431; Rath, Penninx, Groenedijk & Meijers 1996: 4-5, 8-9, *passim*.

<sup>224</sup> Bloemberg & Ramsodh 1996: 207-214.

<sup>225</sup> Cf. Landman 1992; Rath, Penninx, Groenedijk & Meijers 1996: 27-32, *passim*.

dhistis.<sup>226</sup> The best developed example is HV, a ‘confessional’ association of agnostics and atheists, which began to emerge as the fifth pillar after 1945, but failed to develop into a fullsize pillar because of its limited numerical strength and its late appearance on the pillar scene.<sup>227</sup> But it did acquire substantial pillar amenities. One was the *Humanistisch Instituut voor Sociaal Onderzoek* (HISO), which it was granted in 1954 in order to provide HV with the same facilities as the government had granted to the NHK-, RC-, and GKN-mainline churches.<sup>228</sup> HV was also granted [137] other church-like prerogatives, like the right to appoint its counsellors in hospitals, the army and the prisons. In 1991, it obtained its own, state-funded one-faculty *Universiteit voor Humanistiek* (UH) for the academic training of these counsellors.

Protest-pillars emerged in the right-wing orthodox Protestant communities: the *Gereformeerde Bond* in the NHK-church, the orthodox modality of the GKN-church, and the small ultra-orthodox churches linked to the SGP and GPV.<sup>229</sup> The *Evangelische Omroep* (EO, ‘Evangelical Broadcasting Corporation’) was the most successful attempt at pillar building in these quarters. It won many supporters among the disgruntled orthodox-evangelical Christians of the Netherlands in the late 1970s and 1980s. The RPF is ‘its’ political party. Some educational institutions were also allied to the EO, like *De Evangelische Hogeschool* in Amersfoort, the *Theologische Hogeschool van de Gereformeerde Bond* (in the NHK-church) *De Vijverberg* in Ede. These do not, however, receive government subvention (yet).

However, de-segmentation is at work in these tiny pillars too. HV membership of 13,500 is ageing and barely growing despite the widespread secularisation of Dutch society. It is also struggling with its identity. Only a few members take a militantly atheist position. The majority is agnostic, tolerant of religion and spirituality, and eager to co-operate with religiously inspired people. It is cutting back on its activities because its revenues are dropping.<sup>230</sup>

An indication that the protest mini-pillars are following the general trend towards de-segmentation ‘at a distance’<sup>231</sup> is the recent fusion of the political parties, GPV and RPF, into *Christen Unie* (CU).<sup>232</sup> Other indications are the diminishing size of orthodox Protestant families,<sup>233</sup> and recent developments in the EO. In the past three decades, the EO was remarkably successful in creating a measure of unity in the highly fragmented orthodox and ultra-orthodox scene of Dutch Calvinism by fostering an evangelical ‘ecumenism of the heart’ among its 600.000 subscribers. At the same time, it fostered a much more open, ‘dialogical’ attitude towards ‘the [138] world’ among them, with in its train a significant reduction of biblical literalism. Dogmatic certitude about one’s own election and the damnation of unbelievers shifted to a much more subjective experience of the faith coupled to an increasingly cognitive uncertainty about the destination of unbelievers after death and other matters of faith. A large majority (65%) now supports the modern right to freedom of religion, and an

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<sup>226</sup> BUN (‘Buddhist Union in the Netherlands’) has recently successfully applied for government funding for its BOS (‘Buddhist Broadcasting Organisation). It was granted 10 hours television time and 13 hours radio time on the public broadcasting system *per annum*.

<sup>227</sup> Cf. Van Doorn 1975: 327.

<sup>228</sup> Hilhorst 1992: 11.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. Ellemers 2000: 89-91, 98.

<sup>230</sup> Drayer 2001a.

<sup>231</sup> Janse 1993: 28; cf. also Knippenberg 1992: 230-231; Ellemers & Hak 1998: 135; Hippe & Lucardie 1998: 168-170; Ellemers 2000: 97-98.

<sup>232</sup> Cf. Ellemers 1998: 429-431. For a survey, cf. Stoffels 1993, 1998. Cf. also Janse 1993; Zwemer 1993.

<sup>233</sup> From 2,8 to 2,1 children; cf. Anonymous 2001a.



even larger one (83%) is in favour of improving the subordinate position of women. A small majority (55%) even supports their ordination as ministers.<sup>234</sup>

Two more indications are that TUCGK college of divinity at Apeldoorn has applied recently to participate in NOSTER, the Dutch research school in Theology and Science of Religions. An introduction to Science of Religions was published by Broekhuis, lecturer in the EO-related *Evangelische Hogeschool* at Amersfoort, and the *De Vijverberg* at Ede. Some shift towards a liberal theology of religions was discernable in this book, for Broekhuis accepted that ‘the Holy Spirit is [also] at work in the world of the religions’, and he no longer refers to them as the works of Satan. However, he also maintained that the non-Christian religions are not vessels of God’s revelation, for they have ‘processed the work of God in them in the wrong way’. He holds that Christians must, therefore, ‘sharply maintain’ the centrality of the salvific work of God’s Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ.<sup>235</sup>

### *The dazzling diversity*

I must plead guilty to having been over-ambitious in one major part of the programme of this article as set out in the title, to wit that on ‘pluralism’. I have dealt with ‘pillars’ and their demise, with the secularisation of Dutch society, and their impact on the Science(s) of Religions. But I have dealt with only one part of Dutch modern polychromatic ‘religious pluralism’, to wit, its increase in the mainline churches through the modalities and religious self-service, and that only summarily. Two much more important elements of the ‘dazzling diversity’ of the Dutch modern religious scene have, however, not yet been touched upon at all, nor have I dealt with their impact, or lack of impact, on the Sciences of Religions in the Netherlands. [139] They are the ‘fringe religions’ of the native Dutch, and the religions which migrated into the Netherlands in the wake of decolonisation (1945-1980), labour and chain migration (1960-1985) and political turmoil and poverty elsewhere (1985-). Let me briefly give only a glimpse of them.

The ‘fringe’ religions consist of the numerous small groups on the periphery of Dutch Protestantism, and recently also of Roman Catholicism; the Jews; the very many tiny esoteric and spirit(ual)ist societies; and the numerous small groups of Dutch who converted to a great diversity of types of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Baha’i, and other religions. Although the total number of their members remained demographically insignificant, they constituted a watershed culturally as well as religiously. That was apparent from the stigmatisation of conversion to the so called ‘youth sects’ in the media in the early 1980s, and the scare it caused among parents and the general public, which led to a parliamentary investigation. The new religions were also significant in that they were strongest in the regions in which disaffiliation from the mainline churches was highest.<sup>236</sup> Remarkable is also the disjunction among the Dutch Jews between ethnic and religious affiliation: the former remained high, the latter had dropped even lower than among Dutch Christians already before 1940,<sup>237</sup> and is extremely low now.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Cf. Stoffels 1998: 147-150.

<sup>235</sup> Broekhuis 1994: 121-126.

<sup>236</sup> Schepens 1994: 61-67.

<sup>237</sup> Cf. Blom & Cahen 1995: 251.

<sup>238</sup> Cf. Brasz 1995: 403; Van Praag 1971: 45; Wijnberg 1967: 40-41, 74-75.

Demographically more significant were the communities of migrants, with the number of Muslims rising to 700.000 in 2000,<sup>239</sup> of Surinamese Hindus to 70.000 in 1990, and of Buddhists born elsewhere estimated at 22.000. To these must be added the allochthonous Christians from Africa, Asia and Latin America who came as political or economical asylum seekers, and the numerous Surinamese Creoles who practise Winti – an Afro-Surinamese folk religion from the slavery period – in addition to their RC or Moravian Christianities. The immigrant Muslims, Buddhists and Christians are extremely diverse, by national or regional backgrounds, and further by ‘denominations’ and ‘modalities’.

They are all here to stay and have brought about an ‘internal globalisation’ of the Dutch religious and cultural scene. A main part of Science of Religions was born from Europe’s ‘external globalisation’ [140] during the colonial period. Relatively few Dutch scholars researching the religions outside the Western world have trained their eyes as yet on this internal globalisation. In as far as they have, they have mainly mapped the ethnic communities as if they were consolidated religious communities, and hardly researched the dynamics of ethnic affiliation and religious disaffiliation. Fringe and migrant religions are also researched in uneven ways. Whereas there is relatively much attention to Islam in the Netherlands and to esotericism, most of the rest of this important field lies unattended.

#### *In conclusion*

My purpose throughout this article was to show that Dutch political and religious histories in the past century and a half were closely intertwined, and that these two together shaped and constrained Dutch Science(s) of Religions in numerous ways. The aims of this essay were modest. Due to limitations of the size of a contribution to a collective volume, I could present preliminary data only, and merely a first draft of my analysis. It is, therefore, also a programme for further research.

I have been inspired to this undertaking by two colleagues in particular. One is Michael Pye. As IAHR General Secretary, he initiated research into institutional strategies in the 1988 conference at Marburg in order to find ways and means to strengthen the position of Science of Religions in universities worldwide. We must, he wrote, critically study ‘the institutional and ideological constraints on the study of religion[s] [...] in various parts of the world’.<sup>240</sup> The other is Lammert Leertouwer. He argued, in his important contribution to the volume that marks a milestone in the history of Dutch Science of Religions: if we are avoid the a prioris of the past, we must critically examine ‘the compulsive role of the *idée[s]* *directrice[s]*’, which society and its religions impose upon scholars of religions.<sup>241</sup>

Critical examination of the history of Science of Religions, including its being produced in, and by, specific historical contexts, is a major means for developing, and re-examining, an up-to-date critical methodology for this group of academic disciplines. It is also a sobering [141] exercise in academic humility. It shows that scholars of religions are much more the produce of their own contexts than they care to admit.

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<sup>239</sup> Cf. also Waardenburg (1986: 21): On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1984, 155.000 Turks were registered as residents in The Netherlands, and 106.400 Moroccans. To these must be added 23.600 Muslims from Surinam, bringing the number of the three largest groups of Muslims, from Turkey, Morocco and Surinam, to 285.000. To them, another 20.000 had to be added from very diverse parts of the Muslim world, bringing the total number of Muslims in The Netherlands in 1984 to over 300.000.

<sup>240</sup> Pye 1989: 7.

<sup>241</sup> Leertouwer 1973: 80, 81, 84, 85, 86.

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