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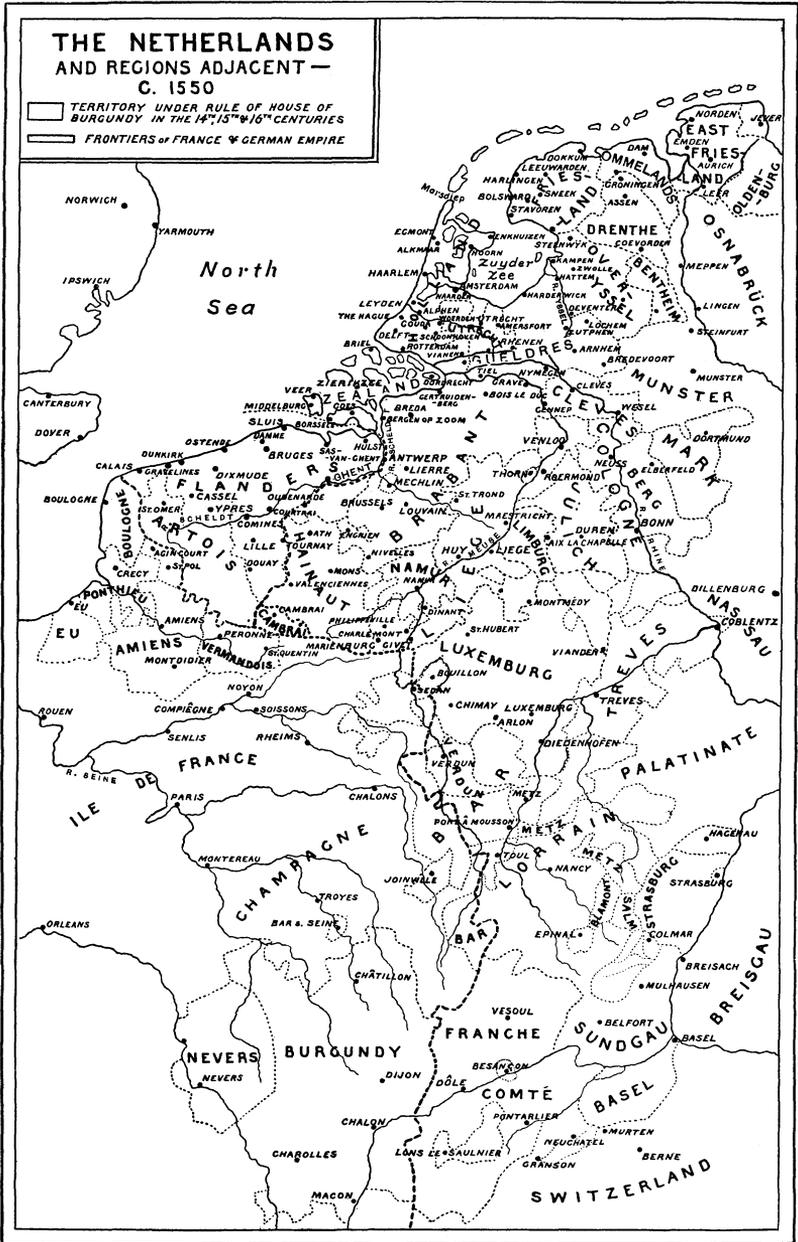
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The Netherlands 1550

Chapter 20

From Pure Church to Pious Culture: The Further Reformation in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic

Fred A. van Lieburg

The Further Reformation was a pietistic movement within the Dutch Reformed Church during the seventeenth century. Its representatives struggled for the unity of doctrine and daily life among governors, clergymen, and common people. This chapter gives a sketch of the religions and moral ideals, the reforming means, and the churchly and popular impact of the movement. Its development is seen against the background of the growing tension in the Calvinistic search both for a theocratical society and the practice of personal piety.

DUTCH CALVINISM DISTINGUISHED ITSELF among the various reform movements of the sixteenth century by a late arising, a foreign origin, and a modest following. Yet, in part because of their powerful organization according to the Genevan presbyterial model of the church, the Calvinists received the honor of taking the place of the Roman Catholic Church in the Dutch regions that under the leadership of the Prince of Orange had, after 1572, withdrawn from the authority of the King of Spain. But from the beginning of this political and religious revolt the question was asked whether Calvinism was really suited to fill the role of state religion in the new Dutch Republic (founded in 1588 and recognized by Spain in 1648).¹

¹General literature: A. Duke, *Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries* (London:Hambleton, 1990), 269–93; A Th. van Deursen, *Plain lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

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The regional and local governments, which regarded confessional unity of the population as a condition for political and societal stability, wanted the Reformed church to have sufficiently broad boundaries so that at least all Protestant Netherlanders could become a member of it. In general, they strove for a national church or people's church in which the sacraments would be open to all. Most Reformed clergymen, however, had a stricter conception of the church. They saw the church primarily as the Body of Christ, the purity of which would need to be guaranteed through the exercise of church discipline. Only those who subjected themselves to supervision concerning doctrine and conduct could, after a relevant investigation, enter the community by means of a public confession of faith.

The tension between the two conceptions of the church lay at the basis of the remarkable position that the Reformed church would assume during the Dutch Republic (until its downfall at the time of the French invasion in 1795). It was a "public" church in that it was the only one to be recognized and financed by the government, and because it performed a general function of providing service by administering baptism and confirming marriages. The Calvinists were prepared to administer baptism to the children of all Christian parents, including Roman Catholics, for covenant-theological reasons. In relation to the Lord's Supper, however, they held to the principle of a *purior ecclesia*. This sacrament remained accessible only to confessing members of impeccable doctrine and conduct. Dutch Calvinists—in distinction from Calvin himself—regarded maintenance of church discipline as one of the *notae ecclesiae*.²

Consequently, Reformed communities remained small in size. According to rough estimates, the number of Calvinists (including their children) among the population grew from 10 percent around 1590 to 25 percent around 1620. This does not imply, however, that the remaining majority of the population of the northern provinces was still staunchly Roman Catholic, for a great number of people had as yet made no conscious choice for or against the new religion. There was a neutral middle group that vacillated politically between revolt against and subjugation to the sovereign lord, and that vacillated religiously between extreme Calvinism and extreme Catholicism. Part of this group of the undecided—possi-

²A. Duke, "The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism in the Netherlands, 1561–1618," in M. Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism 1541–1715*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 109–34. A fundamental work on this period is also: A. Th. van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen: Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1991).

bly 20 percent of the population—did attend public worship services; these were the so-called lovers of reformed religion [*liefhebbers van de gereformeerde religie*]. In addition to the Reformed and Roman Catholics there were also Protestant dissenters: Baptists, Lutherans, and all kinds of sectarian groups.³

This religious plurality, unique in the international situation of the time, was possible because of the confessionally neutral politics of religion of the Dutch regents. Within the context of the war against Spain they conducted an anti-Catholic policy, but the principle of freedom of conscience was held in high regard from the outset. They granted the Calvinists monopoly concerning the public exercise of religion, but in practice they gave limited space to non-Reformed persons to live in accordance with their religion. This toleration—sometimes ascribed to Erasmian-humanist ideas, but forced above all by practical circumstances—increased the tension between the government and the Reformed church. Additionally, there was within Calvinism a moderate, evangelical group with a conception of the church that was close to that of the government.⁴

A polarization between proponents and opponents of a spacious people's church [*volkskerk*] started during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) because of a quarrel among theologians concerning the doctrine of predestination, a quarrel that became entangled with a political quarrel concerning church order. The outcome of this often described crisis in Dutch church history is well known: a national synod was held in 1618-1619 in Dordrecht that condemned the doctrine of the so-called Remonstrants (*rekkelijken* or moderates) and accepted that of the counter-Remonstrants (*preciezen* or strict orthodox) as the basis of the Reformed church.

In the decades after the Synod of Dordt it would become evident that the triumph of strict Calvinism had been largely a pyrrhic victory. The Reformed church had gained standing nationally and internationally, and as the war with Spain came to an end it became clear that it would perma-

³J. P. Elliott, *Protestantization in the Northern Netherlands: A Case Study: The Classis of Dordrecht 1572-1640*, 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1990). For regional studies following Van Deursen and Duke, see *ibid.*; W. Bergsma, "Calvinismus in Friesland um 1600 am Biespiel der Stadt Sneek," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 80 (1989): 252-85.

⁴For a local study, see J. Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577-1620* ('s-Gravenhage: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1989) A comprehensive interpretation is O. Mörke, "'Konfessionalisierung' als politisch-soziales Strukturprinzip? Das Verhältnis von Religion und Staatsbildung in der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," *Tijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis* 16 (1990): 31-60.

nently replace the pre-Reformation church. Consequently, it became more and more involved in its role as a public church, for example through the church and state cooperation in education and poor relief. The church also became more attractive to the vacillators, many of whom now became Calvinists. Roman Catholicism, which experienced a movement of revival during this period, also won back part of its lost ground. Around 1650, when religious adherence had stabilized, probably about half of the population had become Reformed.

Remarkably, the growth of the public church related not so much to the numbers of “lovers” [*liefhebbers*] as to the number of members [*lidmaten*]. Although we lack clear numbers concerning this development, it is established that a silent reduction took place in the catechetical and moral standards for admission to membership. Also, for the second and third generation of Reformed persons, joining the church became more of an automatic matter than—as for their parents and grandparents—a conscious choice. Because of political and societal pressure, the Calvinist leaders appear to have given up the original model of the church, with its pure communion table, as that had not proven from the outset to be practically attainable; the church had, as it were, given in to the public.

This supposed growth of the church became visible in a weakening of the exercise of discipline. Discipline pertaining to doctrine became less meaningful now that competition with non-Reformed Protestant groups had diminished. And discipline concerning one’s life-style lost force, for it could no longer bear an exemplary character because the public sins of the members were too numerous to be brought before the church council or to be combated effectively. Celebration of the Lord’s Supper became less an expression of belonging to the chosen community of Christ, and more a demonstration of social respectability within the local community. The Dutch Reformed church evolved from its ideal of a pure church into a (limited) people’s church (*volkskerk*), just as the regents always had had in mind.⁵

⁵H. Roodenburg, *Onder censuur. De kerkelijke tucht in de gereformeerde gemeente van Amsterdam, 1578–1700* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1990). But see also, A. Th. van Deursen, “Dutch Reformed Parish Life in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century,” in M. van Os and G. J. Schutte, eds., *Bunyan in England and Abroad: Papers Delivered at the Vrije University Amsterdam, 1988* (Amsterdam: Vrije University Press, 1990), 105–20.

II

This sketch of the religious situation in the Dutch Republic and the remarkable position of the Reformed church within it forms the background of the rise of the Further Reformation (*Nadere Reformatie*). That term is sometimes translated as Second Reformation, an analogy to movements of the same name in Scotland and Germany (*die Zweite Reformation*). The Dutch Second Reformation should, however, also be seen to include the numerous reforming Christians outside of the dominant church.⁶ The Further Reformation can then be seen as the Calvinist, moderate branch of this broader stream that wished to operate within the public church and the political order. The Further Reformation is usually regarded as the Dutch, Reformed, and seventeenth-century mode of Pietism, the Protestant movement of renewal that became manifest in several countries and churches in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In any case, the movement was largely represented by orthodox Calvinist clergymen of pietistic stripe.⁷

An often cited definition describes the Further Reformation as “the movement within the Dutch Reformed Church that, turning against common abuses and misconceptions, and with an eye to the deepening and broadening of the continuation of the sixteenth-century Reformation, with prophetic animation presses for and works for the inner appropriation of the Reformed doctrine and for personal sanctification as well as for the radical and total sanctification of all areas of life.”⁸ Currently, Dutch researchers are seeking to determine the historical content and boundaries of the Further Reformation and its relation to Pietism and to Dutch Calvinism in general. The fixing of the definition of Further Reformation in accordance with the original seventeenth-century meaning and use plays a role. (*Nader* or *vorder reformatie* is equivalent to the English-Puritan phrase *further reformation*.)

Since no consensus has emerged from this discussion, the best thing we can do is to provide a sketch of the components that were inextricably

⁶Cf. A. C. Fix, *Prophecy and Reason: The Dutch Collegiants in the Early Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁷For an overview, see J. van den Berg, “Die Frömmigkeitsbestrebungen in den Niederlanden,” in M. Brecht, ed., *Geschichte des Pietismus I* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 57–112.

⁸T. Brienen, et al., “Nadere Reformatie, een poging tot begripsbepaling,” *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 7 (1983): 109–16.

bound together in the ideology and activity of the Further Reformation. We distinguish (without ranking) four dimensions in the movement: (1) a pietistical (spiritual, mystical, experiential), (2) a social-cultural (moral), (3) an ecclesiastical, and (4) a political (societal, theocratic) dimension.⁹

As a manifestation of Pietism, the Further Reformation was primarily a movement for the advancement of true piety: living in the sight of God. Religion was supposed to be a matter of the heart, spirit, and conscience; only that could be the proper source of all other expressions of piety in personal behavior in the family, church, city or village, and society as a whole. Reformed doctrine was regarded as the exclusive basis of “the power of godliness.” In the religiously plural society the truth of orthodoxy would need to be proven by means of orthopraxis. The Dutch confession of faith was pure and had been made dogmatically more precise at the Synod of Dordt, but theological progress had not been coupled with a spiritual deepening and moral improvement. Therefore, the Further Reformers subjected the lives of their contemporaries to heavy criticism. According to them the hearts of the Reformed of the seventeenth century were unreformed: Their attitude towards service to God was marked by tepidness, indifference, and ignorance.

The focus on the inner experience of faith implied primarily a battle between simulated faith and pseudo-piety, since an outwardly irreproachable walk of life need not be evidence of being truly Christian. This explains the emphasis on personal self-examination (in particular before the Lord’s Supper) for the marks of the work of the Holy Spirit and for the temptations of the devil in the hearts of believers. Not infrequently, the permanent self-criticism desired by pietistic preachers led to a condition of spiritual anxiety. The Further Reformation developed, on the one hand, a nearly peerless Reformed pastoral psychology, but on the other, placed its religious-ethical demands so high that it scarcely could find the church in a flourishing state.

⁹For general literature on the Further Reformation, see L. F. Groenendijk, *De nadere reformatie van het gezin. De visie van Petrus Wittewrongel op de christelijke huishouding* (Dordrecht: Van der Tol, 1984); T. Brienen, et al., *De Nadere Reformatie. Beschrijving van haar voornaamste vertegenwoordigers* ('s-Gravenhage: Boekcentrum, 1986); idem, *De Nadere Reformatie en de Gereformede Piëtisme* ('s-Gravenhage: Boekcentrum, 1989); idem, *Theologische aspecten van de Nadere Reformatie* ('s-Gravenhage: Boekcentrum, 1993); O. J. de Jong, et al., *Het eigene van de Nederlandse Nadere Reformatie* (Houton, 1992); idem, *Figuren en thema's van de Nadere Reformatie*, 3 vols. (Kampen, 1987, 1990; Rotterdam, 1993).

The focus of the Further Reformation on the *pietas*, the subjective piety of the heart, was paired with the striving for *praecisitas*, the walk of life in strict agreement with the biblical commandments. That formed the cultural dimension of the movement, as it eyed a reformation of both individual and group related patterns of behavior in society. This striving can be seen as a bibliocratic civilizing offensive, in which, usually guided by the Decalogue, the daily life of all kinds of social groups was placed under criticism. Religious sins were: deficient knowledge of Reformed doctrine and practice, spiritless attitudes during preaching and administration of the sacraments, swearing, making oaths and playing dice, profaning the Sabbath, and celebrating Roman Catholic feast days. Among moral evils were: the spiritless education of children, sexual dissipations (adultery, whoring, dancing, pornography), excessive drinking, craving for luxury in clothing or home furnishings, economic dishonesty, and lack of social compassion.

In its combat against popular culture, with its many remaining papal superstitions, the Further Reformation did not essentially distinguish itself from the efforts for cultural discipline that had been waged by almost all European ecclesiastical and political elites since the sixteenth century. But the protest of the movement also directed itself—sometimes through church discipline—against the morality and life-style of the patriariate. The haughtiness and craving for luxury of the Dutch regents, who during the republic's Golden Age had experienced a process of becoming aristocratic, was hardly in agreement with their Reformed confession. On the other hand, patricians were often annoyed by the moralizing sermonizing of the popular preachers, who were counted socially among the middle class.

As for the stand of the Further Reformation in relation to the higher expressions of culture—arts, sciences, and literature—its strong concentration on personal, eternal salvation would have obstructed a positive participation in the activities of this world. Historians are, however, slowly retreating from the usually negative evaluation of the significance of Calvinism for the unprecedented cultural flourishing of the republic during its Golden Age. Although the Further Reformed certainly condemned many expressions of culture (the theater in particular) that did not bear witness to God's Word and law, some representatives and leading sympathizers of the movement created high quality products, in particular in poetry, that are rooted in both a humanistic-classical education and a heartfelt Calvinistic outlook on life.

In addition, the reformed-ecclesiastical character is essential to the movement of the Further Reformation. This distinguished it from the numerous groups outside the public church, among which the cry for reform of Christianity was heard no less often. For the Further Reformation, a truly apostolic revival could only take place within the framework of the official preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and the maintenance of discipline, these being the marks of the true Church of Christ as it was planted by the grace of God in the Netherlands during the Reformation. The Further Reformation devoted attention to missions among Jews and the heathen, for the expectation for the future of Jews and Christians was also connected to the conception of the church as a confessing, national covenantal community. While the Further Reformation shared this attention with reformers outside the church, it was precisely this attention that distinguished it within the Reformed church.

The point of departure for the activity of the Further Reformation was the conception that the “first” Reformation had only been a restoration of the Church (of its theology, confession, and organization), which needed to be further deepened in the life of the members of the church. The body had been renewed, but the spirit had as yet to carry this renewal into head and heart, hands and feet. The church was an *ecclesia reformata quia semper reformanda*; to be Reformed meant to be continuously reforming. Ever since the sixteenth century, the church was said to have fallen—increasingly and on an ever greater scale—into a state of spiritual and moral decay. The most important cause seemed to have been the weakening of both its admission policy and its exercise of discipline. Given their knowledge and lifestyle, many who became members of the Reformed church could not be acknowledged as true believers, so that the Lord’s Supper was increasingly desecrated by “sham Christians,” “reformers-in-name-only,” and “confessors in word only.”

A key role in the process of decay—and in its reversal—was played by the clergy, who had the best possibilities of implementing the Word of God and the law in their congregations. They were accused, as were elders and deacons, of not setting a good example of a pious life for the people of the church. Public preaching was an important medium of influence. The sermon was not to be a learned presentation or a theological argument, but an instruction in the godly walk of life and an application of the content of Scripture to various groups in the congregation: advanced and beginning believers, as well as the unconverted. Also highly valued were: regular catechesis of children and adults, house visitation and pastoral

guidance of members, and intensive maintenance of discipline concerning their beliefs and actions.

The Further Reformation attempted to reach its aims at an institutional level exclusively through churchly means in the local congregations, supported by efforts to influence policy in the higher ecclesiastical organs of classes and synods. The battle for the autonomy of the church in relation to the government was also characteristic of the ecclesiastical consciousness of the movement. It repeatedly resisted the many forms of political usurpation by appealing to the independent kingship of Christ in the church. Additionally, the Further Reformation exposed its essence in its rejection of separatism, which was especially manifested during the crisis concerning Jean de Labadie (1610-1678), who had parted from association with the Reformed church out of desperation over the possibility for reformation within the church. For covenant-theological reasons, this went too far for the Further Reformation, even though it acknowledged the advancing decay of the church, and even if all its striving found little support and resonance within the ranks of the church.

Finally, the ecclesiastical quality of the movement is closely connected to the political dimension of the Further Reformation. This was determined by the theocratic pretensions of Calvinism itself. The Dutch Confession called it the task of Reformed governments (“the nurlords of the church”) to exterminate all false religion, and to protect and spread the true service of Christ. Not only was such a national reformation in tension with the pure church ideal, but, according to the already moderate Dutch regents, it simply came up against the boundaries of practical politics in the religiously pluralistic society. They preferred to allow the continued existence of diverse religious cultures rather than to repressively implement the social order approved by only one confession. In cultural political respect there was no absolute contrast between the secular and ecclesiastical governments: they shared the aim of a reformation of popular culture in the sense of privatizing and de-romanizing of many public practices.

Against this background, the Further Reformation acted as a movement of protest against the laxity of those public authorities who called themselves Reformed but hindered the reign of the Word and law of God in all areas of life. The later reformers were, in particular, annoyed with the great tolerance given to Roman Catholics, who were hardly prevented from continuing (with the help of a growing number of curates) to attract churchgoers. They also accused the government of inadequately maintain-

ing, in practice, legislation against religious-moral abuses, in particular profaning Sunday by conducting business. In addition, they heckled the regents for their personal behavior, charging them with perjury, office-chasing, and lusting after gain.

It was typical of the Further Reformation that in addition to the increasing spiritual and moral decay, it gave an ideological tenor to the ecclesiastical lobby with the government. Often, during its radical and increasingly rhetorical appeal to the people and government, use was made of the contemporary interpretation of history, in which the Republic was compared to the Israelites of the Old Testament. The miracles that God had bestowed upon "Dutch Israel" in the war against Spain bought dear obligations. If country and people persisted in their sins and failure to convert, then God's punishments and judgments could be expected. In any case, the Further Reformation had a prophetically loaded message that was proclaimed all the more at setbacks, disasters, and wars that struck the Republic with regularity during the third quarter of the seventeenth century. After this, a lengthy period of relative peace and prosperity arrived, in which the ecclesiastical-political timeliness of the movement became anachronistic.

III

This cross-section of the Further Reformation should be related to marking out the movement historically in its rise, development, and fall. In doing so, we should not forget that we are dealing with a historiographical concept, an overview of many distinct activities, events, and phenomena that has been constructed after the facts. What we now call "the Further Reformation" needs not to have been seen or explicated by contemporaries. That would make it especially difficult to draw a profile of the movement against the background of the general history of the Reformed church during the Republic, partly because one can observe and accentuate different historical connections from diverse disciplinary perspectives.

The Walloon-Reformed clergyman Jean Taffin (ca. 1529-1602) has sometimes been regarded as the first representative of the Further Reformation, based on his early publication of a critical appeal to the life of Reformed contemporaries in 1594. At present, instead of looking at such individual manifestations of pietistic-Reformed ideals, we look more at the cooperation among Further Reformers, who could be identified by outsiders as a reforming party with a distinctive program. Such an association for action first came into being in the province of Zeeland around the cler-

gyman Willem Teellinck (1579-1629). As a student, Teellinck had become personally acquainted with Puritanism in England, and he wanted to generate a similar movement for reform in the Netherlands as well. Starting in 1608, he promoted the “practice of piety” by means of a long series of edifying writings and through cooperation with partisans in ecclesiastical meetings. He is regarded as the father of the Further Reformation.¹⁰

On an interregional level, the image of a pietistic party of reform within the church developed only later. During the National Synod at Dordt (1618-1619), the delegates from Zeeland particularly made themselves heard as bearers of pleas for measures against the profanation of the Sabbath, without gaining concrete results. The same theme arose when Teellinck and two colleagues living elsewhere were forced to defend their stringent notions before the Provincial Synod of South Holland in 1626. In these years, a movement that was suspected of importing English-Puritan ideas into the Dutch church was also delineated in the polemic, while in 1627 the first complete explication of the program of the Further Reformation was published by Teellinck under the title *Necessary Exposition Concerning the Present Sad State of God's People (Noodwendigh vertoogh aengaende den tegenwoordighen bedroefden staet van Gods volck)*.¹¹

The fertile soil for the movement and with it the viability of the movement became larger because of the development of the Reformed church itself during this period. In addition to its numerical growth and the expansion of its tasks as public church, the intellectual—but not always the moral—quality of the corps of preachers was improved by the establishment of institutions of higher education in most districts. Organizationally, the Reformed church in the Republic had attained a unity, but since 1619 it had not been allowed to convene in a national synod, which indicates the extent to which its hitting power was obstructed by regional authorities, in particular by the powerful, libertine, anti-Orangist regents of Holland. There could be no question of a Reformed church state, let alone of a Puritan-Calvinist theocracy. To the disappointment of the more rigorous Calvinists, this became more or less definitely clear during the Great Assembly of the States-General in 1651. Various indicators make clear that

¹⁰For this period, see W. J. op 't Hof, *Engelse piëtistische geschriften in het Nederlands, 1598-1622* (Rotterdam: Lindenberg, 1987).

¹¹For this period, see W. J. op 't Hof, *Voorbereiding en bestrijding. De oudste gereformeerde piëtistische voorbereidingspreken tot het Avondmaal en de eerste bestrijding van de Nadere Reformatie in druk* (Kampen: DeGroot, 1987).

the Further Reformation occupied a politically marginal position, operated in a locally and regionally fragmented manner, and experienced, in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, an almost reactionary revival.

In the meantime, the center of the movement had shifted from the region of Zeeland to the city of Utrecht. Starting in 1634, Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676) worked as a professor in the theological faculty. He became the most important proponent of orthodox Calvinism of his day. For more than forty years he trained several generations of students for the ministerial profession, during which time he assigned special value to their practical-theological formation. He was surrounded by a number of professors and preachers of kindred spirit; especially in the decade of the 1650s, a few leading representatives of the pietistic movement of reform were called to Utrecht, among whom the mystical poet Jodocus van Lodenstein (1620-1677) deserves special mention.¹²

In the same period, the Reformed community in Utrecht experienced an explosive growth (in 1659 it had about seven thousand members). The church council reacted to this with an ever more intensive policy that was aimed at the reformation of morals. In preaching, the elements of repentance and conversion were central; materialism and religious indifference were denounced, sometimes with the aid of indexes of sins. The exercise of discipline reached a peak in the years 1658 and 1659, when a great number of dissolute members of the congregation were barred from the Lord's Supper or even excommunicated. The people spoke with annoyance of a "yoke and tyranny" and a "new theology" of the "devilish Puritans" in the consistory.

The offensive of the church council was complicated by two issues that became pertinent in this period. In the academy, a discussion had been ongoing for a few years between Voetius and Johannes Coccejus (1603-1669), his colleague at Leiden, concerning the interpretation of the fourth Commandment. In this discussion, Voetius battled for a strict observance of Sunday according to the Anglo-Saxon model. In addition, Voetius's followers protested against the patriciate of regents in Utrecht enriching itself with income from the "churchly goods" of the archbishopric, which according to them should have benefited the Reformed church since the confiscation during the Reformation. The en-

¹²J. van Oort, et al., eds., *De onbekende Voetius* (Kampen: Kok, 1989); J. C. Trimp, *Jodocus van Lodensteyn, Predikant en dichter* (Kampen: Kok, 1987).

couragement of these “further reformed” actions towards the people and the government in the sometimes fierce sermons from the pulpit provoked an increasing tension, tension that discharged in 1660. The city government expelled two preachers from the city and would, in the future, send political observers to church council meetings.

This intervention signified a sharp blow to the movement of the Further Reformation. Nevertheless, in 1665 the church council again proposed an ambitious and paradigmatic program of “Means for further reformation of morals in this alarmed community, upon the occasion of the heavy English war and defeat suffered,” of which a revised version was sent as a petition to the city government.¹³ As usual, no concrete measures were taken.¹⁴

In an atmosphere of despondency, the circle of Voetius gained hope from the arrival in the Netherlands of the French Calvinist clergyman Jean de Labadie. He was a radical proponent of a spiritual, pastoral, and moral reform of the decayed reformed-ecclesiastical life. Through his charismatic manner of preaching he was able to make a great impression on many. But the action of De Labadie in the Netherlands (in the case of the Walloon-Reformed sister churches) would soon lead to a new crisis in the Further Reformation, now on a national level. In 1669, he withdrew from church association, and he founded a house church in Amsterdam with the claim of restoring the purity of the first communities of Christians. The famous Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678), a woman of great learnedness and piety, and a friend of Voetius, and other pietists from Utrecht were among those joining his followers.¹⁵

Some other representatives of the Further Reformation appear to have teetered on the edge of joining De Labadie also, but came to their senses theologically. The psychological significance of the event for the view of ecclesiastical decline was great, however. It is characteristic that the minister, Van Lodenstein, withdrew from his official duty of administering the sacraments; he described those taking the Lord’s Supper as more like a herd of swine than a sheepfold of Christ.

In 1672 the Dutch Republic was attacked by England and France, and it faced a serious threat to its existence. This created an atmosphere within which the call to conversion of the people and the government—in the

¹³F. A. van Lieburg, *De Nadere Reformatie in Utrecht ten tijde van Voetius. Sporen in de gereformeerde kerkeraadsacta* (Rotterdam: Lindenberg, 1989).

¹⁴A local study of the reforming movement is *ibid.*, 25–33.

¹⁵See, in general, T. J. Saxby, *The Quest for the New Jerusalem: Jean de Labadie and the Labadists, 1610-1744* (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1987).

midst of numerous predictions for the future that were of topical interest in that disaster year—seemed meaningful once more. Programs were designed for the reformation of ecclesiastical and political abuses not only by the church council of Utrecht, but also by higher ecclesiastical assemblies in the country (in particular in Zeeland and Friesland), and even by private groups of Reformed members. It did not get beyond planning, however, for rest and prosperity soon returned to the Republic and the chance for an orthodox-Calvinist revival apparently was lost for good. In 1674, in Utrecht one last—moderate—program for reform was framed. In the following years the leaders from Utrecht of the Further Reformation died, after which a new generation of kindred spirits would take other paths towards the actualization of pietistic ideals.

The history of the Further Reformation in Utrecht was exemplary, but not representative of the development of the movement as a whole. In other places there were also, in less special circumstances than in Voetius's university town, concentrations and concrete manifestations of the movement. Systematic local and regional research on the Further Reformation has not yet been conducted; we know only of a number of cities where well-known, i.e. published, preachers of this school have stood, such as Amsterdam, Delft, Enkhuizen, Franeker, Goes, Leeuwarden, Middelburg, Rotterdam, and Zierikzee. The apparently urban character of the movement is probably related to factors such as the the higher social-cultural level of the Reformed clergymen in the cities, as well as the presence of publishers and booksellers. This is not to say, however, that the movement was not represented in the countryside.

In this historical overview, special mention should still be made of the garrison city of Sluis in Zeeland Flanders, where, starting in 1662, the clergyman Jacobus Koelman (1631-1695), Voetius's student and confidant, displayed an unprecedented activity for reformation of church and morals. His prophetic preaching, frequent catechisms, and rigorous exercise of discipline were not without result: in 1671, witness could be made in Sluis of a spiritual revival through conversion of many members of the community, young and old. The growing annoyance among city governors—who were not spared by Koelman in his exercise of discipline—became fatal to him when he started to condemn and omit the use of liturgical services and the celebration of Christian feast days as papal remnants. In 1675, he was dismissed and banned by the government, after which, for twenty years, he made trips from Amsterdam and Utrecht to many places and provinces to lead in conventicles. These events made Koelman, as it

were, the personification of the ecclesiastical-political dismantling of Reformed pietism in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. We shall also see that as theologian, pastor, and publicist he could be said to have guided that development.¹⁶

The end of the movement of the Further Reformation is almost impossible to determine. The process of decline undoubtedly began with the crises mentioned above in the Dutch church (1669-1670) and in politics (1672-1674). During the government of the new stadtholder William III, Prince of Orange, the front against which the Further Reformation had repeatedly acted changed drastically, in particular through the spread of the school of Cocceius. In retrospect, the year 1682 can possibly count as the end point, when—in Zeeland—for the last time in an ecclesiastical and political meeting a program of reformation was framed in line with Teelinck, Voetius, and Koelman. In this period, the new generation of pietistic clergymen were forced to search for alternative, private strategies for the spread of true piety in church and society. We shall see that this reversal can also be seen as a reaction to the effects of the movement of the Further Reformation itself.

IV

We said that the Further Reformation pursued its ideal of the spread of personal piety in all layers of society, especially using ecclesiastical means, and if possible with political support. There was, however, a yet more powerful means of conveying ideas to greater groups of people: the printing press. The movement enlisted not only Reformed preachers or other ecclesiastical and political bearers of authority, but also book publishers, publicists, and translators of religious literature. In part thanks to them, the movement supplied its most important contribution to the religious cultural history of the Netherlands, namely the production of a corpus of books intended for the laity concerning the practice of Reformed piety. This canon of literature remained for later generations, all the way to contemporary Dutch pietistic groups in the Netherlands, the tangible point of reference for identifying distinctive religious convictions in the Reformed tradition.¹⁷

¹⁶C. J. Meeuse, "Jacobus Koelman (1631-1695: leven en werken," in *figuren en thema's van de Nadere Reformatie II* (Kampen: DeGroot, 1990), 63-93.

¹⁷Many devotional works were translated from English Puritans; see the bibliographical checklist in C. W. Schoneveld, *Intertraffic of the Mind* (Leiden: Brill, 1983).

The literature of the Further Reformation can be divided into three primary categories. First are the most voluminous writings, in which an inventory is given of abuses in personal, ecclesiastical, and public life, as well as their causes, and for which a detailed program for restoration and improvement was also given.¹⁸ The practical significance of these reformation compendia lay not so much in their effect on ecclesiastical and political government, but primarily—and less positively—in establishing an image among sympathizers: they showed how bad the decay was, and what would need to happen if God's Spirit was to return to the church.

A second main category of the literature produced by the Further Reformation served the advancement of household religion. The moralists of this movement viewed the family as a "little church" (*ecclesiola*), the best place for the godly Christian citizen, by being brought up in the biblical commandments, to be cultivated. In numerous writings the duties of fathers and mothers, of children, and of servants were set forth, and instructions were given for praying and singing together, for reading and speaking about a selection from the Bible or the catechism or about the sermon.¹⁹ One can assume that the spread and use of this literature, as practice of the "family church," had a stimulating effect on the flourishing of the network of conventicles.

Third, the Further Reformers provided a great deal of literature for private devotions, intended for individual religious exercises. There appeared Reformed booklets of prayer, booklets of meditation, mirrors of sins and virtues and similar little works of spirituality, as it were, for the replacement of the old Roman Catholic manuals. Also, more and more tracts appeared that treated the problems and questions of faith of Reformed believers. The popularity of these little practical-theological works is evident

¹⁸The most important works are: W. Teellinck, *Noodwendig vertoog* (Middelburg, van der Hellen, 1627); H. Witsius, *Twist des Heeren met zijn wijngaart* (Leeuwarden: Balthasar Lob'e, 1669); J. van Lodenstein, *Beschouwinge van Zion* (Utrecht, 1674–1678); J. Koelman, *Pointen van nodige reformatie* (Vlissingen, 1678).

¹⁹Some examples of this literature are: F. Ridderus, *Daglycsxche huys = hous catachisatie* (Rotterdam, 1657); S. Oomius, *Ecclesiola, dat is kleyne kerche* (Amsterdam: Van marten, 1661); P. Witterwongel, *Oeconomia christiana, ofte christelicke huyshoudinghe* (Amsterdam, 166); J. Koelman, *De pligten der ouders in kinderen voor Godt op te voeden* (Amsterdam, 1679). See also L. F. Groenendijk, "'Opdat de mensche Godts volmaeckt zij.' Lectuur voor de religieuze vorming der gereformeerden tijdens de zeventiende eeuw, met bijzondere aandacht voor de bijdrage van de Nadere reformatie aan de gezinsdevotie en -catechisatie," *Pedagogische verhandelingen* 9 (1986): 16–54.

indirectly from later complaints by preachers that Reformed pious persons were in danger of neglecting reading the Bible.²⁰

Bibliometric research has shown that during the seventeenth century at least two thousand Dutch language pietist-Reformed titles appeared on the book market, of which at least a third consisted of translations from Anglo-Saxon Puritan works. There were nearly double this number of editions: about 40 percent of the total supply consisted of reprints of existing works. The publishing high point was reached in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, during which the peak ecclesiastical-political years of the Further Reformation also occurred. It is characteristic of the strong influence of English Puritanism on Dutch pietistic writers that the increasing supply of reprinted works was not accompanied by a decrease in the production of translations. The many reprints seem to confirm that edifying writings, usually inexpensive and handy, were well received.²¹ Some publishers aimed almost all of their lists at a pious reading audience.²²

This brings us to the question of the reception of the Further Reformation in general. The power of its offensive and, among its representatives, the growing pessimism about its effect had already indicated that the battle was being waged against a refractory front. Just as in the world of politics, the majority of the population—including the Reformed—seem to have had a negative or skeptical attitude towards the pious and strict way of life that was presented to them as the ideal norm. The numerous terms of abuse that came into circulation for the Reformed pietists—such as “precisians” (*fijnen*), “puritans,” “bigots” (*kwezels*), “pharisees”—are the best proof that their behavior was condemned as exaggerated, sentimental, legalistic, and fanatical. A more moderate form of criticism of the Further Reformation was aimed at the discrepancy between the high ideals of piety praised by clergymen and the actual opportunities for practice in the daily life of the ordinary working man and woman.

²⁰Examples of this literature: L. Bayly, *De practycke ofte oeffeninghe der godtzaligheydt* (Amsterdam, 1620); W. Teellinck, *Sleutel der devotie* (Middelburg: Cloppenborch, 1624); J. van den Houte, *Biechtboecxken der christenen* (Vlissingen, 1669); Th. à Brake, *De trappen des geestelyken levens* (Amsterdam: Cornelis, 1670).

²¹F. A. van Lieburg, “Piëtistische lectuur in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw,” *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 13 (1989): 73–87.

²²For a pietistic bookseller, see J. B. H. Alblas, *Johannes Boekholt (1656–1693). The first Publisher of John Bunyan and other English Authors* (Nieuwkoop: DeGraff, 1987).

Yet the Calvinist reformers could also point to positive reception of their ideals in the form of actual discipleship. The concrete practice of piety in the lives and the families of the Reformed is, of course, difficult to document. Not many pietistical bio- or autobiographical witnesses of Netherlanders have been handed down from the seventeenth century. From the few that are extant, one can gather that the “practice of piety” was not only observed among the adults, but also among children and youth, while its social spread stretched from high to low. Reformed pietism found entry among nobility, patriciate, and the general citizenry as well as among the industrious sort of people: tradespeople, artisans, and workers. It can be supposed that women, because of their private life-style and lack of economic affiliation, were overrepresented among the pious.²³

In the course of the seventeenth century a transition took place from more incidental to more collective forms of reception of Reformed ideals of piety. Reports from Utrecht, for example, demonstrate that the serious Reformed were increasingly recognizable to the outside world after about 1650. In this social-psychological process various factors of behavior played a role: the holding of regular house exercises and prayers with members of the family and staff; the coming together of pious friends in conventicles, where they sang and spoke about the faith; frequent attendance at church, with a pronounced preference for experiential preachers; the wearing of sober, antifashionable clothing; the frequent reading of the Bible and of edifying literature; the development of a distinctive religious jargon (the “language of Canaan”).²⁴

This local, collective, cultural formation among pious Reformed persons is connected with the development from a pure church to a public church (*volkskerk*). In the original Calvinist model of the church joining a congregation by publicly confessing the faith and, subsequently, by regularly celebrating the Lord’s Supper counted as the most important characteristics of those Reformed persons who wanted to place their lives under the discipline of God’s Word and law. But with growth in the number of members, the relation between participation in these churchly rituals and

²³For biographies of pious children, see: L. F. Groenendijk and F. A. van Lieburg, *Voor edeler staat geschapen. Levens- en sterfbedbeschrijvingen van gereformeerde kinderen en jeugdigen in de 17e en 18e eeuw* (Leiden, 1991).

²⁴For the popular reception of pietism, see: F. A. van Lieburg, “De receptie van de Nadere Reformatie in Utrecht,” *De zeventiende eeuw* 5 (1989): 120–28; F. A. van Lieburg, “Het gereformeerde conventikelwezen in de classis Dordrecht in de 17e en 18e eeuw,” *Holland, regional-historisch tijdschrift* 23 (1991): 2–21.

daily life became less harmonious and eventually—certainly in the eyes of the Further Reformation—became contradictory; there grew among the pious members of the congregation the need for forms of behavior by which they could distinguish themselves as “true believers” from the crowd of “confessors in name only.”

The activity of De Labadie provided an important impulse for the establishment of a pious subculture that was more than local. Not that many sympathizers could have realistically considered leaving home in order to join the new household congregation, but many were confirmed in their conviction that the public church lacked the inner strength to gain the desired reformation of hearts and morals. Several church councils were needed to provide not only admonishment but also justification in response to congregation members who made their agreement with De Labadie apparent by not allowing their children to be baptized, by staying away from the Lord’s Supper, or by pleading to officeholders for a rigorous exercise of discipline.

For the leaders of the Further Reformation the Labadistic crisis must have been a shock that drew their attention to the logical conclusions and, consequently, to the helplessness of the Reformed striving for reformation. The negative political experiences caused resignation to gain the upper hand for good. The demise of the movement was caused not only by its failure at the ecclesiastical and political level, but at the same time by its success at the individual and subcultural level. That is clear from the shifting of attention to new problems that were the direct outcome of the time when the offensive of piety flourished, the decades of the 1650s and 1660s. The interiorization of Dutch pietism noted by many church historians was a process in which the earlier Further Reformers chose to look away from society in general and to focus on pious individuals.²⁵

There was, in the first place, the matter of pastoral crisis, a result of the great attention that the puritan “piety of the law” had received in the propaganda of the Further Reformation. What was central in this piety was the puritanizing of conduct and the self-examination guided by sin indexes, cases of conscience, and marks of faith. In practice this led to uncertainty on the ethical plane (in particular pertaining to Sunday observance) and on the personal plane (partaking in salvation). In reaction to

²⁵For the problem of interiorization, see C. Graafland, “Het eigene van het gereformeerde piëtisme in de 18e eeuw in onderscheid van de 17e eeuw,” *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 11 (1987): 37–53.

the fact that there were many Reformed who lived without comfort because of doubts concerning their conversion and sanctification, voices arose that pleaded in an almost antinomian manner for a believing, passive resting in the certainty of God's promises. No less a person than Jacobus Koelman, a radical representative of the Further Reformation, experienced such a transition from a legalistic to an evangelical approach to the pietistic pastorate. It must not be a coincidence that as a traveling conventicle preacher he was in contact with many simple pious persons in the country.²⁶

Second, a latent tendency to pietistic separatism continued to smolder among potential "crypto-Labadists," who called themselves "scrupulous persons." These were the church members who distanced themselves from the growing worldliness of the official church and sometimes failed to attend the Lord's Supper or even the church services in their own place of residence. Among church members, they differentiated the core of those born again from the great circle of unconverted, a theological line of demarcation that also assumed sociological forms. While they could appeal for their negative view of the church to the critical and idealistic writings of the Further Reformation, the testators of this movement now busied themselves with combating the dangers of inner ecclesiastical group formation. So the polemical writings that Koelman and his like-minded friend Wilhelmus à Brakel—both of whom came from the circle surrounding Voetius—had composed against the Labadists, had at the same time a warning function for Reformed sympathizers.

Brakel also combated tendencies toward church individualization in a handbook of Reformed dogmatics that became very popular.²⁷ This guide for the Reformed devout—that gained for the author the nickname "leader of precisians"—came out, symbolically enough, in 1700, at the end of the century of the Further Reformation, and on the threshold of a century that would become the period of flourishing of pietism as "church within the church." Formally, this Calvinist subculture did indeed remain with the official church association, but in fact it functioned via the system of conventicles, seen as an inner—if not fringe—ecclesiastical network of local groups of devout persons. Here one could read the writings of ortho-

²⁶F. A. Van Lieburg, *Eswijlerianen in Holland 1734–1743. Kerk en kerkvolk in strijd over de Zielseenzame meditatiën van Jan Willemsz. Eswijler (ca. 1633–1719)* (Kampen: De Groot, 1989), 2528.

²⁷W. à Brakel, *Redelijke godsdienst* (Rotterdam: van den Aak, 1700).

dox-Reformed writers and listen to lay preachers, who dealt with the Bible or catechism on the basis of personal charisma and of being self-taught. In these circles the experience of faith was not primarily oriented to (local) preaching and celebration of the Lord's Supper, but to the exchange of experiences among the devout. The programmatic attention to the restoration of church and society that had characterized seventeenth-century Further Reformers, had almost disappeared among eighteenth-century pietists.²⁸

CONCLUSION

In a fundamental article, the historian Alastair Duke has pointed to "the ambivalent face" of Dutch Calvinism from 1572 to 1619. The Reformed church wanted to be a pure church, but became a politically infiltrated public church. In the period starting in 1619 this tension, via a devaluation of the exercise of discipline, made itself felt in the time-honored religious distinction between "children of God" and "children of the world." In the shadow of the ecclesiastical-sacramental form of expression, namely confessing membership and celebrating the Lord's Supper, there developed a sociocultural form of expression, marked by conformation to a pattern of marks of faith and ways of behaving. In that process the movement of the Further Reformation played an active role by radicalizing the ambivalence mentioned by means of the ecclesiastical and publishing media. It combined a prophetic call to conversion to the people and government with a high religious-moral standard for the Christian congregation. As ecclesiastical and political offensive it died naturally, but not without leaving a durable subcultural *residu*. Much research in the seventeenth century sources is still necessary, however, in order to test this general sketch of developments in its historical reality and diversity.

²⁸A study on this subculture, based on autobiographies, and its relation to seventeenth-century Further Formation is in: F. A. Van Lieburg, *Levens van vromen. Gereformeerd piëtisme in de achttiende eeuw* (Kampen: De Groot, 1991).