

***The Incarnation of the Antithesis:
An Introduction to the Educational
Thought of Abraham Kuyper***

R. E. L. Rodgers

Durham: Pentland, 1992, xvi + 89 pp.,
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RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre traite essentiellement de la théorie éducative d'Abraham Kuyper, philosophe, théologien, journaliste et homme politique hollandais (1837-1920), dont les réalisations comprennent la fondation de l'Université Libre d'Amsterdam et du parti anti-révolutionnaire, et qui a exercé les fonctions de Premier Ministre des Pays-Bas. Rodgers montre comment la pensée et l'action de Kuyper étaient fondées sur les doctrines réformées de la souveraineté de Dieu et de la grâce commune. Dans le dernier chapitre, il cherche à déterminer quelle a été l'influence internationale de Kuyper, qui reste significative de nos jours. Le livre offre une présentation courte mais utile de la vie et de la pensée de Kuyper.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das vorliegende Buch behandelt vor allem die erziehungswissenschaftlichen Anschauungen des holländischen Philosophen, Theologen, Journalisten und Politikern Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), dessen Leistungen die Gründung der Freien Universität von Amsterdam sowie der Antirevolutionären Partei einschließen und der darüber hinaus Premierminister der Niederlande war. Rodgers zeigt auf, daß Kuypers Denken und Handeln zu einem Großteil auf den reformierten Lehren von der Souveränität Gottes und der allgemeinen Gnade basierte. Im letzten Kapitel verfolgt der Autor das Ziel, das Ausmaß von Kuypers internationalem Einfluß aufzuzeigen, der bis heute beachtlich ist. Das Buch bietet eine kurze aber durchaus brauchbare Einführung in Kuypers Leben und Denken.

Although this book is concerned primarily with Abraham Kuyper's ideas on education, it provides an interesting and readable introduction to the general scope of his life and thought. Kuyper was not only an educational, social and political philosopher but a theologian, journalist and politician. His activities and achievements are impressive, and included the establishment of the Free University of Amsterdam, committed to

scholarship based on Reformed principles, and the founding of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, which laid an important basis for the emergence of the Christian Democratic tradition in the Netherlands. For nearly fifty years he was chief editor of both a daily newspaper and a religious weekly journal, and in 1901 he became Prime Minister, leading a coalition cabinet of Protestant and Catholic parties. Dr. Rodgers highlights the historical significance of these achievements and the theological foundations on which they were based. Chief amongst these are the sovereignty of God over the entire created order and the doctrine of common grace. Rodgers shows how such foundational beliefs provided Kuyper with a mandate for Christian activity in every area of human life and culture, and how he used them to encourage his followers to be involved in all levels of public life, and thus to express Christ's lordship over all creation. He aimed, Rodgers explains, to combine orthodox religious views with a progressive social programme.

Rodgers' final chapter discusses the transmission of Kuyper's influence, and is particularly useful to the international audience his book has already attracted. After sketching out Kuyper's influence amongst successive generations of Dutch philosophers, most notably Herman Dooyeweerd, Rodgers discusses Kuyper's American influence, with particular reference to Cornelius van Til, Louis Berkhof, and the Institute of Christian Studies in Toronto. Kuyper's influence in South Africa also receives attention, Rodgers proving himself well aware of the misapplication of Kuyper's doctrine of sphere-sovereignty in support of the *apartheid* system.

Given the extent of his intellectual legacy, particularly in Reformed and evangelical circles, and the breadth, clarity and practical significance of his thought, Kuyper is certainly a figure worthy of the increase in attention he is currently enjoying. Within this renewal of interest, Rodgers' book serves as a valuable prelude to the many publications appearing this year and next to mark the centenary of Kuyper's famous Stone Lectures on Calvinism, which were delivered at Princeton in 1898. It is not, however, based on original research or on a first-hand knowledge of Kuyper's Dutch-language works, and indeed its reliance on secondary material of a semi-popular nature produced by American Kuyper-devotees is largely responsible for its somewhat superficial analysis and racy tone. It remains useful, nonetheless, to those

seeking a short introduction in English to the core of Kuyper's intellectual legacy. It also supplies inspiration to those within the evangelical and Reformed tradition who seek to relate biblical principles to cultural and social engagement. In the words of the British politician Viscount Tony Pandy, who writes the forward, 'It provides Christians in public life with an added incentive to proclaim the relevance of our faith to all aspects of human activity.'

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The Extent of the Atonement: A Dilemma for Reformed Theology from Calvin to the Consensus

G. M. Thomas

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RÉSUMÉ

Le livre de Thomas tente de montrer que, dans la théologie réformée de 1536 à 1675, alors qu'il y avait un consensus sur la doctrine de l'élection inconditionnelle au salut, un consensus semblable n'a pas été atteint sur la question de l'étendue de l'expiation, et que la théologie réformée maintenait une tension entre une portée universelle et une portée particulière de l'œuvre de Christ, sans parvenir à résoudre la difficulté. La plus grande force de ce livre ne se situe pas dans sa présentation de l'histoire de la théologie, mais dans sa manière de nous introduire à la théologie systématique réformée, car Thomas lie la question de l'étendue de l'expiation à d'autres points de doctrine, en particulier à la doctrine de la prédestination. Comme tel, le livre est stimulant et utile.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Thomas weist in seinem Buch darauf hin, daß in der reformierten Theologie von 1536-1675, ungeachtet des Konsens bezüglich der nichtkonditionalen Erwählung zum Heil, kein Konsens bestand in der Frage des Ausmaßes der Sühne. Zudem war die reformierte Theologie laut Thomas von einer nicht zu vereinbarenden Spannung zwischen der universellen und der spezifischen Dimension des Werks Christi gekennzeichnet. Aus der Sicht des Rezensenten besteht die Stärke dieses Buches nicht so sehr

in seinem Beitrag zur Kirchengeschichte als vielmehr darin, das Ausmaß der Sühne zu anderen Bereichen der Dogmatik, insbesondere der Prädestinationslehre, in Beziehung zu setzen. Dies macht das Buch stimulierend und relevant.

The question of the extent of the atonement has long been a theological shibboleth in the Reformed tradition and it seems commonplace to define Reformed theology in terms of its belief in limited atonement (note its place in T.U.L.I.P.). This book, which is closely based on Thomas' doctoral thesis, seeks to refute two opposing camps in Reformed historical studies: the first and most prominent camp stating that from Calvin to the Swiss Consensus of 1675, there was, apart from the Amyraldian controversy, an unbroken Reformed consensus on the extent of the atonement (its extent being limited to the elect); the second camp in a variety of ways stating that there was a division between Calvin's teaching and that of his successors, and even that Amyraut's theology was a faithful re-interpretation of Calvin. Surveying a number of Reformed theologians and schools over a hundred and fifty year period, Thomas' conclusion is that from the beginning of the Reformed movement there were inherent and unresolvable theological tensions over the universality and particularity of the atonement which can be clearly seen in the controversies and debates of the time. As such, the aim of Thomas' thesis appears to be one of problematization: to make the reader aware of the theological complexities and nuances surrounding the question of the extent of the atonement. The great strength of Thomas' work is his insistence not to treat the extent of the atonement as an isolated doctrine, but to relate it to other fundamental areas of Reformed doctrine (for example, the 'two wills' of God, covenant and the nature of God), most importantly the doctrine of predestination. Thomas argues that there was (*contra* Arminianism) a Reformed consensus on defining election as the eternal and unconditional selection of certain persons to be granted faith and salvation. He also believes that for some theologians, most noticeably Beza, the logic of such a belief inexorably led to a belief in limited atonement. However Thomas' contention is that there was a great deal of diversity in relating predestination to the work of Christ (is Christ subordinate to predestination or vice versa?), and that many prominent theologians including Bullinger and Ursinus upheld *both* a